

**PIGEON VALLEY URBAN IMPROVEMENT PRECINCT
SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING**

FOR AFFECTED PROPERTY OWNERS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

17h30 PM, 18 AUGUST 2022, GLENWOOD BOYS HIGH SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Key Presenters

Athol Wesselink (AW), Chair of interim steering committee

Nick Alcock (NA), Member of the interim Steering committee

Gary Cullen (GC), Resident and Municipal employee working in the area of UIP compliance and regulation.

Jonathan Edkins (JE), Member of Interim Steering Committee

John White (JW), Resident and facilitator of Q& A Session

1. REGISTRATION

All attendees signed the registers outside the hall before the meeting.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Meeting opened @17h37 by AW. Thanks were extended to all for attending the meeting, as well as to Glenwood Boys High for the use of the Hall and the benefactor's sponsoring their time, talent and funds with a special mention of Alliance fencing.

3. EXPLANATIONS

a. Purpose of the meeting

NA presented the Summary of the Pigeon Valley presentation.

JW Shared that all questions could be SMSed to 083 7107555 during the meeting and they would be answered in the Q&A section of the meeting together with other questions received by social media and website.

b. UIP and SRA

NA talked through the definitions as below

Urban Improved Precinct (UIP)

Property owners vote to establish a Special Rated Area (SRA) – Municipal Property Act 2004

Property owners agree to pay extra rates collected by Municipality and paid to a UIP Non-Profit Company (NPC)

Key Aim – Revitalise the demarcated area through the implementation of agreed Business Plan based on input of residents

Glenwood challenges are increase in crime, decay in the public environment including environmental areas, a misuse of properties in terms of zonal requirements and a lack of community cohesion and activism.

c. Governance structures and processes – Initiators, Steering Committee, NPC

NA talked through the Governance slide in the presentation.

The Pigeon Valley UIP Steering Committee was nominated at the launch meeting 16 March 2022, a non-profit company established with non-remunerative directors (from Steering Committee), bank account opened, procurement policies outlined as value for money, capacity to deliver, competitiveness (3 quotes for contracts over R10 000), ethics and fair dealing and accountability and reporting. And no contract or agreement can exceed 3 years.

An AGM for members will be held to approve budgets, agree on members of steering committee, vote on continuation or closure of UIP.

4. PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY BUSINESS PLAN

a. Demarcation

NA spoke through the Street Group Areas/Street Group Reps slide in the presentation.

The proposed area is currently shown on the map and loosely described as Rick Turner, Esther Roberts, Alan Paton, Lena Ahrens, Helen Joseph, Cato, Clark, Ridge Road back to Rick Turner via Lamont. This area is broken up into approx. 40 street groups with street reps. Who are used to send communications to the residents and owners.

b. Results of perception surveys

AW - Safety was a priority, 60% of houses who took the survey have paid for home security, comments on rubbish lying around, the full info is on the presentation

Results of Various Community Surveys and Stakeholder consultations,

85 Respondents from 25 streets in the area, Security and safety is a high priority, desire for cameras and patrols, physical road access control challenging, some streets have street guards however majority don't. Over 60% have home security with some streets with camera monitoring. The state of public space – parks, roadways and islands is poor. Big call for Municipality to do their job, a need for integration of initiatives that are currently being effected and the residents need to drive process.

c. Services and other activities to be provided by Pigeon Valley UIP

UIP services - Security

NA UIP will establish an agreement with CPF & with security company based on proposals - this is being investigated and negotiated currently. These proposals are all different but aim to include the provision of additional patrol vehicles and staff, based on a certain number of sign ups or change overs to selected security company.

Establishment of integrated cloud based communication system, use of Tech/AI rather than human monitoring to update private security company patrols, gradual installation of ANPR at key points and gradual Integration of street installed cameras. As well as formalising of car guards at business nodes.

UIP services - Communication and fault management

AW spoke to the flow chart in "Cloud Based Automated Communication System" slide in presentation. Security is problematic when it is staffed by untrained volunteers, so the approach is as follows: linking the structures that exist, working with the structures that are currently available (police and municipality), policing forum (CPF), private security companies, street guards and the residents, so that reporting crimes to the Police is supported, and reporting issues get to the right place. It is only through crime reporting of petty and serious incidents that the police can allocate relevant resources, as this allocation is based on the data in the police system. The UIP admin portal (which is a cloud-based database) will get inputs from AI cameras, street guards, residents, and private security companies, so that the UIP can ensure issues get resolved, resources can be motivated for via the police, and the UIP can coordinate.

SNIPR is an AI system which uses artificial intelligence algorithms and software to identify suspicious vehicles when they enter the area. These are vehicles with no number plates, wanted number plated, and vehicles not matching number plates. These are flagged on the system as well as sent to private security.

NA – Members of the steering committee have been to observe and talk to other UIP's to discuss what works and the development of relationships with key people in the municipality to follow up and work together on resolving issues will be critical.

UIP services - Environment and public spaces

NA - Look after public spaces and road islands to work with the municipality to ensure the area looks good, adoption of public spaces, clean up and planting.

Urban development strategy, we have experienced architects and planners who are coming together to work on this.

The UIP will hold the municipality to account on service delivery, partner with municipal departments on maintaining parks, road islands, open spaces and roadways / pavements. Spearhead planning and supporting special environmental projects (for example Pigeon Valley and conversion of grass to indigenous ground cover where suitable to reduce maintenance burden). Encourage, support and track adoption of public spaces (for example Coffee Tree & Tysons in Alan Paton park) and developing an Urban planning initiative.

GC - 22 workers under the Parks Dept have been assigned to our area for getting weeds out of gutters and pavements and gardening improvement to our small parks, grass verges and islands and plant beds (e.g. top verge on Lena Ahrens). The plan is to divide them into small groups working under day-to-day supervision of local enthusiastic residents for the most impact. More important than this is the landscaping improvement plan in the area, so that all projects work towards a cohesive vision

UIP services - Urban development Strategy

JE- Spoke about the subcommittee within the UIP for an Urban development Strategy.

Establishment of a framework for sustainable place-making interventions, so that groups can work together towards inclusive goals. Urban designers Paul Wygers and other architects are giving of their time and expertise pro bono to contribute to our vision and ensure we work towards a plan that supports residents and the area.

Local participation will be important, and all initiatives need to work toward the greater goal, and be included in the framework.

High impact actions will be prioritised- these will be identified after a framework is established.

The framework needs to come from the residents, and so we will have a series of workshops where we bring all the ideas from participants and residents and draw it into a brief for the future, so all projects can be moulded within that vision, and serve the community.

Outcome – green, clean, safe, people centred precinct.

UIP Services - Communications & community participation

NA Communication aspects include the erection of signs, newsletters for the community, community events, community activism as well as fault management in conjunction with municipal departments.

d. Management structure

NA explained the management structure slide in the presentation. This includes Property Owners steering committee, a Non-profit company, an employed UIP manager and employed administrator (who manage any Parks and Maintenance contractors, as well as support Glenwood residents' special projects) , the cloud-based communication system/admin portal, where property owners, formalised car guards, CPF and SAPS and private security companies together with the ANPR cameras can input issues, data , faults etc

e. Budget

NA presented the operational Budget slide in the presentation. Monthly budget of R247 800 has been outlined for year 1, with a three-year budget plan.

f. Estimated additional rate randage

NA explained the Estimated additional special Rates based on proposed demarcated area and associated total area value.

The demarcated area has an estimated property value of R2.7 bill, if you divide the monthly budget by that value you get a special rating area randage of 0.0011013. So to calculate what your annual cost for your property would be you multiply your property value by 0.0011013 and divide by 12 to get your monthly special rate.

For example, If you had a R1.5mil home you would pay R138 a month on top of your normal rates.

If UIP boundaries change and number of properties is reduced then rates will change accordingly. Should residents outside the demarcated area want to be included, they can get residents in their streets to vote and if they get 67% support for the UIP they can be included.

g. Voting process and options

NA – It is regulated that 66% plus 1 yes votes are needed to establish the UIP (2/3 majority) but then everyone within the demarcated area has to contribute. The 3 voting options are :Voting on a paper form at the public meeting (yellow full title, green sectional title) or by App – vote on street rep or sectional title app on phone or lastly voting by e-mail (sign and scan form) back to street rep. We have a voting window until the end of October 2022. If voting tonight you need to tick on the form to say you understand the business plan and put your name, address and sign.

h. Milestones/programme

NA – talked through the programme milestone slide in the presentation. If we get the required vote by end of October, then the UIP can only start on 1 July 23 – this is the start of the municipal financial year So if you believe in this please consider starting to make a donation now.

5. FACILITATED DISCUSSION BASED ON QUESTIONS/ISSUES

JW facilitated the consolidation of the questions and comments into the below themes for answering

Why are municipalities not doing what they should be doing?

NA – there is a lack of capacity in the municipality, we will hold them to account, so we need to partner with the municipality, as well as doing things ourselves, we will not let the municipality off the hook. We are an inner-city suburb with the associated challenges of homeless people etc but we can do more together.

AW – Unified we can be stronger

Affordability, can some of the rates we already pay be given to the UIP?

NA – Cost is a major issue and in the initial business plan we had 2x patrol vehicles at a cost of R100 000 each. To make the UIP budget more affordable we cut the patrol cars out of the budget, which brought it down to R250 000 a month from R400 000+ We are embarking on discussions with security companies to support us. If you are a pensioner and get a rebate on rates you will also get a rebate on this

GC – The rates is a tax and there is no way to not pay your rates or only pay a portion of your rates.

Worries about Fraud and Municipality not paying the money over to the UIP?

GC – This structure with the municipality and UIP is legislated, there is a lack of trust however there has never been a collection or payment issue by the municipality with any UIP currently operating.

What about Municipal Accountability?

NA - The UIP will hold Municipality to account for the services they are obligated to provide. The UIP will also do extra work, with a bigger plan in mind.

Security alignment, can we cancel our armed response, what will happen to GCW?

AW – GCW is unsustainable, and it is not okay to expect untrained volunteers to work as security. At this stage I wouldn't cancel the extra security on roads in guard huts and street patrols but as we get more cameras rolled out much of it may become superfluous. If you provide a security service and street guards should be registered with the SERA assoc. In some other UIPs the old car guard/foot patrols are labelled precinct ambassadors – they clean up and are the eyes on the street, Is there any other alternative collection method that can be used for the SRA?

What happens if we don't want the UIP to continue?

JW – At the AGM, a vote can be taken to can shut down the SRA with a 51 % majority.

How did the UIP idea start?

AW – Several committed residents in Glenwood came together to explore options for revitalising the suburb.

Demarcation, why not include all of Glenwood?

NA- Alan Paton is the boundary for Glenwood Business UIP, so we can't move into their area. The Pigeon Valley UIP includes sector 2 and a portion of Sector 1 of CPF.

Where is the admin support?

NA – Two employees will be part of the UIP a manager and an admin support position.

Different priorities within the precinct how will UIP cater for all of them?

NA – we have tried to make it a public and open process. We want to make it inclusive, hence the workshops and transparent processes associated with the Urban Strategy process.

Scale across UIPS, will this not make it more cost effective?

NA – we are talking to other groups such as Manor Gardens and Glenwood Business UIP, for example we plan to connect with other organisations to tackle Bulwer Park including Glenwood UIP, Stella Club, Glenwood Prep School and the Parks Department to work together to tackle the upliftment and betterment of Bulwer Park.

Will UIP have power for zoning and rezoning?

JW – UIP manager will assist with zoning issues.

GC – The value is if speaking as a representative of a body, one speaks with more power and authority, means that change is more possible as municipality will listen.

What happens if we want to make changes to the business plan?

NA – every year we have an AGM to decide on budget and mandate for the Pigeon Valley UIP. We might learn things over the next year and so change the plan and budget at the AGM.

Formalising car guards, will that help?

AW – This provides an intelligence network which is helpful in security.

Where did the name Pigeon Valley UIP come from? Can we change it?

NA – the Glenwood UIP already existed, so that name was taken. Pigeon valley is at the heart of the demarcation area – we also chose the leaf of the Natal elm as our logo as Pigeon Valley Is a haven for the Natal Elm tree.

Can donations get tax certificates?

NA – We will look into how to issue of Section 18A tax certificates for donations to the UIP.

Voting, who can vote, only over 18?

GC – regulations stipulate that there is 1 vote per property ratepayer for main sections, any section under R350 000 (such as garages attached to flats) don't get an additional vote. Pensioners would get a rebate as per their usual rates.

Challenge to the committee, how will you draw all residents including the youth into consultation?

JE – We need to ask them what they want, and we will be having an inclusive discussion and get everyone involved

NA – Karen Brokensha who is helping with marketing has been talking to the churches and schools- they are not rate payers so they don't have a vote but they can be involved in the upliftment of the area and projects.

Will the UIP have the power to stop and search?

AW - Only metro and SAPS have the power to do that. You can ask someone what is in their bag but if they don't want to, you don't have any power to force them.

Who carries the financial risk if people refuse to pay?

GC – If ratepayer underpays their rates they will go into arrears, same outcome if you under pay your rates

How will the UIP deal with informal economy such as waste pickers?

GC – we can start working with the waste pickers, the municipality is regulated to bring them into the system, there are ways in which we can stream waste to support upliftment of area.

AW – There is a responsibility for us to take the vulnerable into account, we do need to go forward with a conscious. We would need to look at some sort of policy.

What will the UIP do about the high number of Vagrants?

AW – We will address the issues as they arise and work on a larger solution.

Can there be a focus on replanting as trees are dying or fall?

NA – The UIP will definitely support the replacement of trees, in a sensible way as part of a plan, also with reducing the amount of work and maintenance needed.

What ABOUT Growing the area too much, stretching security?

NA –We first want to focus on our smaller demarcated area but if in the future we do grow the area funds available will also grow so we can get another patrol vehicle for more residents and a larger area.

Can we get a copy of the Minutes?

NA – We will distribute the minutes through the street reps WhatsApp groups and load it onto the website.

Question from the floor

If you want to cancel, how does that happen?

GC – at AGM all residents can elect steering committee or vote to disband UIP, then a process will start to close it down, need 50% support to close it down.

Who do you communicate with at Municipality? Are you guided by IDP?

NA – We currently do have relationships with some officials and the UIP will continue those relationships and forge new connections with relevant officials in various departments. The IDP guides the city as a whole and will thus guide our urban strategy.

Calvin Thomas CPF chair spoke from the floor

Crime is on the rise , people should not cancel their security, however UIP will negotiate with security companies to reduce your monthly payment and costs, so that the overall cost burden is reduced.

There will be all the added services that come with this agreement with a security company and the UIP establishment.

Councillor Sakhile Mngadi spoke from the floor

Services in this municipality are not going to get better. This UIP will supplement what is not being done in the area, not replace municipal services. The SRA special rated area is the only way to funnel the money you pay back to your immediate location.

A question from the floor re potential fraud in the voting process.

NA The Committee will ensure that the voting process can be audited (i.e. sample checking or more) by the relevant municipal department.

6. VOTING TO APPROVE SRA BUSINESS PLAN WITH ANY AGREED AMENDMENTS

NA/GC – The interim Steering committee are all happy to continue to stand. Two additional nominations were received immediately after the meeting. These nominations have been accepted by the committee and are noted below. The Business plan was agreed upon with no amendments.

Owners need to vote yes or no, owners who do not vote, are a no vote. Anyone can lodge an objection to the process if they feel it has been faulty in some way. However, there can be no objections on the voting as it is merely a yes or no vote.

7. ELECTION OF STEERING COMMITTEE (and ratification)

Steering Committee

Athol Wesselink (Chair)

Nick Alcock

Thulani Madlose

Paul Dekker

Jonathan Edkins

Angela Shaw

Adele Ackerman

Elliot Ngcobo

Graham Muller

New nominations:

Calvin Thomas - (Nominated by Naven Naidoo)

Janet Gillespie – (Nominated by Brian Daventry-Bull)

8. CONCLUSION

NA – Thank you all for your attendance, Voting will happen outside please place your votes in the boxes provided.

MEETING CLOSED @19H19