

Zandvlei visioning exercise

7 February 2019

The requirement for security of tenure for the Zandvlei Sports Centre, to enable a pivot in how Zandvlei is managed was the single most supported idea at the visioning exercise held at the sports centre. About 22 area stakeholders attended, representing a variety of interest groups and active citizens from the area.

The visioning exercise asked individual participants to share and then prioritise their hopes, but also their fears, for the Zandvlei area so that goals could be set and risks identified. Pink and green dots showed individuals' primary and secondary priorities while yellow and orange dots showed likely risks and those with a large potential impact.

Several themes arose from the exercise, namely:

1. Governance
2. Community involvement
3. Environmental and ecological

1. Governance

The idea of having security of tenure (5 pink, 5 green) was shared as it may provide a base of operations, a consistent presence in the vlei that could generate activity and be used to host activities and raise funding. This stability would provide a base for more adequate and effective management by the city (4 green) of the whole area.

Adequate funding (2 green) for projects and improvements was seen as necessary, and tied to participants' level of participation and energy (2 green). Research-driven policy and management would improve meaningful implementation. Using a public private partnership model to effect change was also mentioned. Crime (3 orange, 1 yellow) and traffic congestion (2 yellow) were seen as plausible risks.

2. Community involvement

Community involvement (6 green); adequate, active stewardship and a sense of ownership by user community (4 green) tie directly into the call for: an overall masterplan (2 pink, 2 green); how these communities' impact on irrigation as well as how development and sewage influences water quality (2 pink). This community involvement would then contribute to a sense of ownership and pride in young people, which would especially be visible in how they engage with visitors. Important tasks were identified as: re-engineering of the mouth and sewage line,

solutions to backyard-dwellers' waste management, and creating paths for cycling, walking and canoeing.

The most plausible risks identified were the City losing the ability to monitor ecological quality (4 yellow) leading to severe pollution (5 yellow) and surprise at the crash of the False Bay fishing industry due to the fish-nursery properties of the Zandvlei estuary being destroyed (4 yellow).

3. Environmental/ Ecological

A functional estuary (3 pink, 4 green) with the situation under control (6 green) characterized by a plastic-free Zandvlei (4 green) and interconnected and extended water ways (3 green) with circular access routes to and from all communities (1 pink) characterize a Dream Zandvlei.

This environment is impacted most by:

- research-inspired action (3 green),
- a mix of habitats and beautiful urban design (2 green),
- sewage systems that have an alternative to dump into the vlei,
- and a nature reserve system that works to address over-supply of nutrients, invasive species and plastics.

The fish nursery is nurtured and regular patrols of wetlands prevent and clean weed encroachment.

With a broader biodiversity (2 green) and a more diverse flora and fauna (3 green), integrated sporting facilities (as well as for night-time activities), Zandvlei is well frequented and very popular with a shared sense of ownership among users.

Next steps and recommendations

1. A meeting with the ward councilor to discuss progress and ask for advice.
2. A meeting with community members not reached in this first meeting - contacts available through Berenice (ZENR) and Sharon McCallum (Dream Zandvlei group)
3. Better understand the current tenure of the Zandvlei Sports Centre and investigate alternative arrangements.
4. Look at donor funding bodies that are aimed at a broad array of interests (youth and sporting development, environmental stewardship and conservation, infrastructure upgrades (re-engineering mouth, sewer line, promenade, sports and toilet facilities).

Addendum 1: Transcript of post-it notes from visioning meeting

Transcript of post-it notes:

Governance: Hopes

Security of tenure (5 pink, 5 green)

Adequate and effective management by the city (4 green)

Adequate funding and resources catchment (2 green)

Will to do it, energy by participants (2 green)

Resource driven polity and management leads to implementation and collation of existing and new reserve (2 green)

Private public partnerships look at existing infrastructure and new locations (1 green)

Education to raise awareness of its value and benefits = zero tolerance (1 green)

By in by the diverse communities in the catchment

Unlocking diverse contributions to maintain these catchments

- Financial
- Sweat equity
- Skills and info levels
- Nursery of plant flourishing

Money/ corporate (required financial flows through corporate buy-in)

Diverse range of sources of funding to support the catchment

Money collected 'locally' should be utilized where it is collected

More money leading to

- A proper plan
- Higher tourism profile
- Eco and sports tourism

- Public transport

Well-financed conservation agency

Functioning estuary

Litter free and good water quality

Rich bio diversity

Governance: Fear

Property values plunge (2 yellow)

Policies are different with EFF in charge (1 orange)

Land grabs (3 orange)

No water activities, anything edible has been eaten (2 yellow)

Crime hot spot (3 orange, 1 yellow)

Traffic congestion (2 yellow)

Younger generation give outdoor activities no value

Polarization between the haves and the have-nots 'us and them' narrative

Rezoned for housing or invaded

All faculties derelict, squatter camp

Community involvement: hopes

An overall masterplan (2 pink, 2 green)

Water quality (continuing awareness regarding irrigation development and sewage) (2 pink)

Community involvement (6 green)

Adequate and active stewardship and sense of ownership by user community (4 green)

Young people with a sense of ownership and pride, engaging with visitors (1 pink, 1 green)

Reengineering of mouth and sewage line (3 green)

There are solutions to backyard dwellers' waste management (2 green)

Cycle/ walking paths, canoeing peninsula (2 green)

Cases to inspire: How surfing catalyzed Muizenberg; Liesbeeck river transformation from sewer to recreational resource, living with its homeless (1 green)

Safe environment to be in and no worry of being on ones own (1 yellow)

Deep enough water for sailing, paddling and windsurfing

Community lobbying, community info

Community group using the built facilities on a regular and popular basis

Clean enough water to permit swimming

Public toilets open, clean and functioning

Co

Community involvement: Fears

Severe pollution of water body by waste, chemicals etc (5 yellow)

Crashing of fishing industry, and no clue as to why it happened (4 yellow)

City loses capacity of monitor ecological quality (4 yellow)

Rand plummets, membership of clubs shrinks, city under different political control (3 yellow)

Apathy by stakeholders, lack of community involvement (1 orange, 2 yellow)

No accountability by public authorities (2 orange, 1 yellow)

Government funds diverted to other areas (1 yellow, 1 orange)

Deproclamation of nature reserve (2 orange)

Change of governance approach to natural areas (2 yellow, 2 orange)

Collapse of sporting facilities (1 orange)

Lack of awareness (1 yellow, 1 orange)

Ecosystem stops functioning due to inflow (1 orange)

Lack of adequate water inflow due to climate change (1 orange)

Too much extraction upstream (2 orange, 1 yellow)

No security, fish poached, bands of unemployed youth (1 yellow)

Increased litter, increased land invasion, informal settlements, algae bloom (1 orange)

Lack of control of input – nutrients and litter (2 yellow)

Overpopulation, people invading proclaimed nature reserve (12 orange, 1 yellow)

City no longer functions, governance and law enforcement broken down (1 green)

Public transport (2 green)

Community values will change and the natural ecosystem will not be seen as important (1 orange)

Protectionism “laager mentality” contributing to political volatility

Unrealistic ideas of how things work by all groups (poor communication, assumptions flourish, resentment sets in...)

National economic depression leads to many involved people leaving a brain drain from area and people involved (1 orange)

City closes WMC playgrounds (yacht clubs)

No conservation competence to manage catchment

Not enough action (paralysis)

Government commitment

Lack of integration between jobs and environment concerns means the green/ bio economy isn't taken seriously (3 yellow)

Complete breakdown of biodiversity (4 orange)

Encroachment of invasive plants

Environmental/ ecological: Hopes

Functioning estuary (3 pink, 4 green)

Situation under control (6 green)

Plastic-free zandvlei (being aware of the whole cycle) (4 green)

Interconnected and extended waterways (Coniston connect to vlei) (3 green)

Dredged/ canals clean, wide open/ safe and accessible, ecologically functioning estuary, litter free and clean, modern sports facility, (1 pink, 2 green)

Reputation of being clean, litter-free through joint effort of all stakeholders (not just lip-service). All stakeholders having a genuine interest in making it work (made visible by listening to everyone) (1 pink)

Famous mix of habitats, beautiful urban design (2 green)

Circular routes of access to and from all communities (1 pink)

Sewage systems have an alternative to dumping in to Zandvlei (3 green)

After research monitoring and act at the went not afterwards (3 green) / research-inspired action

A nature reserve that requires little intervention/ management, a system that is working and addresses nutrient catchment issues and invasive species (1 green)

Biodiversity broadened (2 green) More diverse flora and fauna (3 green)

Connect to catchment - integrated sporting facilities (paths, cycle trails) waterways, signage

(1 green)

Facilities for night time activities (1 green)

Recognition in long term changes in future management (climate control)

Dry toilets, thriving bioeconomy

Safe, Light installations, Promenade, Well frequented

Ecotourism, more research

Whole catchment reflected and reinterpreted in some form of interpretation - signage, cell phone connectivity

Awareness of fish nursery

Interactive public facilities

Improved sewage treatment infrastructure

Everything on this planet has a right to exist, when it does so, so do we humans

Swimming like they do in Copenhagen

Regular patrols of wetlands to prevent and clean weed encroachment

Integrate the whole value chain, litter as part of consumption – cradle to grave / nutrient management

Plastic has a value and so is immediately removed

Second Kingfisher and both machines working

Wetlands being used to clean inflowing water

City and nature working together, more herbivores (Eland!)

Fully accessible nature reserve

People know about zandvlei, they're aware and conscious

Lots of engaging activities, telling the Zandvlei story to enhance ownership

Environmental/ ecological: Fears

Acceleration of global warming (2 orange)

There's no water and it's all silted up (1 yellow)

Zandvlei is a green soup, all fish and animals are dead (2 yellow)

Lack of enforcement and political will (2 orange, 1 yellow)

No more nature reserve (4 orange)

System not valued by decision makers (1 orange)

No accessibility (pond of sewage)