

10 February 2016

Dear Neighbourhood,

After another Masi Fire Crises meeting at the Masi Primary School last night, we were taken to see the structures the City finally erected for a few of the fire victims.

Truly, no people should ever be treated like this! On mounds of rubble, corrugated iron 3x3 meter structures, some without windows, and at best 1 meter apart are a boiling pot, in more than one sense. The City says this is temporary but with the same breath says it has no plan where else to provide space for them. Hundreds of other fire victims still have no place other than the hall or staying in over-crowded conditions with friends.

One man asked me into his new structure. He said I should stand on the two foam mattresses that covered virtually the entire floor. He said his wife and two children were getting ready to go to sleep. It was unbearably hot with the last sun still shining in through the door. He was bringing buckets of soil into the structure to even the ground in a corner where the gap was so large a child could roll or fall out at night. He was polite to a point and simply stated: They treat us worse than dogs. Water is via a collective pipe that sticks out in open ground. "We don't know where to wash ourselves". And, "we are not allowed to go the toilets over there, we have to share toilets with shack-dwellers, far down there. It's far; we all use the bush". The man has a job but earns too much for an RDP house and too little to buy or rent.

What I describe makes us all uncomfortable. I share it here because as sure as anything this situation is humanly unbearable and will boil over. When that happens we should not say: we did not know. Please prevail on those you know and who have the powers to act otherwise, to take steps that address this appalling situation. We need urgent measures, rather than the 'business as usual' approach.

We are into the 10th week after the fire and it is clear the City, as far as Masi is concerned, is floundering.

(For the record, my plea is not to garner votes for the ANC. I am not a member nor friend of those who mismanage townships in the rest of SA)

Yours,

Horst.



New temporary homes have been constructed for Masiphumelele fire victims, while they await permanent space in sites D and E. PHOTO: NICOLE MCCAIN

MASIPHUMELELE

New homes for fire victims

NICOLE MCCAIN
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The Masiphumelele fire victims housed in the community hall are being moved into new temporary homes. The City of Cape Town has provided about 35 homes for 80 residents.

Community representatives estimated about 250 victims were housed in the hall, despite an assessment by the City that claimed that up to 82 residents were accommodated in the hall where they were receiving humanitarian relief, including food ("Many still living in hall", *People's Post*, 26 January).

An extra 350 to 400 people sought accommodation with relatives or on land close by, community members estimate.

At a recent subcouncil meeting, chairperson Felicity Purchase confirmed the residents had been housed in the hall following the illegal construction of homes on land cleared after the fire.

Some residents built informal homes larger than the space allocated or moved in during a land grab, leaving others without space to build their homes.

The temporary homes have been erected on land cleared for the next phase in the City's housing development, explains Purchase. It is estimated that the tender will be advertised in the middle of the year and that construction will take two years.

In the meantime, non-compliant structures built on sites D and E will be reduced in size to make space permanently for the displaced fire victims, she says.

C.T. 9.2.2016
Masi action sickening

The video on SABC of the "official" destruction of the new shacks built on the edge of Masiphumelele was sickening. How inhumane to destroy new homes built by people desperate for a place to live!

Every society, every religious group, and each of us as individuals will be judged on the basis of our actions toward the most vulnerable and marginalised of our neighbours.

Of course, the City has told the people not to build there. The City put responsibility for that "rule" on the SANParks officials. Now we learn that the "wetlands" may not, indeed, be true wetlands. And SANParks officials say that a parcel of the land bought by the city in 2004 (12 years ago!) was expressly intended to provide land for homeless Masi families, "to relieve the pressure" of congestion.

No wonder there is anger: Had the city been transparent about it, this problem could have been avoided. Not surprising that the current situation seems to be driven by political (perhaps racist?) considerations.

It certainly appears that we are defending white privilege.

Councillor Purchase has stated that "the validity of these families" is in question. Who "validated" the families who settled in this community decades ago? Certainly no one validated my husband and me when we moved to Fish Hoek in 2001. Finally, how can we

pretend that there is no land available when we drive past the obscene new development at the bottom of Ou Kaapse Weg, and when we read of the approval of a new development in Kommetjie?
Mrs Solveig Kjeseth
Fish Hoek

Masi leaders in showdown with City over housing

Michael Nkalane

CAPE
TIMES

9.2.2016

Community leadership denies being consulted on plans by authorities

WHILE the City insists it had consulted the Masiphumelele community about a development on a piece of land earmarked for housing, community leaders of the area have denied being consulted.

But community leader Tsepo Moletsane disputed that, saying that most members Patricia de Lille in

never consulted about any piece of land earmarked for our housing development. We only met the

beneficiary selection process through a public participation process over many years.

"The City plans to develop of erf 5131 for the Masiphumelele Phase 4 housing project. The property was acquired in 2003. Masiphumelele Phase 4 housing project will be developed betw

