**What we learnt from meeting with the Table Mountain National Park on 7 and 15 January 2016.**

The motivation for the meetings was to explore all avenues of available land for recent fire victims and others cramped in inhumanly tight conditions. We were a loose alliance of recognised Masi community leaders and individuals from the wider ‘valley’ community.

The description below should be read with the attached map.

1. We discovered the full size of City Erf 5131. This was sold for R1.5m by TMNP to the City in 2004 explicitly for the expansion of Masi. The then Mayor of the City bought the land for this purpose. The whole Erf comprises 10.8 hectares. Erf 5131 currently has 3 parts to it
   1. The western third, closest to Masi is also referred to as TRA and as Phase IV. On the southern parcel of the land are informal houses, including people who lost their homes in the 2006 fire and who are on a waiting list if The Amakhaya Ngoku flats are extended to house them. The people living here used to live on the northern part of the TRA but co-operated with the City and moved their homes south. This was done so the City can, hopefully later this year build 228 RDP type serviced houses here. The question of where to move those living here currently, has not been addressed.
   2. The ‘middle’ part of Erf 5131 is now sports fields. Masi residents use them but high rental cost, minimises the use. The fields are comprehensively fenced.
   3. The western side of Erf 5131, ca. 4-5 hectares, was ‘unknown’ until above meetings. It is currently densely covered with Port Jackson invasive bush. The City has argued that this piece of land serves as a kind of buffer to the wetlands further west (TMNP Erf 4189). TMNP point out that the wetland actually is further west of Erf 4189. Erf 4198 is TMNP property. An old EIA study marks this as ‘environmentally sensitive’. This is not the view of TMNP who sold it for housing to be erected. Minutes of the time confirm this (see text at bottom of these minutes).
   4. To the south of Erf 5131 are sewage plants. In part, they are at a higher elevation than Erf 5131. This poses an engineering challenge that can be overcome.
2. TMNP Erf 4198, in its south western corner has some informal housing on it. TMNP has a court injunction against this encroachment (but TMNP has no injunction on any parcels of land on which informal houses have been erected and not owned by them, as has loosely been asserted!). Community leaders explained that the occupants have no knowledge of the status of this land versus adjacent other land covered in similar vegetation. The community leaders indicated they would be helpful to get people moved on to City land if City land was available.
3. City CF 945/25 is where most of the informal homes have been built. Its western section D and E is where the fire of 29 November 2015 raged. It is also known as ‘Wetland’. The reason people have not moved further north into this land is that it drains water from all areas east, north and south of the area. Many homes here stand in moisture, even muddy water, in winter. The important piece of information gleaned from TMNP is that TMNP do not consider this area as either ‘sensitive’ or as ‘wetland’. The land is not of environmental importance. People living here have continuously been told that they live ‘illegally’, it being a wetland, and that the TMNP has an injunction against them. This is not true.

Proper water management could make this area safe for occupation and could alleviate the terrible over-crowding in other parts of Masi.

1. The attached map (reference 4) refers to the 232 Amakhaya Ngoku flats. Plans exist for a further 120 flats to be built. The money was raised but shacks occupy the designated land, on its northern boundary. The residents have indicated a willingness to move but on condition that they first see the land they are moved to. Their concern is that they will be re-located to land that gets water logged in winter or that is very distant from their places of work.
2. The City has identified two small slithers of land for the November fire victims. One is on the north eastern tip of Erf 5131, the other is a slice on the eastern edge of Houmoed Road. This will free up 90 odd plots. This is the response by the City to a small number of those who lost their homes in the November fire and who are unable to re-erect shacks where they were previously. Eight weeks after the fire, these plots have not yet been released for occupation. ( See the two \* on the attached map.
3. TMNP have confirmed that TMNP purchased the high ground to the south of Solole, but that the City owns the northern part of Solole, abutting Kommetjie Road. Although the City initially viewed this as an area for Masi to expand to, an objection from adjacent suburbs has resulted in the City going mum on this option. This Erf is portion 39 of Cape Farm CA 9511 (not part of the enclosed map).

The City will reject this information as faulty or wrong. They are welcome to add further information. Due to Masi’s population now being at breaking point, the options to alleviate the pressure must be discussed openly. Public participation is necessary. As citizens of the valley, those with open minds, should assist the City in countering those who wish Masi away and out of our valley. The City should see us as allies.

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