

New Killarney-Riviera Association

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January 2023

Hi everyone

We held our January public meeting over the internet at 18h30 on Wednesday 18 January. Nobody attended, perhaps in part due to the load shedding which was happening in Killarney at the time. This virtual-meeting process does not seem to be working so far. We will continue to hold virtual NKRA public meetings in February and March, but if participation does not improve then a new plan will be needed. Meanwhile we will continue to operate by email.

Our next virtual public meeting will be held at 18h30 on Wednesday 15 February 2023. All owners and residents of Killarney-Riviera are welcome to participate. An agenda with a meeting link will be circulated closer to the meeting date.

It seems that Covid is not done with us yet. Although it is still early days, studies so far suggest that the symptoms of the XBB.1.5 variant of the Omicron strain are apparently about the same as the previous variants, but it might have an extra ability to evade the immunity acquired from previous infections or vaccines, so it might be able to infect vaccinated people and to re-infect people who have previously experienced a Covid infection – especially people who have existing underlying health conditions and health vulnerabilities. There is no need to panic, but taking basic common-sense precautions is obviously advisable.

While we wait for service delivery from the municipality, we again continue to ask all buildings please to help us by cleaning up litter and weeds on your adjacent pavements and gutters. Litter and weeds create a general impression of neglect, especially among potential new investors. If the municipality does not act soon, we will need to consider once again hiring a service provider to cut back the huge overgrowth on the narrow pavement in 7th Street all along the motorway, which is forcing pedestrians to walk in the street. Meanwhile, many buildings are already doing great work on their pavements, and the park gardener Nolicent attends to the weeds on the 4th Avenue traffic islands and the 4th Avenue bridge from time to time. The weeds grow back quickly, so any assistance would be very useful indeed. If every building looked after their own pavements and gutters, the entire area would look constantly amazing.



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Thank you to the people of Dumbarton Oaks, who are one of the many buildings to have taken steps to beautify a pavement. This is a stretch of 2nd Avenue, between 2nd Street and 3rd Street. (If your building is beautifying a pavement, please send us photos and we will publish them too.)



Many residents have responded to the request to help us build up a schedule of items requiring repair or attention by the municipality. This schedule currently includes street potholes, damaged pavements, poorly completed repairs on the streets and pavements, heavily-overgrown plants and trees on pavements, stolen manhole covers, water leaks and general litter. I attach the updated schedule of issues, which has been sent to the Ward Councillor. We are still waiting for her feedback. Once we get feedback and action plans from the municipality, we will probably need to consider repairing some of these items ourselves. Please let me know if we need to add anything else to the schedule.

We are particularly concerned about how long it is taking for the municipality to finish resurfacing the pavements where they dug trenches many, many months ago. If we decide to repave that area again ourselves, tar surfacing is comparatively cheap, but it will be dug up again repeatedly every time the municipality needs to replace or repair something. It has therefore been suggested that we should instead reinstate the trenches with a narrow pathway made of brick paving, so that any future repair projects can simply lift the bricks and replace them again on completion. This will be more expensive in the short term, but it is a more sustainable long-term solution. The default option is to continue waiting for the municipality to do their job properly, however long that might take them. Please would the members share their views and suggestions.

We are still trying to have the two huge recycling bins removed from the pavement in Killarney Avenue, opposite Clicks. These bins were placed here by PikiTup, without any consultation with residents. They are very unsightly, they attract litter, and they are being used as urinals. In addition, since they are positioned in a no-stopping part of the street, residents who bring their

recycling material in by car are now incentivised to park illegally in that area while they unload and dump their materials. Mentone Court residents have been told by the PikiTup head office that these bins are probably the property of the Norwood Depot of PikiTup, but this has not yet been confirmed. We have asked the Ward Councillor to follow this up for us.



Meanwhile, please note that we have a well-serviced glass recycling bin in 5th Street, right at the end adjacent to the Mall property. This is a private sector project which has been working very well for many years. Except for glass, the "trolley people" will happily collect any recyclable material, especially cardboard and plastics. If you separate out your cardboard and plastics, and put them out on Tuesday alongside your garbage, the "trolley people" will ensure it is successfully recycled. This opportunity will also help them to earn a modest income as well.

The illegal pavement hawkers continue to be an issue. In terms of the by-laws, no pavement in Killarney is wide enough to allow legal hawking. However the municipal parking area in 7th Street opposite Castlerosse has been used for years by illegal hawkers, because of the space and the substantial passing trade. It has been suggested to consider creating a legal hawking area in this parking lot, properly regulated and managed by the JMPD. However we obviously cannot be certain that the JMPD will manage this any better than they currently manage anything else, or that the hawkers themselves will abide by the regulations and restrictions. If this proposed "street market" goes wrong, it will have seriously negative impacts on the surrounding properties, and it might accelerate a further deterioration of the situation on other pavements in Killarney as well. We have had years of experience of the problems caused by illegal traders at the illegal taxi rank in 1st Street, and of the abject lack of law enforcement which JMPD has provided so far.

The response from residents to this suggestion so far has been quite negative, based on the negative experience of hawkers generally not complying with regulations which don't suit them, and the negative experience of JMPD being generally unwilling to enforce these by-laws and

regulations. Private-sector security companies have no authority out on a public street, and they will not be able to enforce any by-laws in this regard either. This suggestion will require substantial formal consultation with all the affected residents before any decisions can be made.

We receive regular queries about the homeless people who live on the motorway embankments. As has been communicated many times before, the municipality is well aware of this problem. However the municipality is not allowed to remove people from their homes, however illegal those homes may be, unless the municipality can provide those people with decent alternative accommodation. At present, the Johannesburg municipality does not have any decent alternative accommodation to offer.

The water interruptions are likely to be "normal" for the next few years, as the politicians fight among themselves at the expense of service delivery to citizens. You can protect yourself to an extent by using 2-litre cold-drink bottles - fill them with tap water, and store them under the bed like a wine cellar. Over time you will quickly accumulate a substantial buffer supply. If you have a bit of space in a courtyard or balcony, you can obtain a "slimline" JOJO tank. These take up very little space, can hold around a thousand litres of tap water, and can cost around R2000 (depending on size and supplier). A good plumber can hook up a tap-water supply to ensure that the tanks are automatically refilled whenever the tap water does become available again.



For all municipal service delivery issues, including potholes, pavements, Pikitup, electricity and water issues, you can contact the municipal Call Centre on 0860 562 874 to have your concerns forwarded to the relevant operational departments. Please would everybody keep on reporting these issues, and always ask them for a reference number. Please also take photographs of the potholes and/or damaged pavements etc where you can, because the municipality seems to respond slightly faster when we include photos to support our complaints.

The vegetation in the park is growing nicely, although the heat is tough on certain types of plants. City Parks has assured us that the grass-cutting is supposed to happen twice a month, provided the weather does not disrupt that process. Before the current extended heat wave, we did have an extended period of city-wide rain, which messed up the grass-cutting schedules totally.

At the December public NKRA meeting it was resolved to obtain two cubic meters of fresh sand to top up and refresh the playground in the park, as well as some antimicrobial salt to make the sand safer for small children. This project has been publicised repeatedly to member buildings and other residents for public comment. The supplier had problems getting started in January, but the delivery of the sand is now booked for Thursday 2 February. The sand cannot be delivered into the park, because of the size of their truck, and so it will be dumped on the pavement in 2nd Avenue. Please could some nearby buildings assist Nolicent on Thursday to move the sand inside using wheelbarrows, because we hope to get rain this coming week, and if that fine sand lies on that pavement for too long it will wash away.

Schindler's Attorneys are moving forward very slowly with our sewerage class action lawsuit. We had hoped for some finality in early 2023, but it seems that it is going to take quite a bit longer.

The owners of the Killarney Mall have confirmed that they will be building a taxi facility on their premises, but that the project will take more than a year to complete. No specific timelines are available yet at this stage. However the Hillbrow Community Policing Forum, of which we are a member, is assisting us to put pressure on the Mall to rectify the resultant problems.

The invoices for the 2023 financial year will be sent out at the end of February 2023, and we hope that most of our buildings will continue to support us. We anticipate that we will probably need to repair some potholes and pavements ourselves, and we will need as much funding as possible.

Please would the NKRA members give us your feedback on the various issues described above? We are happy to receive photos of any interesting things around our area, which we might include in future newsletters. We also welcome all suggestions from all residents, on all issues.

Our next virtual meeting will be held at 18h30 on Wednesday 15 February 2023.

Greetings to all, keep well, and keep safe. 😊

Wayne Ford



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