

Rooiels Ratepayers Association

Chairperson's Report 2021

Hilgard Müller

### **Where shall I begin?**

Yes, it was a difficult year. Certainly not what I planned it to be! Covid-19 created havoc with our personal lives, our neighbourhood structure and fabric and our working lives and income. We had to say goodbye to loved ones, others retired to a more suitable place, others got stuck in overseas countries, ran out of water on numerous occasions, load shedding didn't help, had a horrible spate of burning and looting, but we did beat the British and Irish Lions and we also had a record amount of new people settling in Rooiels – calling our precious town – home!

We settled in Rooiels in 1994, or half settled if you want, and quickly realised that the people of Rooiels have more viewpoints than inhabitants. And depending (maybe on the wind), these opinions sometimes change from day to day.

But I am a strong believer that if you are a positive human being, you look for the opportunities, you'll find opportunities. If you are negative, you just see problems.

I furthermore believe if we hold fast to the Rooiels Vision we cannot go wrong. However, I feel that RERA and REC should revisit the Rooiels Vision as part of a Public Participation initiative. Therefore also listening to new voices in Rooiels.

So, how do I see Rooiels? I don't see Rooiels as an island. We are part of a Ward, a municipality, a Province and a Country. We should resist acting exclusively. We don't need the spotlight on us. We need to be a model Village for sustainable development, living in harmony with the natural and built environments. To advocate and participate in the conservation, protection and restoration of the natural landscapes and ecosystems in our area, actively promote disaster risk reduction strategies subscribing to the 17 UNESCO sustainable development goals, supporting national, provincial and district goals and priorities. For peace and stability it is necessary to support sustainable land use ensuring a fair and balanced distribution of land, water, biodiversity and other environmental resources between the various

competing claims, in order to secure human needs now and in the future, therefore advancing the rights, interests and wellbeing of all in Rooiels, as part of the Overstrand and Overberg Municipalities and Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve.

### **Functions and priorities**

RERA currently, in my opinion has three basic functions:

To be actively involved in all Ward activities on behalf of all Rooiels Ratepayers. We also need to understand that we are part of a Ward Committee and therefore also have to work towards advancing the interests of the ward as a whole.

To actively support our local community associations and organisations in dealing with the authorities. This is important, not only at Municipality level, but also at District and Provincial level.

To build good relationships and networks in the local, provincial and national context with government agencies as well as private entities to promote Rooiels interests.

### **Local government and the Ward system.**

We concluded the local government elections in November. We want to congratulate the new Mayor, Dr Rabie and Councillor Els as the new Ward 10 Councillor. Members of the Ward Committees were elected during a similar process thereafter. RERA was successfully elected as a member of the Ward 10 committee – thanks to all those who took the time to vote. Ward committees are regarded as the vehicle to promote good governance at local government level by being involved in planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects. And it's here that the IDP ( Integrated Development Plan) is most important.

Because of time constraints due to the relative late local elections, the process to formulate a new IDP will start early in the new year. As a community it's our duty to be involved. I feel it's also important to ensure that the United Nations Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are part of the IDP for the next 5 years.

The following key policies directing future management and development are important to note.

- Ensure that environmentally sensitive areas, significant cultural landscapes and heritage sites are protected and enhanced.
- Ensure the protection of prominent indigenous vegetation and the habitats of indigenous fauna.
- Ensure that development and growth is managed based on sustainable densification principles.
- Encourage and support the development of networks of open space that sustain and enhance eco-system functioning, connect fragments of vegetation, protect waterways and regenerate the natural environment.
- Encourage natural dune processes to occur where appropriate and pro-actively work towards reducing coastal erosion.
- Encourage the design and construction of new buildings and retrofitting of existing buildings based on low environmental impact design principles, the utilisation of energy efficient sources, the green economy and locally sourced materials.
- Ensure that facilities/amenities cater for the needs of all of the Overstrand's inhabitants including those reliant on public transport, the elderly and physically impaired.
- Promote urban, suburban and rural centres as the primary commercial areas within settlements and suppress and limit commercial development outside of these centres.
- Create a network of well-designed public spaces that support participation in social, recreational and cultural events.
- Ensure that tourism destinations are accessible, safe and attractive.
- Promote the intensification of the existing business node based on specific local urban design guidelines.
- Ensure an appropriate interface between the coast line and urban development.
- The functioning of the Rooiels River and its estuary environment as an ecological corridor and linear open space area should be protected and managed with conservation objectives in mind.
- The spatial integration of the residential areas, business area, coastline and nature areas should be promoted through the establishment of a

formalised network of footpaths that link these areas to be enjoyed by all.

- Sustainable land use that ensures a balanced distribution of land, water, biodiversity and other environmental resources between the various competing claims in order to secure human needs now and in the future.

The following are currently proposed as Ward 10 priorities.

1. Sustainable infrastructure and basic services (housing, health, roads, water, electricity, waste and sewage).
2. Meaningful jobs and sustainable development. Emphasis on locally based enterprise, business and labour are strongly requested.
3. Appropriate Protection services – secure, safe and cohesive communities
4. Outreach programmes to support marginalized women and children, and the elderly.
5. Emphasis on renewable resources.
6. Waste management and recycling.
7. Fire wise communities.

### **Basic services in Rooiels.**

The Overstrand Municipality has published a notice setting out particulars of a proposed long term debt to the amount of R150 m over the 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 financial years. This is for the purpose of Electricity, Water and Sewage projects. How much for Ward 10 is not known yet.

Our focus was and should continue to be the following:

#### **Water**

The installation of the new main water supply pipe has started and is due to finish in 2022. The water pipe replacement project finished their work in the Perspicua area, leaving the road in a bit of a mess. I understood that the pipes are quite shallow in certain areas. This will be reported to the municipality. A programme to replace the water pipes in the rest of Rooiels will be requested.

Maintaining and upgrading of our roads and storm water.

At the last Ward meeting all present felt that all roads and storm water channels need to be engineered to acceptable levels and standards. Paving of Anemone, Harveya, Bathers and possibly Rocklands roads were discussed and can be Ward specific projects. There is a growing feeling that issues around basic services should be part of Ward specific projects.

#### Electricity

This is an issue that will not be easily solved. Individual solar alternatives are possibly the best solution to these interruptions.

Ward specific projects. The following are already approved for finalization before June 2022.

Paving. R150 000 for the paving of Anemone road.

Storm water channels specifically ERF (110/ 122), (271), (286/ 287-233/233)

#### **Zoning, constitution and communication.**

According to the Overstrand Municipality 496 building projects to the value of R340 m were approved in the Hangklip Kleinmond area during the last financial year. (Betty Bay R164 m, Kleinmond R75 m, Pringle Bay R62 m , Rooiels R11,1 m). I somehow predict this only to be the start to a lot more development. In this regard RERA followed the directive raised at the 2020 AGM and consulted members on 2 projects, namely ERF 141 – the proposed distillery as well as the Glen Craig rezoning application and responded according to the wishes of the respondents. Note that the opinion of all property owners was taken into account when determining the response, not only those of paid up members.

The RECOZ was finalized largely through work done by David and Eldie and circulated for commentary in August. There were only 2 comments received – (perhaps because of the disunity in the community ?) – and as such the committee felt it wasn't appropriate to forward this to the municipality also bearing in mind the upcoming municipal local elections that were due at that time. Given the new amount of owners in Rooiels it's also perhaps fitting to have another public participation event – again a decision for the new committee.

It is always difficult to create a balanced communication – in the year we have been told that we communicate too much as well as too little. In order to promote better continuity we have created a profile for Rooiels on mailchimp and have worked at refining the mailing list over time. In the year we sent out 21 campaigns and currently have 273 people on record who receive these mails. In addition items of interest were posted on both RECA (205 members) and VP (185 members)

A project was kicked off to update the website and a few meetings were held. A content audit was done and a style sheet drawn up with an indication of what the pages should look like and what content should be where. Next step for the 2022 committee would be to evaluate the work done and look to implementing it. Thanks to Kay, Martie, Pierre and Charlie for the time taken in this. An attempt was made in the interim to tidy up the RERA and REC pages and put things in a different order. In addition 34 copies of the Breeze were copied and transferred into PDF format and uploaded onto the website to be accessible to all – the oldest done in 1996 !

Constitution. Following on the request at the April AGM, a sub committee was formed to redraft the RERA constitution. Great input was given by Izak, David, Mark and Peter. Allison then used the input to draft a new constitution for commentary. While there was some constructive feedback given, some of the feedback was less than helpful and it was decided as well to hand this over to the new committee for completion.

### **Community networking and support**

RERA also actively supported and fostered close working relationships with our local community associations and organisations in dealing with the authorities.

**Rooiels Conservancy (REC).** REC and RERA continued their close working relationship. This was especially evident in working on the Rooiels Corridor, the wheelchair friendly pathway, and numerous requests to give feedback on possible environmental issues. RERA therefore also wish to congratulate the REC team with an excellent report and hard work during the year.

**Rooiels Security Association (RESA).** Jointly RERA and RESA continued to be part of the Kleinmond Community Police Forum. We are part of the Public Camera system initiative (especially number plate recognition cameras on the R44) to ensure better security in the area as a whole.

Although we are relative crime free, we need to support RESA in their efforts to make our Village safe. Thanks to RESA in keeping us safe.

We are also currently investigating a First Responder Initiative in cooperation with Pringle Bay. This is especially important to reduce the time for medical assistance during an emergency.

**Rooiels Boat Club.** RERA want to thank the Boat club for the Pink Buoy initiative supporting the NRSI and our general safety. A special word of gratitude goes to the Böltmann's for their heroic saving of two fishermen that got washed off the rocks. You made us proud. We also want to thank the Boat club for their generous donations towards funding of the Breeze and our Fire First responder initiative.

### **Outreach.**

One thing that gave me great happiness this year, is the joy we brought to the disadvantaged children of our area and particularly Kleinmond Child Welfare. This was done through the hard work and the dedication of a group of dedicated Rooiels people and through the Rooiels Outreach Programme. The Outreach Initiative came into existence in March 2020 and the work was continued in 2021. Throughout the various lockdowns, those in need in the village were assisted with food parcels and clothing. This assistance was extended out to other communities in neighbouring towns. The Overstrand Municipality continues to encourage outreach assistance.

During the year the following were the major initiatives done

- The Mandela box and library are ongoing
- Rory Williams (Erf 333), on hearing about the Outreach initiatives, made contact with the Lego Group who kindly donated several boxes of Lego for the children and Lego training for school teachers involved with Kleinmond Child Welfare. The teachers who received Lego training during the year are amazed

at the educational opportunities and have implemented their newly learnt skills to great benefit of the children

- Immune boosters were provided to all the children at child welfare after one of the children tested positive for Covid
- A Santa shoebox project was run and over R7000 donated towards it, supported by many Rooielsers. It led to 26 children in the Overstrand Youth Care centre receiving a Christmas backpack filled with clothing, shoes, toiletries, books, fun things and sweets.
- A biscuit bake was done by ladies in Rooiels, and Christmas packs of biscuits were distributed to Brigadoon, Kleinmond clinic, KAWS, the R44 maintenance team and the engineers office in Kleinmond for the honey sucker team.

Thanks to Fiona, Stephanie, Karen, Monique and Di who were the main organisers of the shoebox and bake, and to Ivan, Wolf and Fiona for the overall contribution to outreach.

### **To conclude**

RERA, actively supported the Rooiels Vision, I would like to thank all the Village volunteers who gave up a lot of their time to keep this Village special, especially the committee that have worked tirelessly to get things done. So it's then my sincere hope that all of you will have a meaningful year-end, and that we will enter 2022 with the necessary energy, passion and compassion to be an example to all.

**Something I read in the Pringle Bay Post by Sherry Anderson. Volunteers don't get paid because they are worthless, but because they are priceless!**