

RERA Report for 2022

The Rooiels Ratepayers Association this year has directed its energy at helping Rooiels to remain the same. This is not always easy! It is also really important sometimes to direct focus and energy to reduce turbulence and move the community into calmer waters. This has been what has underpinned the RERA efforts this year. We have also had volunteers who have generously given their time to assist us to clear the street signs and keep overgrowth along the roads under control. This means that we do not need to call in the Overstrand Municipality who may use contractors that are less sensitive and destroy the fynbos. The untamed road reserves are essential to our fynbos for reseedling and as habitat for the animals and insects. RERA would like to see Rooiels receiving its services from the Overstrand in ways that enhance the ecosystem value our village brings to the area. It supports the Overstrand Municipality to establish policies that provide services to ratepayers while enhancing biodiversity. This is important, for its own sake, and for the economy of the Overstrand.

MAKING SENSE OF THE EMPTY-ERVEN PLOT CLEARING POLICY

<https://rooiels.weebly.com/plot-clearing-policy-comments.html>

We have, along with our neighbouring ratepayers associations and conservation bodies, including the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve Company, been unsuccessful in preventing the adoption of a policy that will totally destroy the area: a policy that requires all empty erven to cut down and maintain their vegetation at 50cm. This will devastate the fynbos. The devastation to our ecosystem of removing much of the remaining proteaceae and other fynbos is hard to contemplate. We are in the process of engaging with the legal division in the Overstrand Municipality and are hoping that they agree to remove that provision in the policy before it is implemented. If they do not make that amendment, we will be calling on all Rooiels to assist in widely publicising the threat to the proteas, the buchu, the bietou, guarri bushes, and all the precious plants - even some of the larger ericas. It is almost beyond imagination to picture our roadsides and empty erven without any plants that grow more than 50cm high. If necessary we will have to take this policy to court. However, we sincerely hope that by the time this edition has been printed, that the crisis will have been averted and that sense has prevailed.

IDP AND BUDGET

The Ward Committees representing Wards 9 and 10 have been advised that they will submit a joint budget to the new plan. This past year has been much taken up with budget issues and we hope that in future the Ward Committees will have the opportunity to discuss and engage with the Municipality on other issues. You can read the submission we made for the IDP on the RERA news. And the Draft proposed budget input that has been submitted by Wards 9 and is on the Rooiels Ward Feedback on the website. Rooiels is included in the capital and maintenance budgets for roads, waterpipes and storm drains. We have asked for the Nature Reserve extension to be included and at the meeting on 25th October we are requesting budget for OM for support for education materials and processes for new ratepayers and also to support Rooiels initiative using eco information officers to engage with visitors in the CBD in the school holidays.

BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

RERA have worked closely with Pringle Bay Ratepayers association in responding to those developments that, while falling under Pringle Bay, will affect the broader area. RERA has always had the role of responding to advertised applications for changes to building lines and other title deed restrictions. In principle the RERA stand has always been against approving deviations from the Title Deeds. It is very difficult to justify turning down some applications and approving others. A very strong case is needed for exceptions to be considered. Rooiels has seen an influx of building this year. More than a dozen new houses or major renovations have been carried out this year. This has put pressure on resources and time. As soon as any infringements against title deeds or building regulations are noticed, or brought to our attention, we approach the individual or their builder. Most instances this year have been resolved. If it is not resolved this is then brought to the attention of the authorities. RERA does not enforce the law; it just draws attention to the authorities when there are breaches that are not resolved. The owner is normally given time by OM to address this and if they do not, the matter is then taken to court and fines are put in place. The unusual extension on top of Erf 84 is one example of action taken this year in response to members' requests and is presently at court.

WARD FEEDBACK MEETING AND PLANNING

At a meeting to provide Ward Feedback to Rooielsers in July, REC presented the proposal to extend full nature reserve protection to all the areas currently zoned for nature but not formally protected. Cape Nature has supported the application and once the process is started, formal public participation will be triggered. RERA presented the final draft of the Rooiels Conservancy Overlay Zone that was submitted formally to the Overstrand Municipality for consideration. This year the OM focus is on the new five-year Integrated Development Plan which will begin in July 2023 and we have asked them to please incorporate the RECOZ into the IDP. Also presented at the Ward Feedback were the Pringle and Betty's Bay proposal for a Hangklip Conservation Overlay Zone to help us keep dark night skies.

SERVICES, EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Water pipe replacement in southern Rooiels was successfully completed. The road repairs took much engagement given that the very limited and old equipment has to be shared with all our neighbours' dirt roads. We thank Mr. van Rhodie and his team for working with us over the year. We have requested that the new IDP prioritises equipment for the Kleinmond OM section especially in light of how much the villages have grown. We have also requested replacement of water pipes for other parts of Rooiels which are starting to see an upsurge in broken pipes. Public bins here have been maintained by volunteers and we have asked OM to include public bin maintenance and road sign refurbishing in their IDP budget. Thanks to all those who have been so generous with their time.

RERA and REC have been working closely together and have shared efforts and expenses on the cost of baboon information attendants with businesses in the Village centre over peak holiday periods. We will continue with these efforts over the Christmas school holidays. Thanks to Drummond Arms which employs their own attendant to support their patrons every weekend. We have also worked with Overstrand Municipality to erect their baboon information signs. The resident information

packs have been compiled and are distributed as we learn of new residents. This helps them settle in to the village and understand some of the challenges and opportunities of living here. More specific baboon small signs on locking cars are being obtained to alert visitors in the CBD supported by Save Cape Baboons.

The garden, on the northwest corner (opposite the circle, under the milkwoods), has rehabilitated well and is now looking good. We will start watering the planted CBD gardens again at the end of October. We have had response from the Provincial roads department that they are looking into traffic calming measures on the R44. All these things take multiple contact efforts. We were less successful in getting the Overstrand Municipality to put in place a system to ensure that all prospective and new ratepayers are advised of the particular challenges and opportunities of living in this area. But we will persist. At the recent public baboon meeting, the Mayor referred to the success of a system whereby new ratepayers sign a document that confirms their acceptance of local regulations and norms. She promised to help establish a similar system in the Overstrand that will inform new owners of the adaptations required for living in a Biosphere.

RERA has a representative on the Joint Operations Committee (JOCUM) and on the newly resuscitated Community Police Forum (CPF) which should help us to keep informed and to support RESA and the Police in securing the village.

COMMUNICATIONS

The RERA Exco meetings have been held as hybrid meetings and although most of us have attended in person, there have been times where some of us have dialled in. A new comprehensive communications infrastructure for the Village has been established. Regular member and Ward feedback newsletters have been sent out to keep everyone in touch with what is happening. Please be sure to contact us with your email address, or join the Rooiels Communications WhatsApp group to get access. We hope that we can take advantage of the digital era and that those of you who may not be able to attend the AGM in person will join us on Zoom.

The AGM will be held at 1000 on Friday 30th December in the Pringle Bay Hall. A zoom link will be sent out by email and placed on the Rooiels Communications WhatsApp.

We welcome all Rooiels ratepayers to join RERA – you can email lera@rooiels.org.za or check on the website for details.

The RERA EXCO would like to thank all Rooielsers including REC, RESA and Rooiels Outreach for their assistance and support this year and for protecting us, our ecosystem and our community.

We wish you all every joy over the holidays and best wishes for 2023.