

Reaction regarding Tent City

AFTER the article published in the CHRONICLE / COURIER about the Tent City being erected at the recreation centre there has been an outcry from the public voicing their concerns regarding Tent City.

Ward councillor Paul Smit, was approached for comment on the issue and he stated the following: "I was approached by the 2010 Office from the City on April 23 and was informed by them that a Tent City was planned for the Klipriviersberg Recreation Centre in Kibler Park. I requested that a Public meeting be called to inform the affected residents; this meeting was held on April 28 where the residents were informed that this was to go ahead. Concerns raised by myself and the residents were ones of noise that could affect the residents and the Nature Reserve. Subsequent meetings have been held with council departments and SAPS. I don't believe that Public participation took place in the correct form as the attitude of the 2010 office is one of 'it's been decided and you must accept it'. This is not what is meant by public participation. I can assure residents that I will deal with any issues that arise there, no matter what time of the day."

Andrew Barker, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Klipriviersberg Conservancy was approached to voice his opinion regarding Tent City: "We recognise that the setting for the visitors should provide them with a wonderful opportunity to experience the unique natural environment of the South of Johannesburg. However, it is of

critical importance that the required processes have been followed and permissions obtained to address the use of the area and associated health and safety requirements to ensure that the facility is properly serviced and managed to minimise the impact on the surrounding community and adjacent Nature Reserve."

In response to residents voicing their concern, Mr Barry Mackay of Tent City Johannesburg 2010 gave the following assurance: "We have had very meaningful discussions with Mr Clem Kourie, Chairman of the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve Association, on the presence of a temporary accommodation facility. It is agreed that all aspects of proper respect for conservancy issues will be followed and the Association has kindly agreed to provide guided walks through the Nature Reserve for our overseas visitors. In addition Mr Glen Martin has indicated that horse riding will also be available to guests. A further meeting is scheduled with Mr Bishop Ngobeli from City Parks, who is ultimately responsible for the area, to again discuss fire and safety matters. You will notice that the grass at the Recreation Centre has been cut for the first time in many months and that a fire-break is being created.

"On the matter of noise pollution we have already met with residents in the immediate vicinity of the Recreation Centre and assured them that all the bye-laws regarding noise levels will be imposed."