
RICHMOND HILL TALK

Proudly serving the community

Richmondhilltalk@gmail.com

September 2017 First Edition



A proud moment in 1897 when Sherlock Street's famous Bookender Row of houses were completed. To this day the Victorian houses are beautifully maintained.

“Richmond Hill with all its warts, should be high on the shopping list for any serious resident property owner “ - page 4

Historic character spoiled:

NO! TO ILLEGAL BUSINESSES

Jan de Klerk

Lately our suburb has experienced an influx of businesses and questionable practices on some properties. Many of these are blatant violations of municipality by-laws and in particular, violations pertaining to their zoning. Illegal Spaza Shops, Crèches, Restaurants etc. – the list is endless.

These operations are a threat to the historic character of our suburb and our infrastructure (water supply, sewerage, parking) was never designed to cope with such influx.

In addition, many of the illegal eateries are a cause of the vermin scourge that's been plaguing our suburb lately.

Most of these businesses have been reported to the municipal authorities and even to councilors without much action or success

In one case, 5 St Phillips Street, a Spaza Shop has been operating for more than 2 years. Many complaints, many months and many a promise later, Council finally declined the shop's application and its appeal at the end of March

2017. However, at time of this writing the illegal shop is still operating, with knowledge (consent?) of both our Councilors. The apparent reason for inaction is a lack of resources. However, our latest tariff increases were approved at a Council meeting of 26 May 2017 and implemented on 1 July 2017 – a little more than a month later. No problem with resources.

However, despite this lack of interest from our municipality, residents are asked to please report suspected business activities, to the SRA office where there is a consolidated list which is referred to the incumbents at the municipality on a monthly basis.

A map with markers indicating the approximate properties that have been reported for investigation is available. Not all of these properties are illegal usage per se, but these need to be investigated by the authorities for compliance, along with many others.

Report illegal businesses at the SRA Office at 061 4276431 or send an email to RichmondhillsRA@gmail.com and basjandeklerk@gmail.com

Life's greatest gift is a...



...safe sense of **Community** in the place where you live.

In order to achieve this, certain rules are necessary:



No overcrowding. Greedy landlords break up homes into bedsits and rent it to multiple inhabitants, causing blocked drains, disease (even tuberculosis), degradation and filth.



No 'crime or rat magnets'. Social experiments have proven that filth attracts vermin like criminals and rats. Place rubbish bags only out on the removal days or face a steep fine.



No more ruining of lives. Drug dealers cause ruined lives and crime entering the area where they operate. Take photographs of drug dealing & email it to richmondhillsRA@gmail.com



Respect brings peace, thus no revving of motorcycles and cars, party noise after 22:00, and the use of loudspeakers in the churches around houses.



Report all suspect actions to the SRA Crime Hotline at 0849535561 and report ALL criminal incidents (even petty theft) to the police at 10111



Illegal businesses bleed community life out of residential areas, whether it's a legal firm or a spaza shop. Report it to richmondhillsRA@gmail.com

Meet the SRA directors

KEVIN SLATTERY: RESPECT IS THE BOTTOM LINE

In this first edition of Richmond Hill Forum, we ask **Kevin Slattery**, one of the directors of the Richmond Hill Special Rates Area (SRA) a few questions:

Why do you love living in Richmond Hill?

Because it's a vibey trendy suburb - like De Waterkant in Cape Town. It is a historical suburb, centrally situated with a mixed used of residential, commercial and business.

Your advice to a potential property buyer in the Hill?

If it's for a business, make sure of its correct zoning and / or that it is within the approved landscape/spatial development framework. If it's for residential, I will tell them it will be value for money.

Your occupation? I'm a commercial property broker.

What's your job description as director? There is no separate job description. All the directors work together to, amongst others, oversee and implement the approved SRA business plan that was agreed with the municipality

together with the other directors, to maintain the financial stability and manage the staff, liaison with Humewood police as well as interaction with the council as well as community meetings .

Your personal life? My wife of 10 years is Zhan. I have two grownup children and two grandchildren...and five cats!

Are you a gardener ?

I like gardening. I don't have a vegetable garden, but I have a good producing avo tree and this tree, as well as my wife and five cats, take up all my love and energy!

Your message to the Richmond Hillers?

We live in such a beautiful suburb—respect it, respect one another. Respect the business and or residential zonings and don't deface any of the historical buildings you might own.



Meet the patrollers:

ROBERT BREWERS: IT STARTED WITH A BURGLARY

Immediately after the brick crashed through his lounge window, Robert Brewers shouted for help because he knew that house robbers have struck. Nobody responded to his call , so he decided on a citizen's arrest and counter attacked. When they fled, he jumped in his car and followed them, but they escaped.



This incident, eight years ago, made Robert decide to combat crime on a full time basis and he joined the Hill's Neighborhood watch. He was the first patrol officer to be employed by the newly formed Richmond Hill SRA.

He knows every kink and corner, as well as the criminal hot spots. Drugs, he emphasizes, is the biggest cause for crime in the area.

"Nowadays the dealers also accept stolen goods as payment for drugs. A heroine-ring (circular tube) sells for R30. An addict will do anything to be able to pay for this fix—even up to three times a day. Open garage doors and articles left in cars will draw the petty thieves who need money for their next fix," he warns.

Robert lives with his wife Sarah and two sons in Richmond Hill. For him it was love at first sight when he moved into the Hill about ten years ago. "The people here are involved with each others lives without being interfering. To me, this is what community is all about," he said.

RICHMOND HILL: THE PLACE FOR PROPERTY INVESTORS

Jan de Klerk

The suburb of Richmond Hill stepped into uncharted territory when the property owners adopted the Special Ratings Area (SRA) concept initiated by the MBDA.

Being the first in Port Elizabeth and a first in the Eastern Cape Province it was going to be trial and error exercise until a workable model for the Metro and one specifically suited for the suburb was carved out and applied. At the launching of the SRA property owners were promised an improved suburb with property prices increasing significantly. Recently however, the SRA came under a lot of criticism in particular in the media, for not being effective, for being a waste of time and money and even for being “useless”.

A few weeks ago I came across a “Property Guide” of 8/11/2006 and a “Property Junction” of 4/4/2014. I compared the movement of property values in Richmond Hill with other suburbs in comparable price brackets since 2006.

The comparison included Central, North End, another four suburbs and a few Northern areas—the latter in view of the vast amounts of money invested in formerly disadvantaged areas. Property 24 on the internet provided me with the latest data.

For comparison I used the asking price of 12 properties in each of the areas and worked on the median asking price – which I regard as more reliable than average prices. Richmond Hill has had the highest growth since 2006!

In fact, at 72% increase in prices in our suburb compared to 58% for the closest rival, only those who have not invested have reason to complain about their own lack of vision.

This study was not strictly scientific correct, but indicates a definite trend that cannot be ignored. It proves that Richmond Hill with all its warts, should be high on the shopping list for any serious resident property owner.

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HANDY CONTACT NUMBERS:

Richmond Hill SRA Office:

061 427 6431 /

email : RichmondhillsRA@gmail.com

Ward 5 Councillor’s office:

041 373 0028

Email: ward5@mandelametro.gov.za

Building inspector Richmond Hill:

Pietro Benini— 0798916103

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