

**28 November 2011**

Linbro Park Community Hall meeting

**Presentation by David Ingle (Seeff Properties) and Neil Fuller (Remax)**

*(Notes of meeting drafted by Tina Kroll, Trustee of the OAK AVENUE TRUST, 51 Oak Ave, Linbro Park A.H.)*

Both David and Neil are not townplanners themselves, but as property agents have had many years experience in townplanning and development. Both are stakeholders in Linbro Park.

The presentation was put together from input received from 5 to 6 townplanners.

The **UDF** (Urban Development Framework) plan was approved by Joburg City on 12 October 2011. Its "template" for development is valid for 5 years.

This UDF has given Linbro clarity as to the way forward and provides a very workable plan for the future.

Many stakeholders are busy behind the scenes.

Approx 80 to 100 subdivision- and rezoning applications are presently underway (applications for township rezoning), which is an amount equal to 40% of available stands in Linbro.

There is no need for concern, instead excitement about the future.

Developers have expressed interest and have bought properties.

Quote from a townplanners' meeting attended by Flo K: "Linbro Park is Johannesburg's best kept secret".

Properties in the center of Linbro Park (yellow on the map) are earmarked for development of 150 residential dwelling units per hectare, the highest density granted in Johannesburg.

Road layouts have been approved and are very acceptable:

The **K113**, an extension of Van Riebeeck Road coming from Edenvale, should be completed within 18 - 24 months. It crosses the **PWV3 (Peace St or M54)** which runs west to east from the London Road / N3 intersection, and between Linbro's southern border with **Longmeadow Business Park**. The **K113** is planned along Linbro's eastern border with Modderfontein, then to the northern end of Linbro. It will be a wide road, with 3 lanes in both directions and an island between (like William Nicol or Witkoppen). This road may change (be downgraded) to a 2 lane road for technical reasons, if Heartland get their proposal accepted. But this should not affect the build timeframes.

Joburg's intention of establishing "affordable housing" (one step up from "low-cost housing") at Linbro's south-eastern border (**Westlake**), has been abandoned. Instead Heartland made a deal with Joburg to provide a larger, more suitable site at Klipfontein View, which is already being developed (some distance from Linbro).

On Linbro's eastern border, Heartland is developing **Lakeside Village**, with its **Centenary Road** extending into Linbro Park's **Oak Avenue**. The town centre of Modderfontein will be established north and east of Oak Avenue. It is one of the last developments and should commence within 4 to 5 years. Its character potentially mirrors that of Rosebank, a First World City Scape.

Heartland has obtained rights to build a **Gautrain Station** close to **Linbro's north eastern border**. This is a most exciting development, creating the possibility of an enormous amount of development around Linbro Park. Options will unfold.

In the meantime the Linbro Park community should ensure clean streets and a crime free environment, making the area desirable for investment.

Some property owners along the north of Linbro Park have been approached by Gautrain for further expropriation, in order to establish more space for a future expansion of the rail link to Rosebank and beyond.

A circle node is planned at the junction from Oak Avenue into Clulee Road and then west along 3rd Avenue. The proposed road configuration is better than a right turn into Clulee (the alternative) and then a left turn into 3rd Ave, as this would create traffic-flow problems. The new route will cut right through some properties. Joburg Roads should not expropriate those properties affected, instead make the road part of the future development requirement. The land holders affected here will not be penalised, instead find themselves in a potential retail node with good prospects for high future value. Objections to this development will be reviewed. The UDF is not set in stone and is 'tweakable'.

3rd Avenue crossing over the dump and over the N3 into Alexandra, will not happen for the foreseeable future, if ever.

Travelling by car has become expensive. The housing development of Alexandra next to the Gautrain Station, in the north-western pocket next to and south of the N3/Marlboro intersection, consists of tiny houses which have already risen in value immensely, because there is a great need for small houses within easy access to transport and infrastructure etc., where people can live, work, shop and entertain within a 5km radius of their homes. This small settlement is expected to become the Yuppie accommodation of the future, a springboard for future homeowners intending to upgrade into Linbro Park and Modderfontein.

Should we Linbro Park property owners establish our townships?

If you want to sell, apply for rights, but that process takes a long time.

The reality is that a developer will pay 30 - 40% less for a property that does not have 'rights'.

From a practical point of view, realtors will tell agricultural landowners: "I do not sell farms".

Banks will grant a 60% bond ... if you are lucky ...

For those interested in an exit strategy: It takes 1 to 2 years to get rights and services.

(Note by Tina K: according to info received earlier from David I, the initial part of the process currently costs from R60,000).

Henry Nathanson, a very competent townplanner, was quoted as having predicted that LP's future will not consist of little houses, but high rise buildings, because the land is too expensive for small developments.

The current proposed Joburg development framework allows for up to 50% - 60% ground floor coverage on a 1,6 hectare stand. There has been an application for a 10 storey building (for residential development). Rumour has it that Joburg will grant them 8 storeys.

If development takes place next to your own property, be sure to stay in direct one-on-one contact with the developer. It is his job to keep in touch with you, in and out of office hours. Development on your neighbouring property increases the value of your own property through e.g. better security,

walls or fencing being erected at the developers' cost.

Linbro property prices are currently between R2,000,000 and R8,000,000 - depending on circumstances (e.g. hurried sale at auction) and location. Realistically prices start at 3 - 3,5 million Rand.

As soon as a township is proclaimed, the developer has to pay increased rates and taxes accordingly. For this reason developers often stop the process just before completion and extend the proclamation to a time when they want to start development. A potential developer will only begin developing if he is certain of sales. Banks want proof of 80% sales before they loan money for development.

World trend is currently toward 40 to 60 sq m houses = small units high volume housing.

Banks are in favour of high density housing developments. There are a lot of incentives and finance for this kind of development and sales have picked up in the last 12 months. Banks are reluctant to currently give finance for development of 500 sq m stands (or larger) because bigger properties don't sell easily.

Selling prices of Linbro's internal properties (yellow on map, high density) currently stand at 3 to 5 million Rand, depending on location.

There are approximately 240 homeowners in Linbro Park.

A suggestion from the floor: The whole of Linbro should be zoned commercial.

Response: Heartlands development to the east of Linbro incorporates a large amount of commercial property. In and around Linbro there is enough commercial and industrial land available already. Because the UDF for Linbro Park has been officially accepted, the current plan will remain in force for the next 5 years, after which time an application for commercial-only can be reviewed. Along 3rd Road there are a number of properties that have rights already.

The London Road entrance into Linbro Park will eventually be closed off. Traffic will continue right, into the PWV3 (Peace Str / M54) with access into Linbro through the new Clulee Road. The section turning left, will stay (?). No accurate info on this subject is available at present. Intaprop might be in a position to supply more information.

Jenny N: It is currently still a buyers' market.

(Townplanner for Joburg City ...?) Neels Letter's biggest challenge at this time is still the lack of services. There are currently potential services available for roughly 50% of Linbro development. (Note by Tina K: as yet no sewerage connection east of 1st Road).

Neels is the driving force in Joburg and said years ago already: "... if Eskom don't supply electricity, then we will get power via Egoli Gas." Gas cuts the cost of electricity by 30 - 50%

(note by David I: Reports we have, suggest this may still not be practical, but availability of Electricity is not too far away with Kusile and Medupi coming onstream from 2013)

Waterfall Estate made a deal with Sasol.

Heartland has a sewerage collection point for plugging into.

Joao A: Applications for services have been made mostly by properties north and south-east. Properties along the west of Linbro should be encouraged to submit applications.

It is the responsibility of Linbro residents and property owners to raise the value of their land by putting a positive stamp on Linbro.

It is the responsibility of Johannesburg City to supply services where possible.

Linbro will develop initially mostly along its borders and where services are easily available, because development usually happens close to where development is already underway. There are already development nodes on Linbro's northern and southern borders.

Once again: Linbro has to ensure that the area is desirable for investment. There ideally needs to be one voice out of Linbro.

Again the suggestion of supporting the C.I.D. (City Improvement District) came up. Jimmy T: Stage One alone will cost Linbro R80,000. It will be easier to implement the C.I.D. if the zoning of all the properties falls into one category, instead of residential-commercial-retail, which necessitates different C.I.D's according to precinct.

There are at present several developers in LP.

3rd Road is a buffer against the Dump. Joburg is cash strapped and city parks are not being maintained. We cannot rely on Joburg for easy funding. Neels Letter and ARP have plans for low cost housing along 3rd road. However, there is already retail-commercial zoning happening in 3rd Road. Those owners in all likelihood won't sell.

Every township development has to pay a % to "Parks" or take some land off development and establish a park.

Question by Flo K: "... properties within the red zoning on the map?"

Response: Very early to say. Centenary Road will merge into Oak Ave (red zone) and will become similar to Oxford Road in Rosebank, or Parkhurst or even like the Woodmead retail node.

Big shops, warehouses, shopping malls, blocks of offices, restaurants, etc. Very valuable land. There is presently a developer looking for a **50,000 sq m** piece of ground for development in Linbro, which equals 5 to 6 Linbro properties.

F.A.R. (maximum amount of buildable space) of red zone is 0.8

Minimum of 40% of land must be open. That leaves around **14,000 sq m** of developable space.

Townplanner Desmond Sweke was quoted as saying: "Upscale (rezone) your property in order to lift the price of the land."

Your land value increases if a 10 storey building goes up next to you.

Repetition: The road plan has been adopted, but not fixed. Joburg won't expropriate. The Council will give retail rights to the properties where the road goes through, in order to compensate landowners.

If part of your land is used for roads, you will not lose the physical value of the F.A.R. (buildable space) but the townplanner has to apply for it.

Final Word: Linbro Park has to stand together and speak with one voice.