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The Interface between the Middle-Class Neighbourhood and the Local State: A Case Study of the Melville Precinct Plan, Johannesburg

By

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A Research Report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. MUS, Research Methods, ARPL7040A, Supervisor, Prof Philip Harrison

To my wife, Marina for her undying love and support,
my kids for keeping me inspired.

In loving memory of Christo Bothes.

Abbreviations

ANC - African National Congress
COF - Corridors of Freedom
COJ - City of Johannesburg
DA - Democratic Alliance
IDP - Integrated Development Plan
JDA - Johannesburg Development Agency
MPP - Melville Precinct Plan
MRA - Melville Residents Association
MSI - Melville Security Initiative
RAU - Rand Afrikaans University
SABC - South African Broadcasting Corporation
SAF -Strategic Area Framework
SDF - Spatial Development Framework

Key words/phrases

political discursive process, political culture, class inequalities, policy, liberal political theory, democratic theory, civil society activists, community participation, community engagement/ citizen participation, middle class collective action, community-based politics

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction



Figure 1: Stakeholders at the Melville Precinct Plan Community Engagement Session, 2017

"This will not be another Hillbrow!"

This slogan above was touted by a Melville resident who was also a Melville Residents Association (MRA) committee member during the Melville Precinct Plan (MPP) community participation workshop in 2017. The resident attempted to discredit the MPP project because he believed that a new vision for Melville would encourage undesirable densification. The MPP project was conducted as a participatory design – a dialogue between a middle-class community and the State that was commissioned by the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), a project implementation agency of the City of Johannesburg (COJ). The MPP forms part of a larger progressive regional project called the Corridors of Freedom (COF), an ambitious project initiated by the then-city mayor, Tau Parks. The COF intends to address Johannesburg's

fragmented post-apartheid city pattern and to transform the socio-spatial structure of the city (Harrison *et al.*, 2019). It is a new paradigm to create a new city vision of sustainability, efficiency and support for economies through concentrated nodes and corridors (*JDA Corridors of Freedom to Change City*, 2013).

Some of the terms used to describe this process that have become mainstream (Head, 2007; Cornwall, 2008; Ballard, 2008) in the last three decades include civic engagement, public participation and community engagement. The political discursive nature of communities on policies, sustainability and urban development has become synonymous with ideas of liberal states, democracy and equality. Since the democratic government came into power in 1994, citizen voices and broader inclusion, especially for the black poor who were previously economically disenfranchised, were constitutionally embedded, and have become an integral part of the political discourse. Ballard (2018:172) reminds us that South African community engagement is distinctive due to its unequal nature and that its participation inherently means delivery. However, the complexity of community participation has been the focus of scholarly debate (Arnstein, 1969; Akkerman, Ballard, 2008, Hajer and Grin, 2004; Fernandes, 2004; Innes and Booher, 2004; Harriss, 2007; Head, 2007; Zérah, 2007; Kamath and Vijayabaskar, 2009; Tunstall, 2016; He, 2021) due to the increased challenges present in our political, socio-cultural, historical and spatial context. There is a paradox in community participation for the intention of participation can broaden democracy, increased participation could expand inequality as Ballard (2008:169) points out how the eThekwini municipality in 2002 and 2003 successfully engaged ordinary citizens to develop their Integrated Development Plan (IDP). This is contrary to the shift in engagement in which the voices of the wealthier and the politically connected are more dominant than others and could erode democratic production.

It is because of this, that progressive social and urban geography theorists are using a critical lens to bring the area of community participation into sharp focus and are developing new approaches to thinking about this hotly debated topic in democratic theory. Furthermore, the engagement processes at the neighbourhood or precinct level are complex for both the State and middle-class communities. It is time-consuming and risky and requires careful negotiation between diverse stakeholders with varying degrees of ideals and values. In addition, a neighbourhood or precinct plan must be guided by over-arching spatial frameworks, policies

and approval processes. At the neighbourhood scale communities can make tangible decisions that shape the identity of the neighbourhood. This can be a contentious phase in urban development.

In this report, I explore the complexity of state-community engagement relationally. From the perspective of the State, engagement is part of the democratic discourse, it is legally required for planning, and makes practical sense for getting buy-in for the implementation of City visions. For communities or neighbourhoods, engagement has a lot to do with protecting interests. Faced with deteriorating infrastructure, for example, communities may use engagement to put pressure on the State to perform as it should. Engagement may also be a tactic to resist state intentions such as urban densification which is seen as threatening to local interests.

Community leaders facilitate engagement with the local State using different forms of engagement with the State, including cultivating relationships with State officials and making direct and public demands on the local State to deliver basic services. They represent the interests of the dominant social grouping within a neighbourhood which, in middle-class areas, is generally rate-paying homeowners.

However, a crucial part of effective urban development in a democratic State is the inclusion of other voices (Healey, 2009). On the other hand, the State must serve the people, and having a cooperative community deepens meaningful engagement and creates a sense of working and learning together to create a harmonious precinct, city and region. This study examines the State-community engagement of the MPP in 2017. It analyses roles and actions within political discursive processes such as the MPP. It further intends to understand how the two entities respond to and engage in effective urban development by mapping the MPP process, its objectives, ideals and development.

I am an architect, a lecturer at the University of Johannesburg and a resident of Melville. I was part of the architectural consultant team along with engineers, planners, economists and community liaison officers who facilitated the MPP. Functional neighbourhoods make liveable cities (Marinova and Hossain, 2014) and middle-class neighbourhoods are compromised and

threatened by a lack of State delivery or misalignment of their vision. I am interested in this subject because my participation in my neighbourhood directly affects the quality of my immediate environment and that of my family.

1.2 Problem Statement

Community engagement forms part of a larger body of democratic theory (Head, 2007) and has been a strong feature in developing liberal countries in the last 30 years. Ballard (2018:168) states that participation at the local level is it is not only a useful informative process about community needs, but also how the community would like those needs to be met. However, " community " is "notoriously vague and value-laden" (Head, 2007:441). Often used in grassroots applications, the term can be abused by the State, city officials, ward councillors and consultants to incentivise communities to participate and to create a contrived sense of harmony (Head, 2007:441) to meet their objectives, despite real differences in interests. Therefore, the term 'community' can be misleading because communities like Melville have diverse and competing interests. Melville is a multifaceted community of residents, institutions, businesses, sporting community, visitors to the area, and the displaced, young and old. They can often have "varying interests or varying levels of interest" (JDA Representative, 2022:0:10). It is optimistic to equate community with "harmony and cooperation" (Head, 2007:441).

According to some academics such as Head (2007:442), citizens tend to fall into two main categories: the elites who have attracted negative attention, versus active citizens "who participate in a range of policy or institutional settings" (2007:442). Some Melville community members are active in residency groups, security initiatives, social work, cleaning-up programmes, and so forth. Lathouras (2016) introduces us to the term "Critical Social Work" – a crucial approach to active citizenry engagement that "upholds traditional values and social order despite of inequities and injustice" (Lathouras, 2016:32). However, it is not always clear when activists are being elitists or not. When are individuals active because of their social concerns and when because of their interests in defending middle-class life against outsiders, for example? The phenomenon of using active citizenry as a vehicle to drive a particular urban culture and agenda to undermine democracy is one of the core preoccupations of this study.

In addition, the South African post-apartheid State finds itself in the precarious situation of being untrustworthy (JDA Representative 2022: 0:15:42) because of the approach to prior urban development projects, service delivery failures and corruption. This is a problem when trying to make good on progressive and democratic spatial transformation policies. The challenges of corruption, failing infrastructure and political factionalism aggravate citizens by portraying an agenda that is counter-productive to the broader ideals. City officials and voluntary community leaders work together in highly charged, low-trust, environments with community leaders engaging for narrow interests and State officials hamstrung by perceptions of incompetency and corruption. Participation processes can become conflictual, alternatively, they may be reduced to a tick-box exercise (Ward Councillor, 2022:0:15:10) without deep and meaningful engagement – a way of avoiding the difficult real issues.

1.3 Background

Melville is a predominantly middle-class neighbourhood 3 km from the Johannesburg city centre. It covers 1.73 km^2 and in 2011 (the latest available census) it had a population of 3 355 people of which more than half were white, with one-third black Africa, with an average age of 25 to 35 years. It contained 1,608 households, with an average of only 2.1 persons per household (*Stats SA*, 2022). It is a low-rise suburban neighbourhood with a rich mix of residential, business, schools, faith-based and other organisations and a porous street network. Apart from its residential areas, it has two business strips, the entertainment focussed 7^{th} Street, and mixed-activity Main Road. Melville borders both middle-class (Westdene and Auckland Park) and upper-class neighbourhoods (Westcliff). The area is bordered by significant national institutions such as the Universities of Johannesburg the Witwatersrand, and the South African Broadcasting Corporation. On two edges are main arterial access routes: Empire Road, which connects the CBD with a large township and the site of the COF project; and a major route to the sprawling northern suburbs. Melville sits adjacent to a geologically significant nature reserve often used for leisure, education and cultural practices. Due to its location, Melville is a prime site for urban development because it has access to prime local sites of importance.

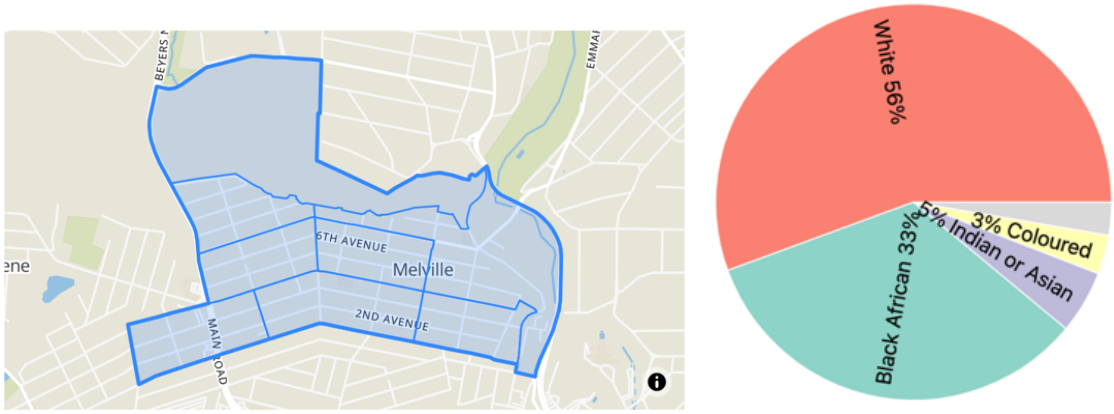


Figure 2: Melville's location and population (https://census2011.adrianfrith.com/place/798015091)

1.4 Rationale

Spatial transformation has been one of the main features of the post-1994 national government's agenda, and democratic rights mean that citizens have the freedom to voice their opinions and influence the process of making their cities. However, it is immensely complex and constrained (Harrison, *et al*., 2019:462). Civic engagement is a crucial part of the democratic repertoire. Since the post-1994 democratic elections, the constitution requires citizens' voices to be included in shaping their communities. It has become increasingly important to address the various levels of challenges experienced by different neighbourhoods. A lot of published urban geography research focuses on the challenges of lower-income communities and their relationship to the State in terms of a 'lack of' infrastructure. This research focuses on the effects of 'not having'. However, there is not a lot of research done specifically on the challenges of 'the haves', the functioning middle-class neighbourhood where the core challenges are concerned with safety, maintenance of existing infrastructure and the prevention of urban development. This case study intends to unpack the engagement of an active and mobilised middle-class community that seeks to maintain and protect their neighbourhood against failing services and 'negative transformation' of the neighbourhood due to 'living rough', student residences, the effects of businesses such as noise, and processes such as densification. This research also hopes to contribute towards an understanding of the role of spatial practitioners within neighbourhoods who are engaging the State through these processes. In the COF and the MPP not only were practitioners from the neighbourhood leading the projects, but they were also intricately involved in the process as stakeholders.

1.5 Objective

The objective of this research is to analyse and review local community activity engagement trends at the neighbourhood level. The intention is to develop a deeper understanding of the complex relationship dynamics between local State actors (officials and elected representatives) and middle-class Melville community members through a case study – the community participation project known as the MPP.

1.6 Research Questions

The main research question is: What is the nature of the engagements between the local State and community leaders in the neighbourhood of Melville, Johannesburg?

Sub-questions:

1. What community engagement platforms are undertaken by either the State or the neighbourhood to engage each other over effective urban development?
2. What are the real intentions of State and Community in engaging in participatory processes?
3. How efficient or helpful are these engagement platforms and what results do they yield?
4. What strategies do the State and communities undertake to achieve their real intentions?
5. What is the role of spatial planning in community participation?

1.8 Methodology

This research employed a mixture of empirical and non-normative qualitative research methods. Primary data collection focused on reflecting on interviews conducted with individuals involved in the MPP, including a JDA representative, the Ward Councillor and other stakeholders. The primary data includes my personal notes, emails and documents as a consultant of the project. The secondary data involves a survey and analysis of publicly available documentation such as literature reviews, newspaper articles, reports, meeting

minutes and government policy documents. The MPP project was also comprehensively documented by a videographer, which is a valuable source of data.

Researching the interface between the middle class and the State forms part of a larger body of work, but due to the scope set out by the institution for this thesis, the extent was cropped. Middle-class neighbourhoods in South Africa face a plethora of socio-economic, environmental and security challenges that can often culminate in either privatisation or decay of the urban environment. The Melville precinct itself has a long history of active engagement with the city including the proposal to pedestrianise 7th Street (Ndebele, 2010), the 27 Boxes development (Mason, 2013) and the Campus Square student residence housing project (MRA, 2016). The COF is a regional project that has a significant impact on the way that the Melville community relate to the city. Furthermore, the JDA Representative (2022; 0:11:54.730) stated that the MPP was one of the first community participation projects in Johannesburg and many lessons have been learnt. As a result, the JDA has developed a new range of toolsets and mediums to expand on their community participative methods. Therefore, the study of middle-class and State engagement has substantial capacity to inform our understanding of this work.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows how community participation that is guided by its policies is instituted at the neighbourhood scale. The MPP is not only a demonstration of how the State navigates challenges of process and democracy but also how the community through its invited and invented (Miraftab, 2004) spaces participates and guards against "looming vulnerabilities and practical opportunities" (Forester, 2008:447). Stakeholders use their professional skills and knowledge to plot a roadmap through the processes. They also rely on representative bodies to create a 'collective' such as the MRA or MSI. Spatial practitioners, academics and consultants also engage in public participation projects and provide a critical and useful voice of reason.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review intends to broaden our theoretical understanding of the community participation of middle-class civil society within the political and democratic theoretical context. Through empirical research, several authors (Arnstein, 1969; Akkerman, Hajer and Grin, 2004; Fernandes, 2004; Innes and Booher, 2004; Harriss, 2007; Head, 2007; Zérah, 2007; Kamath and Vijayabaskar, 2009; Tunstall, 2016; He, 2021) find that there is a positive step towards broadening democracy in newly established liberal countries as more communities become involved in participation concerned with the urban policy and restructuring. The literature reveals several trends relating to a new political 'elitist' culture that is posing a risk to the very objective of community participation. The new political culture is emerging within a specific social group known as the elite middle class located at the neighbourhood scale. This review will document how community participation is defined, its purpose, benefits, limitations and pitfalls. It will then review the middle class as a structural group and the motives for its emerging establishment. It will finally consider how the State and the middle-class elite are seen by each other, as well as the contradictions of the middle-class elite objectives.

Although there is a plethora of contemporary academics who have been theorising democracy in community participation since the 1990s, seminal theoretical literature dates to the late 1960s and early 1970s. The foundational work of Arnstein (1969) sets out the initial analysis of the community participation framework already highlighting the poignant issues of power, tokenism, and paternalism. Arnstein (1969) and Pateman (1970) briefly discuss the dynamics of decision-making the pitfalls of power and the exclusion of the poor. More recently, in the last three decades, many scholars like Fernandes (2004), Harriss (2007), Head (2007), Zérah (2007) and Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009) have developed the theory with most of the case studies emanating from Asian countries. As the case studies began to emerge in the late 2000s, we look to Fernandes (2004), Innes and Booher (2004), Harriss (2007), Zérah (2007) and Kamath and Viyayabaskar (2009) who have conducted in-depth case studies of third-world local-level democratic politics to understand the nuances of these new shifts in neighbourhood political culture.

2.2 Community Participation

Citizen-state community participation is becoming more prevalent at the local neighbourhood scale in liberal states, but there is not enough scholarly reflection on the cross-section of democracy at the local scale (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2008:3). The voices of tax-paying nationals have started to be included more often in urban decision-making processes since the 1990s (Head, 2007:441). As (Zérah, 2007:61) puts it, "Cities have become strategic places … and play a role in the reconfiguration of the territorialization process … the objectives of political and administrative decentralization as well as increased participation are pursued by national organizations and national governments" This means that cities are becoming key role players and agents for change in practices of democracy. This decentralisation progress funnels more power to local administrative structures, giving more power to people 'on the ground' who have previously been ignored (Zérah, 2007:61).

So, what is the reason for the increase in community participation? What is the State's interest in developing a more engaging deliberative dialogue with its citizens and stakeholders to make improved decisions about urban development in the last three decades? Head (2007:442) and Zérah (2007:61) state that there are three main reasons: firstly, there is an uptake of liberal qualities, tolerance and overall and general inclusion of others as society has liberalized over time (although noting recent regression with the rise of right-wing populism); secondly, due to global processes, there is an increase in and more direct access to information and communication with new ICT technologies facilitating the engagement between state and citizens; and finally, socio-environmental problems are becoming more complex, and it requires transdisciplinary knowledge and skills to solve them.

Harriss (2007:2716) offers contributions to thinking about the theory of democracy and its applications by stating that the term 'governance' is conceptually more far-reaching than the term 'government' … "and thinking about what is required for effective governance embraces arguments not only about the reform of institutions of government itself, but also about the possible role of market mechanisms in the efficient delivery of services, and about community deliberation and action as a means whereby people may develop the 'voice' that they need in order to improve the accountability and the efficiency of governance". He goes on to develop foundational ways of thinking about civic engagement by stating that community discursive

dialogues and their applications … "in the governance agenda are bound up with ideas about the importance of organisation in 'civil society' …" He argues that participation is a significant facet of empowerment – both as an application in urban development and as an stand-alone concept (Harriss, 2007:2716). Harriss develops a helpful contribution centred around the concept of empowerment. To be conscious is to be aware – aware of the transactional relationship. "The process of conscientization involves identifying contradictions in experience through dialogue and becoming part of the process of changing the world … It is through such a process of the transformation of individual selves – their empowerment, or liberation from 'disempowerment' – that society will be transformed" (Harriss, 2007:2716).

Table 1. Levels of public participation and empowerment

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	*Public participation goal* To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	*Public participation goal* To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	*Public participation goal* To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	*Public participation goal* To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public We will keep you informed.	*Promise to the public* We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	*Promise to the public* We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	*Promise to the public* We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	*Promise to the public* We will implement what you decide.
Example techniques to consider Fact sheets Web sites Open houses	*Example techniques to consider* Public comment Focus groups Surveys Public meetings	*Example techniques to consider* Workshops Deliberative polling	*Example techniques to consider* Citizen advisory committees Consensus-building Participatory decision making	*Example techniques to consider* Citizens' juries Ballots Delegated decisions

Source: International Association for Public Participation (2005). Copyright IAP2, all rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.

Figure 3: Structured engagement, Head (2017:445)

However, Head (2007:441) guards against the terminology of 'community', suggesting that the term indicates a phoney and deceptive impression of unity, collaboration, and inclusivity and that it does not acknowledge the diversity of that group. The term can often be used in ominous ways to gain buy-in or trust. He echoes the assertion by Mendes (2018:211) that the term 'community' has its limitations because the term is "false and misleading" and that it creates a false "sense of identity, harmony, cooperation and inclusiveness". It ignores economic, cultural, and social differences. Furthermore, the term is often used to manipulate the State (Head:441). Head quotes several scholars such as Adams and Hess (2001) and (Reddel and Woolcock, 2004) who cite a variety of community typologies. A pertinent aspect of the establishment of problematic abuse of the term community is that it is often

implemented in spaces where communities are in development, i.e., at a grassroots level (Head, 1997:442).

2.3 Benefits of Community Participation

In the pursuit of understanding the benefits of community participation, its main objective is to increase democracy – "participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy" (Arnstein, 1969:216). Head (2007:441) states that one of the reasons that liberal states transitioned into democratic ideology was to avoid the failures of communism. He goes on to state that the purpose of community participation is "building institutional bridges", and that "the importance of building effective capacity for citizens and all non-government organisations (NGOs) to participate is emphasised" Head (2007:441). Zérah (2007:63) further unpacks the advantages into three criteria. She states that its role is firstly to expand social relationships, secondly, to strive for better policies, and finally, to expand democracy (Zérah, 2007:63). Bénit-Gbaffou (2008:3) argues that there is "greater potential to enhance participatory democracy than do wider scales of government" because of the direct relationship between the State and its citizens and accountability to engage and to deliver. It has therefore been highlighted in various ways that the existence of the dialogue between the state and its citizens is crucial to democracy. It has a direct impact on the everyday experience of stakeholders to consult with them on urban development matters about them, their neighbourhoods, their streets, and their homes.

Community participation offers a variety of modes of community engagement through a "political discursive process" (Fernandes, 2004:2416) to curate the urban environment. Head (2007:4423) sees community participation as being comprised of a triangulated relationship, i.e. government, business and citizens. Furthermore, if community participation is a significant tool to solve complex social, infrastructure and capacity problems, this relationship needs to take a variety of forms. Head (2007:4423) considers three main types of engagement: firstly, state-led where the government either extracts information from citizens, or delegates and empowers groups and experts; secondly, citizen-led in the form of protests, lobbying or self-articulated projects; and finally, iterative process that occurs over time with various stakeholders and is often associated with generating new urban information and knowledge

through dialogue. According to most scholars, a by-product of the latter process is the development of a 'community' and all parties go through a learning process. Harriss (2007:2716) articulates that "… arguments about community deliberation and action in the governance agenda are bound up with ideas about the importance of organisation in 'civil society', and the potential of participation by citizens in and through such organisations for improving the functioning of political institutions and of the state. 'Participation' in this sense is seen as an important aspect of the 'empowerment' of people which is sought both as a means to development and as an objective in itself". Harris argues that community deliberation is synonymous with the arrangement of civil society (Harriss, 2007:2716) and establishment of empowerment is important in terms of "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives"; and it includes, as practical requirements, four key elements: access to information; inclusion and participation; accountability; and organisational capacity, all of which have a synergistic relation with each other" (Harriss, 2007:2716).

Literature suggests that one of the primary goals of community participation is to build bridges between citizens and the government through meaningful and in-depth discourse and to develop a public-private partnership in which the parties can work cooperatively (Arnstein, 1969; Butler and Robson, 2001; Head, 2007; Coelho and Venkat, 2009; Kamath and Vijayabaskar, 2009). Community participation needs to be active and ongoing as opposed to a transactional and paternalistic relationship (Koo, 1991; Head, 2007; Schuermans, 2016). However, Head (2007:4423), goes on to develop this idea of discursive engagement and records that his third typology of 'partnering' requires engagement with "various types of partnership, delegated powers and, ultimately, citizen control". This briefly encapsulates the current mainstream engagement objectives of liberal states. However, according to the literature, although one would assume that community engagement would have encouraging results, there are many challenges and limitations.

2.4 Challenges and Limitations of Community Participation

An important aspect of understanding community participation is to understand the different typologies. Head (2017:445) revises Arnstein's (1969:217) seminal ladder of participation into

a succinct and contemporary list and omits the non-participative groupings. Head (2017:445) develops a table of "Levels of public participation and empowerment" with sub-group explanatory listings of "inform; consult; involve; collaborate and empower". Harriss' (2007) philosophical literature on 'empowerment' is a strong feature in the work of Head (2017). Head (2007) offers a comprehensive overview of community participation and probes very important questions that open enquiry and analysis from other scholars such as Fernandes (2004), Zérah (2007), Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009). Head's 2007 paper title asks: "On whose terms"? and develops a brief but succinct anecdotal summary of the State-citizen relationship. According to Head's (2017) formulation, the State benefits because they have an opportunity to share the responsibility but still steer and control the process; and citizens are empowered as they get to participate equally. For example, non-government organisations can have a voice that can lead to increased revenue while businesses can influence policy that can develop easier bylaw criteria for easier operations and attracting more patrons (Head, 2007).

Head continues to argue that although the State's intentions are noble, it is commendable because "… it must be acknowledged that many governments and public agencies have taken a systematic approach to provide guidance (both for officials and other participants) concerning the purposes of public participation and the modes of community engagement about policy and program issues" (Head, 2007:447). However, one of the concerns is that this community participation has to be in the best interest of the State to ensure value for tax-payers money. Therefore the State has to maintain its dominance, uphold a low level of trust, and carry out any desired "detailed reporting compliance obligations". The reason for not meeting consensus or a formal shared vision could be attributed to several reasons from either of the participating parties in the State-citizen relationship. Therefore power, trust, capacity and confidence become a strong sub-theme within the literature (Arnstein, 1969:217; Head, 2007:449). State-funded forums can either become contrived by technocrats or paternalism, or they may face the danger of being captured by fractions of the community. These processes documented in the literature describe the antithesis of partnership and empowerment. Fernandes (2004:2416) argues that "state practices are engaged in political processes of spatial purification and the production of a new middle-class-based vision of the Indian nation" where leaders painted pictures of a new 'civic culture' that is a new aesthetic "vision of tree-lined boulevards, fountains, and playgrounds. There will be no slums. The streets will be clean with

wide pavements unencumbered by hawkers. People will stroll through pedestrian plazas. This is an important factor of purification in the politics of forgetting, creating privacy" (Fernandes, 2004:2421).

As urban governance becomes more progressive, and more citizens influence the process, scholars cast more doubt on the process because there are other factors that can affect democracy and civil society. Head (2017): reveals in his reflections such as can the state govern effectively; can effectively entrust civic society to make their own decisions; nebulous state processes; the inability to effectively measure the impact; confidence in the state capacity to carry out the project; lack of coordination and including a comprehensive inclusion of voices. Head (2017:442) also mentions the aspect of the "inherent elitism of professional bureaucracies and representative government". Head (2017:450) questions the clarity and designation of the roles and responsibilities, suggesting a degree of scepticism about the intentions of the government and implying serious limits on the potential influence of the citizenry and community groups (Head, 2007:441).

We can learn important lessons from community participation, such as creating joint goals, fostering trust and building relationships, regulating control, and sharing headship (Head, 2007:441). Community participation is uplifting and is an important part of civic nature. One the most important benefits of this process, according to Head (2007:441), is that citizens will achieve "better informed" decision-making, through facilitating deeper involvement by stakeholders. However, many scholars in this review have drawn attention to the risks posed, not by the State, but by the citizens themselves. We are learning that there is a new culture emerging that poses a significant risk to democracy. Deep analysis of case studies can be in the writing of Fernandes (2004), Zérah (2007) and Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009). By way of introduction to neighbourhood elites, about the sharp contrast between active citizens and elitism, Zérah (2007:62) stated "… we shall question the relationship between participative and representative democracy based upon the actions of those neighbourhood associations: do we witness a renewed shape of elite capture or a process of re-legitimising the political system, and in fine, representative democracy?" This question addresses an additional argument of whether elites are 'capturing' or constantly developing spheres of 'influence'.

2.5 The Rise of a New Political Culture

One of the ubiquitous arguments found in most of the literature is the rise of the middle-class elite at the local neighbourhood scale (Akkerman, Hajer and Grin 2004; Fernandes 2004; Innes and Booher 2004; Harriss 2007; Head 2007; Zérah 2007; Kamath and Vijayabaskar 2009; Tunstall 2016; He 2021). The actual nature and size of the middle classes vary greatly (Fernandes, 2004). The middle class is not homogenous, and this social grouping has a significant range in ideologies, politics and urban vision (Fernandes, 2004:2418; Kamath and Vijayabaskar, 2009:372). Authors have warned that the makeup of the middle class is not a single typology. "The limitation to this formulation is that it assumes that the elites ... form a homogeneous group whose interests are represented in self-evident ways in civil society. The trend of decentralisation of local spatial politics is occurring in parallel with a global lifestyle change in the middle class. Fernandes (2004), Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009) and Zérah (2007) state that there is a new pattern of lifestyle and consumption occurring for example in India predominantly in the middle class. "This middle class is not new in a structural sense … it refers to particular segments of the professional middle classes, particularly those associated with new economy jobs such as the services sector and information technology" (Fernandes, 2004:2418). Fernandes continues that new social and cultural behaviours seem to validate the way this socio-economic class is represented in public culture. In other words, there is evidence by the scholars in this review that consumption and the effects of globalisation are reinforcing sub-classifications and inequality – elevating a new group to a middle-class elitist sub-category. "The invention of the new Indian middle class … is part of a broad process of cultural and economic globalisation that has been set in motion through the economic policies of liberalisation in the 1990s" (Fernandes, 2004:2424). This emergence is creating a new kind of inequality and distinction from the poor. According to Fernandes, there is a direct relationship between the rise of consumption in the liberalising economy of the early 1990s and the new "cultural characteristics marked by attitudes, lifestyle and consumption practices associated with commodities" (Fernandes, 2004:2415). The result is that the emerging politics of the new middle class has broader political significance for the identity formation of Indian middle classes (Fernandes, 2004:2418).

Middle-class elites are preoccupied with urban restructuring. Harriss states that "in Bangalore, the upper stratum, of highly professional associations, has been very much concerned with the

problems of the urban environment" (Harriss, 2007:368). Fernandes (2004:2415) says that the middle class did not arise from its reference instead it was interictally tied to the production of the restructuring of the urban space. "The exercise of state power in this context does not take an external form that is protecting or catering to a predefined set of interests of the middle classes. Rather, it is inextricably engaged in the production of the new Indian middle class, a social category that is materially produced through the restructuring of urban space in contemporary Mumbai (Fernandes, 2004:2424). Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009:365) go on to mention that "the invention of the new middle-class lifestyle has been increasingly interwoven into the creation of an urban aesthetics based on the middle-class desire for the management of urban space based on strict class-based separations". Chatterjee's (2004) conception rests on an assumption of a naturalised identification between civil society, elite middle-class expression (voice), and the representation of a homogeneous set of middle-class interests. In effect, such a notion conflates dominant conceptions of elite or middle-class identity ... with the broader and highly differentiated group that constitutes the middle class" (Kamath and Vijayabaskar, 2009:368). Thus Fernandes (2004:2418) states because they contain the promise of access, the emerging middle class's limits are flexible.

2.6 The Middle-Class Elite and Neighbourhood Associations

At the core of this review lies evidence of a new type of politics that is concerned with exclusion and local-scale spatial production. A large proportion of the literature is dedicated to the structural antonym of the middle class. Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009:368) state that "the exclusive approach highlights the nature of middle class versus the poor" while it talks about the social groups in a more pronounced way – that social groups marginalise. Fernandes (2004:368) draws …" implicitly on Chatterjee's (2004 distinction between 'civil' and 'political society', such dominance, they point out, tends to exclude the voices of the poorer sections, i.e., members of the political society". Furthermore, to describing elitist attitudes, Fernandes describes them as "a cultural characteristic that is marked by attitudes, lifestyles and consumption practices associated with commodities made available in India's liberalising economy" (Fernandes, 2004:2415). The literature over-emphasises this emerging new pattern of activity. One of the aspects of this emergence is the origin:" the public cultural representations of this social class appear to be borne out of a new social and cultural practice"

(Fernandes, 2004:2419). "[T]he category urban 'middle class' privileged in studies on collective action is too homogeneous to account for the multiple locations, interests and concerns, and varied access to power of different sections. … [W]hile some sections of the middle class are more critical to advancing the urban reform agenda, others are less so, and some even oppose the progress of reforms"(Kamath and Vijayabaskar, 2009:369). This outspoken middle-class identity is expressed in a variety of cultural and social contexts, including public discourses, the creation of new urban aesthetics, outspoken claims to public urban space, and the establishment of new civic and community organisations (Fernandes, 2004:2416). Fernandes (2004:2418) states that "such transformations in the cultural identity of the middle classes, in turn, have specific material and political consequences that set into motion the politics of forgetting of those social groups that are marginalised by economic liberalisation".

Fernandes' (2004:2417) analysis focuses on the distinct boundaries of between the state and civil society. She points out that "the invention of the new Indian middle class … is part of a broad process of cultural and economic globalisation that has been set in motion through the economic policies of liberalisation in the 1990s" (Fernandes, 2004:2424). The production of "a new form of cultural citizenship … is linked to the changing relationship between state and capital in the context of economic restructuring" (Fernandes, 2004:2416). A unique characteristic of this type of politics is that it is not concerned with services or infrastructure. Instead, it has everything to do with aspects that create discomfort for these middle-class elites. This is a new form of politics … "built up around voluntary organizations in civil society rather than political parties, around new social movements" (Harriss, 2007:2717). Fernandes argues that this middle-class social culture of exclusion stems from the transnational commodity culture of capitalistic lifestyle changes. There is a sense of maintaining a new agenda and the sense of protection and guarding of real estate, and lifestyle. In this emerging dismissive consumptive culture, the middle class distances itself from the poor. Fernandes (2004) states these are new manoeuvres around state processes to develop a non-acknowledging approach to urban restructuring in what she calls the "politics of forgetting" (about the poor). Fernandes (2004:2424) argues that "the result is that the conception of a politics of forgetting cannot be viewed merely as a process where particular localities are excluded from globalisation, but as an active political process that involves processes of exclusion and purification". Such transformations in the cultural identity of the middle classes,

in turn, have specific material and political consequences that set into motion the politics of forgetting of those social groups that are marginalised by economic liberalisation. Fernandes (2004:2416) reflects that this concept is not only an activity where omission occurs but "an active political process that involves processes of exclusion and purification" and the "dynamics of this politics of forgetting in contemporary India unfold through the spatial reconfiguration of class inequalities and distinctions at the local level" (Fernandes, 2004:2428).

2.7 Sanitation and Purification of the Urban

The literature has so far framed this emerging "cultural citizenship" (Fernandes, 2004:2417) as being influenced by contemporary processes of globalisation and having a distinct agenda to use the neighbourhood associations to preserve the urban condition. However, Schuermans reminds us that although the literature is based on empirical studies of sole case studies, that not all middle-class neighbourhoods subscribe to this application (Schuermans, 2016:190). The politics of forgetting theme is linked to an additional theme: the vision of the urban environment and 'doing away'. This is a "…political project that seeks to produce a sanitised vision of the economic benefits of Globalization" and a "sanitised vision of the economic benefits of globalization" (Fernandes, 2004:2416). According to Fernandes (2004:2421), the 'purification' and the politics of beautifying stems from an ideal of society advancement and aspirations.

I would like to argue that this act of urban 'purification' and 'sanitisation' bears a similarity with urban attitudes of fortification, enclave, and telescopic urban strategies. I argue that the concerns against the urban poor and the fear of urban decay due to economic forces are similar. The differentiating factors are that gated communities have physical boundaries to reinforce their concerns while the middle-class elite are using the state to create and maintain its buffers. Enclave urbanism uses boundaries as divisive mechanisms and to facilitate groupings' ideals and it also "allows the privileged to choose with whom they interact in their everyday lives" (Schuermans, 2016:183). A curated vision of the middle-class elite neighbourhood means "… to exercise unprecedented control over their experience of the city in terms of to whom, how and when social encounters are made" (Schuermans, 2016:183). Schuermans (2016:186) continues to unpack the analysis by stating that middle-class elite

culture is also preoccupied with dimension and distances in physical space:" The sense of proximity and distance among urban strangers is not only affected by the dynamics of face-to-face encounters but also by the aesthetic of the built environment, the sensory feel of a city and the visibility of different groups in public space" (Schuermans, 2016:184).

Who are the middle-class elites? What are the characteristic patterns of identity? Tunstall (2016:770) stated that neighbourhood trends should remain case-specific and that there are limitations in generalising community participation patterns as an application to all middle-class neighbourhoods. Scholars like Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009:368) stated that the elite middle-class is a social group that share the same ideals, ideologies or ideals that resonate with conservatism "… consisting primarily of retired or older middle and higher-level bureaucrats and formal sector employees, located in stable, older, core areas which have not experienced much growth and where there is no problem of basic amenities. They typically tend to focus their collective action efforts on local cultural and religious programmes" (Kamath and Vijayabaskar, 2009:368).

2.8 Paradox

This theme identifies the paradoxical implications of the middle-class expression. Several sub-themes emerge in the contradictions. Firstly, according to Zérah (2007:67), neighbourhood associations portray the idea that they are interested in "defending the public good and general interest, neighbourhood associations emerge as an interest group mobilised on an exclusive vision of the city" but they are merely one of the many actors in the neighbourhood – and most of the time the minority is touting the ideas of community participation (Fernandes, 2004:2418). Harriss (2007:2717) states that "on the one hand there are organisations, concerned mainly with issues of urban governance and the interests of consumer-citizens, that are quite elitist, run by upper-middle-class people, mostly brahmins. These are organisations that adopt the formal language of 'citizenship' and speak of participation in budgeting, and of transparency and accountability in local government". Secondly, Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009:370) recorded that "… in less affluent areas of these localities, upwardly mobile middle-class residents have built up their plots, in violation of planning norms and procedures, to take advantage of the burgeoning rental market. Elite residents with larger plots by contrast are

more concerned about their quality of life, which they argue, is deteriorating due to the 'unauthorised' construction by the less affluent middle class in the neighbourhood". Thirdly, within this new political landscape of sanitised vision, the contradiction is that the political issues are no longer about rights, beliefs, and ideals, but about collective identities. It is no longer about what we believe but instead a politics of association. Zérah (2007:67) states that "…a similar ambiguity characterises the political discourse of placing citizens at the core of a 'new political culture', as it favours consensus over dissensus and carries a defiance towards traditional parliamentary politics. Nevertheless, this is an appealing dimension for some members of neighbourhood associations who deem it possible to combine political engagement with political defiance."

2.9 How the State and Engaged Citizens Are Perceived

In this final theme, we reflect on literature that pertains to how the State and citizens are perceived. We turn to Zérah (2007:64) who states that there is generally a poor and distrustful image of the State. In her case study of neighbourhood associations in India, she recorded that ward councillors are sometimes bypassed because they have a strong belief that there is limited power at the local level. This, in turn, facilitates a false impression of power …"and politics has become a business involving large, unaccounted investments with multiple returns anticipated in a patronage-based, unaccountable, centralised governance" (Zérah, 2007:64). This statement reveals challenges of the role of the state as well as the issues concerning large logistical projects like community participation as" neighbourhood associations consider that most councillors are inefficient, corrupt and biased in favour of poorer sections of the population whose votes they rely on" (Zérah, 2007:64). However, she goes on to recall that the state has the power to make demands on the process through performance mandates like consultants. Secondly, Zérah (2007:64) highlights the role of networking with strategic designations to benefit unfairly. (Zérah, 2007:64) stated that "some of the most dynamic neighbourhood associations started interacting with the local politicians to garner support for some of their initiatives and activities … sometimes they bargained with their support even though they also mostly were at loggerheads with corporators who often support". Bénit-Gbaffou (2008:4) articulates this fickle relationship between the Ward Councillor and the residents (and by nature in this case the residents association). She states that residents

engage the ward councillor when holding them accountable, however, need to bypass the ward councillor if issues are brought against the ward councillor creating an imbalance of bottom-up structure and a sense of clientelism.

This demonstrates that middle-class associations enter into complex and double-standard relationships with the State. This resonates well with the reformers' emphasis on outsourcing tasks to private consultants because local governments are deemed incapable of performing them, and together reveal a lack of faith (nimbyism) in the local government, especially in politicians. "The exercise of state power is an important political force in this political project. At one level, the state is often fragmented and conflicted as it oscillates between responding to the organised demands of middle-class communities on the one hand and workers' organisations such as hawkers' unions on the other. At another level, the State actively participates in attempting to produce a middle-class-based vision of a beautified, globalising city in which signs of poverty can be forgotten in both spatial and political terms.

Reciprocally residence associations are also perceived to demonstrate challenges. Kamath and Vijayabaskar (2009:369) recorded that the resident associations "are marked by fragmentation, a lack of secondary tier leadership, a distrust of democratic modes of functioning, and weak associational participation largely driven by crises". Despite the positive role associations can play in empowering citizens, middle-class elite associations have significant limitations to their operations.

2.10 Conclusion

Through the literature review, several elements become clear regarding the relationship between the state and the middle class through community engagement. The review of literature sheds light on important aspects of the middle-class identity and the relationship to the through community involvement. It firstly highlights that the middle class can play a significant elitist role, however, it is not a homogenous group. Rather it is a mix of different subgroups with their own identities and goals. This diversity in the middle class makes it challenging for them to come together and engage with the government effectively. In addition, the use of social movements or organisations can be tools for achieving particular

agendas, but these collectives are reacting to change as opposed to being driven by a collective vision. This fragmentation arises from scepticism towards democratic processes and limited participation that often occurs in response to crises rather than being sustained over time.

Chapter 3 Reflecting on the Melville Context

3.1 introduction

This chapter intends to develop a contextual understanding of the local civic-to-state activity in the Melville neighbourhood. This section of the thesis is concerned with the material nature of what civic society engages the South African state with and *vice versa* at the neighbourhood level. It is therefore important to get a broad understanding of the physical, social, political, policy context and structure of the neighbourhood – its stakeholders and organisations – both legitimate and illegitimate (Arnstein, 1969; Head, 2007). Developing an understanding of who is engaging is significant to the "transformative power of dialogue" (Innes and Booher, 2004:428) because if the intention is to expand the democracy, it is key to ensure which voices are included, which are excluded, and how they are engaged.

3.2 Physical Context

Melville is well located three kilometres northeast of the Johannesburg city centre. It is surrounded by two public tertiary institutions, i.e. University of Johannesburg and WITS University, the SABC media house, various schools, faith-based organisations, and retail, and encompasses a high street while maintaining a low-rise suburban form by nature. It is located on a north-facing slope of a valley with views to the north. Melville is located between Ward B 69 with Westdene and Rossmore where the average household income is R29 400 and Ward 117 where the average household income is R230 700, with Victory Park, Parktown North, Parkwood, Rosebank and Saxonwold. Melville is a permeable neighbourhood and offers transport links in an east-to-west direction. There is a main arterial east to west from the CBD to one of the largest townships called Soweto. On the eastern boundary, Main Road facilitates transport south-to-north from the CBD to Randburg, while Empire Road on the southern edge facilitates the COF that encompasses the Rea-Vaya Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) system. Melville Koppies on the northern edge is a public nature reserve with significant flora, fauna and geology (Lucas, 1965; Carstens, 2014). Melville is attractive because it is suitably located for access to the CBD, educational public institutions, leisure and sporting spaces, has access to the surrounding areas, and a bustling high street and heritage architecture all while holding reasonable prices for the property market.

Public safety is a major feature in Melville because it experiences a threat of crime in terms of mobile phone snatching, armed robbery, break-ins and hijacking (*The Star*, 2020a). Melville has a permeable grid road layout and this has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it provides ease of access; on the other hand, it facilitates a culture of quick getaway crime. The building form of Melville is mainly low-rise single-storey with specific application to residential. Residential properties range from 250 m^2 to 750 m^2, but the average is 500 m^2. Due to its proximity to the regional institutions and the social culture on 7th Street, Melville has a high transient population that results in a large number of tenants who rent homes and backyard cottages. In terms of land use, residents often complain about illegal building development with specific reference to the risk posed by student residences. Slum lording is a real threat to Melville because it not only infringes on land use, but it has cascading impacts on the load it places on service infrastructure, noise and traffic. For example, all private property has a three-storey height limit with applications required for furthering the bulk and coverage (COJ, 2018). What is a suburban condition with low-rise free-standing houses with high walls could become a dense fabric that could transform the current character of the neighbourhood (ESRI, 2022) and thereby threaten its heritage and overall desirability.

3.3 Architectural Heritage

Melville has a significant architectural heritage. The business strip along 7th Street was built at the beginning of the 20th century and still stands today. Cast-iron sidewalk canopies with decorative broekie-lace post-to-roof details, and ornate timber-framed shopfronts with a recessed glazed timber door are characteristic of that time. Corner block conditions had shaved corners that responded well to the intersections and created a mutual architectural response to each of the other three corners. Post-1930s reinforced concrete technology gave way to framed structures and the opportunity to create multi-storey buildings, which often

exhibited the Art Deco style. Melville's distinct architectural character has rendered it a 'village' (Tsumele, 2021) and it is the subject of many architectural historical tours (Mason, 2013).



Figure 4: A typical Corner Shop in Melville that still stands today(Läuferts and Mavunganidze, no date)

In a study completed by Ntsika Heritage Consultants (Läuferts and Mavunganidze, no date), the historical streetscape was documented and its significance was analysed. Ntsika consultants advise that the urban environment is threatened and that the streetscape should be protected and preserved. There are two recommendations for the protection of the heritage of 7th Street:

> 1. Heritage Area – section 31 of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA)
>
> 2. Protection of specific buildings in the area and the direct surroundings, Structures – section 34 of the NHRA
>
> Both options are processed through the Provincial Heritage Resources Agency Gauteng Office (PHRA-G) (Läuferts and Mavunganidze, no date:81)

Apart from the General Heritage Protection Act that requests owners to apply for approval to the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Gauteng (PHRAG) that deals with building applications, the MRA is an additional 'gateway' for approvals for building plans over sixty years with heritage application. The preservation of Melville's streetscape is not only an asset for the neighbourhood but also for the city and the tourism industry. Currently, there are no

special overall heritage protection strategies for 7th Street in Melville and the architectural character is therefore threatened.

3.4 Social, Cultural and Diversity Context

Melville forms part of Ward 87 and includes suburbs like Greenside, Parkview, Westcliff, Parktown, Richmond and Forest Town. Melville has a mixed population of 3355 over 1,73 km^2, which equates to a low density of 2000 people per km^2. In terms of demographics 56% of the neighbourhood is white, 33% Black African and the balance is a mix of coloured, Indian, Asian and other (Frith, 2016). According to the ward profile (*Wazimap profile: Ward 87 (79800087), City of Johannesburg, Gauteng*, 2011) politically 16 257 i.e. 62.6% of the ward registered to vote. The DA holds the bulk of the voters at 78% to the ANC's 8%. The median age is 32 although most of the population are 20–29 and the second largest age group is 40–49 years old. The racial make-up of the ward is 47% white, 38% black African, 9% Indian, 3% coloured and 2% other. Fifty percent of the neighbourhood speaks English as their home language, with Afrikaans and black African languages making up the balance and with most residents being South African and born in the country. The gender split is half. The average household income is R115 000.00 (2011). Most people are employed, have internet access and have either a secondary or tertiary (undergraduate or postgraduate) degree.

Melville has played a significant role in the city because it was a melting pot of cultures, races, and ages. With the proximity to institutions, media houses and NGOs it has always attracted a range of people. 7th Street has played a significant role in this because the type of retail facilitates a 20-hour commercial cycle from early-morning bakers, and day traders to late-night restaurants and bars. This range attracts a diversity of people from residents to tourists, day visitors to students, from one day to years. 7th Street is the heart of Melville, which has an open, eclectic and vibrant culture are run and managed by the multiple business owners. This range has been the thing that makes Melville well-known for its social life and culture, but this diversity has also been a feature that residential households have rejected. An ongoing tension between business and residential interests is a feature of Melville.

The Melville neighbourhood undergoes constant seasonal economic fluctuations. A good indicator of a productive economy is when well-known restaurant owners fully occupy 7th Street. Its quirkiness is well established because "Melville recently listed as one of the world's coolest top 30 streets by global magazine *Time Out*" (Cox, 2021). However, the neighbourhood also has its challenges with active citizens at the forefront of various groups volunteering their time and resources. "Sarah Hudleston, a resident, said the suburb has issues with homelessness and crime, but this had, funnily enough, brought our suburb together with a common purpose of not letting Melville become Hellville! ... The community is rallying together to do volunteer, regular clean-ups, monitor security and to improve the area." (Cox, 2021). Melville has always been a neighbourhood of opportunity. Historically, other white areas "are not popular because of a conservative attitude among existing owners" (Bähr and Jürgens, 2006:202). In the early 1990s, the whole West Rand (e.g., Roodepoort), the north-western suburbs of Johannesburg, as well as Randburg (*The Star*, 21.10.1992) and Boksburg (the stronghold of the former Conservative Party), that revived micro-Apartheid at the end of the 1980s was affected by this. Suburbs, such as Melville, Greymont and Westdene, which saw an inflation of property prices due to white 'gentrifiers' have also seen minimal black influx (Bähr and Jürgens, 2006:202).

Melville is a place of experimentation. In the early 2000s, a pilot project called 27 Boxes was designed and built in Faan Smit Park in the heart of Melville. It was the country's first container shopping centre (Cox, 2015) – a local shopping centre made of old recycled shipping storage units to create a local and international destination for victors. The intention was to offer space to "[o]ver 100 traders with goods ranging from clothing to coffee; food, furniture and fashion; decor to doughnuts; biltong, bikes, bags, bistros and bus tours; art to architects and galleries to gardening for kids." (Cox, 2015). Derelict land allocated to parks and recreation contained four overgrown tennis courts and a run-down public toilet located in the heart of Melville and "residents complained that the park was not being used and was being overrun by 'undesirables'. In 2008, the park was officially and permanently closed" (Cox, 2015). In the late 1990s, the Faan Smit Park, which was managed by City Parks, changed hands to the Johannesburg Property Company. It was then long leased to Citiq – a private company. The lease to Citiq happened in 2012 and the container project was built. It was not met well by the tenants and the MRA set up a specific portfolio to engage the facility in the event of neighbourhood disruption. The project's enthusiasm was curbed a few years later and it

underwent a desperate renovation in the bid to revive it and to create a wave of excitement to draw customers. According to Mason (2019), the residents on the local Facebook page expressed their anger in response to the rumour that the owners were going to turn it into "low-cost student housing, which Melville homeowners universally despise". Today, the retail centre is unsuccessful and struggles to attract foot traffic and tenants.

Residents of middle-class Melville are very vocal when any negative events impact the middle-class neighbourhood. Krouse (2012) noted in his article that a Melville restaurant owner and resident of Melville was on the organising committee for the annual music festival called Fête de la Musique and there was a string of "letters from angry residents about negative trends in the commercial activities of the shopping strip" and that there was a "general petition launched by members of the public aiming to stop Saturday's festival" (Krouse, 2012). Community members from the MRA are very clear that they do not want Melville to be associated with getting inebriated and that the MRA is working closely with landlords to be selective over tenants while the MRA are "fighting to close down and control about 50 liquor outlets that did not comply with the law" (Krouse, 2012). The MRA claimed that they were against the hosting of the festival only because they were not aware of it. The organising resident exclaimed that not knowing was no reason to decline the festival, instead to learn more about it and assist in creating a harmonious cultural global participative event would bring another dimension to Melville (Krouse, 2012).

The night-time entertainment of a variety of bars, restaurants and pubs on 7th Street brings diversity to Melville for young students because of its proximity to the university and the student residences that are located close to the institutions. It "offers the suburb a youthful and bohemian feel" (Cox, 2021). The range of its offerings is diverse enough for a variety of age groups and interests. Crime has a significant impact on Melville and its image. Apart from the weekly phone-snatchings, hijacking, robberies and mugging it was particularly subjected to a series of violent crimes which involved the deaths of patrons in 7th Street. A series of fatal shootings occurred over the years. Firstly, on New Year's Eve of 2019, a vehicle drove by a bar shortly after midnight and opened fire, killing two people and injuring several (*The Star*, 2020b). A Ghanaian national was allegedly stabbed on 17 August 2015 by a family member (51) who was also his employer at one of the suspect's businesses, Wee-Pub and Restaurant,

in Melville"(Nkwashuglaciern, 2015), and recently there was an incident at a pharmacy in Main Road (*The Star*, 2020a).

3.5 The Formation of the Middle Class

The establishment of the middle class in Melville is synonymous with the historical, spatial and economic evolution of Johannesburg. The literature presents two influential periods that account for the most noteworthy change towards the constitution of the middle class in Melville and its surrounding areas – the initial structuring of Melville and the 1970s.

The first influencing factor is the size of the stands. In 1896, in the establishment of Melville, 850 stands were sold on public auction. The properties were relatively smaller in size than what would eventually be developed and sold in the northern suburbs. The average size of Melville properties is 500 m^2, which is conservatively small. The initial attraction to the suburb was the elevation of the topography with a north-facing view of the forests and a high street that made it more appealing. It was only in 1905 that the area was formally laid out and registered by the government surveyor, Edward Harker Vincent Melville, after whom the suburb was named (Läuferts and Mavunganidze, no date). Secondly, the properties were sold at a competitive price, which made the area attractive to lower-income groups. Deed office registration records show that most of the properties were initially registered under leasehold tenure. It was declared a freehold township by 1921. According to Läuferts and Mavunganidze (no date), British soldiers who fought in the Anglo-Boer War from 1899 to 1902 were among the new owners as Melville experienced an economic boom during a time of depression in Johannesburg. 7th Street was the economic backbone of Melville and still today plays a vital part in the neighbourhood. The streetscape supported diversity by having a butcher, baker, greengrocer, general dealer and cinema. This 'village' style concept is something that Melville residents still refer to today (Tsumele, 2021). Business owners worked in the shop during the day and retreated into their homes at the back of the shops at night. 7th Street also had a tram line with a tram station (Läuferts and Mavunganidze, no date; Mason, 2013). The second factor relates to the geographic development and location. The mining industry created two distinct class groups since the inception of Johannesburg: the poorer African working class related to providing mining labour in the south, and the middle class in the north of the CBD

… and post-World War II class and racial differences deepened for three decades thereafter due to 'Fordist expansion' but it was not as severe as during the 1970s.

Kracker and Heller (2010:176) state that "racially inscribed residential patterns remained unchanged as the introduction of official apartheid during this period maintained and reinforced the racial divide" up until today and Melville was part and parcel of that initial structuring. It is also important to note the maintenance of such class spatial logic because in the 1950s the Johannesburg CBD began expanding south and north reinforcing the scale of extremes. A third factor in sustaining the middle class is the "move from manufacturing employment to a service economy [that] drives an increasingly polarized class structure" Kracker and Heller (2010:176). This means that while the working class moves to service the upper classes, the middle class can migrate into a "growing professional class" (Kracker and Heller, 2010:176). During the 1970s there was a diffusion of racial polarities in the middle class resulting in the State being forced to educate Africans into State white-collar service jobs further resulting in the white middle class 'climbing the professional ladder' to even higher and more prestigious jobs. According to Kracker and Heller (2010:180), this created sub-stratification of the middle class that included professionals with uncommon skills who could appreciate the stature, higher income and authority that came with them.

By the 1970s the CBD was well developed with retail and office blocks pushing development into Braamfontein, Braamfontein Werf and Auckland Park for "non-commercial or 'soft' precincts … across the railway track … into low-income white working-class area" (Beavon, 2004:159). Northern linkages between the CBD and the northern suburbs were improved due to the increase of private cars and the establishment of five bridges to the north (Beavon, 2004:160). Further creating affluence in the middle-class north was the growth in vehicle ownership with state investment into highways (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2021:49). The white middle class were rapidly developing large greenfield sites ranging from a minimum of 1,000 m^2 to anything up to 8 000 m^2. In addition, the white middle class were "upwardly mobile" (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2021:49) benefiting from state residential subsidies and low-interest bonds. Civil servants like teachers, police and nurses were "obliged to own a house to maximise their employment benefits" (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2021:49). As the mining industry pace slowed during the 1960s (Kracker and Heller, 2010:176), the Afrikaans broader

bond were simultaneously looking to establish a strong white Afrikaans presence and a rival to the English-speaking University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)S university. RAU was therefore built between 1969 and 1975 with 100 000 m^2 of academic space and 30,000 m^2 of housing. It was a significant investment of R500m to start off with (Chipkin, 2008:316). As the northern suburbs grew into Sandton and Bryanston, the establishment of RAU and SABC re-attracted northern residents back to the area. Clarke (1987:215) highlighted that the fuel crisis created further incentives for employees of the institutions to gentrify Melville and the surroundings.

As part of the decentralisation movement and the introduction to television, in the mid-1970s the headquarters of the SABC were established in Auckland Park with the employment of 2 500 professionals with rare skills (Beavon, 2004:173). These investments were intended to be a symbol of Afrikaans "to be a manifestation of the Afrikaner's foothold in the big city" (Chipkin, 2008:316). Kirby and associates went on to design and build the Oppenheimer Life Sciences building 1977–1982, and the Chamber of Mines engineering block by Meyer Pienaar Smith at WITS 1985–1988 (Chipkin, 2008:321) further contributed to the establishment of institutional buildings on the edge of the city and the northern suburbs. Milpark also experienced development with the 22-storey Metal Box building in 1974 contributing to the 3.25 ha Milpark business campus precinct just off Empire Road that originally formed part of the Braamfontein Werf (Chipkin, 2008:406). Post-apartheid created another window of gentrification for what Beavon (2004) calls the "renewal of some of the older, more run-down sections of the inner-residential suburb … like Melville"…" due to the lack of appeal of the CBD (Beavon, 2004:261).

As a result of these developments around the 1970s, Melville, which was previously borderline between working- and middle-class gentrified and became a suburb for an established middle class with a professional orientation (academics, media workers). This was, however, not the end of the process. The political transition from the early 1990s had its impact. The transformation of RAU into the University of Johannesburg (UJ), for example, and the dramatic growth in the student population of UJ, saw increased demand for backroom accommodation in Melville, for example, and the suburb diversified and densified. Although Melville did not experience the same degree of change as suburbs such as Brixton and Yeoville, for example, there was also racial diversification and, by 2011, one-third of its population was black African. Although it maintained its visibly middle-class character, rental accommodation in backyards

especially, meant that there was a growing student and working-class population. The was also a grouping number of individuals sleeping rough in and around Melville.

3.6 Representative Groupings

Melville contains several formal and informal stakeholder groupings. The MRA is the only formally constituted stakeholder recognised by the city and its mandate and purpose is governed by policy (South African Government Gazette, 1996). Some stakeholders, like the Melville Business Association and Security Initiatives, are 'invented' entities. In other words, they are recognised by the Ward Councillor and they may be registered as NPOs, but they are not mandated by the state. Some stakeholders, such as faith-based groups and non-profit organisations, do not belong to any stakeholder groups, and it is more challenging for them to be included in participation processes because they are equally as important as other entities. There were five members of the MRA at the time of the MPP and they volunteered their time to represent the best interests of the community. Constituents are the residents, who are represented by a legitimate residents association. The MRA is very active and is concerned mainly about the experience of the residents association is in constant communication with the residents through email newsletters and their website, https://mra.ilovemelville.co.za/. The MRA holds regular meetings and responds to heritage applications, liquor licences, public safety and land use.

3.7 Ward Councillor Engagement

Community participation occurs in a multitude of ways and the intention is to broaden our understanding of political theory at the local level. It seeks to identify who the key role players are and what their roles are, understand their legitimacy, acknowledge what policies are at play and recognise how the various actors navigate in and around such policies. It also intends to understand what common social, environmental, economic and land use issues are surfacing, who is engaging them and through which forums. The City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (COJMM) manages the local governance for Johannesburg and is also known as "the council". It is made up of 270 councillors from various political parties, the speaker of the council, the Chief Whip, section 79 committees, standing committees, executive business committees, the executive mayor and the mayoral committee. The purpose of this council is to debate "local government issues – involving both policy and bylaws – and

proposals are ratified or rejected". It "focuses on legislative, oversight and participatory roles, delegating its executive function to the executive mayor and the mayoral committee. The council's principal role is as a lawmaker, with the other key role being to debate and discuss issues. The council approves bylaws, City policies, the Integrated Development Plan, tariffs for rates and service charges, and the City's budget" (City of Joburg, 2022). The local municipal council forms a committee and is obliged to report to the City mayor. Ward councillors are voted in by the local council per municipality and are annexed by the "Act No. 3 of 2021: Local Government: Municipal Structures Amendment Act, 2021" (Local Government, 2021:18). The Gauteng region or Joburg council is divided into eleven metropolitan municipalities (i.e. ward regions) that manage their affairs in terms of service delivery. Ward Councillors can submit "motions to council and these can ultimately become bylaws. They also serve on Section 79 committees and these bodies play an important oversight role in the operations of the various city entities" (Fourie, 2018). Melville is located in Region B, Ward 87.

> *Our job is also to make sure that participation is robust and democracy is being exercised* (Ward Councillor, 2022:16.06)

A ward councillor is responsible for each ward. The main function of the ward councillors is to "represent the needs and interests of their constituents … they are responsible for building community involvement, with ward committees playing an important role in providing information on the needs and interests of local communities and ensuring that public voices are heard" (City of Joburg, 2022). They are accountable for the voices of the community within their ward and should build community development. Ward councillors form an important bridge between local government and communities so that their concerns and requirements are tabled at the council. A ward councillor is elected by their ward and are governed by a legislated Act that states that they must have a strong presence in the community, be accountable to them, report to the public regarding decisions of the council and the performance of the municipality (Local Government, 2021). This is the operational construction of the citizen-to-state organogram. The municipality, the ward councillor and the managing and implementing agents are responsible for development, maintenance and implementation. However, the ward councillor has a unique relationship to the neighbourhood. Firstly, the ward councillor has to be voted into power at the ward level.

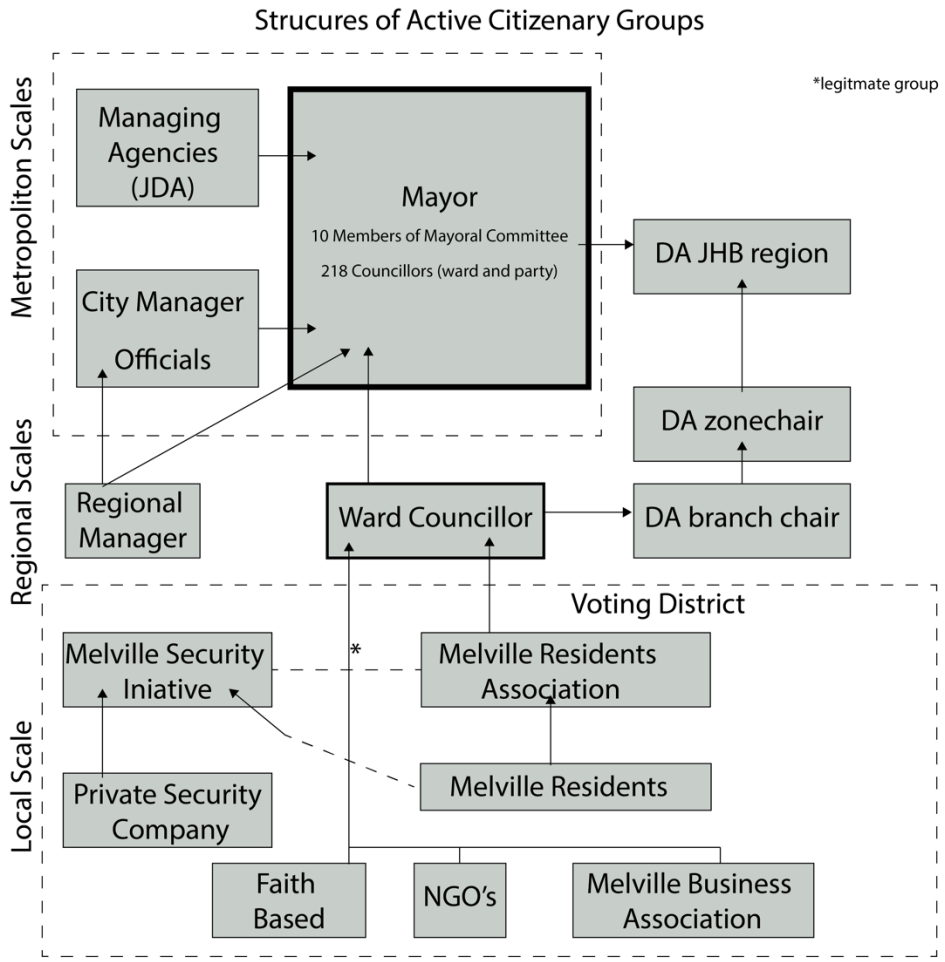


Figure 5: Organogram of the council structure

Head (2007:446) identifies "a closer relationship due to globalisation" and "improved technology" as causes for the increase in civic participation in the last several decades. In 2014 a 'WhatsApp' chat application was established with 150 Melville residents, businesses and the Ward Councillor to develop an efficient communication platform. The ubiquitous neighbourhood issues related to technical services, and social and environmental issues are constantly arising daily and they require urgent attention, action and coordination. Through an analysis of the arising 'WhatsApp' communication of community issues, three things were clear. Firstly, the members of the group mobile chat were residents and business owners. According to Head (2007), the State, community groups and businesses have their unique benefits. The State wants to share responsibility and democracy, community groups want equity and development growth, while businesses want to increase their influence in policy-shaping of bylaws (Head, 2007:448). Secondly, the Ward Councillor responded on a one-to-

one basis with residents – the Ward Councillor responds proactively to issues raised and if additional resources were required to resolve the issues the Ward Councillor would either escalate the matter to the relevant department manager or provide further information for the residents to resolve the matter, such as logging a call. Finally, the theme of the matters raised included service delivery (related to electrical blackouts, refuse collection, and water), as well as social issues, road maintenance, public safety and noise pollution. It is evident by the Whatsapp chat discussions that the Ward Councillors both attempting to sympathise with the residents while emphasising the civic responsibilities of the municipality. For example, Mangena (2015) reported quoting the Ward Councillor that "until the City of Joburg (COJ) starts taking the problem seriously, residents are going to have to learn to live with the problem". According to Head's (2007) table of public participation, it falls within the category of 'collaboration'. The Ward Councillor has a comprehensive understanding of the council services and has the power and knowledge to access and resolve social and technical matters by accessing the council networks.

The COJMM (the council) has a collaborative and inclusive approach to how local policies and bylaws can be applied to the region. This is based on discourse and debate. However, ward councillors are concerned about items like illegal communes and additional load onto the service grid (Fourie, 2018), but law enforcement is lacking. Councillors also play a role in the communication of policy, and bylaws of emerging logistics. For example, in 2018 the Ward Councillors had to inform the community about the rising costs of sewerage and sanitation – this is an engagement of 'informing' according to Head's (2017) table of engagement. The role of ward councillors is to oversee the functioning of the State in terms of its delivery is significant and they play a constant role in engagement. Ward councillors are in a paradoxical position because they have several (sometimes conflicting) biases. The ward councillor has to a) represent the interests of their ward, b) represent the interests of their political party, and c) maintain the interests and uphold the integrity of the municipality.

Chapter 4 Urban Policy Context

4.1 Introduction

Much of community participation is intended to assist communities towards positive development and they are closely framed by tangible spatial policy and practices for urban development. Head (2017:444) stated that "the normative underpinning of social capital theory suggests that capacity for engagement is an important civic quality that should be fostered by public policy, for the benefit of individuals, families and neighbourhood". Therefore state-middle-class engagement does not generally exist in a vacuum because interactions, both formal and informal, are bounded by a post-apartheid new liberal and democratic political paradigm instituted by the new South African government in 1994. This socio-political legislation is strongly framed and articulated in all legislation and policies. It sets the tone for a democratic spatial pattern and the vision for an equitable spatial political context. There is a series of integrated policy documents that address the scales and planning for a more sustainable and equitable spatial pattern: the New Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; Johannesburg Spatial Development Framework, 2016 and the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013.

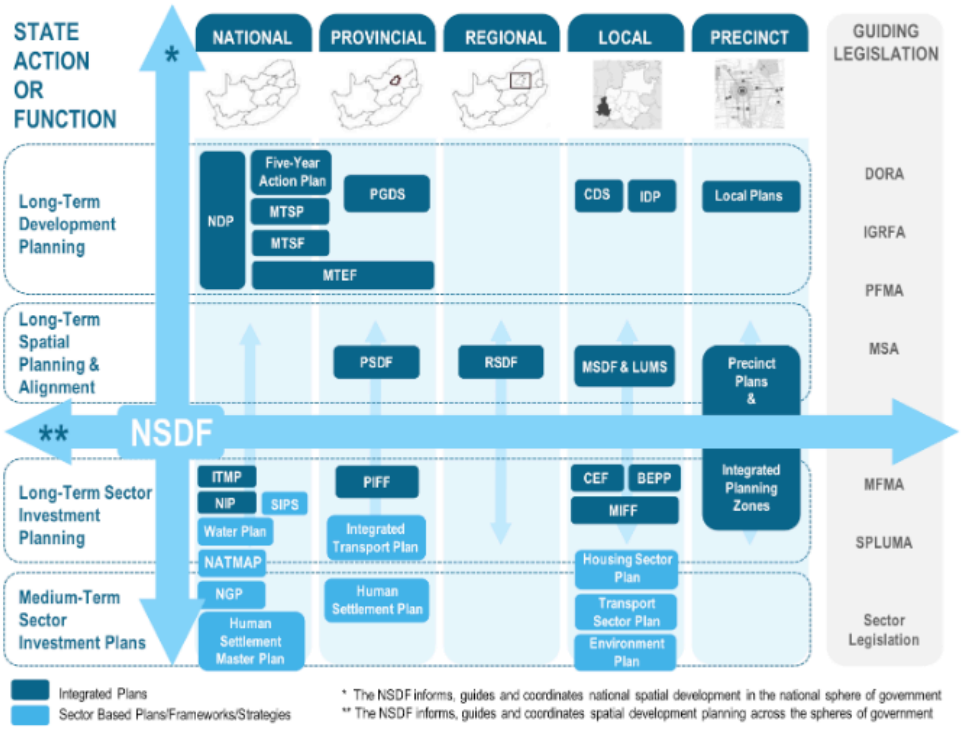


Figure 6: The Role of the NSDF within the 'Family' of Strategic and Sector Plans of Government (South African National Government, 2018)

Post-1994 spatial policies are a crucial dimension of democracy because they are imperative to the transformation of the socio-economic status of the country. Spatial policy is not only about a new equitable spatial pattern but also about how spatial governance is initiated. The vision of spatial policy is intrinsically tied to the 1994 democratic elections and is based on attempting to create an equitable socio-economic urban environment. There is a focus on transformation to reverse the segregated spatial patterns to being dense and efficient to improve economic activity and eradicate poverty.

4.2 Spatial Policy Frameworks

The Constitution [No. 108 of 1996] states that "A municipality has the right to govern, on its initiative, the local government affairs of its community, subject to national and provincial legislation, as provided for in the Constitution" as well as "to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government" ('Constitution of the Republic of South Africa [No. 108 of 1996]', 1996). In addition, the Municipal Systems Act (2000) and the Municipal Structures Act (1998) frame the intention for substantial citizen participation in Urban Development projects (Sinwell, 2011:367) The National Development Plan 2030 (National Planning Commission, South Africa, 2012) subsequently builds on the constitution and calls for a national development strategy that was only approved in 2022.

At the time of the MPP, the main guiding policy was the Johannesburg Spatial Development Framework (City of Johannesburg, 2016). It is a development model and intends to address the apartheid spatial problems and to create a new holistic socio-economic spatial logic for the future. It also includes the values that the city intends to enshrine such as sustainability, compaction, connection, resilience and generativity. It considers the relationship to infrastructure and the economy. It realises that the spatial patterns of the nation at its various scales have a direct impact on unlocking economic potential in the city.

Although there are regional, provincial and local development frameworks, the intention of the spatial development framework (SDF) is to "support the city vision and Joburg 2030 strategy as well as to ensure sustainable urban development … has a set of objectives,

strategies and policy guidelines that directs development and development options to ensure that the envisaged long-term urban structure and target deliverables are realised" (COJ, 2002:30). The SDF is intended to "create a sustainable urban environment … promote urban efficiency and to ensure optimal accessibility to opportunities …" (COJ, 2002:30). The SDF supports middle-class neighbourhoods because apart from articulating guiding principles of development, movement systems, nodal development and environmental management, it also captures the intention to "sustain neighbourhoods" and to "develop corridors", which are core concepts of the case study projects: Corridors of Freedom and Melville Precinct Plan.

4.3 SPLUMA and GDS 2040

SPLUMA is an Act that documents the legal process in which strategic frameworks at their various scales are planned for, coordinated, conducted and approved (South African Government Gazette, 2013). It is important to note that SPLUMA recognises and acknowledges the complex socio-political and technical processes of approving SDFs. In addition, it makes allowance for each municipality to amend their land use scheme to align with the SDFs (South African Government Gazette, 2013:38). This affordance provides flexibility to meet the broader socio-economic objectives. The Growth and Development Strategy 2040 (City of Joburg, 2019) is a long-term city strategy at a local scale that echoes and further conveys the city's policy for integrated development. It is coordinated with the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) metropolitan, regional and national strategic policies. At a very local and practical level, it is a plan to address "complex challenges", defining strategic choices and citywide outcomes and stimulating public interest".

4.4 IDP process

One of the most direct forms of practical inclusion of civic society in community participation is in the development and maintenance of urban spaces. The IDP process is at the heart of community participation in South Africa and is directly responsible for the budget planning for municipalities and wards. Due to the diversity in income groups across municipalities, wards and precincts, strategic planning has varying needs and priorities. The IDP process facilitates appropriate planning for future development and it is the responsibility of the municipality to budget for its various needs. Furthermore, ward councils engage communities

to participate and to contribute to the financial planning. This is intended to be truly democratic and inclusive at a practical level. The IDP process is presented and managed about the Joburg 2050 vision and strategy, SDFs, local integrated development plans, budget books and disaster plans (COJ, 2002).

The City of Johannesburg is entering into its second phase of delivering the commitment made in the Growth and Development Strategy, Vision 2040 (COJ, 2019).

> *This delivery is broken down into a five-year IDP which strategically forces us to focus on delivering the promised future. This IDP is the people's plan. It places people at the centre of development and allows the City Administration to implement the needs of the people. We have put in place a community-based planning model which allowed us to build trust by ensuring the people of Johannesburg form part of the City's Planning framework. By working together, we can collectively ensure the realization of A World Class African City. This IDP guides our resources and it helps us to strengthen our operations to ensure that the employees and stakeholders focus on common goals. Furthermore, it reminds us of our four desired outcomes which we aim to achieve by 2021.*

4.5 COF

The Corridors of Freedom is a large transport-orientated development (TOD) project in Johannesburg that was introduced by Mayor Parks Tau and was revealed in his State of the City address in May 2013 (*JDA Corridors of Freedom to Change City*, 2013; Ballard *et al.*, 2017; Harrison *et al.*, 2019; Kotze and de Vries, 2019). The COF project's main objective is to directly address the spatial transformation project that was set as an agenda by the apartheid white minority government before 1994. He stated that "[t]he Corridors of Freedom will transform entrenched settlement patterns which have shunted the majority of residents to the outskirts of the city, away from economic opportunities and access to jobs and growth" *(JDA Corridors of Freedom to change the city*, 2013). The spatial marginalisation project intended to cement a fragmented spatial pattern. This had a profound effect on the socio-economic impact on the poor. The COF is intended to reverse this process and to catalyse a new urban pattern based on urban design principles that create corridors of densified development and mixed-use with high-activity nodes that can allow for public-private investment. The COF is intended to 're-stitch' the city back together and facilitate the making of equal opportunity in a safe environment of high-density schools, shops, etc. The COF draws on "global concepts"

(Harrison *et al.*, 2019:456) and is based on existing main economic networks (the Louis Botha, Turffontein and the one that affects the Melville neighbourhood is the Empire Perth Corridors). The corridors envelop the Bus rapid transit system, which is a new central line bus system that was drawn from Bogota. The vision falls into the Growth and Development Strategy vision of 2040 and further corridors are planned in the future. It is a significant project that will cost initially R7,3 billion rand and R100 billion over the next 10 years and intends to curb urban sprawl (*JDA Corridors of Freedom to Change City*, 2013).

4.6 Precinct Plan

Finally, at precinct scale planning the City of Johannesburg guides development precincts, nodes and corridors to provide nuanced applications of its urban form and its public space requirements. These are often framed through a series of urban design frameworks. This is an important stage in middle-class and state engagement because it is the practical implementation of the approved envisioning of the public environment projects. Precinct plans are an intensive multi-stakeholder-inclusive process with an action plan. Agencies such as the JDA are implementing agencies in precinct plans and, according to Dinath (2017:19), the focus is to implement small capital works projects and they offer "development management and technical assistance" with a focus on inner city and marginalised areas.

There are several precinct plans in Joburg and according to Dinath's diagram (Figure 8) the precinct plan is integrated with the GDS, GMS, IDP and all SDFs. It is funded by a capital budget. In addition, precinct plans as per the SDFs focus on sustainable and efficient urban planning and therefore nodes and corridors are prioritised to re-consolidate the urban sprawling pattern. Dinath (2017) outlines the following lessons learnt about precinct plans: first, commitment is required for a sustained period; second, working in partnership is important for leverage; third, negotiations are a constant and in good faith; fourth, a precinct plan needs a champion or coordinator; fifth, diverse and meaningful engagement; sixth, the context is unique, and finally, consider the maintenance (Dinath, 2017:47).

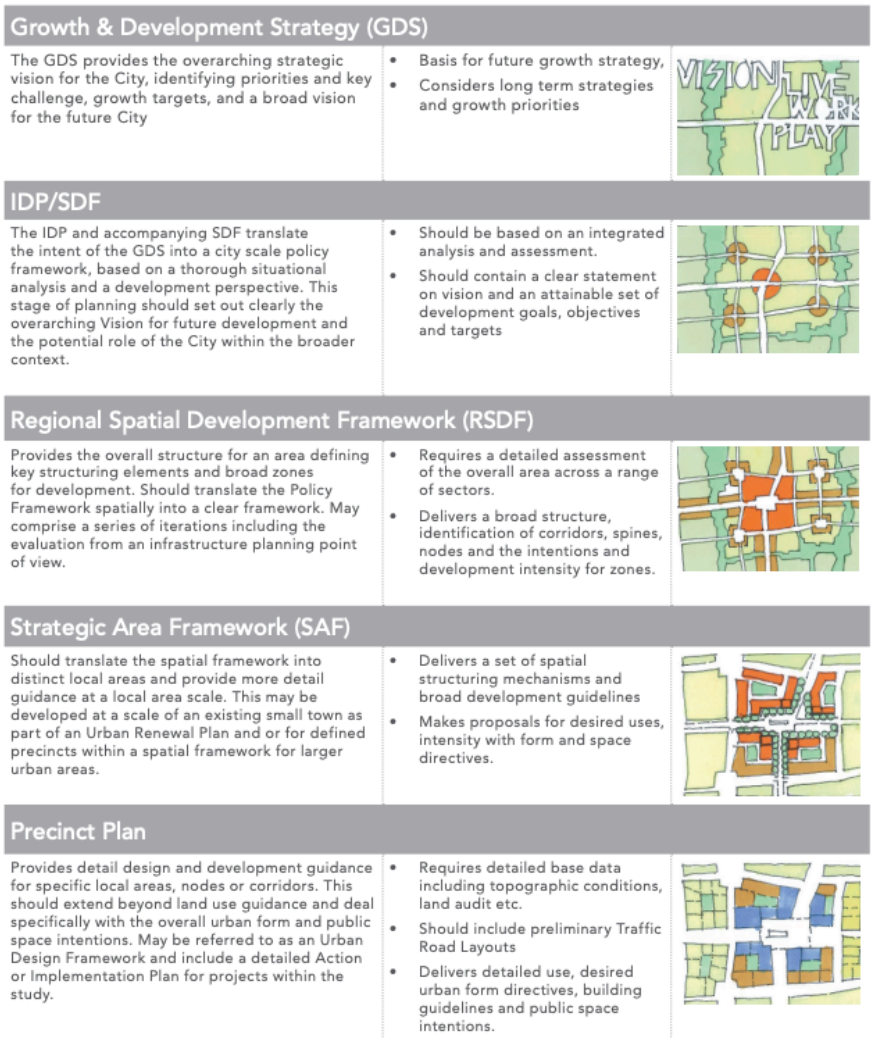


Figure 7: Urban Development at varying scales (Dinath, 2017)

4.7 Conclusion

The new post-apartheid spatial policies legislation and frameworks are well-aligned with democratic practices and robustly encourage discursive participation. The policies are integrated and ensure that urban spatial patterns foster socio-economic transformation. It is important to note that without State agencies like the JDA who can facilitate the implementation and development of public facility and environment upgrade projects, it is hard to imagine how such progressive spatial policies would be realised. Dinath (2017) highlights the challenges of precinct plans, that although guidelines are in place, the success of these policies can only be achieved through consistent partnership over time and that it is important to maximise the deliverables of precinct plans when the opportunity exists. However, while the provision allowing communities to prepare Precinct Plans (with the support of JDA, for example) had the potential of bringing planning to the grassroots, it also increased

levels of inequality in the city. It was generally only wealthier communities that could mobilise resources to prepare their own Precinct Plans. Alternatively, a Precinct Plan could be initiated by an agency such as the JDA and prepared using a highly participatory process. However, as we will see, there are similar risks of domination by well-resourced and mobilised segments of the community.

Chapter 5 Case Study, Melville Precinct Plan

5.1 Introduction

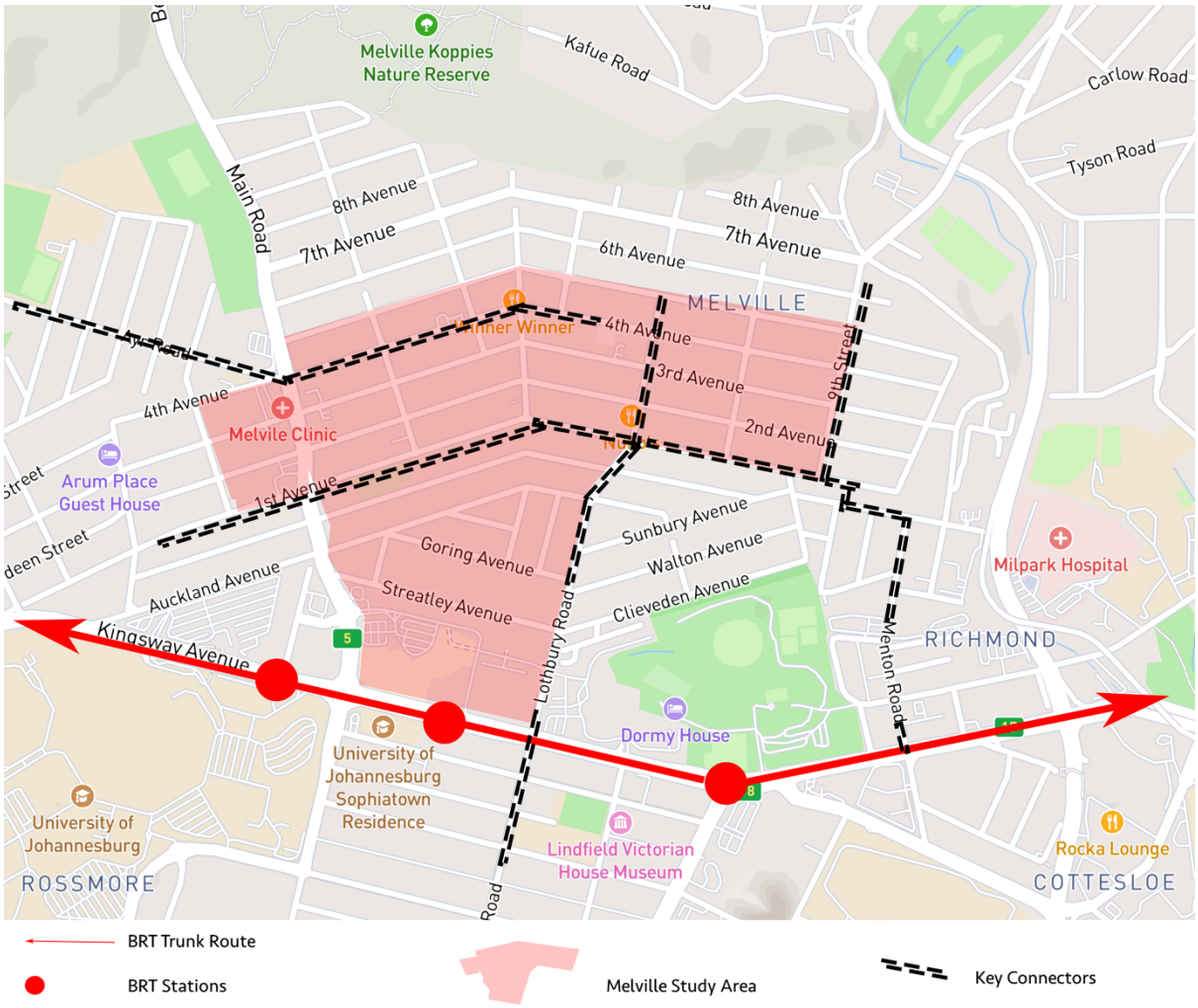


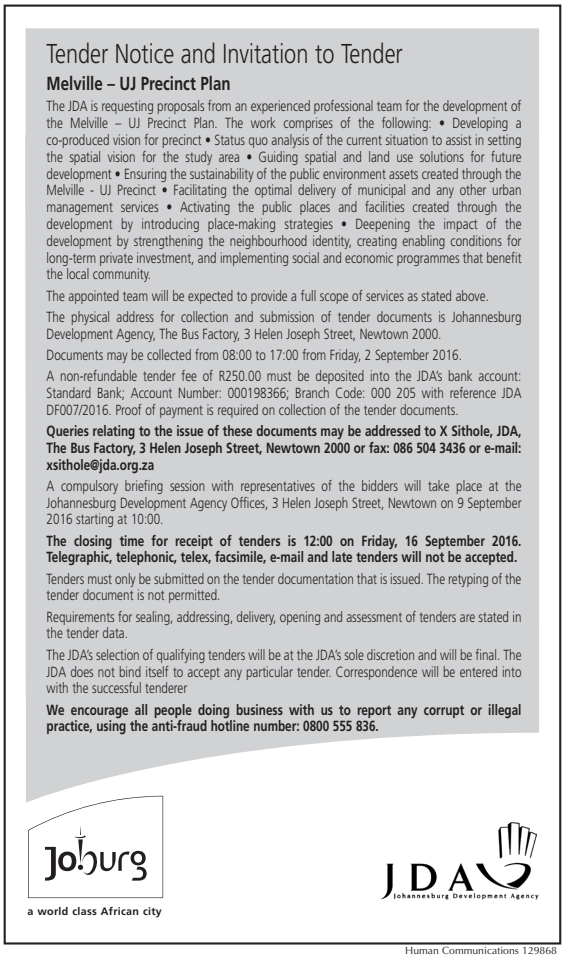
Figure 8: Study area in the project document for the MPP

Melville is a middle-class neighbourhood that is geographically defined by the Melville Koppies on the north side, 1st Avenue on the south edge, Barry Hertzog Avenue on the east side and the M5 also known as Main Road on the western edge. There is a smaller inclusion to the west of Main Road that is bounded by 4th Avenue to the north, 1st Avenue to the south and 1st Street to the west. Although the project scope area does not align with the registered areas of Melville, the JDA client included the suburb of Auckland Park as bounded by Main Road, Lothburg Road and Kingsway Road. The Project scope also excludes Melville to the north of 5th Avenue and east to 9th Avenue. The client's reason for the articulation was that the inclusions to the south towards Kingsway were to demonstrate a relationship to the Corridors of Freedom Project and to focus its efforts on the high streets which are along Lothbury Road,

4^{7th} Street and 4th Avenue because it connects to the main arterial roads. Other significant areas are the Melville Koppies, and the sports grounds on Carlow Road. Several stakeholders were engaged within Melville like the Children of Fire Organisation, Melville Primary School, the Melville Residents Association, and the Melville Security Initiative, the University of Johannesburg, the owners of the Campus Square shopping mall, formal and informal businesses, and there were attempts also to engage groups who were extremely marginalised, including groups of individuals who were living rough.

The tender for the MPP was advertised in 2016 by the JDA. At the time I was a co-director of Urbansoup (Pty) Ltd, who was part of the awarded consortium of the project. My profession, as an architect and academic, has led me to play a role in positive urban change. There were several incentives for me to participate in these roles: firstly, as an architect and to offer my professional services; secondly, as an academic because it offers great value through reflecting as a practitioner, and finally as a resident concerned with looking after my own interests, and those of my family. While there are risks in being so personally close to the subject of my research, which I will try to mitigate, I also have the advantage of insight and knowledge that others may not have.

5.2 Project Definition and Tender



Tender Notice and Invitation to Tender

Melville – UJ Precinct Plan

The JDA is requesting proposals from an experienced professional team for the development of the Melville – UJ Precinct Plan. The work comprises of the following: • Developing a co-produced vision for precinct • Status quo analysis of the current situation to assist in setting the spatial vision for the study area • Guiding spatial and land use solutions for future development • Ensuring the sustainability of the public environment assets created through the Melville - UJ Precinct • Facilitating the optimal delivery of municipal and any other urban management services • Activating the public places and facilities created through the development by introducing place-making strategies • Deepening the impact of the development by strengthening the neighbourhood identity, creating enabling conditions for long-term private investment, and implementing social and economic programmes that benefit the local community.

The appointed team will be expected to provide a full scope of services as stated above.

The physical address for collection and submission of tender documents is Johannesburg Development Agency, The Bus Factory, 3 Helen Joseph Street, Newtown 2000.

Documents may be collected from 08:00 to 17:00 from Friday, 2 September 2016.

A non-refundable tender fee of R250.00 must be deposited into the JDA's bank account: Standard Bank; Account Number: 000198366; Branch Code: 000 205 with reference JDA DF007/2016. Proof of payment is required on collection of the tender documents.

Queries relating to the issue of these documents may be addressed to X Sithole, JDA, The Bus Factory, 3 Helen Joseph Street, Newtown 2000 or fax: 086 504 3436 or e-mail: xsithole@jda.org.za

A compulsory briefing session with representatives of the bidders will take place at the Johannesburg Development Agency Offices, 3 Helen Joseph Street, Newtown on 9 September 2016 starting at 10:00.

The closing time for receipt of tenders is 12:00 on Friday, 16 September 2016. Telegraphic, telephonic, telex, facsimile, e-mail and late tenders will not be accepted.

Tenders must only be submitted on the tender documentation that is issued. The retyping of the tender document is not permitted.

Requirements for sealing, addressing, delivery, opening and assessment of tenders are stated in the tender data.

The JDA's selection of qualifying tenders will be at the JDA's sole discretion and will be final. The JDA does not bind itself to accept any particular tender. Correspondence will be entered into with the successful tenderer

We encourage all people doing business with us to report any corrupt or illegal practice, using the anti-fraud hotline number: 0800 555 836.

Joburg
a world class African city

JDA
Johannesburg Development Agency

Human Communications 129868

Figure 9: Tender Advertisement 2016

The MPP falls within the scope of the Johannesburg Strategic Area Framework (City of Johannesburg, 2016). It is a guiding policy document that sets out the guidelines for post-apartheid planning strategies. It addresses spatial transformation through recommendations to increase economic performance, nodes, transport, housing, resilience and sustainable development. It sets out how various scales of planning are related and the role of the various planning strategies. The precinct plan scale is intended to relate to regional and metropolitan framework policies for consolidated nodal and corridor development for urban form and public space. The MPP feeds into the COF project which is located along the BRT trunk Kingsway and Empire Corridor and forms part of the Knowledge Precinct.

The MPP tender document justifies the project location because of its diverse location within the city, and the benefits to multiple stakeholders including residents, students, businesses and visitors. In addition, the site offers a strong link to the COF project "… the precinct of 7th

Street and 4th Avenue host a wide variety of trendy restaurants, retail facilities and nightclubs. The activity node is dominated by a residential component used largely for student and guest houses due to being a popular tourist destination as well as being closely located to various parts of the City" (JDA, 2016:8). The main objective of the project is that "the service provider will be required to develop a vision and set goals for the Precinct area which will have to be reviewed and endorsed by stakeholders. The vision and goals should serve to guide the outcomes of the plan" (JDA, 2016:8) and detail the following requests:

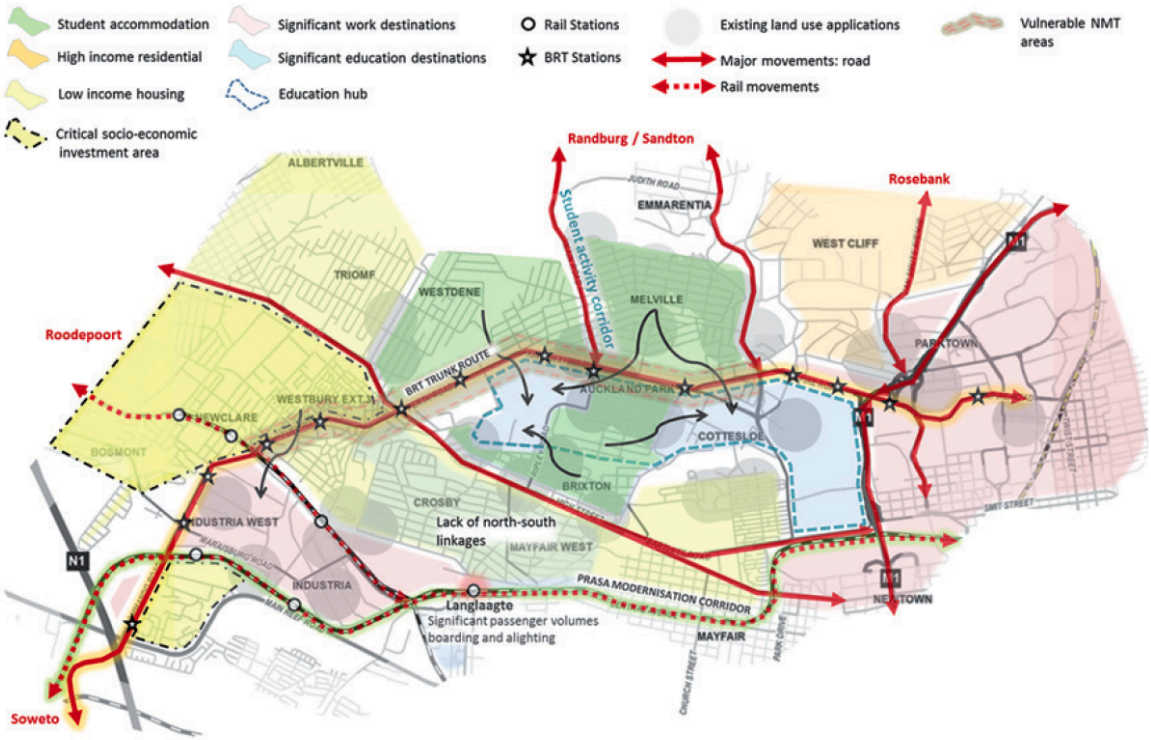


Figure 10: Melville adjacent to the COF project with feeding routes into the corridor

The MPP project required the following scope from consultants:

- The development of a co-produced vision for precinct
- Status quo analysis of the current situation to assist in setting the spatial vision for the study area
- To guide spatial and land use solutions for future development
- To ensure the sustainability of the public environment assets created through the Melville-UJ precinct
- To facilitate the optimal delivery of municipal and any other urban management services
- To activate the public places and facilities created through the development by introducing place-making strategies
- To deepen the impact of the development by strengthening the neighbourhood identity, creating enabling conditions for long-term private investment, and implementing social and economic programmes that benefit the local community.

The team was comprised of multi-disciplines to work together to produce various sections of the deliverables. They were Urban planner as team leaders; Urban designers; Socio-economists; Transport planners; Civil engineers; Urban management specialists; Community participation consultants and Media strategists. The RFP requested the submission of an Urban design guideline, Urban management plan, Activation and implementation plan and an Institutional framework document. It also stipulated that there needs to be a minimum of six workshops with the local stakeholder project steering committee and focus groups; at least two public meetings with wider stakeholders and two testing events.

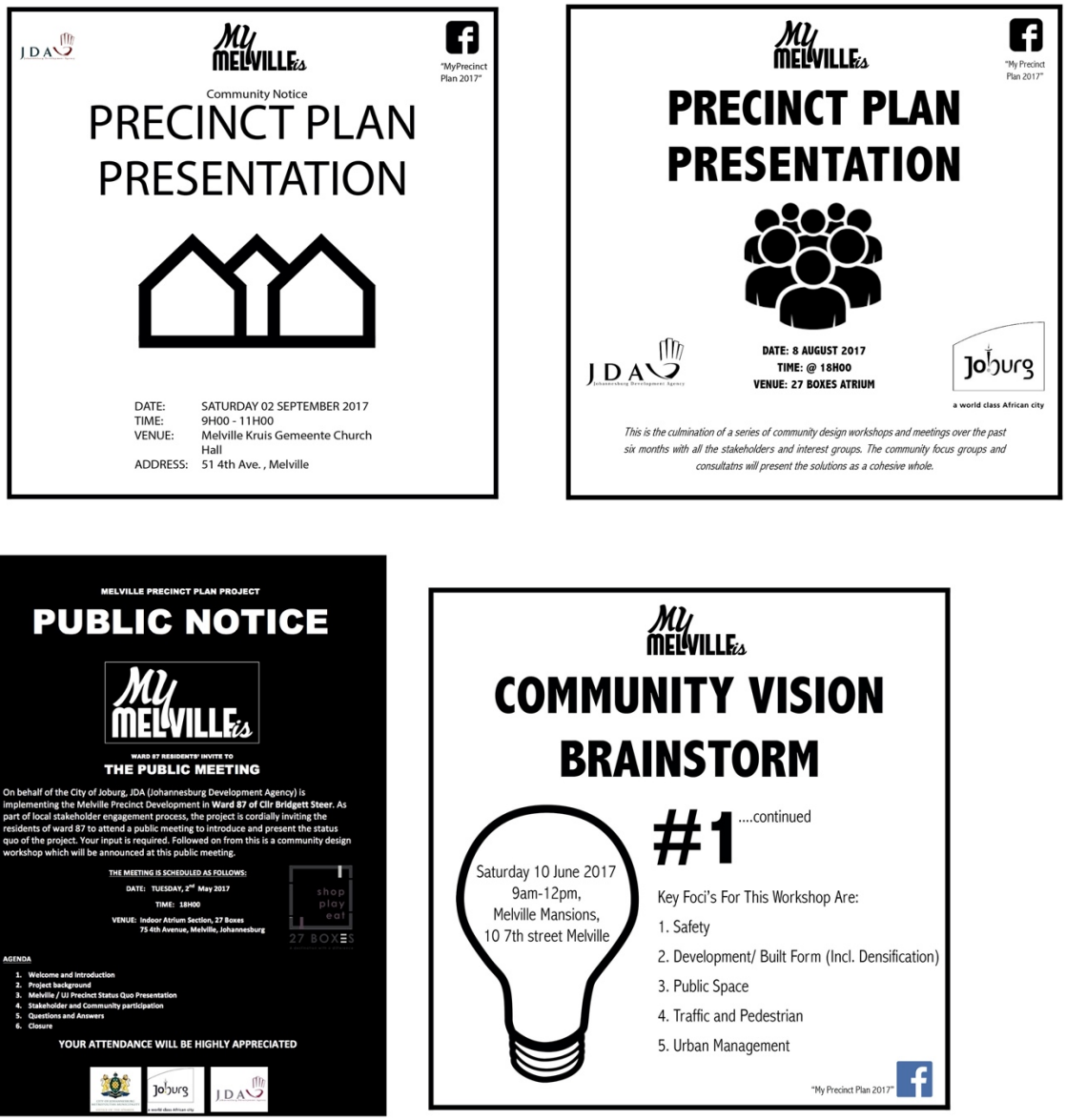


Figure 6: Calls for participation posted on social media, emails and WhatsApp groups

The project was awarded early in 2017. This is a list of the meetings that took place.

	Date	Public meeting purpose	Venue (in Melville)
1	5 April 2017	Inform the MRA of the project	Bread & Roses Bistro, Cnr 7th St & 4th Ave
2	2 May 2017	Initial Community Briefing Meeting	27 Boxes, 4th Avenue
3	27 May 2017	Workshop 1: Brainstorm	Melville Mansions, Cnr 7th St and 2nd Ave
4	6 & 7 June 2017	Vendors and visitors	4th Ave, 7th St and Campus Square

5	10 June 2017	Workshop 2	Melville Mansions, Cnr 7th St. and 2nd Ave
6	24 June 2017	Workshop 3	Main Road walkabout and 27 Boxes, 4th Avenue
7	18 July 2017	Public Space	27 Boxes, 4th Avenue
8	19 July 2017	Movement	27 Boxes, 4th Avenue
9	20 July 2017	Safety	27 Boxes, 4th Avenue
10	25 July 2017	Urban Form	27 Boxes, 4th Avenue
11	26 July 2017	Urban Management	27 Boxes, 4th Avenue
12	2 Sept 2017	Precinct Plan Presentation	Melville Kruis Gemeente Church Hall
13	10 April 2018	Precinct Plan Presentation	Marks Park

5.3 Initial Community Briefing Meeting: 27 Boxes

The professional team was briefed by the client (JDA) before the first community meeting to clarify all logistics and deliverables. It was agreed that the professional team would have their first briefing with the public on 2 May 2017 and that the project manager would arrange the venue and communications to the Ward Councillor and the public. It was agreed that each member of the professional team would conduct a desktop study of the Melville Precinct and present it as the status quo at the first community briefing meeting. This was a challenging task because, on one hand, the team, not from Melville, needed to present a technical profile of the neighbourhood and had to add value to engagement by presenting information that was fairly novel to the community. On the other hand, the community are experts of the neighbourhood within themselves, and the consultants therefore run the risk of discrediting themselves and their reputation if they misrepresent information on the first engagement.

The central atrium of 27 Boxes filled up quickly on the night of the first community briefing meeting at 18h00 on 2 May. It was a crisp autumn evening. The client from the JDA welcomed the community and began to frame the objective of the project. He then gave each consultant a turn to present a short status quo of our knowledge and expertise. Collectively, we, the consultants, painted the picture that Melville is centrally located with walkable streets, but due to a lack of businesses, we tend to be fairly vehicle-orientated commuting to work. Limited public parks but a permeable street network make the area open to 'rat-racing' during peak hours with dark streets at night due to limited lighting for safety.

Once the consultants' presentations were done, responses from participants were requested. The responses ranged from being positive about the project to being pessimistic and critical. The JDA representative addressed the attendees and explained what a precinct is, the requirements from the city and the requirements from the community.

5.4 Workshop 1 and the Community Responses

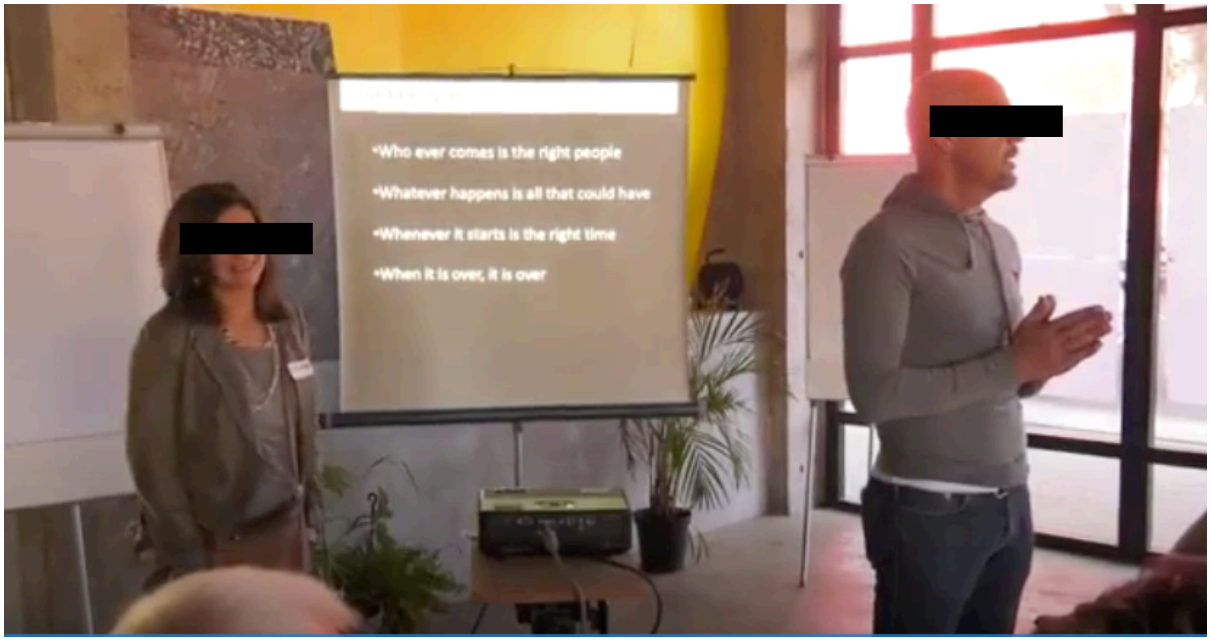


Figure 12: Co-facilitators and JDA representatives introducing the MPP

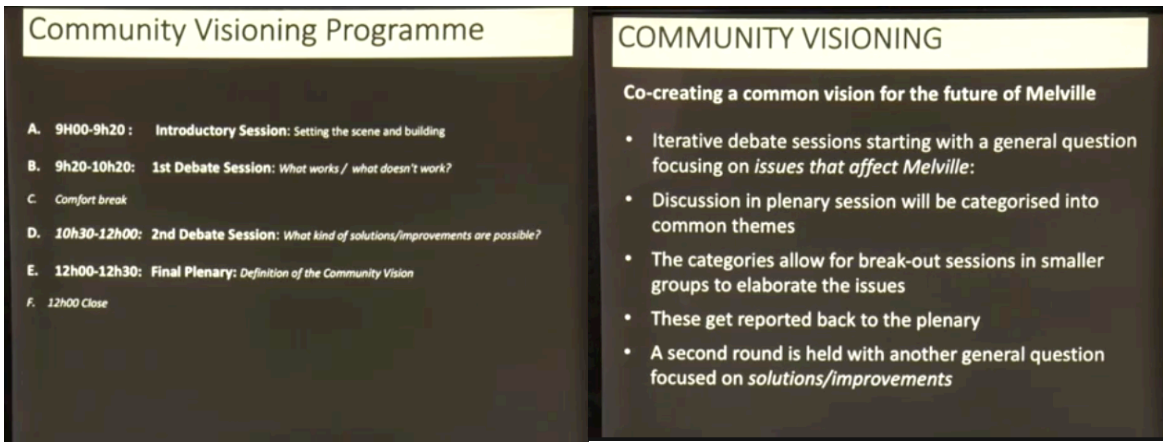


Figure 13: Structure of the first community design participation

Community Workshop 1 was advertised via the MRA, social media and physical posters on walls and light posts in Melville. It was held on 26 May 2017 at Melville Mansions on the corners of 7th Street and 4th Avenue in Melville. About 50 people attended and it was held in

a vacant shop unit. At the beginning of that session, I introduced myself as the face of the project and established my credentials. I then framed the short-term, medium-term and long-term goals of the session and project and contextualised that this project stems from the COF project and that it supports the spatial framework policy of the city to create an efficient corridor and that 7th Street and the broader Melville area feeds into that movement system. I also introduced the JDA representative, the client who is representing the COJ, and a community member who co-facilitated the workshop. She is an urban spatial practitioner and resident of Melville.

Co-facilitator reminded everyone that this was a brainstorming session that we would be facilitating the sessions and that the community would be coming up with the strategies. She stated we would not find the solution on day one, but that we would collect the data physically and online and send out a report with an analysis and proposition. She explained that there would be more focused sessions as well as information gathered from stakeholders who cannot attend the physical sessions- this does not discount the legitimacy of virtual engagement. Also known as Open Source Technology, Civic or Space Technologies, this online format is informal, and she emphasised that we could discuss and engage with it. (*Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1*, 2017:00.06.33). Space Technologies is a method that facilitates and enhances interaction, collaboration and participation through various technological-based platforms. The objective is to transparency and decision making. It allows transparency, collaboration, change and inclusivity. The idea behind technology is to create a more interactive and transparent relationship between citizens and civic organizations whether they are government-related or not, to bypass ineffective bureaucracies (Gordon and Lopez, 2019:57)

The purpose of this section is to develop a deeper understanding of the core and peripheral issues that were raised in Workshop 1. Some issues pertained to soliciting suggestions of what the precinct plan could look like. Two types of issues were raised and discussed: issues that addressed the vision of Melville, which were acknowledged and documented by the scriber; and peripheral issues that raised broader questions about the project itself, the COJ's and the technical team's intentions.

The community equally expressed both positive and negative observations of the engagement session, which means there is a multi-narrative. Community response 1 is an advocate and a member of the MRA and immediately unpacked his fear and cast doubt on the process and the city. He asked for evidence and painted a grim picture of what the future urban could look like if it failed and spoke directly to the homeowners' worst nightmare – that is to have decreased property value and degenerating urban decay. The JDA representative responded to the community's questions and reassured the participant that the engagement process is a continual one and ideas will continue to be fed into the project. (*Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1*, 2017:00.12).

5.5 Urban Issues Raised by the Residents

The brainstorming session ensued with La Mantia drawing issues from the participants and the scriber making notes. The meeting addressed the deliverables of the first workshops and the following issues were raised: safety for visitors when parking; Rustenburg Road embankment requires structural attention because it's collapsing; pedestrianisation access requires prioritising because it has pedestrian connections, but gates are often locked; safety on the Rustenburg Road for cyclists is limited and dangerous and requires thought; noise levels of cars on the corner of 4th Avenue and 9th Street; 6th Street has become a thoroughfare and there is opportunistic crime; the need for inclusive dialogue for developments like 27 Boxes and Campus Square; the displaced community on Main Road requires intervention from the city; drag racing is a problem along Main Road on a Sunday; development attracts traffic and the roads are at capacity; lack of public space like parks; maintaining the Melville character is important; more development brings more businesses and can we have control over the bylaws of creating negative socialising at bars etc.; there are too many communes; there is a lack of public space; lack of public amenities; school population being bussed into Melville unlike Parktown where residents send their kids to the schools in the area bringing a social capital to the area; looking into the sports field.

> *A participant who is also an architect and academic stated that "densification makes the community nervous because they have a negative reference due to the way that the project is executed. He suggested that a way to mitigate is that is there was a design committee that could review the design to mitigate*

negative development. The JDA representative stated that "the urban design guidelines need to be developed through the participative process. The guidelines are binding" (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:00.58.00)

An MRA member (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:00.01.00) stated that a poorly devised PP that grants higher densities facilitates the ease of granting individual applications later on because the 'community' granted it through the PP. The participant stated that his worry is allowing densities now leads to natural density later.

The JDA Representative stated (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:01.00.04) "Government and the people so mistrust each other that nobody believes what the other says" and reassured the participants that the JDA "does not have a (specific) dream for Melville" … "tell us what your dream is so that we can reduce it into a plan so that the stakeholders, residents and businesspeople can take ownership of that dream and then with the city, implement that particular dream – there is nothing from the city, there is just a generic SAF that exists. This is distinct from the previous ways in which the city develops plans, that is to come to Melville, show them the plan and let them comment in 28 days."

The MRA member (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:01.15.04) The JDA representative, responded to a participant who asked when the plan was complete, will the community have an opportunity to respond because 27 Boxes were built without consensus. The JDA representative stated that Section 79 states that if there is sufficient consensus it will be reconsidered, however, another participant was concerned about what 'sufficient consensus' means. The participant wanted to know "Do we have more say?"

Another member, also an architect and academic (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:01.19.23), stated "One of the conceptual issues that the participant grappled with was the fact that development already is in motion and that the PP is a mechanism to manage and control that development. Contrasting ideas of the conservative participants articulated that allowing a PP to develop fosters development and provides a 'green light' to development – it sends the message that development is encouraged. One participant stated that the reason why Campus Square and 27 Boxes were built was the absence of a PP and if a PP were to be in place it would be able to articulate this. This topic was a heated debate and formed the foundation of the understanding of a PP. The three storeys and cottage living were part of the previous dispensation."



Figure 14: Participants in Workshop 1

5.6 What Unfolded in Workshop 1

Several things unfolded at this first brainstorming community participative workshop. Firstly, MRA committee members stated that they have a mandate from the residents of Melville, Secondly that the MRA proposed that the workshops be postponed so they could have an opportunity to have more members of the MRA at this first brainstorming session(Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:00.09). A representative from the MRA noted that they "want to be acknowledged" (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:00.13) when they wrote to the technical team (Annexure A) and the COJ. When reassured that they received information from the technical team, the representative from the MRA re-pronounced that "they did not get acknowledged" from the client from the project. The presence of the MRA was very important to the representatives of the MRA. Participant identity, affiliation and agendas were therefore the first items to be discussed. This is important to understand because the workshop intended to establish ideas for a new vision, it was important to know

'who is talking', what their bias is, and how the resources of the building are appended in the end. Secondly, there were very diverse interests, like businesses and residents who were concerned about upgrades and pedestrianisation. Thirdly, the COJ client and technical team were aware that getting access to all the stakeholders in one meeting would not be possible and that public participation is a continuum, and there are multiple ways, both active and passive, in which voices can be included in the participatory process over time.

A community participant reminded the client that the precinct plan is governed by the SAF, and they wanted to learn more about it, but the SAF is not available online and this raises questions about transparency (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:00.46). The resident did find a draft SAF that portrays a generic application of policy firstly, and secondly is lacking in being specific about the identification of where densification can happen. The community respondent echoed a previous participant (Melville PP Community Brainstorm Session 1, 2017:00.37) and questioned why Melville was the target of densification and not vacant parcels of land along the COF. The JDA representative agreed and requested that the correct information be shared, but he also reassured the participant that the SAF is high level.

An additional query that a community participant raised was the representation of the COF SAF map. The community participant stated that he was part of the COF stakeholder meetings. The map that is being used to contextualise the densification did not originate from the COF stakeholder engagement and he demanded that the map be removed from the discussions.

5.7 Community Participation Workshop 2

Workshop 1 generated several high-tension issues where clarifications were established, biases were declared, and there was even a request to stop the MPP by the MRA. The lengthy discursive dialogue about definitions, bias and concepts occupied most of Workshop 1. Workshop 2 was held two weeks later on 10 June 2017 at the same venue because Workshop 1 required time to establish clarity. It was an extension of Workshop 1. In Workshop 2 – the extension – there was an easier transition into the workshop and it was productive in terms of participant engagement and developing and documenting a list of issues they had been identified in the area. The five sub-committees that emerged through this workshop were

urban form, public space, safety, movement and urban management. Participants who were interested in any of those sub-categories could participate in those groups for the duration of the workshop. At the end of Workshop 2 (extended), participants presented their ideas for the vision of Melville within those categories or portfolios. Those groups exchanged contact details and were tasked to host a stand-alone workshop and expand on the engagement. These meetings took place on weekday evenings from 18 to 26 July 2017 at 27 Boxes.

5.8 Community Participation Workshop 3

Before entering the focus group stage, Workshop 3 was held on 24 June at 27 Boxes. This workshop is intended to provide the community with another opportunity to engage with what has been established up till then in the previous workshops and to further develop the vision of Melville. It was a stock-taking forum of what had already been presented to solicit more contributions, and also to bring the workshop stages to a close. However, before the workshop, the participants agreed to take a physical walk together along Main Road to discuss issues of urban form, public space and safety. They felt that it was important to walk on-site together to ensure consensus. This was a very innovative suggestion that allowed the learning process to be expanded between the participants, the technical team and the client. Issues that surfaced on the walk were the displaced community sleeping on the pavement, the speed of traffic and safety of Main Road, the incoherent language of the shops and colonnades, the maintenance of the pedestrian walkways and the lack of landscaping.

The intention of Workshop 3 was to generate a nuanced and detailed spatial vision. At the beginning of the workshop, the Ward Councillor made a short presentation in which she encouraged participants to be prescriptive about safety, schools and urban form because it helped her to feed that into the IDP process. The Ward Councillor also highlighted that the MPP project was not a quick fix, but that she could negotiate with the city. She reminded participants that it was their own idea, their vision.

One participant from the MRA again requested that Workshop 3 be postponed because the MRA AGM would happen the following month and the MRA would be more representative of

Melville. Two participants disagreed, saying that Workshop 3 should continue, that the session was not only about the residents.

The stakeholders continued to participate in the following groups: urban form, movement, public space and safety. Various ideas and suggestions were workshopped and presented in groups. For example, the 'urban form' group were concerned about the quality of Main Road. The group proposed landscaping, traffic calming, and parking behind the commercial edge to buffer the residential areas. This group was also concerned with 4th Avenue's walkability, disabled access and child-friendly sidewalks (*JDA Melville Precinct Plan Brainstorm Session 3*, 2017). The group that presented 'movement' (this also includes traffic) was conflicted about whether to pedestrianise 7th Street and whether parking spaces could be allocated to 27 Boxes. Cycle lanes and level pedestrian sidewalks were also discussed. The group who spoke to 'public space' identified the need for a family play park, widening of sidewalks and the role that the CSIR site could play.

5.9 Sub-committee Groups

The purpose of the sub-committee was to drill down into the technical issues, approve the draft plans and develop a strategy for testing them. Over the four days, from 18 to 26 July 2017, focus group meetings were held. The average number of participants who showed interest was five to ten participants. This process was intended to draw out the experts and have more focused discussions. The technical team and clients were present at each meeting to moderate. The public space (*Focus Group Appraisal – Public Space*, 2017) group met first on 18 July 2017 and identified a sports precinct, converting aspects of the streets to public spaces and increasing public space. The movement group met on 19 July 2017 (*Focus Group Appraisal – Movement, Jul 26, 2017*) and mapped out the promotion of walkable streets, partial closing and one-way streets to improve traffic flow. They also considered informal traders, tuk-tuk driver parking and Uber collection which required waiting and rubbish facilities (*Focus Group Appraisal – Movement, Jul 26, 2017:00:41:21*). The safety focus group took place on 20 July 2017 (*Melville PP Focus Group Appraisal – Safety*, 2017) and developed a plan for visible policing, space for recyclers, car guards, better general lighting. In the urban form focus group, one participant who represents the MRA discouraged the technical team from limiting the

high four-to-six-storeyed buildings (*Focus Group Appraisal - Urban Form*, 2017:15:38). He requested that we maintain the mandate. The participant argued that a six-storey building should be the limit and argued that the project mandate was not to affect building heights. The client from the JDA stated the urban form committee could come to an agreement and densification along Main Road is open to interpretation and that it could be written into the MPP.

The working groups were valuable because they allowed stakeholders who were only interested in the aspect of Melville being considered to contribute to that discussion. It was not only more informal, but it was also technically focused and tangible.

5.10 Presentation of All Sub-committees Ideas and Projects

Zérah (2007:62) reflects on the concept of "who's vision" is it? To this point, there was true collaboration in the visualisation of the MPP. The penultimate presentation was presented by myself on 2 September 2017 at the Kruis Gemeente Church in Melville. The purpose of this engagement was, firstly, to present an overview of all participatory input that had been documented up to that point. Comments received from the community were, for example making 2nd, 3rd and 4th Avenues one-way roads to discourage tuk-tuks from breaking the law if they parked at 27 Boxes (*Melville Precinct Plan: Community Presentation by JDA*, 2017:00.43). Creating one-way systems does not encourage traffic congestion. However, participants were not averse to testing the one-way systems (*Melville Precinct Plan: Community Presentation by JDA*, 2017:00.44). The response to the pedestrianisation was that it could negatively affect existing formal trading (*Melville Precinct Plan: Community Presentation by JDA*, 2017:00.44). A participant said they welcome informal traders and they are part of our economy, but they need to abide by the same bylaws. I encouraged participants to consider the potential of street food that could create diversity. Another participant stated that older people have the money and the attraction for younger people might need to be discouraged (*Melville Precinct Plan: Community Presentation by JDA*, 2017:00.55). The question was what were we trying to address? The JDA representative responded that the aim was liveability, i.e. people before cars (*Melville Precinct Plan: Community Presentation by JDA*, 2017:00.58).

An additional issue that an MRA member was concerned about was the demonstration of how Lothbury Avenue meets Kingsway Avenue, which is the COF trunk. As architects, we represented a four-storey building on the corner of Lothbury Avenue. The MRA participant questioned why there was a large building showing and wanted to know which discussion they were mentioned in because he was at all the meetings and he had never heard that discussion (*Melville Precinct Plan: Community Presentation by JDA*, 2017:01.03). Another participant claimed she made the suggestion. I exclaimed that it was to demonstrate how the building at the Lothbury and Kingsway intersection could have a more urban connection to create a transition. The MRA participant requested both processed and hand-written notes from all the meetings (*Melville Precinct Plan: Community Presentation by JDA*, 2017:01.26).

5.11 Testing the Interventions

One of the MPP deliverables in the scope for the consultants was to institute the urban scale testing. The workshops produced a series of ideas that would orientate the public space towards more pedestrianisation. This exercise intended to test and evaluate both quantifiably and qualitatively a variety of models that came from the residents' input. The testing was conducted over two weekends and was focused on two areas established in the testing phase, i.e. how public space was impacted if its footprint was expanded on 7th street and vehicular movement along 7th street, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th avenues. In cooperation with the Johannesburg Metro Police Department (JMPD), the first was held on a Saturday morning.

To restrict vehicular movement along 7th street (high street) both in city block phases as well as by completely blocking off. This encouraged pedestrians to walk freely along the street. Temporary trees were brought in and restaurants placed their furniture in the street in the parking bays. This test proved to be a significant success, although, in hindsight, a survey should have been used to capture perceptions.

Another phased test dealt with the challenges of vehicular movement along 1st, 2nd and 3rd Avenue. The facilitating of one-way traffic is intended to ease vehicular traffic flow and make it easier for residents to access their properties during peak times. The Traffic Engineer documented this data and also proved that one-way traffic was more efficient, however, access into the roads would need to be demarcated for exit and entry.

5.12 Changing of Consultants

After the testing of the interventions, an internal consultant issue arose. Although it is not pertinent to democracy and this thesis, it is important to note that new urban practitioners replaced our team. However, there was a request that I remain as an individual consultant, but I declined. The new urban practitioners were disadvantaged because they had not experienced the community workshops, but the client has given the reassurance that all the data and translations of the community participatory workshops were indeed transferred.

5.13 Conclusion

Prior to the workshops, in the weeks leading up to the participatory planning sessions, several groups of stakeholders were engaged. First, street vendors were approached and, second, formal businesses and students at Campus Square shopping centre were engaged. The stakeholders were asked to identify which areas on a map of Melville were the safest. Colourful dots were used creating a dot-matrix map of urban areas that require attention for safety. Formal Businesses was further engaged in a formal meeting to discuss issues of public space, safety and potentially developing a City Improvement District.

In the workshops, there were several group identity stakeholders engaged. First, at the briefing workshop at the 27 Boxes venue, there was a variety of stakeholders that included residents and business owners. At the subsequent focused workshops, a smaller group attended and they were mainly constituted out of the MRA, residents. Finally, in the feedback sessions, the participants were mostly residents who included academics and those working in the built environment professions.

To develop a comprehensive understanding of what the middle-class neighbourhood of Melville envisions through this community participatory process, the JDA must engage stakeholders 'deep and wide', provide sufficient authorship to the stakeholders and provide sufficient guidelines to contextualise the ideas of the community. Firstly, although the participants in the participatory process were mostly residents, other stakeholders like businesses and informal traders were engaged- not to the same degree and shape as the

participation workshops. It is important to note that although the workshops were advertised and open to the public, it doesn't mean all the stakeholders will attend and therefore more diverse forms of engagement over longer periods could be useful to get a clearer account of a democratic vision. Secondly, representatives of the MRA were overtly represented- not by the number of representations, but by how vocal the association was in the workshops. Although they were very engaged, it was also clear that the MRA was a resistant grouping to any change and the MPP as a project. Thirdly, the process that the workshops followed was very useful for us, as consultants to specialise the diverse needs of the stakeholders and resulted in a useful and robust debate that, in the end, was agreeable to most participants.

Chapter 6 Reflecting on the MPP

6.1 Introduction

The MPP community participation project proved to be an ambitious and challenging endeavour taken up by JDA. It is commendable that representatives from the City and the broader State have committed themselves to engaging with its citizens to broaden democracy (Head, 2007). The urban issues that were raised as important to challenge were Safety and security, Urban Densification, Pedestrian and Vehicular movement and finally the environment. This tends to align with Bénit-Gbaffou's (2008:6) findings on the northern Johannesburg middle-class suburbs. This suggests that these concerns are a trend in that order. The middle-class community of Melville demonstrated a diverse range of engagement appetite, which brings us back to Head's (2017) comment that communities are not homogenous.

Cornwall (2008) states that although Arnstein's 1969 ladder of participation is useful for understanding participatory typologies, it is normative because it fails to deepen the citizen control tiers and it is limited in describing the extent to which participation is implicated in power and wealth. Concerning the MPP, in terms of Arnstein's ladder this case study of Melville falls within 'citizen control' because the participants were encouraged to not only articulate a new urban vision, but were also requested to suggest new revisions to the spatial policies, there is a more complex story The JDA certainly encouraged the stakeholders to strengthen local control over development, including to develop a City Improvement District[1] (CID) in which they can continue to sustain an influence over the management of the neighbourhood (Cornwall, 2008:273). However, it was equally clear that the MPP had to be consistent with City policies, which included the Corridors of Freedom, an initiative that aimed at strategic densification along major public transport routes, including parts of Melville. Positioning land use, and specifically densification, as a sphere of influence with participants subsequently was the central contentious part of the MPP project because it was misinterpreted as an opportunity to change the density of Melville that would encourage undesirable land uses such as high-rise student residences.

[1] A Central Improvement District is a non-profit organization created by owners within a defined geographic area who pay a levy to maintain and service the urban environment and receive a discount off their propery rates in return from the city.

It is possible to have multiple forms of participation in one project, either simultaneously or at stepped stages in the process (Cornwall, 2008:274). Cornwall (2008) diverts attention to Pretty's (1995:9) expanded ladder of participation. The top three tiers of Pretty's (1995) participation ladder are 'functional participation': interactive groups working on projects in a defined scope set out by the state; 'interactive participation' … "People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions" (Pretty,1995:9) with a say over resources and, finally, the most intricate is 'self-mobilisation', which fosters the ability to maintain power over resources, but plays a significant continued role in sustaining power and self-motivation to influence their wealth.

The forms of civic participation can range from very deep and wide to shallow and narrow – with any of those combinations. Literature suggests that no participation process is the same and there is no standard practice. Cornwall (2008) leans on Farrington and Bebbington's 1993 "simple axis to assess forms of participation according to depth and breadth" Cornwall (2008:274). A tool to measure and assess the level and effectiveness of participation is much needed and would be very useful. The MPP developed a deep participatory process in the sense that significant urban, social, economic, movement and management matters of the urban environment were engaged with at length. The process engaged schools, businesses, street vendors, NGOs and students by approaching them separately. And yet, participation remained oriented towards certain segments of the community, limiting its inclusiveness.

Although the MPP workshops were advertised on social media and street lampposts, the main attendees of the MPP workshops and presentations were home-owning residents. When some businesses were asked to attend the workshops, they responded by saying that they were not available on Saturday mornings and weekday evenings. Other stakeholders were not asked the reason for their attendance. Therefore, the reasons why stakeholders other than residents attended have not been established and it is necessary to reconceptualise how we engage because if stakeholders cannot attend a physical community engagement session, there is little chance that they will give their input. Similarly, elderly people, children and visitors would be excluded from the process (Cornwall 2008:276). However, the lack of broad-based participation cannot be ascribed only to questions of logistics. Those who were confident that

they had a voice in the process were more likely to participate. There was however also the question of rootedness and interest with homeowners intending to remain in the area more likely to participate than those who are more transient such as students. The problem here is that students as a group have a long-term future in Melville even if individual students are transient.

6.2 Breaking the MPP Down

In conclusion to the MPP process – firstly, the project intention and scope were under significant review by some of the stakeholders. Some stakeholders demonstrated their discord, especially the MRA, with the project because they felt that urban development would encourage undesirable higher densities that would not only encourage student residences but also compromise the architectural heritage of Melville. These concerns were voiced in the context of the COF's project whose intention was also to create undesirable densification and therefore simply generated a lack of trust in the State, the city and the JDA. Secondly, representation was a substantial feature in the MPP. Many stakeholders were engaged through the lifespan of the project and a democratic political landscape needs to exercise multiple voices. Although Community Participant (2022) reflects on how "less rootedness could equate to less desire to participate", he states that there will need to be some rethinking about how to achieve robust participation with stakeholders. However, the Community Participant (2022), JDA Representative (2022) and Ward Councillor (2002) all agree that there was an extensive and overly pronounced representation of the MRA with its ownership and rate-paying base. Thirdly, with the changing of the urban consultants, although the core project scope was similar (Community Participant, 2022), a shift occurred in the project focus. Amongst other things, the new consultants placed less emphasis on the data collected at the community workshops and focus groups and paid more attention to urban design forms and principals of private property (Community Participant, 2022). As a whole, the MPP did not develop sufficient design and technical detail (Ward Councillor, 2022) to inform the implementation phase. Finally**,** although the project was exhaustive, the MPP has not been adopted by the city because the document was not entirely accepted by the MRA (JDA Representative, 2022; Ward Councillor, 2022). This delay in adoption with additional policies that were published by the city requires further alignment and creates further questions about how integrated and aligned

the MPP is. This chapter intends to reflect and contextualise the MPP about all the complex intertwining of State obligations, spatial policies and community development.

6.3 Scope and Intention of the Project

The question 'What are people participating in?' is the central part of this discussion. The MPP project was framed by the JDA and the project intended to dovetail into the COF project. However, Head (2007:450) reminds us that there can often be a sense of State vagueness. In addition, precinct plans to date have not been part of the vocabulary of the neighbourhood and therefore more conservative groups of the middle-class community of Melville were more concerned about the process. As Head (2017) states, one of the by-products of civic engagement is education, and the consultancy team, through time, distributed more information about the MPP. Ward Councillor (2022) and Community Participant (2022) both agree that education and communication are valuable aspects to incorporate into the participatory process to avoid inefficient engagement.

As previously argued, context played a significant role in the MPP. The post-apartheid government's national vision and the COF have negatively impacted the MPP. Conservative participants like those from the MPP and others recollected the COF, for example, and expressed dissatisfaction with the potential impact that densification has on land use, traffic, safety and general urban decay. Additional projects that some stakeholders were unhappy about included a site in Auckland Park behind Campus Square on which a five-storey student residence was planned and built despite the residents' protests. This is what Robertson, McIntosh and Smyth (2010) describe as 'path dependency' when previous socio-historical events affect stakeholders' views on current projects. Although some stakeholders were not too aware of the precinct plan process, some stakeholders used their professional aptitude to argue against expanding the scope of the project, despite instances when the consensus among stakeholders was to extend development for the sake of continuity. Stakeholders who were against any form of urban development, were suspicious of the JDA's plans, asked consultants to 'stick to the brief' to limit the intentions of the MPP and it was a strategic manoeuvre by the more skilled participants who were mostly represented by the MRA.

6.4 Who Participated: Depth and Breadth

The debate on depth and breadth of inclusion is an important consideration in the formation and upholding of democracy. Although it can be agreed that there can never be enough depth in participation, achieving breadth of civic participation – including everyone – is a logistical challenge. The limitation could result in a narrow scope of interested voices giving input to the process. Ballard (2018:179) states that ward meetings at the local level can tend to attract local elites and gatekeepers. In addition, to what degree are they misrepresenting their own opinions than a community? Roy (2009:160) offers insight into "civic governmentality" in which she questions the possibility of the institutionalisation of inclusion. What happens if there is "civic governmentality related to more rebellious forms of citizenship and mobilization?" "What is the dialectical movement between insurgency and institutionalization?" "How is the ideal formalized in regimes of civic governmentality but then disrupted and challenged by new and more radical forms of inclusion?" Roy (2009:160). In other words, where does cooperation begin and end and where does governmentality begin?

In the public meetings, the participants demonstrated a deep engagement with the State and although there was a plethora of voices that participated in multiple physical and virtual ways, there was a consistent concern voiced by the MRA about urban development in Melville. Some of the participants (not all) openly declared that their concerns are one of the broader MRA committee. The concerns ranged in scale and focus. There was, what I term, a general concern of resistance and decline from some residents, mostly within the MRA. The first symbol of non-engagement was the request to meet the technical team before the project began. This was a special meeting that the MRA requested, arranged by the Ward Councillor for myself and the client to brief the MRA. The MRA had strong and influencing power over the residents and by agreeing to the first briefing, I was under the impression that the first MRA meeting would facilitate a more productive relationship between the MRA, the technical team and the JDA. In fact, it made no real positive impact in the participative process. The second sign of resistance to engage the State was based on communication from the MRA stated in the first workshop. The MRA was requesting formal information from the JDA before the workshops could go ahead. The MRA expressed their dissatisfaction in the first workshop because they were not

acknowledged and their request for information did not have any impact on the process. The third sign of disengagement was a strong request at the first workshop to postpone the community engagement workshops because they felt that there was not enough constituency. The JDA and the technical team reassured the MRA that engagement is a continuum and engagement would be included throughout the community engagement process. Fourth, at the focus groups and the MPP presentation, the technical team's mandate was challenged regarding their scope, so if the RFP was explicitly part of the scope, the MRA would challenge the validity of any interventions that fell outside that scope. The MRA also challenged any interventions that were not supported by a professional heritage or traffic study. If any intervention did not conclusively demonstrate a lack of or need for it, the MRA would reject it. A final expression of dissatisfaction with the process was captured in a letter sent to the JDA and the Ward Councillor after the community design process. The Ward Councillor responded to the letter (See annexe) and conceded that density was not to be included in the MPP final document. At this point, it became clear that a wider collection of voices was needed from visitors, employees, businesses, students and the living rough community because the MPP workshops were dominated by the MRA committee.

Koo (1991:486) states that the struggle of middle-class formation and democratisation struggles are synonymous with the role that the middle class plays. Stakeholder groups within the elite middle-class communities tend to develop a more territorial approach to their neighbourhood. The MRA is considered to be one of the few invited spaces of participation where "allied non-governmental organizations are legitimized by donors and government interventions" (Miraftab, 2004:1). The issues surrounding participation come down to "rootedness" (Community Participant, 2022). This Community Participant means that he questions how to force a tenant on a short lease, for example, living in a backyard cottage to invest time to attend these community participation sessions. Advertising and canvasing were the responsibility of a relations consultant. However, the budget and time available for communications were limited. Communications of the participation opportunities, both physical and virtual, needed to be scaled up substantially to address the issues of not being informed timeously or including a wider cohort of participants. With the MPP, consultants were tasked with the responsibility of contacting and accessing all the stakeholders. This was an onerous task and not entirely successful. Depth and breadth require strategising. According

to Ward Councillor (2022), stakeholders should hold their own internal engagements and table limited and framed issues. This will not only ensure that stakeholder groups mostly agree on what they present, but according to Ward Councillor (2022), the city has limited capacity to ensure the scale of participation. Because consultants are motivated by financial incentives and time, the scope of inclusion becomes a negotiable area.

> *As a consultant, I was overwhelmed by the onerous task of capturing a scale of concerns, input, critique, ideas and concepts and synthesising them into an urban vision. The quantity of material information is challenging to capture into a spatial qualitative image.*

In agreement with Cornwall (2008) "closer attention to who is participating, in what and for whose benefit" appears to be one of the substantial elements that diminishes democracy.

6.5 What the Precinct Plan Delivered

The structuring of the public meetings was ostensibly robust and comprehensive because the participatory process spanned over a year and there were over 15 formal meetings and workshops held for the community to attend and to participate, and these were publicly advertised. Several focus group meetings were also held with the local schools, NGOs and informal traders. The type of engagement ranged from very practical concerns and ideas to abstract issues that required further engagement with specific city departments and stakeholders. It was a challenge to specialise in some of these, such as the concerns for addressing the displaced community. However, even a robustly designed process such as this could not resolve the issue of conclusion. Simply put, not all segments of Melville society were represented and some were not at all. While it is true that an individual homeowner in Melville has a longer term and more vested interest than an individual with a short-term lease in backroom accommodation, as group backroom renters are a long-term feature of Melville. The MPP was not usefully concluded because the MRA, as a legitimate participatory body refused to accept the deviations of the project in terms of scope, scale and suggestions to density. This is currently being negotiated between the MRA and the JDA. However, aspects of the plan that have been achieved were the ability to work as a community towards a common goal, co-learning experiences and clarifying positions and agendas.

> *While the MPP has been trying to be approved, still being negotiated. It's been 5 years and apart from COVID, the city published new policies not mentioning the precinct planning and urban management, nodal policy, land use scheme, inclusionary housing policy, and green buildings. (Ward Councillor 2022,34.10)*

It has been established by the Ward Councillor (2022) and the JDA Representative (2022) that the MPP has not been adopted by the council for several reasons. The MRA is disputing references about densification while simultaneously COVID and the policy publication of other policies have outdated the MPP. Through the interviews of Community Participants (2022) and Ward Councillors (2022), it has been highlighted that the MPP was successful in some regards while it exhibited some failures as well. We are reminded by the JDA Representative (2022) that the MPP was one of the first precinct plans to be developed in the city. It was a steep learning curve for the JDA, the consultants, the stakeholders and the Ward Councillor. The JDA Representative (2022) expressed that much has been improved upon through subsequent precinct plans since then. In addition, Community Participant and Ward Councillor (2022) also admit that the MPP process was valuable because it revealed the raw emotion of the participants and demonstrated a range of diverse ideas, concerns and issues. Stakeholders who participated listened to each other and learned from each other through all the deliberative processes. However, the shortcomings were articulated through the interviews, which are pertinent points that aid us in developing more nuanced approaches to community participation at the local scale.

> *… what is the reason we had this project – I'm not sure. Is it the best use of money and is it what the resident asked for? I don't know. But if it means investments then we should take it will be an improvement. (Ward Councillor, 2022:25.17)*

6.6 The Local Scale

Democratic theory presents a new opportunity for citizens to help shape their urban space. Citizens align their urban environment with their identity. There is a strong relationship of democratic rights that feed from the constitution through the spatial development frameworks. Purcell (2006:1921) states that "scales are not independent entities with pre-given characteristics" and …"they are socially constructed strategies to achieve particular ends." Public participation at the precinct scale is constructive, and nuanced and drills down into the heart of the real issues that affect communities and middle-class neighbourhoods. Zérah

(2007), Fernandes (2004) and Head (2007) remind us that capitalism develops new urban governance processes. However, Purcell (2006:1921) warns against the impact of neo-liberal globalisation "and invent[ing] new ideas about democracy and citizenship in cities, it is critical to avoid what I call the local trap, in which the local scale is assumed to be inherently more democratic than other scales". In addition Bénit-Gbaffou (2008:27) concludes that there is "no real power vested by the state at the local level" and that "participation is in practice [is perceived as] a nuisance" because the ward councillors are not empowered to drive effective change. Even though the local level promotes democratisation, we need to be aware of the risks. Although the perspectives of the MRA can help highlight the dangers of urban development, it can also be at the cost of other voices. Community group associations like the MRA have the potential to throttle democracy. As Purcell (2006:1922) notes, it all depends on the agenda and the strategy at the local scale.

On one hand, one can say that the State facilitates a progressive approach to democracy by empowering citizens to take control of their urban visions. On the other hand, Fung and Wright (2001:10) speculate that perhaps the era of the role and capacity of the "state which plays a creative and active role in solving problems in response to popular demands – is over, and a retreat to privatism and political passivity is the unavoidable price of 'progress'" due to the complexity and scale of urban issues that ultimately lead to reduction of democratic strategies.

6.7 Lessons Learnt

Since the adoption of public participation in the last several decades and the theorising of public participation practice, the intention of public participation is intended to ideally expand democracy. This can be achieved through several methods of engagement with the fundamental purpose being about transparency, equality, and change. There is no tool to measure the success of a precinct participatory plan. I tend to agree with Cornwall that 'clarity through specificity' requires more focus if public participation is intended to increase democracy. With closer inspection of Arnstein's ladder, this process is not only about citizen control but also delegated power because the process also asked participants to consider a CID.

I started this thesis with a very personal view based on my experience of being one of the practitioners of the MPP. I relied very heavily on my experience. Developing a much larger frame of reference to middle-class civic engagement, the literature review and my supervisor have facilitated a much broader understanding of what is developing through this process. The literature review is that the phenomena of exclusion and NIMBYISM is a global phenomenon within the civic engagement space. Although the MPP occurred in 2017, the literature correlates with what occurred during the MPP in that firstly middle-class identity, secondly civic participation must pay more attention to how democracy is expanded and finally, how marginalised voices are being included or excluded (Ballard, 2008; Sinwell, L. 2011). This thesis has helped me to understand the larger context of civic engagements and the dynamics of participatory action.

Several lessons surfaced from the MPP project and became apparent through the interviews of the client from JDA, the Ward Councillor, and a local participant. The first lesson that emerged was about framing the scope of the project in the brief. Ward Councillor (2022) and Community Participant (2022) explain that a very focused MPP project brief would reduce the time for deliberation about the focus of the MPP and criticism from the MRA. The techno-bureaucratic critique was a strategic technique to debunk the project and to create fear through the uncertain elements of the brief.

> *…. what policies can and cannot be changed for example in the RSF. If that had to be outlined its not up for review –- it could not have silenced the louder voices but it would have allowed others to help push the process in the right direction. Parameters need to be set in the first meeting – but then again people change over meetings so perhaps there always needs to be information, i.e. the education of the process. The MPP shouldn't be about bringing up any issue. The scope is not limitless (Community Participant. 2022:10:00).*
>
> *"To be specific is important … it not just a wish list … That's too 'Christmas wishlisty'" (Ward Councillor, 2022:5:04)*

The second valuable introspection was about educating stakeholders about the process of the city and the consultant's communication. A lack of such tends to reduce the efficiency of the participatory process and, in turn, democratic sustainability. After realising during the MPP process that many stakeholders had limited knowledge about the precinct plan process, the objective and the impact, the consultants created a simple information graphic about what a precinct plan is and shared it widely.

> *It was successful it revealed peripheral issues in other developments … what was not a success, was about educating and engaging about how the physical environment affects them. Toward the end, there was fatigue from the project team and other participants. There was a lack of PP understanding that it's actually a ticket to funding for development (until today). The PP was not yet adopted yet so it's a lack of investments. Facilitating the PP would allow some development to happen (public investment) (Community Participant, 2022:9:23).*
>
> *Public participation needs a lot of work … we are not doing what we are supposed to be doing on any level (Ward Councillor, 2022:8.52) … Residents just don't get it – communication is important … has to be about the language we use … the city should be educating everyone, and ward councillors are supposed to be meeting their communities. The relationship between the city and the state is that the city should be talking to their customers (Ward Councillor, 2022:5:04).*

Finally, it was about representation. It was very clear that creating a 'deep and wide' cross-section of diverse stakeholders is a logistical challenge and requires focus. On the one hand, Community Participant (2022) explores the paradox that lack of investment equates to lack of participation – and this could hurt representation and democracy. A balance of voices is a lesson worthwhile noting, as the JDA Representative (2022) states, the JDA has been developing new methods to include visitors, the young and the elderly.

> *"… the loudest voices were heard (Ward Councillor, 2022:23.30) while Community Participant (2022) states "The representation was mainly homeowners concerned about their property values. It's not a representative value. Not many business owners. The less rooted are not interested in participating – so how do you bring them to the table? Tenants wouldn't usually want to spend time. It's inherently skewed in terms of proportion. It's mainly the concern. Fear is a big motivator. Homeowners are going to be more interested because they are more fearful – they have more to lose. Rooted versus less motivated. Committing to be louder – it's not more democratic. Less committed to the process and more committed to being louder if the process doesn't go their way … If you have an issue to deal with.*

6.7 Recommendations

I have tried to establish the shortcomings of the MPP as well as its successes. In summation, the MPP was a complex project on one hand because it was established in the wake of a distrustful state firstly, and it shortly followed the COF in which the same community realised

the progressive nature of the state to recommend a 'blanket' increase in densification across Auckland Park and Melville. According to Peens (2015), although there dividing opinions on densification, the conservative opinion won the debate to scale down and to push densification back to the corridors only in the Melville and Auckland Park precinct. It is to JRA's credit that it pursued a highly participatory process, and the leadership of individuals such as the JDA representative is to be commended. However, it is not sufficient to simply create an open participatory process and even to actively promote participation with communication and advertising strategies. In a highly unequal society, there is a need for a careful preliminary investigation into the structure of a neighbourhood society, and its diverse interests. Participation must be carefully framed in a way that allows equitable voice, and given power relations, open community meetings cannot be the only means of engagement. In some cases, positions of power are so extremely different – for example, between homeowners and rough sleepers – that an intermediary organisation representing the weaker voices may be required.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

The previous several chapters provided us with a deeper understanding of middle-class civic engagement through an MPP case study. The contextual chapters support the case study in terms of the actors and the spatial frameworks in which it is embedded. The objective of this chapter is to frame a conclusion and to reflect on the observations of the case study about the literature review. Hence, this chapter intends to bring the MPP project into focus and to summarise the study.

7.2 Summary

Middle-class identity in the literature is characterised as fragmented and that this may pose a difficulty in democratic processes. The use of 'vehicles' such as the residents' association is a way to address the diversity by negotiating a singular vision for a neighbourhood. These associations are commonly used to drive an agenda to demand services, but also to demand from authorities a suitable urban 'nuisance-free' environment. This view according to scholars is a new kind of identity that demonstrates characteristics of elitism as the middle-class is not the only group living in or using a neighbourhood. Members of the MRA expressed their view

that as property-owning residents, that they should have more rights in the precinct and one resident stated that he would not like the neighbourhood to be impacted by 'a new urban vision' that could be a catalyst for density and in turn lead to the degradation of Melville- just like what happened in Hillbrow. In this respect we may consider the MRA, not as a body is driven by a bigger resident representative vision, but instead characterised by the interests and rhetoric of a selected few voices arguing for the maintenance of the status quo- a low-rise, fragmented and sprawling apartheid city.

The objective of some social movements and organisations is to resist or delay deliberation. Subsequently, elite members within the middle class resort to direct action to ensure their interests are prioritised, using neighbourhood associations to legitimise their actions. However, on the other hand, organisations like resident associations are legal entities with a mandate conducting their duty to engage constructively as opposed to passive citizens.

In addition, the diverse and varied nature of middle-class identity adds complexity to their actions. Although community involvement initiatives aim to share power, governmental authority still exerts influence impeding the implementation of urban planning procedures. These inconsistencies underscore the sometimes-contradictory interactions, among the government the middle class and community engagement mechanisms.

Finally, participation must address the lack of disenfranchised members of the community. Although consensus may be optimistic on every objective, striving for cooperation must be the minimum criterion. The MPP suggests that despite the transformation agenda, on the ground' there are conflicting interpretations of the ideal post-apartheid neighbourhood vision. This is where the grand vision poses a risk to democratic processes. Elites work closely with the ward councillor through formal mechanisms to implement strategies that improve their urban living conditions at the expense of broader democratic values. This situation gives rise to contradictions in trying to expand democracy while also simultaneously placing limitations on it.

Therefore, the middle class-state engagement regarding urban development is a 'wicked problem'. While the liberal State works to increase the democratic agenda by opening new

spaces of participation, these very spaces of participation become the vehicle for resisting deeper democracy and inclusion. This is the paradox of middle-class participation. However, not all middle-class community members have the same agendas. In fact, there are many individuals who were willing to contribution to a more inclusive new vision

Spaces of participation must therefore be carefully constructed to ensure that the diversity of middle-class voices and interests are articulated, and vocal individual interests do not dominate, but also that the interests of non-middle-class groupings who live or use supposedly middle-class neighbourhoods are accommodated. A version of liberalism that incorporates a concept of egalitarian social justice cannot simply be about a laissez faire approach in which individual rights and liberty and privileged above the common good (Fund and Wright 2002; Fernandes 2004).

The intention of a liberal state in terms of providing equitable access to a democratic city is intended should be bring the marginalised into democratic processes, recognising their voice. This is not only important in terms of the principles of democracy and inclusive liberalism but also pragmatically. As the city becomes increasingly complex to manage, there does need to be greater reliance on communities or neighbourhoods to drive their visions. However, the role of a democratically elected city administration must be to ensure that community visioning is inclusive, and supportive of wider city visions. Neighbourhood visions cannot represent only the interests of middle-class property-owning residents or, even worse, of the most vocal segments of the middle class.

The bigger picture of this analysis is sl grounded in theorising democracy – whose voices contributed to the MPP and whose voices were omitted? Several processes contributed to omissions: Firstly, at level of the State, as the JDA Representative (2022) acknowledges, t more could have been done to access a wider body of inclusion. The MPP was one of the first participatory projects of this nature and there were admitted limitations to the inclusion of voices. The JDA Representative (2022) noted in the interview that the JDA has subsequently technically expanded on this to broaden democracy. Secondly, as consultants, we conducted limited engagement into the informal and formal businesses, schools, students and NGOs. However, there was no engagement in the transient population of visitors to the neighbourhood, backyard cottages with short to medium-term rentals, athletes from neighbouring areas using the local sports fields and an informal living community. These

voices were lacking and the project could have been expanded by capturing their concerns and visions. Finally, within the MPP workshops, the property-owning residents were generally well represented who dominated the conversations creating a particular eclipse of the Melville future. These efforts would have made the process more inclusive, especially for those who are less fortunate and who usually do not have a voice.

7.4 Future Research

Research into civic participation is by no means homogenous and every application is unique in every community. This means that the knowledge derived from the MPP case study may differ in community participation case studies. However, the literature review presents correlations to the MPP case study in terms of middle-class neighbourhoods developing new identities of capitalism and 'forgetting the poor'. It is therefore important to expand on the research to develop sufficient evidence to further analyse the sub-themes like the works of Ruben (2021) who is developing an analysis of the role of Residents' Associations.

Furthermore, the MPP, as we have seen, is intrinsically connected to other projects that demonstrate similar themes as demonstrated by Peens (2015) and the study of the CoF and Rubin (2021) analysing the role of middle-class residents' associations. As mentioned, this study could develop into a doctoral study because there are many related studies to conduct. There is the current 'safe streets' project, which is driven by the MSI and is a 'bottom-up' project in Melville, and the current implementation of Main Road (Ward Councillor, 2022), which emanates from the MPP. There are therefore several more layers to the middle-class Melville engagement with the state project that can provide a deeper understanding of the dynamic relationship.

7.5 Final Comments

It was very reassuring to observe how community members can work together with the State to build a new vision for the city democratically. However, community participatory projects can be very complex and politically charged and although this project may not have achieved a final detailed planning document, several positive attributes transpired from the project. We need to be reminded that theorising these projects and applying it must also be viewed as a

learning tool to achieve greater insight into State- middle-class engagement. I would recommend that we continue to adopt a reflective approach to future projects so that we can resist the neoliberal forces that in effect reverse democratic transformation.

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