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Local strategies for greenbelt ecology preservation: The case of Huddle Park

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L O C A L S T R A T E G I E S F O R G R E E N B E L T E C O L O G Y P R E S E R V A T I O N: T H E C A S E O F H U D D L E P A R K

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A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Science, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science by research.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this Dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Science at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before any degree or examination at any other University.

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Abstract

This dissertation tracks the political response by middle class residents to attempts by the city of Johannesburg to develop a public golf course and wetland called Huddle Park. It seeks to better understand the role of politics in Johannesburg's suburban areas. The study explores three aspects of this issue. It first looks at the reasons why the issue of Huddle Park became important for residents. It then examines mobilisation tactics used by residents' groups to pursue their political agenda on the issue. Lastly it follows how these middle class formations interact with city governance structures informed by deliberative democratic theories. It argues that understandings of these of these groups are too narrow and that by using a spatial paradigm greater nuance can be added to understandings of their actions. It shows that long term political action is possible by these groups and explores the limits of its effectiveness.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Overview

In the north-eastern corner of the city of Johannesburg, between its sprawling middle class suburbs and the rapidly developing industrial hub of Ekurhuleni, lies Huddle Park. A distinctive feature of the city since the first quarter of the 20th century, Huddle Park is an approximately 186 ha, three course public golfing complex that at one stage hosted some of South Africa's most prestigious tournaments.

Today it is the city's last public golf course and serves anyone who wants to play the sport. Its rates are also far cheaper than any of the other private member-based clubs dotted around the city. Despite providing this service and assisting organisations dedicated to developing the game for disadvantaged youngsters, the club has struggled to stay financially viable. Of the three courses only one operates, with the other two being allowed to lie fallow.

For the cash strapped city which is always seeking ways to build profitably within the urban boundary, Huddle represents an irresistible opportunity. It would like nothing better than to realise this asset and have one less administrative burden on its books. It is aided in this approach by property companies eager to have access to some of the centrally located, upmarket land which is easily able to be developed. The property would pay handsomely not just in initial sale values but in the long term tax revenue that could be generated with the correct tenants.

These political conditions have meant that for almost the last two decades Huddle Park has been subject to relentless attempts to sell it off. Developers have envisioned everything from a private golfing estate complete with hotel and high street to a casino with an entertainment complex. However, every time an attempt is made to develop the space, it is followed by a massive public outcry and intense civic action from residents in the surrounding areas. The effort is led by a small group of citizens who comprise the Huddle and Environs Anti-Degradation (HEAD) League as well as local resident associations which galvanise the resources at their disposal in order to retard or halt entirely the city's proposals. This has led to a stuttering but more or less continuous stalemate over the state of the park and uncertainty about its future.

The Huddle Park protests are significant because they represent a specific long term political issue affecting a suburban area of Johannesburg. Actions taken by groups include mass public meetings, petitions, engagement with city institutions, negotiation with developers, small protests, increased scrutiny of Environmental Impact Assessments, the use of legal instruments and considerable debate generated in the local and regional media. The future of the park is even a minor election issue with local councillors promising environmentally-friendly agendas if elected. While most residents are apathetic about the future of the park and some might actually like to see it developed, opposition groups are extremely active. This situation is unusual since the north-eastern suburbs of Johannesburg are not usually considered a hot bed of local government politics. Civic action is largely confined to the small-scale charity efforts of non-governmental organisations and structures such as schools, youth groups, small businesses and welfare organisations. Organised political action is minimal and driven largely by local councillors, community policing forums and a few residents' associations. Topics of concern revolve primarily around municipal maintenance concerns and worries about crime. In all these activities there is a pervasive sense of apathy that is simply not matched by the highly charged emotions which come to the fore during debates around Huddle Park.

The protests around Huddle Park raise important questions about the nature of democracy in Johannesburg in that they open a window on how suburbanites approach political activism. Much of the literature examining issues of democracy, politics and civil society in South Africa has focused on the role of mass movements, how they undermined apartheid and how they interact with the state under democracy. The story of the suburbs does not fit into this narrative, but instead reflects the smaller issues that affect the democratic participation of urban citizens. By examining the micro-politics of Johannesburg and in this case the middle classes we gain a different perspective on what democracy means to residents in suburban areas. It also gives us insight into how the city is governed and questions the role that the middle class has to play in the political agenda of the city. This is pertinent because this role has at times been seen as being confined to allowing the middle class to maintain its privileged material and sometimes racial position in the city. Lastly, in the context of geography, it contributes to an understanding of how space operates in all these debates, particularly in how the use of space can act as an analytical tool that can contribute to a better understanding the phenomena of suburban politics.

Aims and problem statement

The aim of this study is to use the case of Huddle Park to examine suburban activism in Johannesburg. It includes:

- Understanding the factors that lead to suburban activism around the Huddle Park
- Interrogating how middle class activists mobilise to pursue their political agendas
- Reviewing the effectiveness of suburban activism and understanding the implications for city governance.

Background to the Study

The study begins by briefly explaining the importance of cities for political action and then moves onto how power operates in urban contexts and examines various theoretical arguments. It settles on the notion of regime theory as a useful paradigm for this study. This paradigm sees power as characterised by the convergence of a number of city, business and other institutions which create an overarching set of policy imperatives. It then examines how this paradigm can be applied to Johannesburg, especially after the end of apartheid. It identifies two crucial elements in the city's regime: the need for the city to develop within a compact planning, income generating framework and its focus on a system of governance known as deliberative democracy. A thorough explanation of this democratic theory follows, including its basic founding philosophical principles and notions of how it is meant to function. A comprehensive critique is included from other political traditions, as is a perspective from this theory of subjects relevant to the context of this study, exploring such elements as the environment and civil society.

The literature then focuses on the practical means by which deliberative democracy operates within the regime of Johannesburg and what some of the criticisms of its implementation have been.

It also looks at other provincial deliberative platforms that affect governance in Johannesburg such as Environmental Impact Assessments. It examines the origins of these institutions, the ways in which they operate and certain of the criticisms they faced. It argues that deliberative institutions are also aided by other mechanisms that assist middle class residents to have their voices heard in city politics. Lastly it focuses on the issue of middle class politics. It argues

for a paradigm that views suburban visions of space, rather than other typologies such as race, gender or class, as the primary organising principle through which suburban action is understood and undertaken. Through this it makes the case that the literature of middle class politics has been too narrowly focused and that there is space for broadening the understanding of the concept.

The empirical study is divided into three sections. The first part argues for the use of spatial visions as the key tool in understanding suburban political action. It then deconstructs the various spatial visions that actors created to drive their agenda around Huddle Park. The second section approaches the issue of middle class politics and examines the mechanics of its mobilisation within the deliberative democratic regime of Johannesburg. It also assesses the effectiveness of this mobilisation in changing urban policy. The third section examines practices of participation within development processes in South Africa. It tracks how residents operated in the participative processes around Huddle Park. It argues that although participative institutions are related to deliberative institutions, differences in structure mean the possibility of different political outcomes for middle class activists. The chapter then follows the outcomes of the participative process and how these impacted on the future of Huddle Park.

The parameters of the study

The pattern of the attempted development of Huddle Park goes back nearly 20 years. Typically the politics moves in a cycle where the city proposes a development and is endorsed by a property company. This is opposed by the residents and results in a stalemate between the two parties and the eventual scrapping of the proposal. The cycle repeats itself a few years later when the city proposes a new plan for the space. In the last two decades this cycle has repeated itself several times. The focus of this dissertation is on the last of the cycles which started in late 2003 with the city publicly announcing one of its boldest initiatives yet. The proposal was to create a 1000 unit golfing estate complete with a hotel, retail and recreational component. Despite city assurances that development of the park would begin in six months, the fight for the future of Huddle was still alive eight years later. The reason for this cycle being particularly interesting is because the city carefully planned the concept so that there would be a minimum of objections. Unlike what happened with previous developments, the firms chosen this time were reputable and the type of development fitted easily into the suburban character of the area. The city was also very

careful to deal efficiently with technical and public participation processes which had undermined previous attempts to develop the site. These factors led to a more nuanced response to the development by the middle class residents in the area than in past activism on the issue. Lastly, this attempt to develop the park did not end in a stalemate as had other development attempts. By examining this particular cycle the study benefits from a longitudinal view of some of the most complex aspects of the politics of suburbia and an outcome that can be assessed empirically.

Chapter 2 -Methodology

Ethnography

The focus of this research was primarily on the debates surrounding the fate of Huddle Park and the various actors that were attempting to influence its future. This created conditions suitable for particular approaches to research methodology. The community driven nature of the activism, easily available qualitative data sets, the long period over which the activism occurred and the need to critically interrogate a number of political positions made ethnography a useful choice for such a task.

Whilst there are a variety of definitions of what constitutes ethnographic techniques the key components of this form of research are seen as being an in-situ investigation of social phenomena, using an approach which is grounded in a social-cultural perspective. Characteristics of the ethnographic method include situatedness, richness, participant autonomy, openness, personalisation, reflexivity, self-reflection, independence, intensity, and historicism (Ball and Ormerad, 2000). Ethnography was originally pioneered to investigate the culture of indigenous populations but now has application in everything from medicine to Information technology (Ball and Ormerad, 2000; Keine, 1990). Tools that ethnographers have at their disposal can be both quantitative and qualitative and include participant observation, formal and informal interviews and on occasion analysis of documentary sources (Altheide, 1985; Forsythe, 1999).

Interviews

Interviews were an important source of information in this study. Participants for interviews were selected using a variety of methods and the process was conducted over a series of several months. Some participants were activists and were approached because they had produced a lot of material themselves. Others had a great deal of knowledge about the area but were not involved in the debate. Some participants simply lived nearby or were found while walking in the park. Snowballing techniques were also used successfully to obtain respondents. Members of the "SAVE HUDDLE PARK" Facebook group were messaged and asked if they would be interested in being interviewed. Participants often suggested others who might be sources of information. At all times the key focus of the interview process was to cover as many points of view as possible in an oral form. Where this could not

be achieved, written text was then used as the primary source. This ensured that the widest possible spread of arguments for and against the development was adequately captured.

The interviews themselves were conducted in an unstructured or in-depth format. This is a technique in which the researcher does not use a prepared set of questions in the interview (Malhotra and Peterson, 2002). Instead, the session is kept open-ended and the participant is encouraged to share their lived experience of the topic (Low, 2007). Respondents start the narrative from the point most comfortable to them, and put it across in their own way. Using this technique the participant leads the process and neither party has a defined notion of where the interview will lead. While it is recognised that the researcher does have some power in the situation, his role is more that of an active listener than the focus of the process itself (Corbin and Morse, 2003). An approach that is detached controlled and emotionally distant such as one found in more structured techniques is not valued in this methodology. It is the ability to empathise with participants and generate trust which is rather seen as being important (Fontana and Fey, 1994). Advantages of the unstructured interview are increased self-awareness for the researcher, more empowerment for participants, a better understanding of underlying and complex problems, and the enhanced ability to give lay people a voice in the research. It can however be time consuming, generate overly large amounts of data, be comparatively difficult to analyse and damaging to anonymity (Fontana and Fey, 1994; Corbin and Morse, 2003; Low, 2007; Malhotra and Peterson, 2002). Twenty three interviews were conducted and could last anywhere between 5 minutes and three hours, with the average time being 20 minutes. I focused primarily on a few key questions which were designed to give me an understanding of the respondent's relationship to the issue, their history with the park, the role that they had in the development process and the arguments that they were making. Beyond these basic elements I simply gave participants the opportunity to talk about the issue of Huddle Park in a general fashion. As per the method, I focused on allowing them to put the narrative across in the way they felt best. Given the passionate feelings surrounding the issue, this seemed to me to be the best way of capturing the nuances of the debate.

Those interviewed included members of residents' associations, city officials, newspaper reporters, ward councillors, school teachers, nearby shop owners, golfers, caddies, ordinary residents, dog walkers and people at the park. Attempts to meet scientists working for the company conducting the environmental impact assessment met with little success. Some schools surrounding the property were also occasionally reluctant to speak. While the addition of these voices would have added to the research, I do not believe that their absence

had a material effect on the conclusions that were eventually drawn since their points of view were captured in other spaces.

Written Material

Much of the material used in this study was written and secondary in nature particularly newspaper articles. The main press outlets dealing with Huddle Park were the community papers whose beat covers the neighbourhoods surrounding the area. Larger papers as well as radio stations servicing the greater Johannesburg region covered the story periodically as did some smaller specialist publications. In addition, letters from the residents, editorials and op-ed pieces appeared frequently as the future of the park was debated.

Besides the mainstream media coverage, the various groups created their own documents to put across their point. In the city's case these were tender advertisements and proposals for development. On the residents' side there were petitions, protest letters, their own scientific studies and calls for public meetings. At the time social media platforms such as Facebook were becoming popular and were used by the residents as an information dispersal tool. The open nature of social media also meant that it created a fluid space in which additional debate could take place. Lastly the environmental impact assessment for the project also generated a great deal of written material. It added the views of scientists and development professionals to the mix while at the same time capturing the views of the different parties in particular ways.

Analysis

Once text and interviews were collected an analysis was done to extract useful information about the situation. From a research point of view, the way in which material is studied is a matter both of disciplinary endeavour and philosophical outlook. Focusing on a text from a literary criticism point of view, for example, may focus on micro elements of the text such as grammar, sentence construction and how the plot is constructed. It may also look at how a certain piece of literature fits into a genre of other texts (Van Dijk, 1983; Gillespie and Toynbee, 2006; Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). This is different from the view of a text in the social sciences. Here the focus is on the context of the text and its overarching narratives and key themes. Issues such as grammar and sentence construction may still be important as analytic tools but only as far as they inform researchers about wider questions. So a text could be examined as a better way of understanding certain kinds of foreign policy

(Crawford, 2004) or in order to identify key themes in a political or historical debate (Boyce, 2000; Herrera and Braumoeller, 2004).

In an ethnographic study the role of the researcher is to make use of the material at hand and examine it. Using established theoretical perspectives the researcher then examines the multiple perspectives that the collected material should provide. The objective is to detect consistent behaviours of thought and practice and further understand the nature of the relationship between them (Compte and Scensal, 1999).

This view of knowledge production means that ethnography tends to value a certain epistemology. While there are many different ways to understand the nature of knowledge, for the purposes of explanation it is helpful to divide them into two main camps: the realist and the constructivist (Crawford, 2004).

The realist paradigm tends to see research as a process by which the actually existing world can be discovered. Following on from this notion, words are considered to be tools that society simply assigns to real-life objects for the purpose of successfully navigating reality (Elos and Kynga, 2007; Fierke, 2004; Herrera and Braumoeller, 2004; Gill, 2000). In the realist paradigm subjects can be analysed so that the objective nature of the world can be uncovered. Realists rely on the idea of value-free information for the basis of research and tend to use quantitative analytic tools more readily (Fierke, 2004; Gaskell and Bauer, 2000).

The opposing paradigm is known as constructivism. This views language as operating at a more active level than simply as a labelling tool. It sees it instead as being the primary driver behind social processes and the creation of knowledge. The key difference between the two paradigms is that constructivism does not see words as being tied directly to reality. While an objective reality may exist, the meanings of words operate in a separate social context. This means a given word may have a number of associative meanings or an entirely different one, depending on the social or cultural context (Fierke, 2004). This fluid attachment of meaning to reality means that unlike realist notions of universal laws, everything in constructivist knowledge is time-and place-bound. This knowledge-context also means the ideological creation of words or discourse is a part of the social process. The discourse helps to shape social processes and at the same time is shaped by it in a discursive relationship. All actors in the political process have a role in defining the bounds of the discourse. They add to it and challenge it but at the same time have to make decisions based on how they fit into the discourse themselves. Discourse by this notion goes beyond a given text and can be

considered to be all the rules, institutions, practices and powers which help construct the social context (Herrera and Braumoeller, 2004; Hardy *et al*, 2004; Gillespie and Toynbee, 2006).

Ethnography fits more strongly into this latter description of knowledge. Accordingly from a research perspective the key aim is not to discover one objective observable truth. Rather it is important to examine how social reality is constantly shifting. By working back and forth through social theory, past experience and data the ethnographic researcher is able to start to mine out the patterns, themes and relationships in a given data set (Le Compte and Scensal, 1999).

The epistemological and ontological claims made by these notions of a language centred political process, the importance of cultural context and a lack of universal truth, have a direct impact on methodological options. Some kinds of empirical, even positivist approaches may be appropriate however the traditional notion of measurement and testability as pursued by the scientific method is not appropriate (Crawford, 2004; Herrera and Braumoeller, 2004).

A subjective understanding of the nature of knowledge also means that a strict adherence to a calcified methodological toolset would not be in keeping with the fluid approach to information interpretation. Simply being subjective, however, does not mean there is no space for a relevant methodological approach. Organising principles such as power, dominance, equality and the roles of different groups form the basis of important themes that can be addressed in the research (Hardy *et al*, 2004; Van Dijk, 1985). Key quality issues such as reliability and validity can be obtained by the researcher being transparent about text and sources. Other important markers such as persuasiveness, plausibility and trustworthiness of the data interpretation can be ensured by connecting to well-established theory and making use of empirical tools of evidence like triangulation (Elos and Kynga, 2007; Gaskell and Bauer, 2000). The ethnographic characteristic of reflexivity is also called for to avoid bias problems and the incorrect rendering of conclusions. Problematic approaches such as arguments that are separated from the context should be avoided. Also the use of "either/or" assumptions and mono-causal arguments should be avoided. These occur when political actions are seen as being a stark choice between one route and another. This promotes binary thinking and reduces the complexity of the interpretation (Boyce 2000; Gaskell and Bauer, 2000). Rather one can focus on the notion of power using the ethnographic tool of historicism and situating it inside the research frame. Power can come from a variety of sources including

state power, economic power, cultural power, legal power or any other resource that contributes to the ability to impact on the debate. While no one group in society has absolute power, various groups will have more or less of it. There will also be dominant groups that have been able to assert their version of the reality onto the political system. Less powerful groups have to adjust to the system and attempt to mould the debate through whatever resources they are able to muster (Van Dijk, 1985). The contestation that occurs in this process helps to shape the shape and, through this, change the nature of the society. By observing how arguments are constructed, which group's voices are being presented and which are being suppressed, the structures of power relations can be properly understood (Hardy *et al*, 2004).

Interpretive frameworks can also be utilised to identify possible markers in the material that may yield useful information and provide direction to the analysis process. One approach for example stresses the need to examine the ideas that have become naturalised, "the norm" or "common sense". By doing this, one immediately begins to examine critically the status quo and the political power structure. The approach makes use of the notions of articulation and interpellation in order to undertake this examination. Articulation refers to the process of the creation of ideas in a society. A political idea is created when political actors make use of symbols and meanings in their discourse to drive forward a specific agenda. Over time these symbols are advanced continuously and other symbols and meanings are added to make the agenda more compelling. Various meanings begin to connect and form a chain of association that eventually result in an overarching idea. Of course the fluid nature of symbols means that they may have different connotations in different contexts. It also means that a specific meaning can be contested by other political actors. The nature of the idea is therefore not fixed. Once an idea becomes fixed, however, it starts to attach itself to institutions and these have the power to alter the social fabric. Interpellation is the next stage in the process. Once institutions begin to espouse particular ideas, they start to have an impact on the identities of people in the society. Over time people may begin to make the idea a part of their identity and will tend to act in line with the narrative connected to this identity. Once this process reaches a critical mass the idea becomes naturalised into the political thinking of the society. It is at the articulation phase where the contestation of ideas takes place and where the various positions and powers of groups can be understood (Laffey and Weldes, 2004).

Another approach is a step-by-step methodology for examining a material. To do this one first has to identify the problem or political issue. An attempt is then made to understand the

role of the various arguments and actors involved. The second common ground is to differentiate between the different positions. This serves as a starting point to understand where contestation is occurring and where the divergences are occurring. Then the beliefs and social context that surround the various actors are examined to give an understanding about their positions on the issue. The process by which certain arguments are made and eventually become the norm is examined. Finally the link between the argument and actual behavioural change is interrogated (Crawford, 2004).

These kinds of tools provide the strong public accountability required so that conclusions can be challenged, interrogated and used in other research (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000).

Chapter 3 - Literature review

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework starts with an examination of how cities contribute as spaces of political action. In order to understand how the city operates, it then looks at various ways of understanding power in the city context and engages with some potential frameworks including the community power, growth machine and regime theory which can be used to understand specific contexts, which in this case is Johannesburg. From there it moves onto the governance of cities, specifically the democratic systems used to achieve a just and fair outcome for citizens. One particular system, called deliberative democracy and the role that it plays in the politics of South African cities, is extensively reviewed. It examines some of its political foundations and tries to understand its theoretical approaches as well as its limitations both as a concept and as a practice. Having established a number of overall frameworks to understand politics in Johannesburg, the focus then shifts to the role of middle class politics in the city. This is largely done through reviewing current literature on the middle classes in South Africa and around the world. It also centres on the notion that space is very important to understand these politics. Using these concepts, it then makes a case for how an examination of political action in the case of Huddle Park can cast some understanding on a number of these concepts and politics in the city in general.

Introduction -The importance of Cities for Political Action

There is an increasing body of research investigating cities as sites of political action. Cities contain many of the institutions that drive governance structures, such as parliaments, government offices and judiciaries. They are also centers of interconnectedness where a variety of other actors intersect. These include businesses, media, NGOs and ordinary community organizations. In cities, new ideas are more likely to develop because of the high concentration of educational institutions. Cultural influences are also significant both because of the sheer variety of people and the globalised sites that are found in cities. Cities are also extremely unequal places with both powerful and disenfranchised communities. This can make city governance very difficult and cause some forms of political action to be more intense. Given this confluence of conflicting resources and ideas, it is not surprising that cities provide a useful scale to study policy processes and outcomes (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Imrie *et al*, 1996; Judge *et al*, 1995).

Although cities are important sites of politics issues are often dealt with in a different way than at a national level. Cities have some significant control over policy and resources even though the national governing structure still falls outside of their power. What cities represent is a "crack" (Sassen, 2000, 18) in the national state politics where many processes of which the state has less control take place (Baubock, 2003; Sassen, 2000; Swyngedouw, 2004). Issues and ideas that may have trouble being expressed in a national context may find a home in the discourse of the city outside the confines of a national narrative. Minority groups and small political projects may also be able to occupy niche political spaces in the face of strong national forces (Bosniak, 2000; Kadalie, 2006; Leon, 2006).

Abstract political ideas that survive in cities are not created into a spatial vacuum. The city space itself can become part of the fight for inclusion. Henri Lefebvre referred to this process as the social production of space. He argues that there is a fundamental "right to the city", that people should be able to have a say in the creation of the spaces of the city by virtue of the fact that they live there. He argues that the city is made up of three parts. The first is that of representational space. These are the images associated with the city which are built in the media and the mind, often of famous landmarks or some aspect of culture. The second part is called representations of space. These are the plans for the city that are continually being produced by its administration and politicians, the social engineers, architects and planners who try to envision the city in a particular way. Lastly there are the spatial practices, or the way in which ordinary people actually use the city in everyday life. These forces and the political debates around them work to create the social production of space that eventually shapes the city in its current form. The space of the city is always contested. Its form reflects the spatialisation of various economic, political, social and cultural influences that affect the design of its buildings and public spaces. Those who are included in or excluded from the city will be decided in the fight over its spaces. This concept of the city makes it a space of agency where citizens have the opportunity to engage with the polity on various issues. In this way the city also helps to expand our notion of citizenship toward a more substantive version that is organised around issues such as identity, memory, control of everyday life and collective political action (Baubock, 2003; Bosnaik, 2000; Bryant and Livholts, 2007; Dovey, 2001; Lefebvre, 2002; Jelin, 2000; Low, 1996; Purcell, 2003; Sassen, 2003).

Cities and Urban Governance

If cities are important sites for questions of how politics operates then ones needs to look at models of how this politics is likely to operate.

Questions of city governance tend to focus on the notion of power, specifically the question of how power is channelled in local contexts and if it can be explained using a specific theory or model. It is also important to explore the impact of various actors on city politics and see exactly where power lies and how it is instrumentalised.

These and other similar questions around urban political theory began with the attempt to answer the question: Who controls the politics of the city? Attempts to answer this question came to be called the "community power" debates and initially theorists were divided into two opposing camps. On one side there were the pluralism theorists who argued that power in cities was decentralized. Decisions were made because of the interplay of many forces and interests, with no one group having total or even majority control. On the other side of the fence were elite theorists who said that power was largely in the hands of small power elites where decisions were made (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Dahl, 1961; Harding, 1995 Judge, 1995; Mollenkopf, 1992).

These two polarized schools were the dominant debate makers for a long time until they came under attack from Marxist writers. These writers argued that both the pluralism and elite schools were excessively local in their approach and did not take into account broad macro-economic processes. These included the effects of class relations and those of global capital on the governance of cities. This led to a revival of the sterile community power debates as new writers began taking on this Marxist critique of city politics (Judge, 1995). Chief among the objections to Marxist thought was that their theories were overly determinist and that there seemed to be no room at all for human agency. The response was to try and create a set of theories that took broader economic processes into account but also created space for these to be contested (Harding, 1995; Stoker 1995).

In attempting to engage with broader economic processes, theorists have presented the theory of the urban growth machine. This theory is an expansion of the earlier theories of the elite school. What urban growth machine theorists explicitly identified was a coalition of city

government and local business. Business had always been a feature of community power debates (Judge, 1995), but what growth machine theorists suggested was a very specific role for business in city politics. This role was not omnipotent, as suggested by the Marxists, nor unremarkable as suggested by the pluralist school. In addition, they argued that the primary driver of city politics was its relation to land and its alienation. Growth machine theorists used the idea of use value versus exchange value. City residents, they argued, largely valued land for the way in which they could use it. On the other hand large corporations, which owned land, did not want it sitting idle and incurring costs. Thus there was a push for development by these businesses using the rhetoric of "growth". This discourse is distinguished by the idea that growth would attract capital, create jobs and grow the economy. Underpinning this rhetoric was an effort to convince the city administration to offer business incentives to develop the land that they already owned (Harding, 1995; Molotch, 1976; Molotch and Logan, 1990).

Urban growth machines are seen as the dominant force in urban politics, affecting the way that democracy operates and how decisions are made (Kjaer, 1999, Pierre, 1999). The theory does however allow for growth machines to be impeded or stopped when local elites find the costs of growth too high. These costs can take the form of increased crime, traffic, noise or excessive environmental degradation (Clavel, 1986, Harding, 1995; Molotch, 1976; Molotch and Logan, 1990; Schneider and Teske, 1991). The classic example of this is the homeowners' association comprising residents who are fearful of a reduction in property values due to development. Making use of local electoral systems, the media, city bureaucracy and the courts, these groups can try to stop or slow down land development, hence the term "slow-growth movements" which is sometimes applied to them (Davis, 1992).

There have been a number of critics of the urban growth machine theory. Key to the argument is that the theory is reductionist as city administrations cannot simply be seen as a function of property sales. Administrative processes are opaque and driven by numerous factors that may have nothing to do with the development of land. It can also be difficult to anticipate how and where firms will decide to develop land or according to which criteria cities will allocate public money to growth projects (Cox and Mair, 1989). Even when the city decides on a growth project, the negotiations between the various parties are uneven and complex. This makes the predictive use of the theory problematic. In addition the urban growth machine has been notoriously difficult to transfer to contexts outside of the U.S and

especially to cities in the third world (Fuller and Harriss, 2001; Lindell, 2008; Weinstein, 2008).

Despite the shortcomings of the urban growth machine, it did introduce the crucial concept of coalitions between big business and the city administration. Particularly in western capitalist settings it would seem that it is virtually impossible for the administration to have full control of the development of the city. City governance is rather about how formal and informal coalitions between business and politicians develop into what are known as urban regimes. These regimes are made up of the elites in the city and over time come to dominate its politics (Stone, 1989; Stone, 1993). Unlike the urban growth theory, however, these are seen as being long-term coalitions that might govern with the whole set of objectives not necessarily limited to land development. In addition, urban regimes can survive temporary changes in policy direction as well as changes in the parties that are part of the regime, as long as they continue to pursue the key objectives. The classic example of the urban regime stems from work on the politics of Atlanta. The urban regime there was run by a coalition of the mostly white Atlanta business community and the mostly black Atlanta political establishment. The ways in which these groups formed a coalition and negotiated the key issues facing the city determined the entire trajectory of its development. Regime theory has seemed to be more exportable than its urban growth counterpart and has a far greater explanatory power, which has accounted for its longevity (Dowding, 2001; Mossberger and Stoker, 2001; Stone, 1989; Stone, 1993). The term "regime theory", however, has been accused of being applied too widely, thus diluting the meaning of the terminology. The theory is also limited in its ability to explain the maintenance or change in regime. The emphasis the theory places on self-interest, rational decision making, economics and a focus on first world situations is also seen as a weakness. More importantly, regime theory has been unable to accommodate identity politics and social movements in its explanation of city politics, something that is front and centre of other forms of urban research. Its more western orientation is also seen as disadvantage in third world contexts (Dowding, 2001; Deleon, Unpublished; Parnell and Robinson, 2006). By examining the city politics for signs of an urban regime, we are better able to understand the long-term nature of these coalitions and how they help frame urban relations and the key salient issues in the urban fabric.

Urban regime theory is a useful framework to make use of in a study of Johannesburg and in particular Huddle Park. The theory explicitly focuses on the co-ordination of city policy and practices between local business and the city administration. The creation of various urban

planning policies through these actors is key to understanding why Huddle Park was identified for development and how the story around this process unfolded. At the same time regime theory is not policy-actor determinist and can take into account other actors within the system. Understanding these actors and the idea that they can challenge the regime means using this framework can add nuance to a city politics analysis. Although the term regime theory has been expanded widely from its early ideas, the original framework was particularly focused on how democratic cities operate. In the early 1990's Johannesburg made the transition from being the country's seat of capital under apartheid to a much more open, internationalised city operating in a democratic system. The debate around the future of Huddle Park happened at roughly the same time. Thus it makes sense to use a theoretical outlook developed in a more democratic context and apply it to this time frame. This allows the research to largely forgo pre-1994 agendas necessarily couched in discourses of race, class and apartheid planning, which were influenced a great deal by national state politics. Rather it helps to locate post-1994 ideas within a more agency based a local state framework, including actors like small residents associations, which better reflect the democratic problems faced by Johannesburg in it suburban areas. At the same time the theory also allows for the influences of forces outside of the democratic process in both time and space that help shape city processes. Thus it can take account of changes in urban policy and ideas implemented before the era of democratic transition that still persist in the city to this day. It can also interrogate the effects that such policies have on the spatial form of the city today. Thus it has the additional advantage of allowing understandings of the spatial effects of the regime and spatial strategies to challenge this hegemony. It is important to note that regime theory does have disadvantages in that it is still essentially a western model being applied in a context of a weaker fragmented local state, maturing democratic structure, contested ideological arena and vastly unequal infrastructure. Nonetheless its policy and agency advantages in studying the micro-politics of a more developed spaces in Johannesburg is useful and is an opportunity to expand the theory's explanatory power in new contexts.

The Creation of Regimes and Johannesburg

For most of its existence the city of Johannesburg has not been a democratic entity with national race based laws impacting on it governance in every conceivable way. While regimes have been applied to many scenarios its particular strength in integrating democratic governance institutions means that it is best applied as a concept within the changing face of

the city in the early 1990's. The creation of this new *democratic* regime in Johannesburg that would replace the one governed by minority rule started in the 1980s with the apartheid state losing its grip on power, with violent ungovernable cities at home twinned with isolation, and with boycotts abroad. Some minor reforms of the city administration began in 1990 with the negotiation of the Soweto Accord which tried to get a more inclusive urban government; a process that would eventually succeed at all levels of government with the 1994 elections. While this left Johannesburg more politically inclusive, it was still a divided city and in a state of financial crisis. On the one side it had its white areas which included the CBD and the northern suburbs, as developed as any in the first world. Around it and to the south of the city, however, were sprawling black township areas desperately in need of proper infrastructural development.

The new council in Johannesburg was immediately faced with trying to overcome many social problems, including reintegrating its residents and participating again in the world economy, while hopefully being able to attract foreign investment. Initial attempts proved problematic as the city struggled to overcome the administrative, fiscal and infrastructural challenges associated with the task. These issues focused the attention of city officials and helped carve out a new regime. Eventually the city would adopt the IGoli 2002 plan, which was essentially an austerity measures document that proposed cost cutting and some privatisation to get the city's financial house in order before further investment-led initiatives were taken. This document called for "a world class city in Africa" with all areas of the city under one administration run by the new democratic regime. It also proposed that the city start an integrated planning initiative to inform the priorities of the administration (Beavon, 2004; Bremner, 2000; Czeglédy, 2003; Robinson, 2003; Sassen, 1998; Tomlinson, *et al*, 2003). This implementation and creation of hegemony for the regime was by no means a simple task and met with considerable opposition. On the left this came from unions, civil society and academics opposed to austerity whilst on the right suburbanites opposed the administrative integration of the city (Dirsuweit, 2007; Parnell and Robinson, 2006)

One particular part of this policy creation the identified need for compact planning. The city's need to focus on compact development in particular was precipitated by a number of trends concurrently affecting its growth even before the advent of democracy. The first had been operating from the 1980s when the CBD had started to lose its appeal as a premier shopping and business space. Increasingly high rentals, lack of parking, poor business portfolio management and high traffic volumes produced a hollowing out of the CBD and urban

sprawl to other nodes. It was noticeable that this development followed a mostly northern, sometimes eastern course into the wealthier suburbs of the city. The pinnacle of this process was reached with the establishment of Sandton City, which increasingly attracted the financial firms which had been at the heart of the CBD (Beavon, 2004; Bremner, 2000; Czeglédy, 2003; Goga, 2003; Tomlinson and Larsen, 2003).

The movement of capital away from the CBD created a spine of development running north all the way along to Sandton and beyond. The fear of crime also began to affect the residential market, with long-time residents of the high rise apartments adjacent to the CBD leaving for the northern suburbs. This meant that the city was still divided with white people and the private sector largely located in the north of the city while the south remained dominated by black small business, the public sector and informal trading (Tomlinson, *et al*, 2003; Tomlinson and Larsen, 2003).

This set of economic factors was crucial to the creation of the Johannesburg regime in particular a policy focus on compact development which had very specific effects on the changes that were taking place in the city. To see the new regime as entirely economic, however, would be a mistake. The cornerstone of the change in the city's administration had been political and this had at least as much impact on the regime. It is important therefore to understand the political changes that took place in the city and the kinds of systems that replaced the apartheid framework.

Political Changes and the New Regime

The new political system in Johannesburg was shaped substantially by the change that occurred in the national polity in the early 1990's. The negotiated settlement that took place in South Africa post-1994 was in effect a liberal democratic one (Giliomee, 2006; Leon, 2006). The new constitution placed a strong emphasis on the rights of the individual, specifically political rights such as the rights to free speech and freedom of association. There was also a strong set of legal rights protecting minorities and a place for social rights in the form of government entitlements. The government was composed of three spheres: a national, a provincial and a local sphere. The local sphere was seen as a space where delivery of social services would occur. For this to be effective, it was argued that a simple liberal state with little input from citizens apart from elections was not an effective way to provide for this delivery. In addition the liberation movements themselves had highly participatory

internal structures and sought to integrate these into the state political system (Ballard, 2006; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glaser, 1997). This system had a strong national liberal democratic framework flowing down to a local state where some forms of basic participation were built in. This blending of liberal and participative democracy is known as deliberative democracy. I will now look at the basic theoretical underpinnings of this concept before explaining how it is applied in the context of Johannesburg.

Underscoring the approach of deliberative democracy is a critique of the liberal democratic system. While deliberative democrats appreciate the solid political foundation of liberal democracy, they are not convinced that its approach of relying purely on the aggregation of private voting and party political bargaining is in the best interests of the polity. Liberal systems suffer from apathy with large recent drop-offs in democratic activities such as party membership and voting. Explanations for this include the free rider problem, too much information, and difficulty in differentiating between various party policies. Whatever the reason, liberal approaches struggle to keep citizens engaged with the political system (Svensson, 2008). In addition citizens lack participative power in this system, able only to exert pressure on elected representatives during election periods (Elster, 1998). In contrast deliberative democrats view more participation as a way to bring people back into politics but are wary that participation can be burdensome and that it has the potential to infringe on individual rights and those of minorities. Instead they argued that collective decisions should be based on deliberation that includes free, equal and rational agents seeking consensus on issues pertaining to the common good (Benhabib, 1996; Elster, 1998; Habermas, 1997; Rawls, 1997).

Rationality and reasonableness are seen a key part of how acts of speech and political conversations take place. This is called the idea of public reason. Public agents (i.e. not private institutions) must advance their concerns, chiefly using reasons for what they believe to be solutions to a given political problem. If all the actors have the common good in mind, it is theorized that they will work out a consensus and an appropriate political solution (Cohen, 1997; Rawls, 1997).

Deliberative democrats argue that when reasons are given in public, self-interested arguments are less likely to be convincing. Therefore in order for actors to get support for their proposals they must make them appeal to the widest range of possible interests. This may

mean adjusting the proposal so that it accommodates more positions or they must be able to couch it in terms of the public good (Cohen, 1989; Rawls, 1997). With all the actors changing their stance, this process generates a set of viable alternatives, helps add previously unknown information, sets priorities for preferences that are complicated and refines poorly constructed ideas. In the process different reasons can be advanced and a rational discussion takes place. The system aims for an environment for debate where different inter-subjective rational views points can be used to reach a consensus. The key here is the rationality of the debate as actors need to be able to rely on the best reasons to make their case (Elster, 1997; Healey, 1992).

Habermas stresses what he calls the "ideal speech situation" which requires an equal opportunity for planning, reasonable respect of claims and an argument. He builds on this by arguing that for democracy to be more rational, statements by speakers need to be accurate, sincere and comprehensive, and the speaker themselves must have legitimacy in the eyes of those with whom they are arguing (Mohamed, 2009). This highlights the key values of equality and autonomy which are important for the process to be fair. Inputting these values bolsters the respect that the individual gets while being involved with the deliberation process. This serves a number of purposes. First it is argued that by respecting other actors and allowing them to speak, trust is built and leads to more cooperation, thus adding legitimacy to the decision making process. It also allows minority voices into the decision making process. The theory supports a politics that is interactive, diverse, respectful and reflexive. It allows individual actors to assess and re-assess their arguments and reach a common consensus. In understanding their opponent's positions and their own judgements they are open to the transformation of policy agendas. This requires that those who are deliberating have the social capacity to do so. That they are not discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, religion, social standing and language is imperative to allow them to participate actively in proceedings. Thus actors need to be educated enough that they are able to engage in debate and not be prejudiced against by a lack of technical or cultural knowledge. This gives them the autonomy to act in their own interests and not be cornered into positions that are not their own (Cohen, 1997; Gambetta, 1998; Mohamed, 2009; Watson, 2005; Young, 1997).

Equality and autonomy are also important to another aspect, that of the issue of legitimacy of outcomes. Deliberative theorists argue that if people are given equality and autonomy then everyone has a chance to try and convince others of their argument. Equality means that no

one actor has more power than any other. By providing equality actors have confidence that they can rely on the reasonableness of their arguments (not some other form of power) to try and change the outcome of a decision. It is theorised that a party of equal actors in discussion will abide by a decision even if it was their original position, as long as they get a proper chance at input. This concept is known as *procedural fairness,* its basis being that the fairness of a decision is just as long as the deliberative process is followed correctly. The other major notion in deliberative democracy is that of *substantive fairness* where the judge of the legitimacy of a decision lies not in how well procedure is followed but in how well the final decision approximates the common good (Cohen 1999; Christiano, 1999; Estlund, 1997; Knight and Johnson 1999; Michelman, 1997).

Critics of Deliberative Democracy

The politics of deliberative democracy has not been without its critics. These come from two main camps, liberals and those of the "new left". First are classical liberal thinkers who find any sort of popular participation to be problematic. They see politics as being strictly about the rights of the individual who has a choice in how active or inactive to be in political decision making. The state's only responsibility is to give basic rights such as the right to protection, free speech, political association and the vote. Accordingly it should not become involved in deliberative decision making which is seen as inadequate to defend minority and individual rights. They have argued that the theory is over simplistic and political positions are more about interest group bargaining than about the common good and consensus. In addition they point out that since voting is still the final arbiter of decision–making, that deliberation makes no difference to the final outcomes. Critics have also warned there is a serious risk of demagoguery in deliberative systems with the possibility of decision makers following a charismatic leader instead of giving reasonable positions on topics. This could lead to oppressive decisions being made in the name of democracy and a violation of *substantive fairness* (Gaus, 1997; Knight and Johnson, 1997; Michelman, 1997; Mohamed, 2009; Rawls, 1997).

Another criticism of deliberative democracy has centred on its notions of citizenship. These tend to assume that everyone agrees on a common notion of citizenship as being essentially liberal and therefore individually based. Notions of citizenship in many countries do not however fit this model and are subject to people's histories, culture and political experiences. In many cases (in particular outside of western democracy) the appropriate unit of

identification is not seen as the individual. Rather it is seen as some or other collective such as the family, tribe, religion, race, geographic region or ethnic group. This so-called "communitarian citizenship" stresses the importance of loyalty to the group and contribution to the state (Dwyer, 2004; Etzioni, 1993; Lewis, 2004; Rakodi, 1997; Ramphele, 2001).

The concern with these notions of citizenship under deliberative democracy is that they may violate both the equality and autonomy of the process. It is a crucial idea that actors who are deliberating have an interest in changing their viewpoints in order to meet the common good. If a large group of actors have made up their mind as a group and are not willing to deliberate, then the process is meaningless. The group and its position become more important than the process. There is also a fear that such a large group could overwhelm state structures. With this in mind (Habermas, 1997) warns that it is important that parties come to power and not "sects". Sects are groups who have only their interests and not the common good at the centre of their agenda (Habermas, 1997; Rakodi, 1997).

To counter this argument deliberative democrats often appeal to a constitutional constraint on deliberation that would secure basic rights to protect against an assault on minorities. This is called a foundationalist approach. By deliberating within a framework of fundamental rights, deliberative democrats argue that actors can work across a whole series of issues without the risk of oppressing those with whom they disagree. They argue that a foundation of rights provides a platform of overlapping shared values which results in the ability to deliberate appropriately on all societal concerns. *Procedural fairness* will then occur even if there is a lack of agreement on a specific policy. By having a basic set of inalienable rights backed up by the appropriate institutional arrangements, deliberation can continue without fear that the process will descend into majoratarian politics (Gaus, 1997; Knight and Johnson, 1997; Michelman, 1997; Mohamed, 2009; Rawls, 1997).

The other major criticism of deliberative democracy has been from post-structuralist, "New Left" or agonist democratic thinkers. This group takes issue with the decision-making process itself. The deliberative formulation stresses the need for rational, free and equal actors aiming for consensus. To radical theorists this is an unrealistic vision. They contest the expectation of rational decision-making that is expected from citizens in deliberation. They point out that the theory assumes a disinterested actor making a purely rational decision in a public setting (Little and Lloyd, 2009). They argue that this is not a true reflection of real people's lives and ignores the role that identity plays in the creation of public policy. This identity is shaped by

the citizens' history; where they sit in society; their religious beliefs; ethnic grouping and a whole range of other factors. People are likely to become involved in a deliberative process precisely because of their identity interest, not from some rational disinterest. Identity is important in understanding people's responses to deliberation, which may not always follow the predicted move toward consensus that the model suggests (Svensson, 2008).

This makes the assumed consensus building that is held up as the ideal under deliberative democracy an unattractive goal in the minds of radical thinkers. They argue that instead of trying to enforce rational discussion and consensus where it cannot exist, we should expect a certain amount of identity-based conflict and antagonism. A better outcome than consensus in their mind is an outcome that is contested. This leads to a decision that is far more open and adaptable than one under deliberative democratic systems (Little and Lloyd, 2009; Mohamed, 2009; Mouffe, 1999).

Radical democrats also worry about the implications of the liberal thinking inherent in the deliberative model. They argue that liberal systems are too focused on abstract rights and do not take proper account of power. They also discount the liberal idea of neutral actors in political systems, especially the state. Under deliberative democracy the state is seen as an elected neutral arbitrator that is the best site for organizing consensus (Mouffe, 1999). Agonistic democrats tend to view the state as well as all other political institutions as being in continual flux and contestation. They do not see the state as being a neutral bystander capable of directing and formalizing deliberative discourse. Rather they see a state that is particularistic, created by its historical conditions and the various interests that have a stake in its existence. Thus from their point of view the deliberative model is a state-centred institution that serves dominant discourses by excluding dissenting voices instead of bringing them to consensus. Instead they see civil society as the appropriate space in which deliberation should take place (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Martin, 2009; Mouffe, 1999).

Civil Society and Deliberative Democracy

Civil society, social movements, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, secondary associations and the third sector are all varying terms that describe one or more aspects of the same political phenomenon. In general civil society is considered to consist of the type of institution that comes between the family, the state and business. It includes organisations like religious institutions, universities and sporting groups. Within the

category of civil society there are groups that are more politically focused and are referred to as social movements. These types of organisations tend to be involved in forms of collective action to solve specific issues of concern. They often have higher degrees of popular participation and generally make their demands outside of political party structures (Ballard et al, 2006; Bucek and Smith, 2000).

Deliberative theorists have had to grapple with the participatory role of civil society or secondary associations. On the one hand they can be seen as a positive force in deliberative democracy. They have their own "private reason" or specific objectives upon which all their members can agree. They thus can act as additional spaces in which rational deliberation can take place. This gives citizens a chance to create their own agendas and use private resources to attempt to change society. In these spaces voices may not be drowned out by mainstream discourse (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Mouffe, 1999; Mohamed, 2009; Ballard *et al*, 2006; Young, 1986). Some have suggested that they create the background to an effective political culture. They argue that by creating deliberation in society itself, they help to create the options that can be taken by traditional deliberative bodies (Habermas, 1995).

Others have suggested that they can have more of a direct role. It is argued that secondary associations are seen as better able to monitor operations than government and can more easily collect local information because of their grassroots membership. They may also have a role to play where problems have multiple causes or where monitoring of compliance is difficult (Cohen, 1997). They can in addition act as aggressive watchdogs on state action and help localize decision-making by championing very specific causes (Glazer, 1997; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996).

Social movements also represent marginalized groups or those groups for whom political parties are not competent enough to voice their particular concerns. Civil society is not connected to the family or state and so traditional norms are not as strong. This allows for more freedom in developing identities and political projects. So for example a worker who is underpaid may join a union in order to address this problem. In the process this worker will come to take on a specific political, class, social and economic identity. This helps to create a space for the underrepresented identity and provide impetus to facilitate these values into mainstream political discourse (Castells, 1983; Gottdiener, 1985; Martin, 2009; Pichardo, 1997). For secondary associations to play an effective role in the deliberative democratic process, it is argued that institutions including government funding may need to be set up to

accommodate them, ensuring that they are able to contribute to the common good rather than merely their own interests (Cohen, 1997). The major issue confronting the role of civil society in the deliberative framework is the methods that it uses to get its message across. Deliberative democrats privilege forums of reasonable, rational and non-coercive discussion as the most appropriate means of policy creation. It is important that none should be forced to take a position against their will and everything should be debatable (Cohen, 1997; Rawls, 1997).

Civil society is often actively engaged in this process through open lobbying, drawing media attention and challenging administrative practices (Jimenez, 2007). In many respects however, this is precisely *not* the type of approach that civil society will take to make its voice heard. Included in its repertoire of political tools, civil society makes use of protests, sit-ins, strikes, civil disobedience and guerrilla theatre. These are quite clearly coercive and non-reasonable and therefore fall outside of the acceptable parameters of deliberative theory. The only time such coercion would be accepted is to pressure deliberative forums when voices are being excluded. Thus the forum does not adequately conform to the ideal speech situation (Young, 2001).

Radical democrats, however, contend that voices are *always* being left out of the political discussion. These voices are excluded from deliberations through structural barriers but also by the power of discourse to define what is and is not appropriate. They argue that "rational" frames of discussion effectively exclude a number of minority or radical viewpoints which could potentially be there. They argue therefore that there is a need for unreasonable civil society actions that will force other frames of reference and viewpoints onto the discussion agenda (Glazer, 1997, Medearis, 2005; Pollak; 2009; Young, 2001). The standard example is the American civil rights campaign. This made use of non-violent coercive tactics to get the national legislative authority to undermine local racist laws. In addition it consistently used the Bible to frame its discourse and invoke its own moral authority. These were extremely effective tactics but cannot be considered either reasonable or rational in the sense that deliberative democratic theory has defined those (Medearis, 2005).

The Environment and Deliberative Democracy

Civil society has not been the only aspect of deliberative theory that has been controversial. Another much debated topic is the role that it has played in environmental decision-making.

It is especially crucial in areas where there are concerns around developments that may harm the environment. Deliberative democracy is often seen as an effective method to resolve environmental concerns. This is because of the so called" tragedy of the commons" where resources must be shared by a large number of actors. With no effective mechanism to address how resources are shared, there is a theorised degradation in the resource. Often solutions to commons problems are presented in terms of rational choice theories that seek to maximize the utility of environmental resources. These theories advocate the use of a single instrumental rational system of knowledge that can then allocate environmental resources according to its logic. This often requires the privatization of environmental resources and the exclusion of those who for whatever reasons cannot be a part of such a regime. Deliberative systems have been advocated as an alternative means of making decisions about the environment. Their emphasis on multiple contending rationalities is seen by its proponents as better suited to meeting the demands of environmental challenges. Such problems are often highly complex, can involve multiple actors and have any number of potential views for a solution. Thus the benefits of deliberative democracy, its focus on consensus, reflection, inclusion and multiple knowledges, have many advantages over other systems in finding solutions to such problems (Owens, 2000; Sowman and Brown, 2006; Zografos and Howarth, 2010; Young, 1997).

The environment, however, also poses a number of problems for the process of deliberative democracy. First there are a number of philosophical positions within the environmental movement. Not all of these see democracy as a legitimate organising system, nor do they see engagement with its political structures as useful (Gandy, 1996; Pepper *et al*, 1984). Others have pointed out that the idea of deliberating on environmental issues is difficult because liberal democratic systems are essentially anthropocentric. Thus they do not adequately represent non-human actors in the process. Human actors can clearly have environmental concerns since the environment is something that affects the human condition (Bell, 2005). The environment itself however does not have actual representation in the deliberative process. These representations are broad and include the notions of bequeathing the earth to unborn generations, protecting natural resources such as oceans and wetlands and standing up for the rights of animals. On all these topics in the deliberative process, the "needs" of these actors are represented without their having to be present (Dryzek, 2000; Hailwood, 2005). For this reason, environmental issues leave a lot of room for cultural interpretation, ideology

and co-option of the narrative for other issues (Adams, 1990; Kousis, 2007; Jimenez, 2007; Patel, 2000).

This is made all the more difficult by the fact that environmental issues differ significantly from other social problems. These include large areas of uncertainty both in the causality of the problems and the efficacy, cost and complexity of the solutions. In addition results are hard to measure in the short term. Thus they do not offer the kind of social prestige that is needed to generate the political will to resolve concerns. In fact environmental issues often challenge high profile short term social issues such as jobs, development, food production and energy generation. There is also the cross-border nature of the environment which brings disparate actors into play. There may be very little incentive for such groups to co-operate and there may be very large power imbalances to contend with. Added to this is the fact that the environment is a discipline that cuts across administrative functional silos, making even internal co-ordination difficult. Finally the effects of environmental problems tend to be longer lasting than normal social problems and may be impossible to reverse. This makes the need to get correct decisions all the more necessary. All these issues make defining the common good difficult and impede the ability of deliberative processes to find consensus (Jordan and O'Riordan, 1999).

Despite the alleged shortcomings of the deliberative democratic system, whether they be from radicals, liberals, civil society or environmentalists, it has nonetheless been a system that has been embraced in many spaces and especially cities. This is particularly true of Johannesburg where deliberative democracy became part of the city's new regime at the same time as the phase of rapid development. In order to understand how the theory is practically able to cope with these kinds of scenarios in Johannesburg, it is worth examining the relevant literature that surrounds this topic.

The Implementation of Deliberative Democracy by the Regime

Having examined the theoretical approaches to deliberative democracy, we now look at how the system is implemented in Johannesburg. The city has a number of deliberative channels for use in its local governance programme. Chief among these are the ward councillor and ward committee systems. The former are locally elected officials who stand for five-year

terms in between local government elections. The city is divided up into wards which are demarcated at about every 15,000 people (Gervais-Lambony, 2008). Political parties promote candidates in these wards who are then elected by majority ballot. In addition a parallel proportional representation (PR) system exists in which parties are given seats on the Johannesburg City Council. These are calculated according to the overall percentage of votes that parties receive in the local government elections. Ward councillors then work with ward committees which comprise interest groups in the community and which provide them with information about happenings in the ward. These ward councillors then also sit on the Johannesburg City Council. This use of a twinned PR and ward system is designed so that minorities have the ability to voice their concerns in the city politics and increase deliberation (Benit- Gbaffou, 2008; Rakodi, 1997). Another major deliberative channel comes through the integrated development planning (IDP) initiatives and City Development Strategies (CDS). These processes allow for citizens to give input into planning processes that are taking place in their area. These are then passed to the comprehensive planning process that takes place in the city so that their views are taken into account (Ballard, 2008; Sowman and Brown, 2006 Parnell and Robison, 2006).

These processes are supposed to allow input from the local community about what is important in the area. However the local councillor system has come under significant criticism. Studies have shown that local government is consistently seen as the most inefficient and corrupt of all South Africa's spheres of government. Compared with processes in other countries, fewer South Africans know who their councillors are or have ever met with them (Mattes, 2008). Despite some arguments that suggest that this may be due to the still young democratic culture in South Africa, others have pointed to more structural problems that may be occurring in the system (Benit- Gbaffou, 2008).

Firstly the political structure of the city is problematic from the point of view of the deliberative process. Although the joint first-past-the-post/PR system allows for a significant oppositional voice in the city council, it is the majority party which picks the mayor. The mayor then decides who will sit on the mayoral committee, which is a group of 10 people who have themed portfolios corresponding to various functions of the city administration. PR and ward councillors are then selected to sit on subcommittees for each portfolio. This system robs the city council of much of its deliberative power. The majority party selects the governing group of the city, which leaves the opposition a much smaller role to play. In addition the theme-based committee system does not allow for effective localised

representation. The only time ward councillors can talk about their local issues is during the council chambers discussion sessions. This unfortunately does not achieve much unless the ward councillor can attract the attention and resources of a member of the committee in charge of the issue (Benit- Gbaffou, 2008).

The councillors themselves may also not be responsive to the citizens in their ward. Candidates for elections in wards are not selected by the citizens who live there. Rather the decision for who runs in a particular ward for a particular party is made through the party's internal mechanisms. Sometimes this means that there are ward councillors who represent wards not because of being popular local candidates but because of some other internal party political process. This may mean that they lack knowledge of the area and the people who live in that part of city (Benit- Gbaffou, 2008). Ward committees can also be a problem. Although they represent various groups in the community, the membership of these groups may end up being a fraction of the total number of residents. Committee members may also act as gatekeepers, silencing certain issues and promoting specific agendas (Ballard, 2008).

Finally ward councillors are voted in after every five years in a local election. Between elections there is not much that can be done by the citizens of a ward to ensure that the councillor remains accountable (Gervais-Lambony, 2008). Unlike some local governments in America and Europe, those in South Africa do not make use of participatory techniques such as recall, referendums and initiative ballots that allow citizens to force issues onto the political agenda (Davis, 1992; Earnest, 2007). The councillor is not even obliged to forward the suggestions of a ward committee onto the city council. The overall system means that a committed and enthusiastic ward councillor will find it difficult to get changes made in his ward and it makes ineffective councillors hard to hold accountable (Benit- Gbaffou, 2008).

Deliberative Platforms outside the Local Sphere

Generally speaking provincial and national spheres of government do not have much in the way of participatory infrastructure. Under special circumstances, however, there are mechanisms that can be used to gather information from the public which can also impact on the local sphere. These usually occur when a development of some kind is about to be implemented and it has a potential impact on the environment or heritage of an area. The procedure is then put in place at the level of the province to gather information so that these concerns are taken into account if/when the development goes ahead. Part of this process

includes participation from those who will be affected by the development. These participation processes are part of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs).

Participative planning started in the 1970s with the increase in international aid efforts. This framework was popular because of the benefits that it offered those who were trying to engage and who required it. The process allowed participants the opportunity to comment on the way that aid was being dispensed and some control over their own futures as well as giving them other more material benefits. These included a decrease in costs through the avoidance of unnecessary obstacles, more accurate information and new spaces in which to explore innovative localised solutions. It was also argued that participation assisted in empowering participants by creating more accountability in project execution (Ballard, 2008).

There has however also been much criticism of participation as a practice. The most famous example is that of (Arnstein, 1969) who classified different types of participation into a "ladder" typology. At the very top of this ladder was citizen control and delegated authority while at the very bottom was manipulation, with consultation coming between the two. Others have also used the typology-based analysis, building on the Arnstein model but analysing participation in different ways (Petty, 1995; White, 1996). These typology-based assessments have been criticised for being overly theoretical and not able adequately to explain empowerment or marginalisation in a participative setting. Instead it is argued that critical questions should be asked of participants to interrogate the issues impacting them. For instance one can look at what kinds of participation are taking place and how important they are. It is also important to look at who participates, who is excluded, how extensive the participation is, and how widely it is spread. It is also important to interrogate the power relations in the process itself and to make allowances for unusual reactions that may be produced during the process (Ballard, 2008; Cornwall, 2008; Williams, 2004). It is only by asking critical questions of the participative process that we can gain an understanding of its emancipatory value. However, the issues facing participation go beyond simply assessing how the process itself is being conducted. The fact that these EIAs have to deal with explicitly environmental problems also poses a challenge to the deliberative process.

One of the strengths of deliberative democracy is that it is a means by which instrumental rationality is removed as the sole source of decision-making and is replaced with contending rationalities organized toward a common position. As a deliberative system EIAs are meant

to provide the platform onto which all these multiple rationalities can be projected. The problem is that in EIAs, scientific positivism is often the favoured episteme (Freund, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2004). Environmental Assessments are often done in scientific language, by experts who are hired for the job. The process needs to be able to capture other forms of knowledge and the experts need to be given equal consideration in the decision-making process. If this does not happen the deliberative element of the process is lost. The rational aspect of the deliberative process can also be a problem for environmental proponents who often rely on ruralist, romantic visions of environmental issues. These appeal to issues at an emotional and even irrational level. Thus they are not easy to motivate in a deliberative democratic system where the ability to articulate reasonable positions within a rational framework is considered paramount. Views that are considered irrational or can be framed in this way may be excluded from the process along with the actors who hold them (Barnett and Scott, 2007; Death, 2006; Owens *et al*, 2004; Pepper *et al*, 1984; Richardson, 2004, Watson, 2003, Young, 1990).

Environmental problems also magnify some of the issues associated with trying to achieve equality in the deliberation process. The particular issue here is the role that capital plays in the implementation of decisions under deliberative democracy. Capital is an important element in the carrying out of decisions that arise out of the consultation process. If those who control the capital do not wish to implement a program of action because they have decided they do not agree with it, one then has a problem of equality amongst the participants (Knight and Johnston, 1997). In "development vs. environment" cases this problem is often acute. EIAs are an important part of sustainable development thinking, which has been accused of privileging growth over the environmental concerns that it seeks to address.

Growth as an agenda is privileged in a number of ways over the environment. At the national scale the rhetoric of growth is important because of the type of economic system and the real economic needs to be addressed (Death, 2006). At the local scale there is focus on growth because of urban poverty and local revenue issues. This is the thinking that drives the process of the EIA from the outset. Even though there is theoretically a "no-build" clause in an EIA, the assumption is that development will go ahead and environmental problems will be managed. When an EIA begins, consultants are hired to manage the process in line with this development logic. The emphasis on this process is significant because it is the developer who hires and pays for the process (Barnett and Scott 2007; Freund, 2001; Wood, 1999). In

the vision of deliberative democracy the state rather than the corporation should be the neutral arbiter. In addition, the corporate which is putting up the money for development may refuse to implement the final product of deliberation if it is not profitable. This undermines the power of the process (Knight and Johnston, 1997; Rawls, 1997).

EIAs have for this reason been accused of being a form of "Eco-governability", a term used to describe ways of managing people and the environment. The term derives its meaning from the Foucaltian notion of internalized power. Power in this sense is not seen as coming from structural sources of the state or even capital. Rather it refers to a kind of acceptance of a group of discourses, ideas and unwritten rules. According to this idea, by agreeing to participate in an EIA the citizens involved "buy in" to these specific notions of growth. They also give the EIA power by agreeing to its own internal rules. These govern issues such as which actors have power in the process and include the ultimate authority of the EIA to decide the final outcome of the particular environmental concern. By participating in the EIA, citizens also give up their framing of the issue and the ability to provide alternatives to the development. EIAs cannot alter the structure of the development but only negotiate a more environmentally friendly outcome within its logic. Given the strong pro-growth orientation of the wider political environment, it is argued EIAs are less a tool for contesting a given rationality than a method of managing a broader development agenda (Bedford *et al*, 2002, Death, 2006; Murombo, 2007). This critique of the EIA has meant that some groups are inclined to walk out on them and use means other than deliberation to make their case (Barnett and Scott 2007; Patel, 2000). One must however be cognisant of the fact that EIAs are not rubber stamps for development and that contestation can and does happen in the process (Ballard, 2008).

It could be argued that the institutions described above do not in fact represent Johannesburg some form of deliberative democracy. Rather it could be said to be a far more traditional form of representative democracy with ad hoc institutions imposed for specific roles in city processes. This view is reinforced by the notion readily obtained by the literature that in fact the city in case does not listen to the views of the citizens regardless of the institutions. I do not think this is the correct view.

Firstly it is important to take into account that often discussions around such different types of democracy (e.g. deliberative, participatory, direct etc) are fluid and terms are used interchangeably and often are mutually inclusive. Therefore it is important to argue at a

theoretical level first why I have classed Johannesburg as a deliberative city. At the heart of the notion of deliberative democracy is the idea of spaces that are created for the discussion of public policy objectives. This means that Johannesburg is a deliberative and representative democracy where mandated delegates discuss various policy options. One can have representative democracy without deliberation where for example voted delegates simply take majoritarian decisions without discussion (Gutman, 2009). Also certain types of representative democracy are more deliberative than others, first-past-the-post/Westminster systems tend to be more aggressive and subject to group interest bargaining than proportional representative systems (Rakodi, 1997; Sawer, 2000). In Johannesburg not only is there a blend of systems but there is an additional layer of deliberation through ward committees. Thus the system is by design on the more deliberative end of representative democratic models. It is however also true that this design undermined by institutions such as the mayoral committee and party discipline.

The idea of discussion however is also understood in deliberative systems to operate below and around the representative institutions. In Johannesburg there are groups of other institutions that fall outside of these formal representative structures and create deliberation. Some of these are provided for by national legislation and the constitution and include for example the Promotion of Access to information Act (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008), the chapter 9 institutions and at the provincial level Environmental Impact Assessments. At a local level policy initiatives such as IDP's and CDS's are also part of this process. In addition this dissertation will explore other institutions that also increase deliberation without having been explicitly integrated into this infrastructure for this purpose.

In the literature institutions like IDP's and CDS's are often called participative institutions (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Parnell and Robinson, 2006). Having participatory institutions however does not necessarily mean that Johannesburg has a participatory democratic system. Participatory democracy implies the ability not just to discuss policy but to have a direct say in its implementation. Johannesburg's institutions do not allow for this kind of decision making only for input. Participatory democracy are better characterised by the citizen budgeting exercises found in South America or democracy at the organisational level as favoured by the former liberation movements (Cabannes, 2004; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996). Nor do the systems approximate direct democracy as practiced by for example some parts of America and Europe (Earnest, 2007; Davis, 1992). Therefore I would argue that Johannesburg system can be categorised as deliberative since philosophically institutions

have been created that provide for discussion around public ends. As representative institutions they fall more on the deliberative end of the spectrum and in fact go beyond the representative model but not so much as be declared participatory or direct.

Of course there is an argument to be made that all this is irrelevant if these institutions don't provide the deliberation that they are supposed to in theory. Indeed this is an important question and this paper will engage with how effective the deliberative, participative and other institutions were in the battle to save Huddle Park. Even if however it is found that Johannesburg has a very weak deliberative model this says something about is implementation or problems with the theory, not a problem with its theoretical classification per se.

Space, Politics and the Middle Class

Despite there being more inclusive political structures in Johannesburg since the end of apartheid, the continuing divisions in the city and the nature of democracy itself mean that the regime is continually being contested. This contestation has not confined itself to the deliberative structures of the city but has manifested in increased civil society activism. Much of this activism has come from social movements previously connected to the anti-apartheid struggle (Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glaser, 1997; Tomlinson *et al*, 2003).

On a smaller scale there have also been a number of other groups operating in suburban areas (Benit-Gbffou, 2008). What research there has been has tended to relate to the issue in terms of the entrenchment of privilege by these groups. Authors have tended to organise their ideas around what is driving this kind of politics as an intersection of race and class driven by self interest (Ballard, 2002; Ballard, 2005; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002; Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002; Ulrich, *et al* 2003). Given the history of Johannesburg and South Africa's obsession with these two issues, it is not really surprising that this should be the case (Purcell, 2001). however, making use of Lefebvre's spatailisation of politics, believes that these criteria alone are not sufficient to evaluate this kind of action adequately. Rather, he argues, the key to understanding suburban political action lies not in these factors but rather in the way in which a political action is trying conform an area to a certain vision of space.

Space viewed in this manner and especially from a middle-class perspective can be very powerful. Spaces have certain identities attached to them: they have a "sense of place" with meanings that help people relate to the space and understand their own spatial contexts

(Manzo and Perkins, 2006). This has been seen as important by a number of scholars who have argued that natural spaces are important for therapeutic, spiritual and recreational purposes (Anyinam, 1999; Collins, 2009; Gesler, 1999). In the case of Johannesburg authors have noted a chaotic, individualised, image driven approach to its residential archeatecture being offset by the use of the "urban pastoral" approach for its parks. This form of planning often located parks on the edge of the city for them to be a space to which people could escape the chaos of the urban environment. Its vision came from the British pastoral landscape and its features were circular and naturalistic and contained water and trees. It emphasised moral and social order, the purpose being to induce a feeling of calm, tranquillity and a rural air to the urban sphere (Bachin, 2003; Czeglédy, 2003; Cranz and Boland, 2004; Mbembe, 2004). Supposedly these design features were meant to be a reproduction of naturalness in the city, yet very little of the original indigenous flora of Johannesburg was used in these park designs. To this day hardly any of this flora remains in the city. Planning instead sought to subjugate nature to the needs of man and keep it managed. This view of nature has remained an important part of the designs of open areas in Johannesburg (Bachin, 2003; Mbembe, 2004). These green and separate spatial identities of the suburbs are reinforced by the mutated influence of international spatial ideologies such as modernism, garden city design emphasising discrete residential, retail and work zones, often with European countryside imaginaries, separated by green corridor and large highways. These have meshed with apartheid style planning and ethnic city migration and have become a powerful influence on the creation of the suburbs and townships alike (Harrison and Zack, 2012; Murray, 2011; Parnell and Mabin, 1995; Mabin, 2012).

Beyond the aesthetics of space there has been a focus on how space can create a better functioning society. One idea that has received a particular amount of attention is the notion of public space. It is argued that in these spaces citizens can do a variety of things such as relax, recreate, socialise, and interact with other citizens. Public spaces help to build communities and engage others in a non-threatening public manner (Cattell *et al*, 2007; Low, 1996).

There is also a strong political element with these spaces being used to allow engagement in political activities which is designed to draw attention to issues of public concern. In democratic systems public space is considered to be an important part of allowing individuals and groups to express themselves and raise issues. This can be highly contested if certain groups and individuals, and their views, are excluded from the political discourse (Dovey,

2001; Habermas, 1989; Low, 1996). This could be because a particular activity is unpopular in that public space, or because a particular space is dominated by a certain political or ideological power, or because of some fear including crime or some kind of prejudice (Van Deusen, 2002; Ehrenfeucht and Loukaitou-Sideris, 2007, Mitchell, 2003, Staeheli and Mitchell, 2006; Whitzman, 2002). For this reason public space sometimes needs to be "taken" by engaging state authorities or through some kind of civic, legal or protest action in the public space itself (Dovey, 2001; Whitzman, 2002).

Spaces however are not only a place for the political. They can also help to galvanise political action. For example there was the attempted commercial development of private beaches in New Zealand. Residents opposed the new development on the basis that it would destroy the community and its sense of place (Collins, 2009). There have also been other examples, such as that of colonial era cemeteries interning dead British soldiers who were stationed in India. These cemeteries were neglected for many years and have now become targets for property developers. In response British citizens have now set up organisations to save these cemeteries, connecting themselves once again to India's colonial past (Buettner, 2006).

Authors have tended to see the mobilisation of the middle class through spatial projects as fairly exclusionary in nature. There is a whole swathe of literature devoted to the projects in which the middle classes are involved where there is a conscious move to create spaces for themselves and in the process exclude the rest of the city, particularly the poor (Ballard, 2002; Ballard, 2005; Baud and Navtej, 2008; Davis, 1992; Van Deusen, 2002; Fernandes, 2004; Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002; Lemanski, 2006; Mitchell, 2003).

This can be achieved in a number of ways, initially by privatising services previously provided by the city. These can include water, rubbish removal, security and "greening activities". By providing services themselves the middle class then does not contribute to the upliftment of rest of the populace. In the process they may also exclude democratically elected officials whose job it is to serve residents. The middle class also uses scalar arguments to ring fence resources (Baud and Navtej, 2008; Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Dirsuweit, 2007; Parnell and Robinson, 2006 Fernande's, 2001; Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002).

In South Africa there has been much focus on the physical walling off of the middle class from the other communities. In some cases this can take the form of gentrification where the poor are removed from spaces they previously occupied, to make way for middle-class consumption spaces. In other cases, such as the issue of crime, there is a strong militarisation

of middle-class residential areas. This is achieved with the use of privatised security, high walls and electric fences on their properties. There has also been even more extreme action taken with attempts to boom off public roads and create entire residential areas not accessible to the public. In these ways middle-class residents insulate themselves from physical and political contact with the city and in the process avoid any deliberation on the public good. This helps to create an exclusionary, balkanised, divided city that critics have compared to something out of the middle ages (Ballard, 2005; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002, Davis, 1992; Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002; King; 2010).

In the case of Johannesburg authors have argued that developments that attempt to close themselves off from the city are in effect trying to re-impose a middle class European vision on a now African space (Ballard, 2005; Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002; Ulrich *et al*¸2003).

These authors show us some important aspects of city politics and deploy powerful and useful metaphors to explain how it works. Unfortunately they also convey a very deterministic view of all middle-class politics, depicting it as inherently instrumental and selfish. First of all this view ignores the roles that middle-class groups have had in important political projects (Fainstein and Hirst 1995; Pichardo, 1997; Scott, 1976). Secondly, it does not allow for visions of the city which may retain middle-class characteristics but would also add constructively to its politics. Authors have shown that there are many ways to engage the vision of the city that are not purely driven by self-interest (Chiesura, 2004; Orwell, 2009; Wolch, 2007). In addition the very metaphors used to show the dark dangerous sides of city life can be used to find important democratic projects (King, 2010). Others have argued that until we are able to reconfigure the vision of these spaces it may be difficult to get community action to change the physical character of the city (Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Wolch, 2007). With these aspects in mind we are able to then to then respond to calls by academics to seek out other explanations other than those based in race (Parnell and Mabin, 1995). In this case the focus will be on the way that the middle class uses space and the democratic process to challenge the policy framework of the regime.

Space has been an important part of the way that Johannesburg was built particularly in current politics as well as its structure. By integrating this aspect of the city into the analysis we are able to better understand the role that it plays in challenging or entrenching the

hegemony of the regime in the governance of the city and the way that that the middle class makes use of this as a strategy to engage with the city.

Literature Review Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter gives a strong structure on which to base an analysis of suburban middle class politics. Having a much divided political history and spatial form Johannesburg now finds itself with a new regime made up of many parts. In particular interest in this case are the economic aspects driving a more compact approach to city planning and the new political structure that is designed to incorporate a more deliberative process. By examining the opposition to the attempt to develop Huddle Park we can see how the aims of this regime are sometimes contested. We also gain a better understanding of middle class politics and how it is driven and understand some of the key components that make up its view of space, as well as some of the strategies that it uses to pursue a vision to control space. In the process we are also able to gain a better understanding of the city's politics and the potential challenges that it might face in the future.

Chapter 4 - Suburban Visions

Huddle Park and the Making of Suburban Politics

The most striking aspects of the bid to save Huddle Park are its characteristics of longevity and intensity in a suburban space marked by a lack of interest in local affairs and little tradition of political activism. This dissertation will look at many parts of the process including how the activists were organised, how they operated and if they were effective. Before reaching these points, however, it is important to understand why Huddle Park became an issue in the first place. My eventual conclusion is that a number of factors connected to the park itself created an effective platform from which to mobilise the residents. This platform could only be built in a political and social context that allowed for this sustained piece of active citizenry. This context is shaped by the city as a political space and particularly the way that Johannesburg and in this case its suburbs function as political entities. The chapter begins with a look at the politics of cities and how they are governed before discussing Johannesburg's specific urban context. It also examines how Huddle Park fits into this context. It then moves on to how suburbs can be understood politically. It focuses on the idea that the primary driver of political action in a suburb is the geographic vision that suburban residents have for their area. I then also examine how residents understand the park and interrogate what visions were deployed by activists and the developers in order to drive their political agenda. The chapter ends with an assessment of how effective these visions were in achieving their aims.

It has been noted that many of the important building blocks for a highly dynamic polity reside in the spaces of the urban including the enmeshed networks of capital, culture, governing institutions and many unequal groups (Amin and Thrift, 2002; Imrie *et al,* 1996; Judge *et al,* 1995). These resources are required to deal with the myriad of development challenges that cities are expected to confront and where their often limited capacity and power that are sometimes inadequate. Unpopular decisions made by city administrations can be contested by residents using whatever resources are available (Judge *et al,* 1995; Sassen, 2002).Huddle Park is situated within this framework of residents who use the resources available to them to try and contest the outcomes that are being pursued by the local state. Without the city, its resources and context, these efforts would likely not be as effective. Therefore cities provide a space for small scale political issues (like the ones at Huddle Park)

to be played out, and a home for political movements that have been able to find a niche and a support base nationally (Baubock, 2003; Bosniak, 2000; Kadalie, 2006; Leon, 2006; Sassen, 2000; Swyngedouw, 2004). The focus of this research is not however on large political movements such as unions, poverty campaigners, or identity activists that are commonly found in urban studies. Rather it is about the workings of isolated, numerically inferior suburban residents' associations that form part of the micro-politics of the city. By examining them we get an insight not only into how these groups operate but also an understanding into what impact they may have on other city politics.

Huddle Park and its Urban Context

Understanding how Huddle Park fits into the context of Johannesburg's politics is important in assessing why it became such a contentious issue. The next section details where Huddle sits in terms of the historical development of the city as a whole.

There are a number of general theories that relate to how cities are governed. In the main this centres on notions of power and how it is organised. Some authors have questioned whether power is organised in elitist cliques or is spread throughout the urban system (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Dahl, 1961; Harding, 1995 Judge, 1995; Mollenkopf, 1992). Others have argued for a greater focus on the inflows of international capital, while others have focused more on the influence of growth imperatives at the local level (Clavel, 1986; Cox and Mair, 1989; Davis, 1992; Fuller and Harriss, 2001; Harding, 1995; Judge, 1995; Kjaer, 1999; Lindell, 2008; Molotch, 1976; Molotch and Logan, 1990; Pierre, 1999; Stoker, 1995; Schneider and Teske, 1991; Weinstein, 2008). These paradigms contribute to the understanding of events surrounding Huddle Park, where for instance the situation at first glance looks like a classic growth coalition. The influence of business is clear, as is the growth discourse and opposition by local residents. The problem is that simply identifying a growth coalition doesn't add much to the understanding of the politics of Huddle Park. Rather what is required is a broader perspective that can take more elements on board and give a more holistic notion of events surrounding Huddle Park.

One paradigm that has gained fairly wide acceptance in explaining how urban decision-making operates is known as regime theory. The focus of the idea is that a city's governability is based on a long-term set of interests that coalesce to form the driving momentum of its politics. This regime transcends changes in political parties and institutions,

such as a new mayor, that may occur through the democratic process (Deleon, Unpublished; Dowding, 2001; Mossberger and Stoker, 2009; Stone, 1989; Stone, 1993).

Huddle Park and the New Regime

In order to interrogate how the issue of Huddle Park fitted into the new regime of Johannesburg one first needs to understand the overarching dynamics of the elected democratic leadership. Since the end of apartheid there have been many goals that the new leadership has sought for the city but there were two that particularly affected the issue of Huddle Park, namely the promotion of political access to all citizens and a fair distribution of the city's resources. In order to achieve these goals the city has had to confront a serious financial challenge which created a specific economic approach to its political agenda. In the next section both the political and economic changes that made up the new city regime will be examined.

Being undemocratic, apartheid city planning was generally unresponsive to the needs of the majority of its citizens and was informed by top-down economic and ideological considerations. The new ANC council wished to discard these approaches and create a more inclusive governing structure. These changes to the city's political structure were informed by a body of theory known as deliberative democracy which focuses on negotiation and consensus building as the foundation of the political process (Benhabib, 1996; Elster, 1997; Rawls, 1997; Habermas, 1997). This involved the introduction of liberal democratic reforms such as universal voting rights, freedom of movement and free speech (Giliomee, 2006: Leon, 2006). These were in line with similar moves in national government but in Johannesburg there was also an emphasis on participative institutions. These were drawn from the liberation movement tradition with an emphasis on more direct contact with decision makers. In this spirit political institutions were put in place that sought to convey information from residents to the city council through means beyond just the ballot box (Ballard *et al*, 2006; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glaser, 1997). It was hoped that new structures put in place by the city regime would serve both as a way of creating effective policy and as a guide for the fair distribution of local state resources. These political changes served as the backbone of the city's new regime.

At the same time as the change in the political system occurred, the new regime of Johannesburg also had to contend with a growing set of economic problems. These included

fiscal challenges which were a remnant from apartheid. They were compounded by the city having neither sufficient revenue nor the capacity to collect efficiently on existing sources. In addition it faced the massive delivery challenge of maintaining an expensive first world infrastructure in some parts of the city while at the same time attempting to develop other areas out of dire poverty and cope with new arrivals from other parts of the continent. In addition there was the phenomenon of capital flight out of the Central Business District to the more northern wealthy areas of the city and away from the increasing crime, informalisation, congestion and urban decay. In order to confront these issues the city integrated itself turned to the use of austerity measures and began the hunt for additional forms of income. It also focused on uplifting and regenerating the CBD and created a policy environment that encouraged a mega city and compact development principles as an antidote to the growth of urban sprawl (Beavon, 2004; Bremner, 2000; Czeglédy, 2003; Dirsuweit, 2007; Goga, 2003; Palmary *et al,* 2003; Rogerson, 1996; Simone, 2004; Tomlinson and Larsen, 2003). Although there was opposition to the creation of this regime (Dirsuweit, 2007; Parnell and Robinson, 2006) it nonetheless became part of how the city operated. It is in fact interesting that regimes are normally seen as collusionary forces between business and local government. Here however compact development was used as a way to correct the outward spatial dynamic being driven by business. These factors together could be said to compose the economic aspects of the regime that entrenched themselves as business started looking for different opportunities within this framework. These policy initiatives created incentives for development firms that focused on specific types of development to become more involved in the creation of space in the city. The interaction of these firms with the city specifically through the tender process for new building became important in the new regime shaping the spaces of Johannesburg.

As the city regime sought to balance its economic challenges and began to implement its program of densification, it was inevitable that there would be an impact on the city landscape and infrastructure. This centred on maintenance and delivery issues such as roads, water and the provision of electricity. The political aspect of the democratic system was supposed to pick up on these concerns and convey them effectively to the city to ensure that the process would work effectively.

This is the context in which the debate around the future of Huddle Park was conducted. The area owned by the city is large, open, situated in a prime location, and does not produce much income. It therefore is a natural target for the compact development policy and if sold off, it

could potentially contribute considerably towards the city's revenue stream and make considerable profits for the developers. When opposition to the project began from the residents, they turned first to the democratic structures of the regime that were supposed to project their voices to those in power. The residents made it clear through these channels that this was not what they wanted. The demands of the residents which were articulated through the political arm of the city's regime took the form of opposition to its fiscal arm, development firms and economic goals. It is from this opposition that the tension around this particular issue grew.

Understanding the context of Huddle Park in the city regime may help us understand why there was a tension between the residents and the city but it does not explain why the residents opposed the project in the first place. To understand this, there is a need to drill down past the level of city administration and into the politics of the suburbs.

The Politics of the Suburban Ideal

The key to understanding the reasons behind the action that took place around Huddle Park is not to look exclusively at the political and economic environment but also to view the issue spatially.

This idea draws heavily on the notions of the "triad" that makes up the social production of space as envisioned by Henri Lefebvre. It is argued that the creation of the urban form is manufactured through a process in which three separate forces drive a particular notion of how the city should look and feel. The first is that of representational space, which consists of the images associated with the city which is built up in the media and the mind, often of famous landmarks or some aspect of culture. The second part is called representations of space: the plans for the city that are continually being produced by its administration and politicians, the social engineers, architects and planners who try to envision the city in a particular way. Finally there are the spatial practices, the way in which ordinary people actually use the city in everyday life (Bryant and Livholts, 2007; Dovey, 2001; Lefebvre, 2002; Jelin, 2000; Low, 1996; Purcell, 2003; Sassen, 2003).

One can extend Lefebvre's spatial notions by focusing them specifically on the operation of suburban politics. In this context it is argued that suburban political action is generally geared through representational space and specifically into what is called the "suburban ideal". This is an amalgamation of notions whose eventual vision gives the classic look and feel of neat

suburbia. This includes large, low density properties, ample recreations facilities and green areas which contribute to relaxed space primarily for the living requirements of the nuclear family. Anything that threatens this ideal will be opposed by groups who are looking to preserve this piece of suburban representational space. Thus it is common for anti-development and landscape issues to be part of suburban disputes (Purcell, 2001).

There is no doubt that the case of Huddle Park fits nicely into this model. It is a large open space contributing to the suburban ideal that would be severely disrupted by the presence of a large housing and shopping complex. Thus the tension around Huddle Park can be encapsulated as lying between the residents' representational space and the city's representations of space. In the case of Huddle these two poles are particularly important because of a lack of spatial practice due to the park's neglected state. Spatial practice can sometimes be an important driver in urban disputes (Ehrenfeucht and Loukaitou-Sideris, 2007; Van Deusen, 2002; Mitchell, 2003; Staeheli and Mitchelll; 2006). Without this actual use of space its imagined qualities become the prime aspects around how the contestation takes place.

This is still only a partial explanation of why Huddle Park was the cause of so much concerted action as opposed to other spaces, including other golf courses, which were not subject to such intense prolonged activism. If however the argument is that there is a spatial vision driving this action, then the increased intensity can perhaps be explained by understanding the make-up of this particular spatial vision.

The representational space of Huddle Park is not the sole property of the developers or even the activists but rather an amalgamation of images and ideas stemming from the park's long history. Together these weave an overall notion of the park to which all parties, whether opposed to or in favour of the development, need to respond in order to drive their agenda. This section investigates some of the most important of these threads in the vision, particularly the issue of crime at Huddle Park. It then moves on to how the key actors tried to create their own vision for the space and how effective these visions were for garnering support.

Huddle Park and the Suburban Ideal

Huddle is a very large area measuring approximately 186 ha and housing three public golf courses. It was created in the first quarter of the 1900's and was expanded in the 1950's and

1960's. In the 1970s the course was so highly regarded that it hosted the South African Open and was the only golfing complex of its kind on the continent. Today Huddle is one of the only public golf courses left in the country and it provides (SEF, 2005).

One of the reasons that Huddle Park was such an important issue for the residents was that its development undercut the suburban ideal. The maintenance factors affecting the park concerned many residents but one worries them more anything else, the issue of crime. Like many discussions about the city of Johannesburg, the debate around Huddle Park is incomplete unless there is some reference to the notion of crime. It pervades the discourse and is often referred to by those wanting to make a point about the park's future. The interesting aspect of its presence in the debate is that crime has little to do with arguments in favour of or against the development. Rather crime and degradation are among the key frames through which people understand the discourse of Huddle Park before the actual debate about the development even begins.

Very few residents ever used the park other than the golfing fraternity and once the council decided to start the development even those began to tail off until eventually the council announced that the course would be closed. This meant that for several years while the fight for Huddle was commencing and gaining momentum, there were few and sometimes no users of the park. This has meant that unlike cases of potential development which have infringed on people's spatial practice and ability to use parks, in the case of Huddle almost all opinions on the development are informed by some kind of imaginary or representational space. By exploring the notion of crime, important insights into how people think about the park and its future are exposed. It also shows how crime and security discourses were important in shaping this imaginary scenario and how they generated specific political responses.

Almost every person interviewed for the study exhibited much anxiety over the fact that Huddle Park had begun to degrade. As fewer people began to use the space and since only one golf course was operational, the rest of the property became overgrown and unkempt. Eventually the tenant who inhabited the course ceased to spend money on maintenance and moved out. At this point the fencing was stolen and the fittings inside the club house were stripped. Residents' references to crime are almost always connected with this degradation and the fear that its continual progression would eventually lead to large negative consequences for the neighbourhood.

One resident said, the park is “in ruin” and “has lost its beauty and is all overgrown” (Interview, 2011). Another said that, the “grass is an eyesore”, that it “attracts a criminal element” and “that it is an area that criminals use to conceal themselves and evade authorities” (Interview, 2011). Residents repeated stories of muggings and of smash and grab attacks on the roads near the park. One claimed that, “At work a colleague’s son was attacked a few months ago at the Linksfield Golf Club. He had to jump into a hole of filthy water to save himself” (Bedfordview Edenvale News, 23 August, 2005).

What the extent of the crime problem is can be somewhat difficult to ascertain. A member of the sector crime forum, a sub-committee of the Norwood community policing forum (CPF), which deals with the area, claimed that Huddle has, “never really been an issue from a policing perspective” (Interview, 2011). Rather he that argued that the, “crime is from Rietfontein (an adjacent open space) into Huddle, it’s an escape route. We’re not saying crime happens in Huddle Park because there is nobody there” (Interview, 2011). This view is backed up by information from private security companies who patrol the area. They refused to go on record with their data base of incidents but they also tended to see Huddle Park as a potential enabler for escaping criminals rather than their source. An earlier report however quotes the head of the CPF saying that crime is a problem in the area (SEF, 2005). In addition to these sources there are also residents who frequently walk in the park and who can relate their experiences. One told me that despite walking there sometimes as often as twice a day he has, “never had any incident” (Interview, 2011) and another said that, “There used to be a perception that the park was dangerous to walk in but that is not so” (9 November 2007, North Eastern Tribune). An activist who lives in a boomed off suburb on the edge of the park believes that, “There is no crime, but the fear of crime is very high” (Interview, 2011). She then went onto explain that the most recent house robbery in the suburb had been perpetrated by armed criminals who had driven through the guarded boom gates in broad daylight but had not made use of the park at all. On the other hand the Facebook group promoting the park does have reports from concerned residents who have been attacked while walking in the area, this even during times when the park was more secure (www.facebook.com).

The defenders of the park have had to respond to this crime discourse with one activist saying that they, “agree that Huddle Park is neglected and security is a problem” (Bedfordview Edenvale News, 23 August, 2005) and the member of the sector crime forum saying that, “logic tells me that there are criminals living in that area” (Interview, 2011). By the same token, those who voice the strongest worries about crime do not tend to see it as an

immediate threat. What separates those who would like to see development and those who do not is the question of what to do about the *future* of the park.

Those opposing the development tend to see the degradation of the park as a deliberate ploy by the Johannesburg City Council to erode opposition to the project. The activist who admitted that crime was an issue qualified her statement by saying that, "the problem lies in the deliberate neglect of Huddle Park by the Johannesburg city Council" (Bedfordview Edenvale News, 23 August, 2005). One the key groups in the opposition believed that there was a, "strategy to encourage the degradation of Huddle Park to generate this (negative) type reaction" (Bedfordview Edenvale News, 23 August, 2005).

Those who wanted to see the development go ahead, however, declared that it was "unsafe as an open space and not designed for it" (Interview, 2011) and that they "would rather see a hotel and shopping centre erected on the estate... the clubhouse is invaded by vagrants and refuse" (Bedfordview Edenvale News, 23 August, 2005).

This last aspect, that of, the potential migration to the park of homeless people and particularly squatters, is a real fear for all those who were involved in the issue. It made the case for development particularly urgent for those in favour of the project. The park has a number of groups of people living there. The first is a group of municipal workers who live in compounds owned by the city on the site and work in surrounding areas. The second group comprises former caddies at the golf course who have simply stayed on. The last group is one of genuine homeless people who use the park as a place to sleep. At one point when the park was left unoccupied a number of these people moved into the club house and it was subsequently stripped of some of its fittings. The presence in the park of groups of unknown people, whether there legitimately or not, created a great deal of discomfort for many residents. Those few walking in the park do not, however, seem to have had a problem, with one Huddle Park walker reporting that, "the squatters are not dangerous; one asked me for a blanket" (Resident, 2011). Many, though, expressed their concern that these groups could become a permanent fixture in the park. Sentiments expressing the view that there could be a growth explosion were common, for instance "[you have a] squatter, him and his family, then his 17 cousins and pretty soon you have a whole informal city" (Interview, 2011).

This fear was particularly highlighted when some confusion arose after the city placed adverts in local newspapers promoting, "the proclamation of township", a technical phrase that refers to the legal process required to develop a property of this kind. The residents,

more used to colloquial uses of the term, immediately assumed that the site was earmarked for low-cost housing. Frustrated activists regularly complained about this assumption, "people come up to me and say we hear its low cost housing. I actually want to scream, I actually want to strangle them and I say don't you read, don't you understand what is going on, don't you participate" (Interview, 2011)?

Despite protestations to the contrary by the activists, it is these images which defined the debate of Huddle as soon as it became an issue of development. Essentially protagonists argued that Huddle was degraded and would continue to decline. If nothing was done there would be more crime, a large invasion of squatters or even the spectre of government-sponsored low-cost housing.

The implicit assumption was that the city simply no longer cared about the space and no-one could count on its support or interest to maintain it. Regularly during my interviews respondents reiterated that the Johannesburg Council was generally incompetent and not able to handle the issue. Public services such as the police service that one would assume might deal with a problem such as crime, were barely considered and in fact most residents spoke more about what private security companies had done for security in the area. Therefore the choice presented was stark: either continue with a declining park and the possibility of new untold urban horrors or build a golfing estate to pre-empt such a fate. Despite these associations undercutting Huddle Park as part of the suburban ideal, the activists believed that residents would be in favour of saving it from development.

The task of the activists therefore became a twofold interrelated process. In the first place a vision for the area would be created that would convince enough residents that developing the park was worth saving; then a way would be found to convert this into enough public pressure to convince the city of this as well.

The first part proved to be relatively easy and many residents tended to come out in the public discourse as being anti the development. In the next part of this chapter I explore the component parts that created this "vision of public development". I contend that while this vision was effective in mobilizing the residents and engaging them with the political arm of the city's regime, it did very little to alter its economic approach.

The Vision of Public Development

Due to the economic policy of the regime Huddle Park was not the only golf course in the city that was under pressure from development. Some had a limited number of houses built on them while others completely disappeared beneath wholesale new shopping centres. In some cases local residents were very much against these developments but were powerless to stop them. The reason for this was that as they were private golf clubs, the only people who mattered in the decision-making process were their members. Some critics of the defence of Huddle Park have argued that essentially the fight to save the area should not be seen as qualitatively different from the sale of these private golf clubs. The argument goes that golf is an elitist sport and that golf courses are land and resource hungry. So despite vastly cheaper and more egalitarian access to the this course (because of its being municipally owned) and the presence of the Golf Development Board that supports young previously disadvantaged golfers, Huddle Park is still seen in this same wealthy, elitist mould. To understand this strictly as a golfing issue, however, would be overly reductionist. In fact the golfing fraternity as a whole was relatively mute on the issue of Huddle. Rather than golf, the key to understanding the defence of the park is to understand its publicness.

On the face of it this might seem like a counter-intuitive idea. To begin with many of the activists did not seem to need the public space and in fact some of them lived very private spaced lives in boomed off suburbs. Some of those in favour of the development argued that in fact the area did not act as a public space and that golf was not really designed to be one. Also while it is true that defences of public space have been mounted by citizens in many cities across the world, these campaigns usually tend be rights-based and focus particularly on the idea of access for the poor to public spaces in the city (Mitchell, 2003, Staeheli and Mitchell, 2006). This was clearly not the case with Huddle Park since it was squatters living at the site who were in the main seen as a threat and whose presence was not defended. Even the caddies and municipal employees who worked at the golf course were not a focal point of the debate. The city was generally keen to see that municipal workers remained in their posts and lived in the compound at the site while the plight of the caddies plight drew sympathy from the residents because their jobs and homes were at risk. One article explained that "[the caddies] grew up around the park and now see it as a refuge" and that "some have been there for more than 60 years" (26 November 2005, Sat Star).

Nor was this concept based on the idea that as a public good it promotes democratic values, social good and informal contact among citizens (Cattell *et al*, 2007; Dovey, 2001; Low, 1996; Whitzman, 2002). The concept of public space in the case of Huddle Park was not

rights, social, or democratic based but stemmed instead from a legal definition. This arose from the fact that Huddle Park is owned by the municipality and is zoned as public open space. The first practical consequence of this is that any development that might be considered is governed by powerful legislation such as the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) and municipal planning procedures. In a later chapter I show how the activists used these procedures to further their cause in a way that those opposed to private golf development could not. More importantly, however, this legal idea of public open space also provides a useful rhetorical scaffolding to build a mobilising vision for those who wanted to oppose the development. The preamble to the city by-laws provides some of this mental architecture. It argues that public spaces should be considered for the long-term interest of the city. It also says that the beneficiaries should be the collective citizenry, future generations and even non-human actors. Lastly the contribution that such spaces should make is to enhancing the quality of life of the local residents and toward communities being involved in the upkeep of these spaces (CoJ, 2004).

In addition to these notions of common property and equal access, there is also the spatial context of the park which people have experienced. The surrounding suburbs established within the proximity of Huddle are made up of long term communities. Some of these communities are cultural in nature and include members of the Greek, Italian and Jewish communities, while others were simply created through shared experiences such as the establishment of one suburb for soldiers returning from World War II. One of the important effects of these communities is that they established their institutions like schools, places of worship, old age homes and other public amenities in the area (Harrison and Zack, 2012). Despite this presence of networks, the north eastern areas of Johannesburg still exhibit roughly the same kinds of low social capital and general apathy in local affairs that are a feature of most suburbs. The World War II veterans are no longer around and the other networks function largely through ethnic affiliations rather than some spatial identity. What these groups did contribute, however, was a spatial legacy that is demographically relatively stable. Many of the people I interviewed had lived in and around the area for decades if not their entire lives.

For this reason many people had a deep attachment to the park as a space often merely for the simple fact that they had been driving past it most of their lives. Some used to run on the course and many had played golf there, often as children, because it was cheap and easy to access. The fact that it was a public golf course seems to have improved the quality of the

golfing experience. One golfer reminisced that Huddle was, "a golf club with a spirit and camaraderie few other clubs ever enjoyed" (24th April, 2009 North Eastern Tribune) and that, "since golf is a humbling game and a powerful common denominator, friendships were made across status and background" (24th April, 2009 North Eastern Tribune). Although the golf course would have been racially segregated at the time, the publicness of the space still brought this golfer into contact with people with whom he would not normally have associated..

Authors have argued that these kinds of experiences with spaces have important spiritual, recreational and therapeutic effects (Anyinam 1999; Collins, 2009; Gesler, 1999). One in particular is that people begin to identify with the space and its presence helps them make sense of their reality (Manzo and Perkins, 2006). Such sentimental connections to space have been shown to drive political actions for its preservation (Buettner, 2006; Collins, 2009). In the case of Huddle I would argue that memories that people had of the park, coupled with their long domicile in the area, created a powerful spatial identity. These sentiments were well captured in the construction of the park as a public space.

The public common ownership of the park is nicely illustrated through a popular legend. The story goes that the original owner of the land died and in his will he left the property to the Johannesburg City Council to manage on behalf of the people of the city as a public space. Thus the city was not allowed to take away the land. No proof of this assertion has ever been found, and it is possible that this story has simply been appropriated in people's minds from other cases of public space in Johannesburg that was saved from development in this way. Nonetheless the fact that it was believed shows people's sense that the park really did belong to them and that the city was wrong to try take it away.

This allowed the activists to claim that it was the city that was elitist, "It's criminal to take what belongs to the people. We need sports and recreation areas" (26 November 2005, Saturday Star) or that, "this is my park. It's everybody's park. It's a valuable asset that the people of Jo'burg are going to lose. When did we give the Jo'burg council the mandate to sell our parks?" (17 Nov 2007, Saturday Star). Putting it more bluntly one activist claimed that the development was a, "private gated community for rich people" (Saturday Star, 2006).

This notion of common publicness also helpfully sidestepped the degraded status of the park and allowed the activists to appeal to an intergenerational notion of potential. One activist argued that, "The city of Johannesburg wants to sell off parks to fix its books which are just

such a short term solution you want to shoot yourself" (Interview, 2011); while another said, "you don't sell off the crown jewels, once public space is gone, it's gone" (Interview, 2011). Lastly the public notions of the park created the idea that this was community property and could be defended as such. One resident argued that if the park was developed at all, "It should be to improve the open space and provide more facilities for the community" (North Eastern Tribune, 2005) and that saving the park was, "fighting for the good of the area" (North Eastern Tribune, 2005). Thus the vision tapped into underlying discourses of local autonomy and separateness that have circulated at various times and scales of the city whether at the modernist and garden city design level, the municipal anti-integration agitation or the relatively homogenous residential make up informed by the cities apartheid and ethnic migration history (Dirsuweit, 2007; Harrison and Zack, 2012; Murray, 2011; Parnell and Mabin, 1995; Mabin, 2012)

The focus of the vision was not only on publicness. The definition of the zoning was not just public space but it was public *open* space. There is a crucial difference. Huddle is not a square, it is a park. This added a whole new dimension to the activism because the issue also became one of protecting nature. The design of Huddle added to this notion since it follows the urban pastoral style that focuses on inducing the tranquil relaxed feeling of being in the countryside (Bachin, 2003; Cranz and Boland, 2004; Mbembe, 2004). The golf course is aesthetically pleasing as it sits at the base of a ridge, has wide open spaces, long rows of trees, small dams and minor fauna according to a community newspaper, "A recent walkabout noted Terrapins, Herons, Egyptian Geese, Sacred Ibis, Wild spinach and Kapok trees bursting with cotton" (North Eastern Tribune 2007). These are all important elements in the urban pastoral, particularly the lack of indigenous veld with nature in a managed setting (Bachin, 2003; Mbembe, 2004). In fact when the idea of veld is used pejoratively by the residents, they tend to link this with the idea of the park's degradation. In a busy city like Johannesburg many residents explicitly identified with this notion of tranquillity invoking some of the notions the garden city that have been part of planning in the suburbs (Murray, 2012). One activist remarked that, "It's like having a little oasis in the bloomming concrete jungle" (Interview, 2011) and another said that, "I love coming here in the morning, it's so pure and fresh" (North Eastern tribune, 2007). Expanding on this notion of nature and tranquillity, and possibly tapping into growing international concerns around "green issues", many residents also began to use a strongly environmental discourse. In the interviews there are many references to the idea of Huddle Park as a "green lung", and an island for nature in

the city. This echoes the garden city design features being imprinted on the landscape (Parnell and Mabin, 1995; Mabin, 2012). When asked about why they were involved, one activist said "Anything, any species that can be protected in these eleventh hours of our planet must be done....remaining open spaces must contribute in the best way that they can". One resident went further saying that "Huddle Park is not only a golf club. To me it also feels like being in a nature reserve" (Edenvale News, 2005). Many were scathing of the council's decision to go ahead with the development on this conservation basis. One resident speaking for his environmental group said that "We abhor this mindless development which will contribute to the destruction of the ecology and environment of this beautiful city" (North Eastern Tribune, 2005).

Thus by constructing their opposition to the project under the formulation of "public open space", activists were able to make use of long time emotional attachments to Huddle and tie together diverse narratives such as community, publicness, common ownership, recreation, lost potential, tranquillity and environmental degradation into one powerful vision for defending the park. Perhaps this is best symbolised by the image that residents produced time and again, that of Central Park in New York. What the actual comparison is between Huddle and Central Park is unclear but to the residents it represented a large area, full of activity, in the middle of a busy city, one that everyone could be proud of and that no-one would ever dare sell. Some even appropriated the rhetoric of the city arguing that Huddle was part of achieving the council's own mission of becoming a "world class African city" (Interview, 2011). This refers to a select group of cities that are distinguished by the strength of their financial, cultural and international connectedness (Sassen, 1998). He explained that if Johannesburg wanted to be like these cities in the world then decent public open space was essential (Interview, 2011).

Distilling all these narratives down to one central demand, the activists declared that, "The HEAD league is in favour of development but such that it is consistent with its use as public open space" (The Star, 2005). Central to this demand was that the council should give a long term lease on the land. This would mean that those renting the property would no longer have to face the situation of potentially being evicted with only six months' notice. This would allow potential public minded businesses to invest in keeping the space public without fear of losing their money.

Arguably this formulation of the activists was a powerful one. It enticed large numbers of people to meetings and convinced them that the park was worth saving. It moved residents into some form of action, for example by helping with the collection and signing of petitions and donations of money to the cause. It created a small but dedicated pool of activists and supporters in the press and political establishment who were prepared to invest time in fighting the issue. It also assisted in generating pressure because the governance of public spaces fell under statutory processes open to public scrutiny. In this way the residents were able to contest the narrative and hegemony of the regime. Drawing on a range of different discourses and explicit placing them in spatial framework they were able to draw on important political resources to contest the regime. Unlike the private golf clubs that were accountable only to their membership and therefore to profit-based concerns, Huddle Park could be evaluated by a much broader basis of stakeholder groups by a variety of different standards using these formulations. Given the state of apathy that exists in suburban political contexts this could be considered a successful grassroots campaign.

The problem for the activists is that this vision entirely failed to convince the one actor that was able to stop the development: the city council. When the council put out the bid specifications to develop the park the activists put in their own submission but it had very little chance of being accepted. This was because it strayed too far from the framework that the city had given for what it wanted to happen to the land as part of what the city regime called for. In the next section I explore this vision of the city, why it was created and the arguments that the activists used to try and put a stop its implementation.

The City's Vision for Huddle Park

If the city did not want to buy into the communities recreational common purpose vision for Huddle Park, what did it envision as the best use for the area?

According to the memorandum of motivation for the development the city wanted a Golf Estate development on approximately 153 hectares of land and consisting of an 18 hole golf course, 1000 residential units and amenities including a hotel, health spa and recreation facilities. Connected to this was a proposal for a "High Street Town Square" with various services commonly found in shopping malls such as grocers, banks, hardware stores and other retail orientated businesses. Aware of the public history of the space, it proposed that 30 hectares be run as a public park with a bird sanctuary, jogging track, amphitheatre and

education facilities for young children (SEF, 2005). Importantly it also argued for two additional off-site golf courses to be built in other parts of the city so that "public golf courses will be located in close proximity to large concentrations of lower income people who at present do not enjoy the benefits of living in close proximity to such a facility" (SEF, 2005, 3).

The document commences promoting its vision by using a number of the critiques that are commonplace and relevant to the park. While it freely admits that Huddle Park is, "one of the largest remaining open spaces in the City of Johannesburg" (SEF, 2005, 1) it nonetheless argues that it "is underutilised in terms of its potential as a centrally located open space facility" (SEF, 2005, 1). It also argues that, "the general appearance of the existing development is deteriorating and it is not functioning effectively as a major public open space i.e. an open space which provides suitable, safe and effective passive and active open space facilities in a location that is accessible to the majority of the residents of Johannesburg." (SEF, 2005, 1).This is substantially the same notion as that which the residents had expressed about the state of the park.

The city however tended not to blame the state of the park on its administration of the property, instead focusing attention on the tenant which it says, "due to financial constrains, [was] not able to maintain and manage the entire site" (SEF, 2005, 2). A number of activists had also expressed this view and were worried that the tenant was doing a very poor job of maintaining the course. However they pointed out that if at any time the city decided that the property was needed, it could simply get rid of the tenant at very short notice. According to the memorandum, the lessee could, "be terminated in the event that the Council wishes to rezone the property and / or develop the property itself" (SEF, 2005, 2). The activists argued that this meant nobody would invest in the site because there was no guarantee for any money put into the project. The city disputed this view saying that, "from the date of approval of re-zoning to development is probably a three year period" (Interview, 2011). As far as the city was concerned this was ample forewarning for a lessee to operating a business on the site before they would be vacated. City officials also contested the accusation that the city was trying to degrade Huddle Park so it could develop the site itself. The city's view after having visited Huddle Park was that the, "guy is effectively running one course and at a very low standard" (Interview, 2011). Therefore the memorandum states that the city would like to, "consider alternative forms of

development for the site" and that this would "relieve the Council of the financial burden of maintaining the golf courses" (SEF, 2005, 1).

The city also believed that unlike the activist's vision, its vision had a better chance of succeeding as a public space. For instance the description of the 30 hectares public aspect of the development (known as the special place) would include, "A living classroom and farm yard where city children will be able to enjoy the experience of touching and playing with small animals and where they will be taught about the nature and behaviour patterns of these animals" (SEF, 2005, 15) and "A large public open space that will incorporate an arboretum, an outdoor amphitheatre, a bird sanctuary at the existing large wetland and a jogging track"(SEF, 2005, 15). It argued that the development would ensure a superior use of the open space because it would retain 120 hectares of the park of which 90 hectares would comprise the new private golf course while 30 would remain public. This would be preferable because, "unlike the existing development that is badly maintained and that is not functioning effectively as part of the public open space system and, as a result, is hardly used by the public, the proposed open spaces will be well maintained and public open space facilities will be provided in a safe and secure environment" (SEF, 2005, 16).

This safety element is emphasised by the memorandum with the new development envisioned as having secure facilities, "where parents in the vicinity of the site could leave their children at a crèche or nursery school during the day while at work, where people could go for a walk or have a picnic in a safe and relaxed environment and where special events such as birthday parties could be arranged for children in a fun and controlled environment" (SEF, 2005, 29). In addition the city's proposal focused on community ownership of the development, albeit in a manner different from that envisaged by the activists, stating that, "It will therefore be a community based development that will be exclusively aimed at serving the leisure and social needs of the shoppers and the people living in the area" (SEF, 2005, 29). For the city these were better than the open space proposals of the residents which argued that this would be a "world class destination".

Believing that it was better serving the agenda of the environment, the city argued that the, "development will encourage tourism to the city and, from an environmental point of view it will contribute to the maintenance of one of Johannesburg's green lungs. The ecologically sensitive wetland areas within the open space will be expanded and protected and a water

recycling system on the estate will be introduced for efficient water management" (SEF, 2005, 31).

Lastly the developers also found a creative solution to the city's bid requirement that one of the public golf courses at Huddle Park be retained. What was proposed was a type of a trade-off scheme where they would build on and privatise all the courses at Huddle while simultaneously building new public golf courses in other parts of the city, namely Soweto and what eventually became Diepsloot. Thus they argued that, "Unlike the existing three Huddle Park golf courses, these two golf courses will be located in close proximity to or within easy driving distance of large concentrations of lower income groups who cannot afford to become members of a private golf club" (SEF, 2005, 42). This was a real win-win strategy for the developers and the city. Firstly it shrewdly circumvented the issue of the loss of public open space. Then it opened up the entire area of Huddle for lucrative development which would otherwise have been constrained by the presence of a public golf course. Finally it displaced the cost of building and maintaining a golf course to less expensive areas of the city that needed such infrastructure. As the representative of the developers said,, "the argument is the real need for public golf courses is in Soweto and Diepsloot which have nothing" (Interview, 2011). This also allowed the city to claim that not only was it not destroying assets but it was actually creating a net gain in the amount of public space through the project (Jewish report, 2005).

It also painted the activists as elitists saying **"**It could also not be expected of the City to inject large sums of money into an existing development that does not function efficiently as a community facility and that benefits only a small group of residents of the City" (SEF, 2005, 37).

A representative of the city believed that the opposition to the development was largely driven by self-interest adding that, "I think that it is in everyone's interest to protect their own territory" (Interview, 2011) and that, "the densities that exist in the area don't warrant that amount of public space" (Interview 2011).

On the basis of these arguments and the fact that it had a viable high-end development available, the city believed that "The only feasible alternative is to develop the site for a form of

development that will be sustainable and that will ensure that the public in general will benefit from an existing public asset" (SEF, 2005, 38).

Not surprisingly, the activists disputed the fact that the development was either, "sustainable" or that they would be, "benefiting from a public asset". One called the 30 hectares that would be created as a public space "a sop" (Interview, 2011).

One article argued that only the large corporate golfers would benefit while the kids from nearby townships who used the site would lose out (April 2005, Noseweek). Members of the private club next door were also quietly critical of the idea that the new clubs would be good for the sport. For them access to golfing was less a geographical issue than one of culture and class which were more important. The cost of playing was also a serious consideration for those trying to become involved because, "you can't make golf a cheap sport, you just can't, it doesn't have to be expensive but it can't be cheap" (Interview, 2011) and therefore, "to try and focus on making it open to everyone is a misnomer". One member explained that even if the necessary equipment could be gathered for an aspirant but poor golfer, he was likely to be excluded as a result of other expenses associated with the elite life style of the game.

They argued that way to get new entrants into the game meant that golf had to be made convenient, "You have to make it easy for them to find a club that looks after their business interests and this sort of...expectation" (Interview, 2011). Once a potential golfer identifies the club, only then does the public golf course become important as a place, "where he can go incognito and learn the game so that when he gets the invitation from "the boys" he feels confident that he won't make a fool out of himself" (Interview, 2011).

He therefore argued that, "it might be better to have it in a more middle class established suburb where I dunno there's a level of aspiration or even ease of access" (Interview, 2011). From this perspective the location of a public golf course is significant more in what it offers as a middle-class experience than for its position near potential new members. If it doesn't have this middle-class aspect the game loses its allure: "to make a cheap golf course the guy says well I don't want to play on a cabbage patch....I would rather play soccer if that is what it is all about" (Interview, 2011). Therefore he felt the site of the new intended golf courses was not ideal, "I don't think Soweto is a good place, Huddle, I don't know whether Huddle is good or bad" (Interview, 2011).

These criticisms notwithstanding, the city's vision for the project posed a problem for the activists. Their vision for the park was one that would be able to mobilise many of the residents but it was not enough to make the city believe it had a better alternative. Even if they had a sustainable viable option, what the city could earn from the consortium simply could not be matched. This was a mega-development and the developer believed he knew of only two others in the country which matched this one. The ground alone would be sold for an amount of R105 million while the yearly rates and taxes generated would be close to R10 million (April 2005, Noseweek). What's more, the residents had another problem. They were up against a very reputable, well organised set of financial firms which had thought carefully and creatively about the project. The vision had all the hallmarks of being created by a well organised city regime. Using the compact development framework the city could engage with high power development consortiums to create large income generating developments pumping money into the city's coffers. At the level of the discourse the developers had been most successful in incorporating all the key rhetorical devices of the activists' vision and harnessing them for their own project. They integrated all the elements that one would find in the activists' vision without unduly influencing the profitability of the project. They were also very willing to engage residents and were comfortable with taking their concerns into account as long as they did not impact upon the general profitability of the development. The overall effect was a development that certainly affected the suburban ideal but one which perhaps residents could live with if it avoided further degradation of the park. The activists' vision while attractive tended to rest on the notion that if the city provided the correct rental rights, alternative investors would be prepared to build on the property in line with public open space requirements. Without the city being forthcoming with these considerations, no credible investor could be found who could show that this was really the case. This made it harder for the activists to show that they had a convincing counter-argument which was also not likely to be as profitable as that of the city. Once the city had chosen this development vision, it shifted the frame of the debate. No longer was it about the activists' vision vs. that of the city, but was rather about how the city's vision would now be implemented.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to examine the first key question of the dissertation, namely *why* it was that Huddle Park was an important issue for the residents.. It has located Huddle Park within the history of Johannesburg and its position in Johannesburg's political landscape post

the introduction of democracy. It views the two key components of this landscape as the inclusion of greater political openness and more conservative fiscal policy contributing to the creation of a new city regime. These two components of the regime are not always in alignment, and having understood the tension at the level of the city administration the chapter then moves on to interrogate these further at the suburban level. Politics at this scale is understood as being an extension of Lefebvre's social production of space theories, specifically the use of spatial visions as a driving force for political action. It examines the diverse ideas around the space of Huddle Park and how various actors constructed their visions to drive their political agendas.

The city regime had a vision to generate revenue by turning a badly maintained park into a profitable commercial residential node this was the result of the regime's focus on compact development and the ability of the city to entice high level developers into engaging in process. The local residents resisted this vision with one that promoted a notion of an environmentally friendly public space development. Although the residents' vision was effective in mobilising residents, it was not enough to trump the city's vision as it fell outside of the framework being promoted by the regime. The next chapter examines how the residents carried out their mandate of opposing the city, and tries to understand the mechanics of the political action involved.

Chapter 5 - Suburban Mobilisation

Having established the various visions that defined the debate on Huddle Park, this chapter begins to explore how these created a context for action amongst the residents. In order to understand the mobilisation of the residents, one needs to understand the political system in which this operated. This chapter explores how the various interest groups in the community interacted with the system and how this was effective in mobilising resources and affecting the outcome of the development proposal.

Johannesburg's Political System

The political system of Johannesburg is composed of a synthesis between the national liberal framework of the country and a local concern for more participation in the system. This stems from an interest by the liberation movements in participatory approaches and a concern that liberal systems do not provide enough control or enough engagement (Ballard, *et al* 2006; Elster, 1997; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glaser, 1997; Svensson, 2008)

This system is known as deliberative democracy and attempts to focus on consensus and mutual promotion of the common good through structured debate as the key aspect of the political process. Political actors are expected to make arguments that use rational frameworks and are backed up by reasonable evidence. Through a process of iterative argument and adjustment of position with deliberation among, free, equal and rational actors, deliberative democrats hope a consensus condition will emerge (Benhabib, 1996 Cohen, 1989; Elster, 1997; Habermas, 1997; Healey, 1992; Rawls, 1997).

The reliance on the strength of arguments rather than appeals to power theoretically means that residents can be part of a process that is both egalitarian and autonomous. If consensus is reached, not everyone will have achieved everything that they want, but actors can be assured that they have achieved something called procedural fairness. This is the idea that the process is seen as being fair and therefore a decision with legitimacy can be implemented. If the process has focused properly on achieving ends that are compatible with the common good then it can also be said to have achieved substantive fairness in which society as a whole benefits from the engagement (Cohen 1999; Christiano, 1997; Estlund, 1997; Knight and Johnson 1999; Michelman, 1997).

The application of this theory in Johannesburg has meant that a number of institutions have been set up in the city to try and achieve this kind of consensus politics. The various parts of the city are divided up and have their own ward councillors to represent the interests of smaller area units. In addition the city makes use of a proportional system whereby residents could also vote for political party representatives on the city council (Gervais-Lambony, 2008). As well, all ward councillors elect ward committees which give information about what is happening at the local level. Ward councillors are allowed a platform in the city council so that decisions can be debated (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Rakodi, 1997). Integrated development plans are another mechanism which enables the city to collect information from the citizens so that it can better understand planning requirements. These documents are informed through structured engagements with residents that run throughout the city (Ballard, 2008; Sowman and Brown, 2006). Certain measures such as the Promotion of Access to Information Act are also part of national legislation (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). The ability to petition the city council and various community forums and tribunals are also part of the policy environment. These systems are all designed to give residents a voice in the city so that they can be involved in the process of its governance. This is one way in of approaching the theoretical "ideal speech situation" by creating spaces where citizens have equality and autonomy in an input giving situation where their views are respected. This process builds legitimacy and cooperation, creates less coercion and makes a consensus outcome more likely (Cohen, 1997; Gambetta, 1998; Mohamed, 2009; Watson, 2005; Young, 1997). This offer benefits the citizens because it means that institutions are ready made for engagement and there is no requirement for aggressive interest based political campaigns.

Throughout the debate around Huddle Park, local residents readily turned to these deliberative institutions to add their input to the discussion. One of the drawbacks of the system, however, is that it is difficult to keep public representatives accountable. Thus, if citizens feel that they are not being heard there are few ways for them to engage actively with the system to drive their political interests. One way for suburban residents to be more powerful is through the formation of residents' associations. These speak on behalf of a number of households in an area and try to mobilise their collective resources to change political circumstance. Mobilised residents' associations were crucial to the final outcome of the park. This next section examines how these mobilised groups and other actors interacted with the political system that prevails in the city and how this affected the debate around Huddle Park.

Mobilising in the Suburbs

The primary goal of the residents' associations is to interact with the city council and bring residents' problems to its attention. In this way residents play a role as a non-state actor in making deliberative democracy function. Theoretically these groups are seen as participating in forms of collective action to solve specific issues outside of state, family and party political structures (Ballard et al, 2006; Bucek and Smith, 2000).

They are seen as important for deliberative democracy because they provide additional "private reason" spaces of deliberation less constrained by family and tradition. This allows individuals to organise marginal agendas not captured by other deliberative spaces and help promote new identities and political projects within the society. They can also assist the state in monitoring and evaluating government programs, localising decisions or even acting as state watchdogs. In this way they contribute to the background political culture and help to create options in a given debate (Ballard et al, 2006; Bucek and Smith, 2000; Castells, 1983; Cohen, 1997; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glazer, 1997; Gottdiener, 1985; Habermas, 1995; Martin, 2009; Pichardo, 1997).

Due to the country's history, research focus on civil society has understandably focused on civil society that opposed apartheid or large formations dealing with wide scale national issues relating to the marginalised and working class (Ballard, 2006; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glaser, 1997; Tomlinson *et al*, 2003).

This study looks at the importance of a much smaller subset of civil society. The micro-politics of urban middle class groups operating in the democratic period (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). Studies that have been conducted have generally been negative and have argued that politics at this level is often related to the attempt to entrench a privileged status quo. The focus is generally centred on a small middle-class elite group, often white, whose key aim is to defend their position by attempting to impose private control over public amenities. Examples of this include the growth of private housing estates and the blocking of public roads (Ballard, 2005; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002). Explanations for this kind of behaviour often rest on the idea of class and race (Ballard, 2002; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002; Ulrich *et al*, 2003).

Given the domination of class and race structures in the way that cities have been formed in South Africa, it is important to use these as a form of analysis. Some studies however, seem

to focus on this to the detriment of other factors driving local politics. As a result descriptions of political action are simplified. Whilst correctly critiquing problematic aspects of middle class spatial politics there seems to be a simultaneous process of essentialising any form of middle-class politics as benighted self-interest. Taken as the exclusive measure of political legitimacy, the negative attributes attached to race and class mean that theorists have taken for granted that all forms of middle class action are normatively problematic. In the case of Huddle Park where virtually all the participants are white and middle class or wealthy, using these kinds of approaches might reduce nuance in the debate and leave little ability for critical analysis of the politics of the situation.

In this case, adopting the suburban extension of Lefebvre's spatial political approach to neighbourhood activism is useful since ideas such as race, class or gender are simply too limited to be analytically effective. While this approach can take into account how issues such as class and race can shape a suburban agenda, it does not give primacy to any one view. It also takes disparate forms of political action, whether this is saving a park, booming off roads or lobbying for a by-law change, and puts them all into one framework (Purcell, 2001).

Using this framework can add understanding to a number of current concerns in middle class politics such as the creation of middle classed space in cities, the privatising of services, the exclusion of elected officials and exclusion of the poor (Ballard, 2002; Ballard, 2005; Baud and Navtej, 2008; Davis, 1992; Van Deusen, 2002; Fernandez, 2004; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002; Mitchell, 2003). What I would argue in the case of Huddle Park is that it also enables entertaining the complexities and possibilities of other forms of middle class politics and narratives that may have more positive connotations for city life (Chiesura, 2004; Fainstein and Hirst 1995; King, 2010; Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Orwell, 2009; Pichardo, 1997; Scott, 1976; Wolch, 2007). It can also assist with calls from academics wanting to move especially from race as a key organising principle (Parnell and Mabin, 1995).With this is mind we can begin to unpack the heterogeneity of politics that has accompanied this issue of Huddle Park.

There are a number of different actors involved with the issue of Huddle Park. The three residents' groups are the most important in terms of participation and include the Linksfield North Residents Association LNRA, the Orange Grove Residents Association OGRA and the Huddle Park and Environs Anti-Degradation League or (HEAD League). Both the residents' associations deal with a wide range of issues while the HEAD league was formed specifically to deal with the proposed development, although technically they are concerned with general

development in the area. Throughout this chapter the responses of the local press, the private golf course adjoining Huddle Park and a number of other institutions are examined.

The Linksfield North Residents Association

Linksfield North is a small suburb wedged tightly between Huddle Park on one side and the Royal Johannesburg Golf Course on the other. It is an extremely wealthy suburb with large houses and pleasant views but that does not mean it is immune from some of the problems faced by the city. For a number of years the suburbs in Johannesburg faced a barrage of crime particularly car hijackings. Linksfield North was badly affected by this wave of violence, according to one representative from the LNRA.

Like other suburbs in Johannesburg the preferred option to deal with this problem was to close off the suburb using a boom and to hire private security. This is a classic response to violent crime in many parts of the world and has been enthusiastically taken up by residents of Johannesburg (Landman and Schonteich, 2002). These structures have been severely criticised for being elitist, isolationist and even racist (Ballard, 2005; Davis, 1992; Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002). When these booms were erected much of the opposition to them was organised around the fact that whole suburbs were being closed off to pedestrian and motorised traffic. Amenities were made more difficult to access and urban management became more difficult (Landman, and Schonteich, 2002). For these reasons the City Council decided to remove a large number of these booms but the one in Linksfield North has remained. The fact that Linksfield North lies between two golf courses means there is only one access road into the suburb and this is the road into which the boom restricts entry. The boom is only the first part of the security structure in the area. It is electronically operated and manned by private security personnel who check those arriving and leaving and patrol the rest of the suburb frequently. The LNRA is in charge of paying for security as well as other maintenance issues in the suburb such as the cutting of grass. This is financed by an additional levy that is paid to the LNRA by those in the suburb. The representative says that payment is not compulsory but that they have an approximately 80% signup and participation rate. The closing of the suburb seems to have been successful in reducing the amount of crime in the area. It is hard to say to exactly how much of this can be attributed directly to the boom since surrounding suburbs have also instituted their own anti-crime initiatives using private patrolling vehicles, and this may have had a generalised effect. Even though residents

in the area felt safer with the boom, they nonetheless still maintained their own personal armed response companies for their houses.

The Linksfield North Residents Association and Huddle Park

Huddle Park is important to the LNRA because it represents a vulnerable flank in their effort to close off the suburb to criminal elements. What happens to Huddle Park directly affects their properties regardless of its future direction. It is for this reason that of all the suburbs surrounding Huddle Park, the residents of Linksfield North tend to be the most involved, no matter what side of the debate they support.

The feeling of the LNRA is that they are in what the representative called an "anomalous situation". They do seem to be genuinely sympathetic to the historical legacy of Huddle Park as a public golf course and there is recognition that it is a "natural" feature that should be preserved. On the other hand, they are easily able to give a long tally of complaints about the state of the park. The top of the list is the issue of crime and the related fear of squatters moving in. There is also the constant problem of fires breaking out. During the winter months particularly, fires can burn right up to the edge of the suburb. In addition residents cite problems with water wastage as well as the fear that trees lining the outside perimeter of the park may be vulnerable to collapse. It does seem that the LNRA has tried to engage with the city council over these maintenance issues. They knew who the local ward councillors were for the area and had worked with them to try and solve particular problems. The LNRA also mentioned having e-mailed and phoned various departments in the city including the fire and parks departments. They were quite negative about the city's response to these problems and didn't feel as if their complaints were given the requisite attention. Their story generally confirms the view found throughout the study, that the local tier of government is perceived as the most inefficient. However it also shows that those involved in the issue of Huddle Park were also more engaged with their local representatives than many other South Africans (Mattes, 2008).

For these reasons the residents had taken their own precautions to deal with the challenges of Huddle Park. Most notable among these initiatives was paying to fence the road that runs between themselves and Huddle Park. Thus their approach to Huddle Park was the same as their approach to the issue of crime. In that instance the residents could not control crime by relying on public resources i.e the police, and so they chose to close themselves off from the

system. Likewise when they were not able to get their concerns across to the city via it deliberative mechanisms, or even just its communication mechanisms they attempted to make use of their own agency to mitigate the problem. The problems caused by Huddle Park were far too big an issue for them to solve so instead they chose to fence themselves off from the park, to make its effects less keenly felt. Like middle class groups in other parts of the world they have felt the need to invest resources in trying to re-configure their existing space so that they are less affected by problems occurring in the city (Baud and Navtej, 2008; Fernandes, 2004) although not to the same extent as those seeking whole new building environments no longer attached to the city at all (Ballard, 2005; Lemanski, 2006; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002)

The response to the actual development proposal by the LNRA has tended to be driven by the same sense of ambivalence that pervades the way it views the Huddle Park issue. Previous attempts to develop Huddle Park often contained "red lines" which no resident anywhere was willing to accept. The classic example was a proposal to build a casino on the site. This allegedly had financial backing from a consortium in Malaysia. The so called "Malaysian" development frequently comes up in interviews with residents and is often described with an air of horror as precisely the thing they fear most that could happen to the park. Not only is it seen as inappropriate but this proposal in particular is cited as being corrupt. Such a proposal is the antithesis of the suburban ideal and as such is roundly dismissed as unacceptable for Huddle Park. All the residents do whatever they can to oppose it.

The latest proposal is a little more complex. All the institutions involved are well-known reputable companies within the financial and property development sectors. In fact some of the directors of these companies actually live in Linksfield North itself. The development proposal, despite being very large, doesn't deviate extensively from the look and feel of the surrounding suburbs. It is comprised mainly of the type of houses that one would expect to find on a golfing estate with a component of retail/recreational facilities attached. In other words, there was far less of a disconnect between the suburban ideal of the LNRA and this vision, than the "Malaysian" development. Therefore the vision set out by the developers was acceptable to residents of the LNRA even if they did not specifically like it. The residents faced a development combination that was reputable and palatable vs. the previous one that was corrupt and chaotic. They also believed that no development could lead to further

deterioration of the park. This new choice caused residents to re-evaluate their stance opposing the development and affected the way in which they now engaged with it.

The representative explained that for the LNRA the best option was to promote the logic of "responsible development" (Interview, 2011). By fighting this current development and potentially winning, they risked facing a less savoury proposal in the inevitable next round. They worried that they would eventually lose all control of the situation and be stuck with something which would impact negatively on their lives. Given the good reputations of companies in the consortium, they argued it was better to negotiate and benefit as best as they could under the circumstances. Thus the LNRA deliberately avoided any direct assault on the developers of the site while still trying to get something out of the process. On the one hand they were able appropriate other discourses that were to their advantage, such as that of the environment being pushed aggressively by other residents groups in the area. The representative was careful to note that the development should not, "undermine the natural environment" (Interview, 2011) and that LNRA would oppose the development if it did. On the other hand they deliberately sought good relations with the developers and were careful to negotiate their needs into the final product. This strategy in fact worked out quite well for them and they were instrumental in gaining concessions around infrastructure improvement and also in keeping development away from the area of the park closest to the suburb.

Arguably the LNRA conforms to notions of residents associations that are described in the literature (Ballard, 2005; Davis, 1992; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002; Ulrich *et al*¸2003). There is a certain amount of sympathy for the position in which the residents find themselves as they feel that they lack the political resources to deal with the problems facing their suburb. From them the deliberative system set up by the city is either unable to hear their needs or unwilling/unable to accommodate them. Not having the resources to engage in the deliberation even at this local scale they withdrawn from the ideal all together. Rather they have chosen to fortify themselves against the pressures of the city and negotiate a compromise as they cannot escape from the area. This has mostly come in the form of privatised solutions which offer no way of changing the city's plans, nor any meaningful engagement with the democratic process of the city. Deliberation where it occurs does not proceed on the basis of public reason but rather with private developers in a group interest fashion. In addition, while they do clearly care about the state of the environment around them, when presented with a proposal that promised "responsible development" as opposed to "sustainable development" they would rather choose the former because it is more

secure. Perhaps if these were the only actions taken in relation to the mobilisation around Huddle Park one may understand those who are pessimistic about the role of suburbs in the politics of the city. In many middle class studies one could simply end the story here and assume that the park would eventually be developed with slight modifications depending on the residents' preferences. This however would be to miss the fact that there is heterogeneity to middle class action in the suburbs with other groups taking alternative approaches.

The Orange Grove Residents Association

Another major group in the area is the Orange Grove Residents Association OGRA. The suburb of Orange Grove is adjacent to the wealthy suburb of Linksfield which directly borders Huddle Park. Although only a few kilometres separate it from Linksfield North, the make-up and priorities of the two residents' associations could not be more different. This has to do with the history and geography of the area. Orange Grove is a much older area. According to residents, It was named for the groves of oranges that used to grow there and is associated with the very beginnings of the city. After the Second World War the area was inhabited mainly by Italian immigrants and then later by a mix of other English-speaking white South African groups. The defining feature of Orange Grove is the thoroughfare of Louis Botha Avenue that runs through the heart of the suburb coming from the CBD. Toward the end of apartheid there was an exodus out of the city centre and into other parts of the city (Beavon, 2004; Bremner, 2000). According to a representative from the Orange Grove Residents Association OGRA the good quality yet affordable residential space as well as easy access to transport modes made it attractive to mobile inner city residents. For this reason it was one of the first formerly white suburbs to welcome black residents after 1994 and one of the suburbs of the city that is gaining residents from other parts of the continent.

As the exodus out of Johannesburg commenced in the early 1990s, some of the issues that caused people to move followed them down Louis Botha Avenue. Through this process Orange Grove has suffered the effects of increased urban decay. Issues facing the suburb include illegal liquor outlets, drug dealing, overcrowding, slum landlords, illegal building takeovers and lack of by-law enforcement. Unlike the residents of Linksfield North, OGRA has neither the money nor the geographic ability to shield itself from the problems of the city. This has led to a very different approach to residential concerns.

Effectively, the organisation comprises a core of community activists who work on and are part of a variety of representational and institutional mechanisms. These are designed to address issues relating to the maintenance of the suburb. For instance one of the representatives I spoke to is a member not only of OGRA but also the Orange Grove Business Association, the sector crime policing forum, the Paterson Park community project and a range of other formal and informal bodies. The city even employs him if they need to increase public participation in the area. In this way it is not formal representative group like the LNRA. Membership fees for OGRA have been abolished as it claims it is easier simply to ask for donations when needed. Much of the work and communication is done via the Internet and e-mail rather than through regular meetings. An OGRA email goes out to approximately 400 residents and OGRA believes it may get sent onto 200 additional people. The association has a yearly AGM which is considered a success if as few as 100 people attends.

The main thrust of the work that OGRA does is to focus on issues that are undermining the suburban ideal in the suburb. To do this the organisation uses statutory mechanisms of the city to solve problems in the suburb. For instance there has been a long-running battle with illegal liquor outlets and bars in the area. OGRA does searches for title deeds of various properties in the area. Much of the time the title deed strictly prohibits the sale of alcohol. OGRA uses the title deeds to force the closure of these outlets through city planning tribunals. It also tries to force landowners to stick to by-laws and creates pressure on those who may be using or changing buildings in violation of building codes. It is a long laborious process but one which has shown some results. Its work goes beyond pressure as the association is also part of public participation when it is required. It provides information for new projects on which the city wishes to embark and it files objections if it believes there is a problem. Lastly, it works proactively to try and solve potential conflicts while they are still small enough to handle. For example at the level of the individual landowner it may engage where a new building renovation is taking place. At the community level it often identifies potential needs and then lobbies the city to get them fulfilled, as in the case of a municipal building that was turned into a community centre. Due to the loose structure, (ORGA) will often get involved in issues of surrounding suburbs to work with other groups or with residents who may not have organised representation. It will also sometimes get involved in another suburb if the issue is one which will ultimately affect Orange Grove. In these ways the group resembles classic small scale civil society groups working outside of the party

political process with more intense forms of participation, trying to resolving specific localised issues (Ballard et al, 2006; Bucek and Smith, 2000)

OGRA is arguably a good example of the limits of political influence that residents can achieve within the deliberative democratic structure of Johannesburg. This is dominated by the ward councillor who supposed to represent the interests of the voters in the area (Gervais-Lambony, 2008). The system has been extensively criticised for not being responsive to the needs of citizens. Cited in particular is the fact that local councillors represent issues at the city council on a thematic basis. It has also been noted that much of the power to make decisions in the council is held high up in the mayoral committee. This means that councillors have to be able to go beyond the deliberative structure of the council chambers and actively lobby different sectoral interests on behalf of their constituents (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Rakodi, 1997). This problem is reflected in the way that OGRA deals with the local authorities. It has a relationship with a number of city councillors, not just the one representing the interests in the ward. Also despite being in a DA dominated area it tends to engage more with ANC councillors. These councillors have more access to the political capital necessary to sort out problems and OGRA is fortunate that several mayoral committee members also live in the area.

While they do make use of the ward councillors, residents use other representative and technical structures which are also important to drive their agenda. By harnessing the legitimacy of representative bodies such as the Community Policing Forum and official by-law procedures, they are able to focus local state resources in specific directions. For example they help to direct police clean up operations and are able to bring liquor offenders before city tribunal hearings.

Their participation also gives them a measure of accountability over these state resources. The deliberative system in Johannesburg uses a once-off ballot as a focus for control of local political actors (Gervais-Lambony, 2008). It does not allow for intensive participation approaches favoured in some countries, such as initiative ballots and recall options (Davis, 1992; Earnest, 2007). It has been argued that this makes the South African system, particularly its councillors, less responsive (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). In the absence of highly participative approaches and the difficulties of deliberative system the residents have relied on technical/participatory mechanisms to pressure the local state. For example, there has been some unhappiness in the past with a local commander of the police station. This has led

to some public confrontations between the CPF and the station and was not properly resolved until the commander eventually moved on.

There certainly seems to be an argument for the effectiveness of technical mechanisms in this area. Political action takes place using ideals that deliberative democrats hold dear, namely a consensus based focus and collective rational engagement on questions of the common good. This is done through established forums designed to facilitate these kinds of outcomes (Benhabib, 1996; Elster, 1997; Habermas, 1997; Rawls, 1997). There are also reasons to suggest that the activists representing the community as small scale civil society are enhancing the deliberative process. By pursuing their own private agenda, bringing issues to the attention of the government and promoting information sharing among their own members, they help to increase the participatory culture of the area (Ballard *et al*, 2006; Habermas, 1995; Jimenez, 2007). It is interesting to note that many of these mechanisms that OGRA use to create deliberation are not part of the deliberative infrastructure informing this aspect of the regime. Rather they are often part of old planning ordinances, by-law enforcement mechanisms policy initiatives attempting more participation for particular municipal line functions, such as local policing. Although these were not originally part of these deliberative forums they have been successfully harnessed by the residents as a means of directing the local state about priorities in a way that fits deliberative the model. In other words the deliberation in Johannesburg comes not just from the structures designed to create this but also from other technical/participative institutions trying to address other issues. Overall however the amounts of deliberation are enhanced.

There is also reason, however, to be suspicious of what the residents are able to achieve. The planning processes such as the planning tribunal and the liquor board are very slow in coming to a decision and are extremely time consuming for those involved. As a result only a few members of the community are able to get involved in driving the agenda. These few activists need a vast amount of knowledge of the system in order to make sure it works in their favour. Also, there is no guarantee that these processes will result in useful state action, even where the viewpoint of the residents is upheld in deliberative forums. OGRA members, like those of the LNRA, frequently complained that the city was not prepared to enforce decisions made in these forums. This means that even where an appropriate solution is found through the system where the best reasons are given and accepted (Cohen, 1997; Elster, 1997; Healey, 1992; Rawls, 1997) there is no way to pressure the bureaucracy to carry out the decision.

It does however seem that OGRA is more successful in its endeavours than their LNRA counterparts in securing assistance of the city in solving problems. While the LNRA has had to use its own resources to improve their suburb, OGRA at least seems to be able to persuade the city to solve some of the issues affecting its suburb.

The role of OGRA and its deliberative engagement is really restricted to information gathering and problem solving. In rare instances it can identify needs in the community and push for them to be accommodated. The issues that it is dealing with however are generally related to a lack of focus or capacity of the local state. By forming relationships with the right people and continuously prodding the bureaucracy, OGRA attempts to push its suburb onto the agenda of the city council. In this way the role that a civic organisation such as OGRA plays in this situation fits the one given to us by deliberative theorists. This is one where they act as information collector for complex decision-making and a mechanism for the monitoring of state implementation due to grassroots connections (Cohen, 1997). Where it does not act is in the wider theoretical role sometimes ascribed to these groups as state watchdog (Glazer, 1997; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996). Mostly this is not an issue as OGRA is not interested in this kind of engagement with the state.

Effectiveness for OGRA becomes problematic in cases where there is a lack of political will or where complex city planning is involved. In these cases the deliberative input of the organisation has not been as effective as a means of advancing their agenda. The issue of Huddle Park is similar in that engagement with the city may sort out maintenance related hazards such as the outbreak of fires but not create the political will needed prevent the development.

The Orange Grove Residents Association and Huddle Park

The issue of Huddle Park first seems to have come to the attention of OGRA because of complaints of crime. Huddle Park is in the jurisdiction of the Norwood police station which has a small but active community policing forum, divided up into sectors encompassing different suburbs. One of these sectors includes both Orange Grove and Huddle Park. The park itself maintains a relatively low profile on the agenda of the crime forum and the levels of crime are not seen as a high priority. The sector crime forum mostly deals with issues plaguing Louis Botha such as drugs and alcohol abuse and social problems affecting migrants

from other African countries. The gravity of these ills and the proximity of the road to the suburb generally keep Huddle far down on the forum's list of priorities.

The issue of crime, however, is not the one that drove OGRA to get involved with the development of Huddle Park. Far more important for OGRA was the issue of traffic as theirs would have been one of the suburbs bearing the brunt of higher volumes resulting from the development. This increase was supposed to be mitigated through the new four lane upgrade but this would have stopped just after Linksfield. Thus the traffic congestion would have built up around the development and then poured directly into Orange Grove. OGRA saw this as being a direct threat to the suburb and thus lent its support to opposing the development.

The process of the development showed some of the weaknesses of the OGRA approach in terms of its being able to oppose the development. The council had in effect decided through its own processes that Huddle Park should be developed. OGRA like other community groups made use of the statutory and deliberative approaches available to it to give its input. These processes were not adequate in changing the city's mind. The skills and connections that it had acquired in its community activism were certainly useful for the defence of the park but its normal strategy of overall participation was not effective enough to secure its future.

There would seem to be two major reasons for this. The first is that the overall policy position and the new regime. This was focused on pursuing a spatial densification program in the city (Beavon, 2004; Bremner, 2000; Czeglédy, 2003; Robinson, 2003; Tomlinson, *et al*, 2003). As one of the largest open spaces in the city its development conformed nicely with the policy. In addition the densification project would have had a considerable financial benefit. In other words the development of Huddle Park coincided perfectly with the economic aspect of the city's regime. The residents' associations like OGRA were highly engaged with the political arm of the regime; they worked with its deliberative structures and understood how the various processes governing the city operated. That the city chose to go ahead with the development despite opposition shows what part of the regime has more impact on policy making.

Deliberative theorists would suggest that the state is a neutral and importantly rational actor in any discussion around the common good (Cohen, 1989; Elster, 1997; Healey, 1992; Rawls, 1997). For the members of OGRA this often is arguably their experience of the process. By deliberating with each other and with the state they are able resolve problems and effectively

improve their area. This is only the case however as long as the rational logics of the two parties coincide. It is ultimately in the interest of the city to have buildings that are fully occupied, liquor outlets that are operating legally and building codes that are being adhered to. The residents' actions on these issues are essentially assisting the city by focusing them on the local aspects of problems common to both parties. As long as the overall framework of discussion continues progress can be made.

Agonist thinkers would argue that the state is not neutral and that it has a specific agenda like all actors (Mouffe, 1999). In the case of Huddle there was a specific rational agenda being pursued by the city. This agenda was driven by a policy of densification and a commercial logic that saw this densification in the form of a profitable golfing estate. This is not the vision of the residents, who instead called for development consistent with an open space framework. Once these differing approaches became clear they called into question the nature of the deliberation process. The theory would argue that the competing logics could now be discussed until a new transformative solution could be attained. The theory would also suggest that by both focusing on the idea of the common good, the outcome would be acceptable to all parties even if it differed from their original notions (Cohen 1999; Christiano, 1997; Estlund, 1997; Knight and Johnson 1999; Michelman, 1997).

It is hard to see how this kind of deliberative outcome is possible within the city's proposal. The process assumes some common ground among political agents. This existed to some extent with both the council and the residents agreeing that "something had to be done". Both parties could also agree that some type of development was necessary. The disagreement came in the fact that the city was insistent on its golfing estate conception and the residents on their open space notion. The theory now assumes that all approaches are up for contestation until an appropriate solution emerges through deliberation (Elster, 1997; Healey, 1992). The problem is that the city's proposal parameters of the development were defined from the beginning. As far as the city was concerned neither the densification process nor the idea of a golfing estate could be questioned. The residents could have gone along with these assumptions working in an OGRA-like engagement. However, the only outcome they could have achieved would have been a minor alteration of the final product. In effect this was the path that was adopted by the LNRA, albeit not through deliberation with the city but rather with the developers. Trying to alter significantly the nature of the development then required a far more aggressive public campaign in order to change the city's mind.

For OGRA there was no need to be in the forefront of such a confrontation. Firstly, it represented residents living technically outside of the development area and therefore had less legitimacy. Secondly, confrontation with the city might jeopardise the relationships that it had built up for other projects; and thirdly it could more effectively use its knowledge and resources to support other groups in the community who were now taking the development head on.

The Impact of Community Media

A key component in the resident's ability to influence events lies in their chance of marshalling the resources of the local press. Generally referred to as "community newspapers" they are in fact all owned by one major corporate who divides the way various districts of the city are covered, according to its own logic. The three newspapers that cover the areas surrounding Huddle Park are the North Eastern Tribune, The Jo'burg East Express and the Bedfordview-Edenvale News. Two of the papers fall within Johannesburg, while one falls within Ekurhuleni with the issue receiving much coverage in both regions.

The core issues that are generally dealt with by these newspapers tend to be those that affect the residents directly and include information about local institutions, community events and prominent individuals. Therefore the activists' formulation that this was a local public environmental issue was something that fitted very well into their news agenda. The newspapers were also one of the first places to which residents went when there was some kind of maintenance issue affecting the park. Over the years the papers have reported on fires, crime, water leaks, sewage spills and occasionally builders dumping in the park. It therefore also fitted well with the narrative of local state service delivery failure which is a consistent theme in their pages. Their relationship with the city is one filled with suspicion because the local newspapers struggle to get comment and feedback from the city on their stories. This enhanced the negative aspects of the development in the minds of local reporters and increased the sense from local editors that the whole development may have a corrupt element to it. The added distance from the city is compounded when one considers the closeness, both geographic and personal, that they have to the subject. The activists worked hard to create a relationship with their community papers and this provided them with a useful conduit for information when advertising their public meetings or highlighting deterioration at the park.

The name “Huddle” is mentioned often and provided endless amusement for headline writers with “Huddle Muddles on” (24 August, 2007, North Eastern Tribune) “Huddle off course” (April 2009, North Eastern Tribune) running along more strident tones such as “Object now- Battle to keep Huddle an open space continues” and “Public, council locked in battle over Huddle Park” (22 November, 2005). In some cases editorial space was also given over to the topic and was invariably more in favour of public development. For these reasons the community newspapers tended to give public development activists a significant voice in their news stories and often space on the front page.

This is not to say that the relationship was perfect. The activists sometimes found it necessary to write letters countering what they believed to be misleading headlines or incorrect facts. There were also some terse conversations when editors were accused of simply taking a quote from a city official without checking the facts or not giving the story of Huddle Park enough prominence. On the whole, however, the community papers could be seen as an important ally for mobilising public opinion in the area against the development and helped to set a different tone to the debate from the regional press when approaching the issue.

The local press thus acts as more than just a space in which news about the park is reported. Its more activist slant means that it helps to generate debate. This gives a platform to the residents to air their views and gives the civil activists a means by which they can start to present an agenda outside of the one being pursued by the city. In this way they created a narrative outside of the mainstream discourse, enabling them to present other options for the development (Habermas, 1995; Young, 1986). By allowing the activists to challenge the city, the press also assisted the activists in their monitoring and information collection role (Jimenez, 2007). This influence did not extend to regional press however, and while environmental reports covering the story were more sympathetic, media would sometimes print press releases from the city without comment from the residents (Engineering News, 2005; Saturday Star, 2005; Mail and Guardian, 2006). Commentators were also not uniform in their support. For example on one popular regional radio station the early morning DJ talk show host backed the city development, while the afternoon talk show host backed the residents.

The Approach of Royal Johannesburg Golf Course

Another important reaction is that of the Royal Johannesburg Golf Club which borders Huddle and can only be accessed through the boom gates of Linksfield North. It was built before Huddle Park but it is a private golf course while Huddle Park is public. While membership at the Royal Golf Club is restricted, it is fairly diverse for a private club, having merged with another club that was sold for development around the same time that the city began its attempt to develop Huddle Park. This is enhanced by the fact that it attracts players who come in as day visitors, corporate event attendees, and tourists who play on "Royal" courses in other countries.

Besides the slightly more diverse membership base Royal Johannesburg exhibits two other interesting features. The first is that it has a very good relationship with the city of Johannesburg by virtue of the fact that it hosts the annual Jo'burg Open. This gives the city considerable exposure as a golfing destination because the tournament is part of the South African "Sunshine tour" as well as the European Tour and is beamed to 500 million people around the world on television. Due to the interest generated by the competition the course gets regular enquiries about the club's facilities that last the entire year. The elite mobile nature of the sport and its high class image is used as part of the city's attempts to make Johannesburg an attractive tourist destination and is part of the global culture industry. This along with global capital has become important for cities as political entities (Baubock, 2003; Earnest, 2007 Zolberg 2001). Members are very proud of their association with the tournament and when interviewed, they say that when the city brought the Open to the club, "I genuinely felt as a citizen of the city, I felt it was a good move" (Interview, 2011).

The other aspect that makes Royal unique is its status as an Audubon accredited golf course. This program is an international initiative that assists in making golf courses more environmentally friendly. Aspects that it addresses include Outreach and Education, Resource Management, Water Quality and Conservation and Wildlife and Habitat Management (*www.audubon.org)*. The Johannesburg Royal Golf Course was the first golf course in South Africa ever to achieve this certification. Golf courses are particularly resource intensive in areas such as water and land. Royal's management has attempted to reduce the golf course's environmental impact by trying to create a "sustainable" course. The management at the club believes that, "the more you look after the environment, the better the course is for that." Thus the certification fits the profile of its being an internal environmental improvement program. This model is well entrenched in sustainable development thinking and is less concerned with political action than with proper resource management (Patel, 2000).

Royal Golf Course therefore shows an intersection of the debate between the city, environmental consciousness, privatisation issues, degradation issues and golf with which no other group had to deal. Like most of the other residents, members at Royal are concerned about the deterioration of the course. The golfer's memories of Huddle Park are the strongest of all the residents and its decline is nostalgic in nature. There is a beautiful view of Huddle Park from Royal and a member explained that when golfers reach the part of the course where it can be seen best, sentiments such as, "how sad is this we are losing three golf courses, we used to play there" (Interview, 2011) are often expressed. Royal has also borne some of the brunt of the neglect that has been a problem at Huddle Park. The club has a fence along the property and also uses a private security company. The management is, however, not confident that these have made any difference to securing the premises. They are quite resigned to having to deal with at least some low level crime. This has mostly manifested as the occasional break in and people using the park as an escape route. They have also witnessed clearly desperate people trying to retrieve golf balls from the dams on the course, with a member of management saying: "5 o'clock tomorrow morning you will find guys up to their neck in water" (Interview, 2011).

For the club, the issue of Huddle Park's status as a public golf course is also very important. The member I spoke to pointed out that "There is nothing [public golf courses] in Jo'burg anymore and hardly anything in South Africa". He explained that public golf courses play an important role in initiating newcomers into the golfing world both from a technical and a cultural perspective. "The average guy starts playing golf as a business person" (Interview, 2011) he explained, largely because of the belief that it is important for their work life and because it is a way for them to fit in with their peer group. The problem with golf courses is their highly classed status and the complex cultural codes that surround the sport. For a newcomer these barriers are important to overcome in order to be accepted in this world. He says that, "Golf clubs have these perceptions, everyone thinks that you come here and look the part and do the right thing they are petrified of doing the wrong thing" (Interview, 2011).

Public golf courses do not have this problem because although they may have a regular membership base, people are also encouraged simply to come off the street and play a round. He argues that, "a public golf course wasn't bad, but it was a very simple visit." (Interview, 2011) For this reason a visit to a public golf course could be a relatively anonymous experience where the game and its culture could be learnt without fear of embarrassment. So

for many golfers, “you learnt your golf at Huddle Park” (Interview, 2011). In this way it acted as “feeder system” for the entire golfing community.

In the absence of a proper public facility, would-be-golfers have had only a couple of options to learn how to play the game. The one is to make use of driving ranges; the other has been for golfers to join so called “virtual clubs” which source once-off open and available T-off times at private clubs around the city. However neither of these options is an optimal solution since driving ranges only offer a limited experience, and those using virtual clubs must still play in a privatised setting.

The activists focused on the public ownership aspect of the space to try and push their agenda but for Royal its publicness served another purpose in the golfing community. It would seem that the difficulty in learning to play golf and understanding the cultural aspects of the game are magnified if there are no good public facilities at which to play. The difficulties of integrating different classes of people into the game have already been mentioned but the problem goes beyond this. The cultural environment in golfing circles can be so hostile that it excludes all types of people who might enjoy the game. Therefore one golfer explained that having a public golf course in Johannesburg might also help young people and women, who currently don’t have the opportunity to participate, to play golf.

Thus one can see a host of factors affecting Royal’s attitude to the park. As long as Huddle Park was working as a public golf course, Royal was happy that it was playing a role in the golfing life of the city. Once it began to degrade, however, and the space came up for development, its committee re-assessed what their role in its future could be. Factors impacting on their decision-making included the physical connection to Huddle Park, their green credentials, their relationship with the city and the importance of a public golf course to the sport generally. Again, however, geography was the overriding factor in their response. Royal is located in Linksfield North and it essentially adopted the residents ‘association view that the current development is the best option the area is likely to get and that opposing it might mean a less pleasant development further down the line. It believed that the activists had therefore been, “short sighted in their attitude” while similarly worrying that there may come a time when the, “city council can score a lot of votes for doing something not so smart”.

It summarised its position on Huddle Park as being that, "we would like to be responsible neighbours". In other words a slightly more involved version of the LNRA's "responsible development" approach.

This subtle difference comes from the fact that there is a large border that Royal shares with Huddle Park. For this reason it could not simply put up a fence the way that the LNRA had done and hope that the problem would eventually go away.

Royal's management readily understood that both areas were geographically connected and that continued mismanagement of Huddle might further worsen its position. Royal representatives explained that, "There is no ways that the two parts of the property can be separated" (Interview, 2011). At the time of the interview, for example, there were heavy rains and it was causing seepage onto Royal from Huddle.

There is a worldwide Green movement and discourse that generates political mobilisation (Gandy; 1996; Kousis, 2007; Jimenez, 2007). The activists used this to make their case to save the park. Even though environmental issues regarding Huddle Park were affecting Royal and it had an environmental program on the course, Royal still backed the development out of political concerns which were more important. Even though it supported the development, it still pushed to get their own environmental agenda onto the table. Such issues were still of concern and was potentially significant for Royal's future.

The most important issue was, "the use and the non-misuse of the water" (Interview, 2011). As a golf course Royal uses a lot of water in the maintenance and upkeep of its operations. For this reason the grey water system that was initially rejected by the city's environmental department was proposed by Royal. This would have enabled it to collect water from the development and surrounding suburbs for use on the golf course. Royal also said that it would like to give input, so that the new golf course would be "frugal and environmentally sensitive" (Interview, 2011). Its other key concern was that an area of the development near its end of the property, which was eventually found to be wetland, should be used productively in terms of their environmental programs. The golf course proposed that it would, with the correct sponsorship, be able to take the wetland and create an area where members of the public could enjoy nature and learn about it. This is similar to both the notions proposed by the residents and the developers. By supporting the development and negotiating with the developers, Royal found that it was comparatively easy to get its input taken into account during the process in similar way to the LNRA. Having examined the

positions of various groups affected by the development, the section looks at the activists actively opposed to it.

The Huddle and Environs Anti-Degradation League

The Huddle and Environs Anti-Degradation League or HEAD was founded in 1997 in response to the original "Malaysian" development. It is a section 21 company, "really an incorporated residents Association" (Interview, 2011) according to one of the founders whose aim is to prevent development of Huddle Park. Like OGRA, the HEAD league does not have a formal membership. It relies on a network of e-mail lists in the community and the local press to mobilise action. Much of the work of the HEAD league is done by the executive of the organisation. Its members volunteer their time to prevent the development of Huddle Park. The volunteers come mostly from suburbs surrounding Huddle Park or in areas adjacent to these. Meetings are held at a house in Linksfield North and tend to be irregular with activity corresponding to the importance and urgency of matters affecting the development. The legal, bureaucratic and administrative processes that govern the way the Huddle Park development progresses often take some time to move through their various phases. This can mean several months, even as much as a year, between meetings followed by a number of them in short succession. Large public meetings are comparatively rare and are only called when action from a larger number of the residents is required. These meetings are also used for the purposes of raising the profile of the issue in the media.

The HEAD league has a number of strategies available to them regarding opposition to the development of the park. Like OGRA, the League makes use of political processes when defending the park. However, it is also more distrustful of politics and has more faith in the use of the legal system. According to one member of the executive "the only thing that the city council will seriously listen to are court orders" (Interview, 2011). The use of legalist solutions is often a common response to city council plans by residents, if they find that they cannot get the city to listen through of the deliberative system (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008).

When the original "Malaysian" development idea was first implemented, there were a lot of planning processes that were not followed in the development attempt. As this member put it, "to say cutting corners was putting it mildly, they were obliterating the corners". In this instance the recourse for the HEAD league was to approach the courts with an interdict application. This froze the development process and put a serious spotlight on the

problematic elements of the proposal. With the pressure of the courts and the overall public outcry, this attempt to development Huddle Park eventually evaporated. This strategy of using the legal system does though have its limits. While court action did bring results in the case of the "Malaysian" development, the residents are acutely aware that it is an expensive and time-consuming option. It is also effective only as long as the technical procedures that are required for development are short-circuited. When the city does follow proper planning procedures legal challenges become a lot more difficult. This has been the case for the development plans that have followed since the "Malaysian" development. The city and the developers have been far more scrupulous in adhering to procedure in the latest attempt to develop Huddle Park. In addition, the more reputable companies that have become involved in the latest development attempt have a large amount of financial resources. Opposing this proposal would therefore mean a great deal of additional fundraising for increased legal costs. The residents still believe that a legal challenge might be inevitable to preserve the Park. In other cases, residents generally use the legal system as a way of getting developers to negotiate (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). In the case of the HEAD league, its goal was not negotiation but rather stopping this particular project. In order to do this it included in its strategy a focus on strong engagement with the democratic system to try and get the decision to develop the park overturned. The legal option was considered as more of a last resort and a potential threat to use against the developers, if they did not implement development processes required of them.

Johannesburg's Land Development Processes

From a town planning perspective the development of Huddle Park is quite unique in that it is what is called a "township development". When a development of any kind occurs in the city it is usually within an area that already has all the legal infrastructural requirements in place that make it suitable for any building. In the case of township development none of this provision has been made for the land exploited, making building a much longer and complex process. A consultant employed by the consortium to assist with the process explained that these kinds of projects are extremely high risk. In the main, the land that is to be sold has not been surveyed and there is uncertainty as to what the requirements are going to be in terms of amenities such as bulk infrastructure and roads. A township development such as this is comparatively rare and he could only think of two others that are currently underway. The profits for such development can though be very high, and a number of the companies

involved in the consortium were experts in getting townships to completion or what is called proclamation.

Essentially the political strategy of the HEAD league was to pressurise the development proposal through public mobilisation at key points during its implementation. The size, type and scope of the proposed development work created a very specific political context because of the number of different technical and political processes that it generated. All these processes are dealt with by different authorities, some located in the city and others in the province.

The more intricate details of township development and its effects on the city process lie beyond the scope of this research. There are a number of processes, however, which include some elements of participation or deliberative input. These processes were the ones around which activists were mobilising in order to try and change the city's decision. For this reason I will briefly describe them with a particular focus on the democratic aspects of the decision so that we can understand the responses of the citizenry to it.

Before anything can happen to a piece of land there is a process that is followed by the City Council. First a piece of ground is identified by the Johannesburg Property Company (JPC) or is brought to their attention. This is a wholly-owned entity of the city of Johannesburg and acts as an agent to develop its land holdings. Once this is identified a request goes out to all players in the city administration that may have a stake in the piece of land. Departments such as the roads agency, parks authority, water services and city power have an opportunity to comment, as does the city's planning department. They are guided in their decision making by planning documents such as the "Johannesburg Growth and Development Strategy". These documents often obtain input through processes including spatial development frameworks and other deliberative channels.

Once approval from all these players has been obtained, including input from the public at a planning tribunal meeting, the request to sell the land is put through to a full sitting of the Johannesburg City Council. Once the City Council has voted on the issue, JPC can then go through another series of committees so that a bid specification can be created and put out to competitive tender. It is this tender process which the consortium eventually won with a development proposal for Huddle Park. The bid specification proposed by the city clarifies what is wanted for the outcome of the park. In the case of the consortium's proposal this was controversial because their bid remained within the specifications in that they retained a

public golf course. Unlike the other bids, however, their public golf course would be placed not at Huddle Park but in another part of the city. A bid to keep the whole park public was also received by council and backed by the community. Unfortunately this proposal stood very little chance of being accepted because the city was specific its attempt to create a bid with a large scale housing and commercial component in line with policy framework of the regime and with a bias toward large scale corporate developers.

Once the bid was approved the technical and logistical aspects of the project began. Along with this are two major decision making processes. The representative explained that at a technical and governance level they do not have anything to do with one another but together their outcomes affect the future of the development. The first process is essentially a local one that seeks to convert the land from its current state which is legally untouchable to a point where it is sellable and able to be developed. A number of issues have to be addressed including sites for infrastructure, geological surveys, rights issues, city department concerns, re-zoning, alienation and a range of others. All this is governed by the rules and procedures of the local authority, in this case the city of Johannesburg.

The second major process that gets initiated is driven by national legislation and a bill called the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA). This act makes provision for an environmental impact assessment (EIA) to be conducted when there is a change to land use. In some cases EIAs are not required for development but the scale of the Huddle Park initiative makes one compulsory. The EIA looks at a range of factors which might affect the surrounding environment both inside and outside of the park. The initial set of studies in this case looked at traffic, pollution, noise, heritage impacts, environmental impacts, historical legacy and the social effects of the potential development.

The next section examines in detail how the HEAD league engaged with the city in its local processes.

Mobilising Opposition to the Development Process

In the previous chapter I focused on the arguments that came up during the development of Huddle Park. From the activists' point of view these arguments were important because they were used to try and convince the residents and the city that the project was a bad idea. The arguments themselves may have been good ones but they could only be effective if they were mobilised in places where they could be heard. The examination of the two residents'

associations has shown a politics which is for the most part less public and more negotiated. If we are better to understand middle class activism in Johannesburg then we need to understand how these arguments were mobilised publicly and in a deliberative manner in the attempt to save the park.

The space where the activists mostly made their case was in the media. In addition to this there were also established forums in the development process and democratic process where they could make their voices heard. The HEAD league made of use these mechanisms in order to oppose the development, mobilising pressure wherever they could. In theory the democratic system of Johannesburg allows ordinary residents a say in the running of the area sometime before any development can begin. Their input is gathered through the city's spatial development frameworks, which are participative meetings held throughout the city in different regional areas. This process tries to identify potential problems and the needs of residents so that these can be incorporated into the city are planning procedures. They also have the ward councillor and the ward committee who are supposed to give input to the city council (Ballard, 2008; Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Rakodi, 1997; Sowman and Brown, 2006). The spatial development framework for Region E where Huddle Park sits agrees that any plans should, "Ensure viable and sustainable use and development of Huddle and Royal Johannesburg & Kensington Golf Courses". Unfortunately for the activists this is quite a general statement and it is clearly interpreted by the document as simply affirming the city's own decision, seeking to "Permit the implementation of the Huddle Park Development that includes High density residential, a Golf Course & a node" (RSDF Region E, 2010). It likely that is not the residents chose this formulation and it would seem that the phrase was inserted by the city. From a deliberative view point there is then a question as to how to keep the integrity of the process as it moves up and away from the grass roots.

The first place where residents were given a voice for the actual development was at the planning tribunal. These tribunals are similar to those used by OGRA to rein in illegal liquor vendors. Accounts from the residents of this particular tribunal are less than flattering. They accuse the planning tribunal of being disinterested in their claims and not allowing anyone to speak. The only thing that was done by the council was to present the residents with the new development plan. It would seem that since the city knew they had to have a planning tribunal, they simply used it as a way to tell the residents what was going to happen. This is not in the spirit of the process, where concerns of the residents are supposed to be heard by

the tribunal. It is important to note that the planning tribunal is not part of the deliberative but it can still fitful this role of creating the respectful dialogue focused on by theorists (Cohen, 1997, Mohamed, 2009). The cities aggressive attitude created a hostile atmosphere between the city and the activists that lasted right throughout the time that the debate about the park raged. Already the park was an issue which the residents saw as violating their *substantive fairness* but the way the tribunal was handled suggested future filled with violations of *procedural fairness* as well. As a representative from the HEAD League said, "it was pure, pure window dressing and very poor window dressing at that" (Interview, 2011). . At least one of these criteria would need to be fulfilled to have a legitimate decision from a theoretical point of view (Cohen 1999; Christiano, 1997; Estlund, 1997; Knight and Johnson 1999; Michelman, 1997).

Once the planning tribunal had completed the decision to sell Huddle Park, the proposal was then sent to a full sitting of the City Council for approval. According to activists at the sitting, much time was spent discussing issues immaterial to the governance of the city and only toward the end was the motion to sell the land dealt with. At this point the local councillor of the area made what was described to me as a, "heartfelt and eloquent plea" (Interview 2011) that Huddle Park be retained. She was reportedly told to, "stop being so emotional" (Interview, 2011) and a motion was then proposed to alienate the land for the purposes of development. This was passed by the council chambers without any further debate on the topic. This part of the deliberative process showed several flaws in the way that the theory is enacted in Johannesburg. The first is the inability of the councillors to represent issues at a spatial level. The power of the council is held in the mayoral committee whose members head up thematic based groups of councillors on subcommittees. This means that councillors wanting to be effective must be better at lobbying officials representing specific issues than being able to express themselves in the deliberative chambers (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). In addition, Johannesburg suffers from a major weakness in deliberative theory in the form of strong majoritarian politics. The critique of this issue is that if consensus is not reached, voting is still the final arbiter of any decision. Therefore if one group is in power it is not in its interest to shift position on a topic as the theory suggests because it can simply outvote its opponents (Gaus, 1997; Knight and Johnson, 1997; Michelman, 1997; Mohamed, 2009; Rawls, 1997). This problem is particularly acute in places where notions of citizenship outside of the individual, such as those connected with history, religion, tribe or family, are dominant. Deliberative democracy assumes a situation where the individual is the primary

actor and is therefore able to rely on their own autonomy and capacity to reason (Dwyer, 2004; Etzioni, 1993; Lewis, 2004; Rakodi, 1997; Ramphele, 2001). South Africa's history is one where citizenship under the previous regime was collectively defined along racial lines, and group position-taking still pervades the politics of the country. Add to this, notions of party discipline and a discouragement of representative choice when voting on issues in assemblies, and there is very little possibility for the kind of circumstances required for the ideal speech situation and potential for interests to replace the common good as the driver of politics (Habermas, 1997; Rakodi, 1997). This does not mean that assaults on individual rights are likely as some critics have worried. The system in Johannesburg is buttressed by a synthesis of the proportional representation and constituency systems and national law. This helps to give opposition parties a voice and has enough of the strong foundationalist safeguards that some theorists have suggested are necessary to protect individual rights (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Gaus, 1997; Knight and Johnson, 1997; Michelman, 1997; Mohamed, 2009; Rawls, 1997). Nonetheless these factors did lead to a situation where in the deliberative chamber of the council it was very difficult for the representative of the ward to take effective action on behalf of her constituents and agenda.

Throughout the decision making process it can be argued the residents could be heard in several places. First their input was taken into account by the spatial development framework, then they had a hearing at the tribunal sitting and then again through their ward representative at the city council meeting. It does not appear, though, that these mechanisms, whether technical or democratic, were very useful for the residents and they were unable to stop the potential development or even alter the city's vision for the space.

Thus the process moved onto the next phase. Once the decision to develop the land was made, a request was circulated for interested parties to tender for the project and a number of bids were received. The city decided that of these the consortium's was the most attractive and chose it over several other development options and an open space development. Having been unable to effect change through the initial decision making mechanisms, the HEAD league began to mobilise around the planning and participation processes that the consortium had to undertake to begin the development.

The first process that took place had to do with changing the legal status of the land. The planning process for rezoning and the alienation of land make allowances for anyone to lodge an official objection to both processes. Using this objection mechanism the HEAD league

went on a signature gathering exercise with large public meetings and door-to-door canvassing to collect as many objections as possible. According to the HEAD league this signature campaign led to 2000 objections to the rezoning and 900 to the alienation. One ordinary resident who signed the objections forms said that, "there was a big groundswell. I don't think the city expected such a reaction (Interview, 2011). An activist explained that, "you have to mobilise the people that don't want it to happen" (Interview, 2011).

To the HEAD league, the objections served a number of functions. The first was that they gave legitimacy to the organisation and showed that it was representing the genuine interests of the residents. The second was that the objections acted as a platform in that they could gather input and suggestions from large numbers of residents. They also were able to use the objection exercise to call large public meetings, with participants sometimes numbering in the hundreds, to create one-on-one encounters and to raise funds. These helped increase consensus in the surrounding areas of the importance of retaining Huddle Park. Such a large response to a local issue was unusual. Again this is an interesting aspect of the deliberative framework that a process that is essentially technical in nature was the site of some of the greatest deliberation in the campaign to save the park. By mobilising around this process however the residents were able generate the deliberative role that the city was ignoring and which theorists suggest civil society can assist with (Bucek and Smith, 2000; Martin, 2009; Mouffe, 1999).

This action also showed how interest in a suburban political issue could be turned into a successful grassroots campaign run by ordinary middle-class residents. The issue of Huddle Park had already been getting attention in the local press and it now started to garner attention at the regional level. In fact the activists had succeeded in extending the discourse and mainstreaming (Castells, 1983; Gottdiener, 1985; Martin, 2009; Pichardo, 1997). The activists were nonetheless somewhat disappointed with the response of the city. A HEAD league member said that, "they treated us with absolute contempt; as far as the city is concerned the residents don't exist" (Interview, 2011). Another activist believed that, "In terms of what the community wanted, I don't think that they took it seriously" (Interview, 2011).

The reason for this reaction was that the city tried to downplay the amount of opposition to the project. Upon receiving the objections, the city alleged that they only received 300 "valid" forms. This was despite the fact that the activists handed in more than six times that

number. The reason the city gave for recognising such a small number of forms was that they believed that many of the forms received were illegible. They also claimed that many of the forms simply repeated the same objections and didn't add any new information. According to a representative of Johannesburg Property Company, while the city does take note when large numbers of objections are obtained, if the issues they raise can be solved then ultimately the numbers don't matter that much at all. In this particular instance the theoretical foundations of the theory worked against the residents with since the focus is on rational, reasonable argument making (Benhabib, 1996; Elster, 1998; Habermas, 1997; Rawls, 1997). Although this allows residents a channels to make their arguments it may not take into account the numbers of complaints received. It is significant however that the city tried to downplay the number of petitions showing that they were concerned by this extra deliberation.

It could perhaps be argued that deliberation was a failure for the activists as they were unable to change the city's mind. Yet I do not believe that this is the case as on a number of occasions when I interviewed the residents, they expressed their confidence in the deliberative system and the willingness to engage with it. The reason for this was that deliberation still offered the residents the best hope to try and change the politics in their area. Being mainly white and therefore a minority meant they didn't have many political resources. The ward in which Huddle Park falls votes in favour of the opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) party by some 80%. A representative of the DA claimed that the best way to stop the ANC from developing the park would be to vote them out of the city administration. Unfortunately for the Huddle Park residents, even with recent gains the party is still some way off from governing the city. Therefore an aggregative ballot strategy is not likely to be useful for them. The area is already firmly in the party's control but they have little influence outside their own neighbourhoods. In addition it is not all clear that Huddle Park would not be developed under a DA administration. Urban Regime theory suggests that key aspects of the regime tend to survive changes in political party (Stone, 1989; Stone, 1993). While it would seem likely that they would find a more sympathetic city council they may still find themselves up against the densification policy. As middle class white residents who support the DA they also lack pathways into the ANC dominated council. If they had these connections they could have attempted to lobby inside the ANC for changes. Some studies have shown neighbourhoods that contain more political capital have attempted to use this to alter city actions (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). Studies have shown that this approach has also been used for larger national issues by the civil society sector but has generally been seen to be

unsuccessful. In response these organisations have tended to fall back on civil disobedience or disruptive protest action (Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glazer, 1997, Medearis, 2005; Pollak, 2009; Young, 2001). The residents, however, did not have the organisational resources or philosophical background to conduct such "unreasonable" actions.

Therefore of all these political options, engaging with the deliberative democratic and town planning process was still preferable. The space allowed by these processes created opportunities for media coverage, civic engagement, and access to city officials. All of this helped to enhance the legitimacy of the case against the development. Also by being part of the process, activists were exposed to information that was useful to them and may have made it easier for them to institute legal proceedings at a later time should they have decided to do so. To present these actions as simply a piece of real politic strategy, however, would be to misrepresent the sentiments expressed by the residents. The residents also chose this approach out of the conviction that they could make themselves heard through these democratic options. This suggests more attachment to the democratic system than has been offered through other studies of the middle classes (Ballard, 2005; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002).

For instance, the residents frequently cited frustration with the inefficient service and spending of the council and anger at the proposal to develop the park. Yet at no point did anyone suggest actions such as a tax revolt which would undermine the council as a whole. This suggests that despite the heavy top-down nature of the council in engagement with deliberative democracy and therefore violations of *substantive fairness*, the process of democracy is seen as containing a strong degree of *procedural fairness* by middle-class residents.

Despite the prediction that a consensus is likely under deliberative democracy, however, (Benhabib, 1996; Elster, 1997; Habermas, 1997; Rawls, 1997) this outcome did not occur. In fact the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) published on Huddle Park states the following on the issue of community participation in the project:

"The community is fragmented and different groups have different views on the proposed development. The feelings vary from the idea that there should be no development at all, only an upgrade of existing services, to the idea that responsible development is the only solution to the problem. Across the board, the community expressed the need to be part of the process and be consulted in a transparent and meaningful manner. A fragment of the community

expressed mistrust in the process and feel that they have been misled and lied to, and that the consultation process up to date has only been white washing. The particular fragment consists of vocal and pro-active people, who ensure that their voices are heard. Other community members have been less vocal, and some have been apathetic about the entire process. A number of people have expressed interest in purchasing property in the proposed development. Feelings in relation to the project are mixed and represent the entire spectrum." (SEF, 2005, 106)

All the residents, whether in favour of the development or not, had engaged with the institutions available to them. Those who were more opposed to the process had also successfully created mobilisation around the issue. Not only had formal deliberation institutions been used but additional institutions of a technical nature had been brought into the process and had helped ramp up interest in the cause in the suburb and the media. The general feeling, however, was that the city was disinterested in residents' concerns. Even though the city mechanisms were supposed to allow citizen input, they were not very effective. The activists continued to engage with the process because and it was their last useful political option.

The most effective way for them to get their concerns addressed was in fact not through the city institutions but through the developer's liaison. This however was only possible if there was a relatively minor change that was required and obviously did not apply to those who were opposed to the entire project.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the mobilisation that took place around the fight for Huddle Park. It has focused attention on the system that the city uses to operate its politics. It starts with a focus on system known as deliberative democracy and how it affected the politics of Huddle Park, and then moves on to the theory of middle-class politics and non-state actors in the system. Continuing on from the previous chapter, it argues for a spatial focus for the politics of the suburbs. It is chosen because it provides a broader notion of political action than other paradigms. It then examines each actor involved in the Huddle Park issue and interrogates the way that they engage with the city's democratic structures. It finds that there is heterogeneity in responses to the development. It also shows how the middle class residents opposed to the project managed to mobilise considerable support for their position It also how this went

beyond standard deliberative systems. Despite this civic action they had difficulty getting the city to change its decision on the development. Once the decision was taken to develop the park, the next phase of deliberations was in the Environmental Impact Assessment. The EIA however went further than the initial deliberative platforms of the city and brought new elements into the debate. In this way the EIA gave more agency to the residents and created new requirements that needed to be dealt with by the developers. The next chapter will look specifically at the EIA and see how the introduction of this new participation process profoundly changed the path of the development of Huddle Park.

Chapter 6 - Suburban Participation

New Engagement from Mobilisation to Participation

The focus of much of the residents' initial activism revolved around the deliberative procedures built into the city's democratic structure as well as the more technocratic planning processes which helped to enlarge their voice. In addition there was much debate on various public platforms such as in the press and at neighbourhood meetings. These campaigns were designed to convince first the residents and then the city that the vision of a public space was a better option than the development. The campaign managed to meet its first requirement in that it created a groundswell of opposition to the city's development. This however was not sufficient to prevent the project from going ahead. Concurrent to these planning procedures was an additional phase in the development called the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). These assessments are mandatory for any development that is making significant changes to the environment. The process has its roots in the same deliberative thinking that informed the city's democratic structures but with several important differences. The first is that it is an ad hoc institution created as the need arises to deal specifically with development issues, rather than a more permanent democratic institution like that represented by the ward councillor. The second difference is that it is a participative process whereby extensive research about all aspects of a given development including affects on residents. Thirdly the most important difference is that is controlled at a scale above the city in the provincial administration and can override the decision for the development to go ahead.

The difference between the EIA and city processes and the additional powers it has, meant that the activists had to use different strategies of engagement from the ones used till now. This chapter looks in general at some of the politics of EIAs and how the activists dealt with the one for Huddle Park. It will also look at how the EIA changed the course of the development and where the development process ended up as a result of the process.

Approaches to Participative Planning

Participative planning approaches became an important to international aid efforts in the 1970s. It is argued that participative planning processes generally provide a means for ordinary citizens to have a say in development processes and create a way to avoid errors created due to insufficient accuracy around the information on the ground (Ballard, 2008).

While these benefits are apparent, participation has also come under criticism for not always reflecting the interests of those who are participating in it (Arnstein, 1969; Cornwall, 2008; White, 1996).

Certainly participation is a tricky exercise and the next section looks at the some of the dynamics that drove the participation in the case of Huddle Park. EIAs in South Africa have a number of phases attached to them. The first is the scoping report, a tool used to gather important information about the potential development. There are studies on pertinent issues that are conducted as well as a process of obtaining input from the general public by canvassing opinions privately from the so called Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs).

Another way of gathering information and interacting was through the use of a "public information evening" where the development was presented to the invited public to examine it in greater detail. Not much information was exchanged at these evenings but members of the public were able to ask questions about the development. Another important part of the public participation process was the information gathering sessions. Various sectors of the community were invited on different days to give their input and feelings about the development. The information gathered from these encounters and from other studies, including interviews with individuals, was then included into a scoping report. There was some discontent among activists about this divisive process and the fact that at no point was a public meeting held to discuss the issue. They felt that the process amounted to a "divide and conquer" strategy (Interview, 2011).

The developers' response to this was that public participation is a difficult issue and they had to "make a judgement call that is not laid down in legislation" (Interview, 2011). From a scrutiny point of view they believed that having had "4 days we opened up all our plans to the public" (Interview, 2011) and the information evenings were sufficient. As for dividing up the community, they took the view that people have the right to their opinion and that therefore some process is needed but, "to hold public meetings and to try and achieve consensus has its challenges". They argued that, "you need to do something, you can't do the ideal which is mass meetings, but to ignore it is also not right" (Interview, 2011). Therefore to divide up the various interested parties was the best way to go.

Different Reactions to the Participation Process

Different groups responded differently to the participation process. During the engagements with the different groups in the community, lists of questions from those groups and the answers that were given by consultants were recorded. From these lists of questions it was easy to gauge the tone of each particular session. These sectors were divided up into four categories including Schools, Social Organisations; NGOs and Residents.

The group at which I am looking is the social organisations group which included other golf courses, some residents, the HEAD league, Residents Associations and some environmental groups. Of all the groups this one had within it the most objectors, which showed during the process. The participants in this group were hostile to the environmental consultants and the EIA, and the activists present questioned the validity of the EIA and many aspects of the development. The list of questions recorded during the session was very long and they were extremely pointed. For instance the second question is recorded as the following:

"The Background Information Document and the Plan of Study for Scoping are inadequate. The HEAD League is also requesting documentation on the background research compiled on Huddle Park. What are the alternatives? What about the green space? Which information has the Council compiled? If the Council does not have the information, the process must be redone and them information fed into the public domain. What information has informed the tender process to take public open space and privatise it, leaving a considerably smaller amount of public open space? The public needs to know what research has been done" (SEF, 2005).

There is also a long appendix of questions to which the consultants seemed to have no answers. The EIA consultants for their part tried to be a civil as possible but were obviously frustrated by the icy reception they received.

Less aggressive was the NGO section which also hosted residents' associations and environmental groups but in a far smaller number. It also included representatives from the South African National Roads Agency. This meant that while there were still some hostile questions about the environment there were also a number of more technocratic ones dealing with traffic.

Far more interactive was the residents' group and the NGO group. The first consisted of institutions such as security companies, ordinary residents, local councillors, representatives

from the city and property. Here most of the questions reflected general concerns about the nature of the development, what it would look and feel like and how it would affect the area.

The schools' section was where the participation was most important. Although there were a number of schools in the area only two of them eventually decided to come to the information evening. Many of the concerns raised were largely confined to those generally expressed by the residents, including worries about deterioration of the park and interest in what the new development would look like. There were also concerns that the new development might include liquor stores that would be detrimental to the learners.

For both schools, however, the major issue was traffic and how this might affect the area. One school that was somewhat closer to Huddle was intimately engaged with the EIA. The number of schools in the area resulted in much additional traffic and even a, "third rush hour" (Interview, 2011) at lunch time. In some places the road near Huddle Park is very narrow and there is nowhere for parents to drop off their children. This contributed to a great sense of unease amongst the residents about the safety of their children. A mother was quoted as saying "It's an accident waiting to happen" (8th September, 2006, North Eastern Tribune). Given this risk to the learners, the school saw this as an opportunity to try and rectify the situation and began talking to the developer during the EIA. This negotiation yielded the promise for improved traffic calming measures near the school as well as additional parking. This group felt that the development overall would be good for the schools and the area in that it might bring with it new students.

The only school to make an objection to the proposal was one that bordered directly onto the golf course itself. Its sports fields and conservation project were housed in the border region and the school was concerned that if the development went ahead these might be damaged in some way. Staff and students at the school also believed that Huddle was a green lung and should not be developed. For this reason they did not attend the session as a school but rather sent representatives of its environmental club to the social grouping.

In this way it can be seen that the different groups present at the consultation evenings involved participation which sometimes worked and sometimes did not. .

Complaints about the Participation

During the studies phase there were a number instances where the activists were unhappy about the fact that the consultants had not done their job properly. The general feeling was that they were good at the formal process, "when I say that they jumped through the hoops they did" (Interview, 2011) but that some of the studies were not in-depth enough, that they were, "very good at not mentioning anything detrimental" (Interview, 2011).

So for instance they complained that in the main, not enough time had been spent looking at different issues and they found it frustrating that in some instances, only one site visit had been reported. This, they argued, led to shallow reporting on some issues such as that of the historically significant buildings on the property that were mostly ignored in the scoping report findings.

There was also one specific activist who alleged that he caught the consultants doing their traffic count in the area on the Jewish Holy Day of Rosh Hashanah when Jewish schools in the area are closed and when religious Jews do not drive at all. This would obviously contribute to a situation where the number of cars being counted in the area would be fewer than usual.

The EIA also does not seem to take into account the views of any of the caddies or the compound workers. Given the lengths to which the consultants went, to mitigate the impact of issues like noise, trees and roads, it would follow that understanding the impact on the caddies would have been an obvious aspect to investigate. But not only are the caddies' views not taken into account: there is also no recommendation that they be incorporated into the new development, other than that building resources should be sourced from local communities. This was despite the fact that the net job increase was promoted as one of the positive features of the development (SEF, 2005).

These kinds of instances contributed to a general low level of trust among the activists about the nature of the participation in the EIA, which had already been created during city's engagement with residents.

The Effects of the Participation

Having examined the way in which the residents participated in the EIA, can we say that it was preferable to the process used in Johannesburg? Those against this argument might say

that the EIA could be accused of being subject to the same problems faced by the other deliberative processes used by the city. Essentially this argument relies on the idea that these processes were being used to legitimise action rather than to engage in environmental deliberation (Barnett and Scott 2007; Bedford *et al*, 2002; Murombo, 2007). Whilst this critique is certainly applicable, the differing structure of the EIA and the powers it holds did help to change the dynamics of the deliberation. Unlike the city tribunal which was only staffed by council officials, the EIA was run by professional environmental consultants who did seem to be able to extract the required range of responses from the community to make the participation meaningful. Also the EIA is a piece of national legislation which ultimately needs to be signed off by the provincial authority. This meant that the city had less control of the potency and direction of the EIA. In the case of the planning tribunal, the EIA controlled the setting and the agenda and could therefore downplay its role. The fact that the EIA took place away from the grasp of officials who had already made up their minds would seem to be to the advantage of the residents.

Ironically some of the residents would rather have had the city involved despite their suspicions of its motives and behaviour. The reason for this was that the consultants who ran the proceedings were being paid by the developer as is the case for any EIA. Some critics of deliberative democracy have focused their attention on the argument that capital plays a problematically large role in the process. They argue that policy under this notion is supposed be decided by a group of actors who have an equal standing. Given the need for capital in any policy-making decision, it gives those who control it a de facto larger say in the process (Knight and Johnston, 1997). Some residents believed it would be difficult for the environmental consultants to come out with a fair decision because the final product was being funded by the developers. Some even went as far as to accuse the hired consultants of, "trying to tweak things for the developer" (Interview, 2011). This issue of mistrust of consultants was responsible for much of the atmosphere of the Huddle Park EIA and is a perennial issue with EIAs in South Africa generally. Some authors have pointed out that in South Africa, although there is theoretically a "no build" clause, it is seldom ever used (Wood, 1999). The developers' consultant was at pains to point out that this was not their approach to the process "I can categorically state in my case, my instruction to the team was, guys we don't want this accusation, you have complete independence" (Interview, 2011). To prove this he pointed to the various studies that the EIA consultants had undertaken on issues that the residents felt were of concern.

Not dealing with the city also created problems for both the activists and the EIA consultants when they were trying to get information. Having launched an unsuccessful Promotion of Access to Information bid to try and get documents from the council, the HEAD league then asked the environmental consultants if they could make these documents available. Although the consultants said they had requested these documents, they claimed they had not received anything either.

Other authors have argued that co-operating at all with an EIA is problematic if the goal is that of opposing a development. By working within an EIA the participants are agreeing to its rules and procedures. These informal rules dictate the actors who have the power and set certain frames around how decisions are made. In addition they argue that by co-operating, activists buy into the logic of a process that is there to manage the development rather than to oppose it, a notion known as "eco-governability" (Death, 2006). It could be possible to take this line with the activists and accuse them of legitimising a potentially flawed deliberation. Certainly the city council tender had already set out what was supposed to happen to the land and there is perhaps a strong argument that the community should have boycotted the EIA entirely.

There are two problems with this approach to the EIA at Huddle Park. The first is that the community did not have many, if any, other options. As has already been noted they had followed the avenues open to them and had failed to create substantive resistance. Besides a legal challenge which may have been bolstered by participation, there were few other routes available especially without the resources to launch an extra-legal or even extra-deliberative campaign. The other problem is that a boycott of the EIA takes the last possible agency away from community activists. Authors have pointed out that it is important to examine any kind of participation in its context. It is only by properly examining the power dynamics that participation can be understood fully (Ballard, 2008; Cornwall, 2008; Williams, 2004).

While it is true that the framework of the development had already been set out, it would be wrong to say that nothing could be contested in the EIA. In fact almost everything within the EIA process can be challenged, especially if there is alternative data to back up the assertions. For instance the residents did their own studies and brought data that had been previously collected to undercut the conclusions of the EIA consultants. It would also be wrong to say that the residents blindly accepted the logic of the EIA. By operating within the system they

were instead trying to use a form of critical engagement to find ways of halting or at least minimizing the development. It is also important to note that although the residents lacked political resources, they had many other ones at their disposal. The activists were organised, educated, articulate, and critical and often had the time and money to devote to saving the park. This meant that they could go into the EIA and at the very least not have the participation imposed upon them.

There is also evidence that the residents were aware of the potential legitimizing role that they were playing in the proceedings surrounding the park. Activists were ambivalent about the process saying that, "public participation ostensibly has lots of power, but I have yet to see it work" (Interview, 2011). They nonetheless wanted to be part of it, believing it to be ultimately be in their favour and saying that, "at the end of the day the process worked but that's only because we were aware of it and knew exactly what to do and how to use the process" (Interview, 2011). Despite their problems with participation they still believed, "the only way to stop JPC to save a park is for the public to get in" (Interview, 2011).

(Ballard, 2008; Cornwall, 2008) argue that one of the things that critics of deliberation miss is that it creates a fluid space wherein there may be unexpected outcomes. In an environment where the residents were doing everything in their power to stop the development, this creative latitude was quite important. One way in which this manifested itself was through being less than fully cooperative with the process.

As part of their strategy the HEAD League did not work closely with the EIA team. The strategy driven by an environmental lawyer on the team argued that HEAD should volunteer no information or only give minimal input. This was especially true on issues where the consultants should themselves have been able to find out the information. It was felt that the consultants were being paid to do a job and that the residents should not have to do it for them. This intransigent attitude clearly frustrated the development consultant who was generally respected by the residents for being more open than the city. He argued that, "The attitude was always we don't want any development. I said guys I have sympathy but then go and fight that case at the council. If we are going to have development then let's sit down and see what you want. We didn't even get to first base". Therefore we can see in this an attempt by activists not to co-operate in the participative process but rather to formulate a strategy to make their position more powerful.

If we look at the basic premise of deliberative theory, it is that there should be deliberation among, free and equal agents that engage within a rational framework should occur with those involved (Benhabib, 1996; Elster, 1997; Habermas, 1997; Rawls, 1997). There is a question about how well this notion operated within the context of the Huddle Park EIA. It has already been noted that the residents' vision of Huddle Park was not strong enough to convince the council, itself a deliberative body, that they should abandon the idea of developing the area.

Having little ability to change that decision, they now produced a range of arguments within the new participative process, the EIA, to try and marshal enough power to change the city's mind. This is not what the theory predicts. Rather it says that all the various parties will continually change their positions until all parties agree on the best possible solution (Cohen, 1997; Rawls, 1997).

Radical democratic thinkers on the other hand have argued that one of the problems with deliberative systems is that they take little account of power dynamics (Mouffe, 1999). In the case of Huddle Park, power dynamics among actors was a problem. There was a vociferous group within the community which was against the development and a number of other smaller ones which were less loud and less opposed to the development but were also trying to get their interests taken into account. In addition the city and the developers had enough planning and financial muscle to allow them to make adjustments to the proposal and embrace the demands of the activists without actually making any concessions themselves. Instead of a discourse that moves towards a consensus condition one is left with a number of contending parties vying to the maximum amount of their vision as implemented in the final product.

Power Dynamics in the Participation Process

It was due to this power imbalance that the activist decided on a strategy to introduce arguments that could be used to minimise, halt or prevent the development. They opposed the development by focusing on specific arguments that might work to their advantage. Anything that might affect their power in the deliberation was introduced as a means of trying to wrestle development away from the grip of the city and the developers. The next section examines a number of the arguments that were used and how they were effective.

Issues that came up for discussion were varied and included property prices, heritage preservation, visual impacts, traffic increases, noise pollution, social effects, environmental challenges, infrastructure capacity and economic viability. Several issues required specialist studies for greater understanding. Not all issues though were necessarily important arguments. The specialist reports were often of a technical nature and much of the information contained in them was uncontroversial. For instance the water provision report went into considerable detail, much as one would expect of a document laying out the infrastructure needs for such a large development. It was uncontroversial because it was simply a report detailing fairly standard mechanical outcomes. What I will focus on here is the arguments that got much more attention because they were contestable by the activists in terms of the EIA process.

The activists had many good arguments that could have proved useful but were easily mitigated by the developers. For instance some residents complained that during construction many of the trees on the golf course would be chopped down. In the EIA it was pointed out that most of the trees on the site were aliens and that because much of the course would be retained, many would be left standing. The EIA suggested that the developer should be sensitive to trees during the building of the estate and those that would have to be removed should be replaced with a more indigenous environmentally friendly variety. This was a seemingly very difficult argument for the residents to contest since the mitigation measures were sufficient to deal with the problem raised (SEF, 2005). Many more of the arguments fell into this category. Problems like noise and light pollution were all tested in the EIA and all were either insignificant or could be easily managed with the proper application of technologies (Lebone and Crosswell, 2005; JH Consulting, 2005). Under this heading also came the aspects of Huddle most enjoyed by the residents in a social context, its walking trails, the public space element and the visual quality of the place. These "sense of place" arguments have been important in other fights against proposed developments (Collins, 2009). The social impact assessment argues that these can also be properly mitigated even though people were angry about losing a public asset. It said that whatever public facilities would eventually be built in the area should be open to all groups. It also stated that design features of the estate should attempt to keep as much open space as possible and the design itself should try not to upset or disturb the visual sense of the area (SEF, 2005). Critics of

EIAs have argued that these processes tend to favour scientific discourses (Freund, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2004) and although the social issues addressed by the EIA comprise a large part of the document, they are nonetheless not considered to be a major hindrance to the progression of the development and are easily rectified or even refined.

One scientific argument presented by a resident did have the potential to disrupt the development. What she required was assurances that the area of Huddle Park which was to be developed did not contain traces of the disease anthrax. This was potentially a very serious problem for the developers. The adjacent open area to Huddle Park is separated by a road and is known as Rietfontein. . While Huddle was developed as a golf course Rietfontein became a farm, then a soldiers' billet and eventually a graveyard for people suffering from some of South Africa's worst diseases. These included bubonic plague, the flu of the 1918 epidemic, smallpox and various others. The exact number of people buried in the graveyard is not known but residents in the area estimate there to be in the region of 7000 people (Davie, 2004; 25 August 2010, Bedfordview Edenvale News). Some locations of the graves are known but not all. In addition pits are also dotted around the site and contain animal carcasses of animals that died through contracting anthrax. Under the right conditions anthrax can stay dormant for many years and become active again when the time is more conducive. In a similar way to Huddle Park, Rietfontein has been the target of numerous development proposals but because of the potential threat of reactivating these diseases, public opinion has always been oppositional and to date nothing has taken place. If it was found that Huddle Park also contained similar sites it would make development equally difficult. When the EIA began and this objection was lodged, a specialist was contacted to give his opinion on what the likelihood of serious anthrax contamination might be. His report suggested that the risk of contracting anthrax was low but he advised that precautions be taken to protect workers digging and building in the area (Duze, 2006). Despite the more serious nature of this objection, the science was simply not strong enough on the issue and it also failed to create enough controversy that might seriously inhibit the growth of the potential development.

The key concerns that the activists identified early on, however, were not scientific and mostly centred on arguments around infrastructure and traffic. At the time of the EIA the entire country had recently been convulsed by a series of events where electricity supply had been under serious strain. This had caused rolling blackouts across the nation in the so-called

load shedding crisis. Thus the main worry of the residents during this time was that a development of this scale in the area would further exacerbate the electricity issues that were being experienced. A pamphlet drumming up opposition to the project read, "DO YOU KNOW In 2004, power outages lasting more than 3 hours occurred in Johannesburg on average once every 3 days. The power capacity simply does not exist" (HEAD League, 22 Novemeber 2005).

The impact on the area would have been significant and the study done during the EIA did in fact note that sufficient power in the area did not exist to cover the extra 10 530 KVA that would be required. Despite this problem, the report stated that this capacity could be added to the current infrastructure and would be paid for by the developer (Lebone Crosswell, 2005). Even the activists who were pushing the idea that electricity supply was a good argument did not see it as an insurmountable hurdle, stating that, "insufficient electricity was important but they can upgrade it."

More than services, however, the issue that worried people the most was the potential for increased traffic. Because of the size of Huddle Park and other surrounding open areas, there are only three possible roads that can be used for traffic to move east across the surrounding suburbs. All these roads are already under strain and accidents are a regular occurrence. Residents complained about traffic and worried about an increase in its volume, as one said "As it is, in the morning it is untenable" (Interview, 2011).

The increase in potential traffic was considerable with a predicted extra 1 825 cars in the morning, 2 748 cars in the afternoon and 2028 on weekends. In order to cater for this additional traffic flow, the developer proposed creating a four-lane road to run past Huddle so that all the cars could be managed (SEF, 2005). The activists were concerned that this new "highway" as they was called it would essentially end at the end of the development where it would revert back to the standard two-lane status. The activists pointed this out to the developer as follows: "we asked what is your plan once all of this traffic gets to that particular robot? They said, that is not part of the mandate" (Interview, 2011).

The consortium believed that the usual principal of new developments applied in that only the pro-rata amount of traffic generated by the development should be provided for by the consortium. The city would then under normal circumstances be responsible for building new

roads because of the expected additional traffic created by the natural growth of the city. They believed that by building additional roads as they were doing, they were going well beyond their more basic responsibility. They also proposed an additional slipway and parking for one of the schools so that its problems with dangerous traffic would be alleviated.

In many ways these arguments resemble those that come out of the literature on so-called slow growth movements found mainly in America (Davis, 1992). They are made up of residents' associations and local institutions that are opposing their areas bearing the brunt of increased development (Clavel, 1986; Harding, 1995; Molotch, 1976; Molotch and Logan, 1990). By using various mechanisms such as the local electoral systems, the media, city bureaucracy and the courts, they have been able to constrain the creation of developments in the suburbs (Davis, 1992). In America however these local participative institutions are far more powerful than deliberative mechanisms are in Johannesburg. Despite the risk of additional traffic arising from the development, these arguments were far less powerful in the context and were further undermined by the fact that the consortium was happy to spend considerable amounts of money to alleviate the traffic, at least in the vicinity of the development.

One resident saw it this way and believed that, "HEAD League kept on putting spokes in the wheel or flies in the ointment and demanding traffic impact studies and ecology reports and that kind of thing and all those hurdles that were being put in place of these so called developers didn't pose a problem" (Interview, 2011). This resident certainly seems to have a point if one looks at the final summary of the EIA. The report and its 17 appendixes run into hundreds of pages, much of it dealing with the social, environmental, technical, heritage and water aspects. All of these are properly assessed and mitigation suggestions are made to lessen their impact on the surrounding neighbourhoods. With reference to the paramount arguments of the residents however, the EIA consultants did not differ too much from the city or the developers.

The section of the scoping report devoted to assessing the development bid and various alternatives for the Huddle Park development argues that the City of Johannesburg's bid process chose the current winning proposal and that it has the lowest percentage of housing on the site of all the proposals under consideration. Of course the city's process immediately excluded any developments consistent with open space. This means that the EIA did not

consider the activists' proposal at all. It also points out potential alternative design layouts and then argues that this current design layout is the most appropriate one. The big change however between these so called "alternative" plans and the current one was that previous design plans had put the houses in the 100 year flood line but in the current plan this was not the case. This is presented as being a properly considered alternative whereas it is in fact a standard part of town planning practice. It also looks at alternative uses for the land with the only other idea mooted being that the site could be used for agriculture. This was a patently absurd notion which it then rejects. Within this framework it also considers that instead of the current plan, "Alternative land uses to the current mix of residential and recreational could be only residential. If the site were to be developed as only residential" (SEF, 2005). It does not however consider the other aspect of the equation which would see the entire site as being a recreational one.

It also bases its rejection of the "no development" option on the notion that, "This would entail leaving the site in its present state" (SEF, 2005) and that the golf courses are in, "a state of disrepair" (SEF, 2005). Despite explaining various residents' viewpoints in a different part of the report, nowhere in this section, which suggests further action to be taken, are they taken into consideration.

If the process continued along this trajectory the activists may eventually have lost the park to the developers. What followed proved to be decisive in how the activists were able to change the process. Having been compiled the EIA it was now open for public comment. Here all parties were able to give input into the document and it was through this that the residents managed to find a new and very powerful argument, the possibility that Huddle Park was actually an environmental issue.

Huddle Park as an Environmental Issue

Environmental arguments were always part of the landscape that made up the Huddle Park debate. Its presence as a "green lung" in the area and increased international focus on issues like climate change that had developed through the decade of the development process resulted in these connections occurring. Deliberative systems are sometimes seen as being useful for dealing with environmental issues. Their ability to engage a number of different viewpoints in an

attempt to find a consensus is considered superior to that of more instrumental systems. This is especially useful in environmental cases which involve complex problems with multiple actors who are required to buy into the process (Owens *et al,* 2000; Sowman and Brown, 2006; Young, 1997; Zografos and Howarth, 2010). They do however also come with some challenges. Others have argued that the theory tends to favour human concerns over environmental ones (Bell, 2005; Dryzek, 2000; Hailwood, 2005). In order to evaluate the process around Huddle Park being an environmental one, however, it is necessary to ask if it can actually be considered as such.

While the notion of the environment was often referred to in interviews, the way in which this idea was promulgated by residents was fairly nebulous, as the term "environment" encompassed such diverse concepts as conservation, rural landscapes, urban parks and golf recreation. This green discourse was also used by the developers who claimed that their option was the more environmentally friendly one as Huddle was degraded and the development would result in its noticeable improvement. The EIA says, "The core value offering of an eco-estate is that it offers an overall lifestyle that is sensitive to the natural environment" (SEF, 2005). Those in the media defending the idea even went so far as to argue that as such, it constituted a form of sustainable development. Making use of this kind of environmental discourse to promote development instead of curtailing it is noted as something that negatively affects the discourse of sustainable development (Adams, 1990; Patel, 2000). Certainly promoting the proposed golf estate as being an environmentally sensitive option was little more than marketing hype. In fact the early versions of the development proposal were heavily criticised by the city's own environmental department. Among others the department focused on the fact that the development had encroached on the hundred-year flood lines, that its grey water disposal system was problematic, that its attention to creating urban corridors for wildlife was inadequate, and that its proposal to shift a part of the actual flow channel was unacceptable (CoJ, 2005).

Nonetheless the activists encountered a similar problem when trying to promote Huddle Park as an environmental issue. Although Huddle is surrounded by several verified environmentally sensitive areas such as the Linksfield Ridge, they struggled to make a case for the park itself. The site like most open areas in the city is very impacted and its degraded state was pointed out repeatedly by the consultants in their studies. Despite the fact that there were many trees there, hardly any of the vegetation on the site was indigenous. The EIA recommended saving the trees but more for their historical/aesthetic values than because of any environmental concerns (SEF, 2005). In fact the consultants noted that a number of the

vegetation species on the site were certified as illegal aliens in terms of environmental legislation. A similar problem was found in the search for fauna. The consultants pointed out that the alien vegetation, the flat nature of the terrain and the presence of feral cats accounted for the absence of any mammals or amphibians listed as red data species. Lastly the report mentions that although having found 23 species of birds and 12 possible others that might live on the site, none appeared to have any conservation value (SEF, 2005). This infuriated activists who claimed to have their own lists proving that there were in fact many more types of birds in the area. They called for residents to report bird sightings, which resulted in a rather amusing situation of a specimen being mis-identified and a newspaper incorrectly reporting that the comparatively rare national bird of South Africa, the blue crane, was living on the course (26 Nov Sat Star, 2005). Despite submitting evidence of increased bird species to the consultants it made very little difference to the argument that the park had conservation value.

On the face of it, it would seem that Huddle Park did not have the elements needed to defend its existence on environmental criteria. Authors have argued that environmental concerns are often based on more romantic and aesthetic claims. Due to the rationalist focus of the deliberative democratic process these concerns tend to be brushed aside **(**Barnett and Scott, 2007; Death, 2006; Owens *et al*, 2004; Pepper *et al*, 1984; Richardson, 2004, Watson, 2003, Young, 1990). This seems to have been the case with Huddle Park where the claims being made that it was a "green Lung" were incorporated by the EIA but were not considered a strong argument in the debate and had very little impact on the overall plans for the development. There was, however, one environmental issue that kept cropping up and that had a substantial impact on the discourse.

Huddle Park as a Wetland

The issue continually raised in opinion pieces to the editors was that Huddle Park was a wetland and that developing on it would be problematic. The concern was not only about environmental preservation but also on possible consequences for the township of Alexandra which is downstream of Huddle. Related to the worries about anthrax in the nearby cemetery, the articles argue that development on the wetland at Huddle would cause massive flooding and extra erosion, and would bring old anthrax infested corpses to the surface (Citizen 21

November 2005; Citizen 22 November, 2005). The source of this idea was neither a public health expert nor an environmentalist but rather a local resident. Although having qualified with a BA Law, the resident explained that his expertise about water was a result of being a veteran of the Rhodesian Bush War and his 39 years as a farmer. Despite this rather unorthodox curriculum vita he nonetheless had had a few environmental wins under his belt. He explained that he had been driving past Huddle Park for 40 years. As soon as he heard that it was going to be developed he realised that this could not be allowed happen because it was a wetland. Initially the activists happily accepted this new argument to their arsenal. But it was still not the main part of their opposition. Six months later, however, it had become a key part of their strategy with the activists retaining the resident as their wetland specialist (30 June 2006 North Eastern Tribune; 31 March 2006 North Eastern Tribune).

The focus of the activists on this particular aspect of the development occurred not just because of the arguments of this resident. It was also because of the discovery of a document which seemed to have been missed by the environmental impact assessment. Prior to this attempt by the consortium to develop Huddle Park the city had put together a study plan of the area in order to review options for its status going into the future. The study was called SETPLAN and one of its findings was that a large part of Huddle Park was considered to be what it called "seasonally wet". Working with the wetland specialist's notion that this was a wetland, the activists overlaid SETPLAN on to the development proposal. The result was a development that cut straight through the heart of this newly discovered area, one which the activists began to call a wetland. This "discovery" of the wetland was the key aspect which changed the discourse from being simply about development into an environmental issue.

Environmental issues are sometimes considered difficult to deal with because they often involve highly complex but also uncertain notions (Jordan and O'Riordan, 1999; Owens, 2000; Sowman and Brown, 2006; Zografos and Howarth, 2010). Usually this is considered a disadvantage for environmental activists as they have a harder case to prove but it was not so with Huddle Park. The idea of a wetland was not new to the plans for Huddle Park; prior to this, however, the development proposal had viewed them as generally limited to the small streams and dams that dotted the landscape. Their only real significance to the project was the fact that they were part of the 100 year flood line and that the developers wanted to use them as a repository for grey water from the estate. One of the city officials charged with dealing with the Huddle Park project explained that, the development proposal was done at a time of

"an evolving understanding of wetlands" (Interview, 2011). Apparently this accounted for it being missed in the initial study. This newer more enlarged idea of the wetland, both physically and on a conceptual level, radically altered the debate around the fate of the area. Defining the development as damaging a wetland, not as affecting a park or a golf course, became a powerful way for the activists to frame the debate. This was because it presented a serious legal hurdle which could not simply be reduced or diminished due to the powerful national legislation that accompanies wetland management. Also, although the size of the wetland was not clear, when it was found it was obvious that it was fairly large and far beyond the 100 year flood lines. This impacted in a material way on the number of houses that could successfully be built on the site. Thus the residents had finally found an argument that was provable and had the potential to be detrimental to the future of the development.

Another issue that has been of concern to deliberative theorists has been the influence of science on deliberative debates as it can exclude other voices from the process (Freund, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2004). The science of wetlands became a highly contested terrain on the issue of Huddle Park. The realisation of the size of the wetland meant that the city needed to re-evaluate its plans. The first thing that the EIA consultants were tasked with doing was to delineate exactly the location of the wetland. To do this they hired not one but three major wetland experts. The developer said that this number of experts was necessary because, "wetlands are like catching a cloud, it's not a precise science" (Interview, 2001).

This group set about delineating the wetland to try and ascertain exactly what was on the site. This process, as well as some other challenges to the scoping report such as problems with the heritage study, meant that the next edition of the scoping report only came out two years later in 2007. While this scoping report retains much of the original 2005 version the issue of the wetland had fundamentally altered key aspects of it. Part of this was an additional wetland report that was radically different in its conclusions from the one produced in the initial study. The crucial finding in the report contained a much larger notion of the wetland, which was now believed to cover 84ha of the park. Some 60ha of this was considered permanent wetland whilst the rest was considered to be of a temporary nature. The extent of the wetland in the report was eventually pegged at 43% of Huddle Park, an approximate 9.91% of the general areas wetland and 0.88% of the surrounding Juskei catchment area (SEF, 2007). All the wetlands were reported as being "highly disturbed" and "perform limited wetland functions, but remain of importance with regard to regulating stream flow and improving

water quality" (SEF, 2007). The assessment not only looked at the delineation of the wetland but went further to discover how this new understanding of the wetland could be incorporated into the development. The conclusion was that development on the site was still possible but simply not in certain areas. This meant a change in the layout and design of the project (SEF, 2007). To compensate for the presence of a wetland on nearly half the site, the developers had to decide what areas of the golf course would now be suitable to build on and what would be suitable to build on those sites. The new proposal created an open area system which was bigger by nearly 20 hectares and also decreased the amount of housing on the site and the spaces where it would be allowed. In an effort to try and diversify the development, more than just the golfing estate housing units were proposed. The development now also had accommodation activities, townhouses and an additional retail component. By all accounts it was still a large development but which was now altered and had a wetland included in its scope (SEF, 2007).

The activists then heavily criticised the approach taken by the consultants. The wetland specialist attacked the delineation done by the wetland experts stating that in his opinion they did not take the entire catchment area into account when they did their study. He also criticized the fact that the study had not taken into consideration storm water drainage that would be generated by the development and that would find its way into the wetland.

The science here was uncertain in another important regard, that of the extent of the buffer zones that are supposed to surround a wetland. Buffers are designed as a protective measure to ensure that the development and the wetland are separated. The report states that buffers are a site specific application that should be decided upon by the context (SEF, 2006; SEF, 2007). Under the circumstances this was extremely important because the activists were pushing for a larger buffer to be imposed. The bigger the buffer the fewer houses/shops could be built thus making the development less profitable. The bullfrog man claims that he pushed the wetland experts to redo the study three times over the issue of the buffers. At this point the activists also changed their strategy from giving limited input to applying anything to the process that they thought could make a difference. In addition they tried to highlight the cause even more by staging some protests at the park, increasing their media exposure and using the then novel phenomenon of Facebook to organise people outside the immediate area. This back and forth wrangling over the borders and buffers of the wetland continued for some

time with activists producing yet more evidence that they believed proved the wetland to be bigger than how it was portrayed by the developers.

These arguments further delayed the EIA's final report. It is not certain however what the conclusion would have been because in 2009 the price of housing was radically affected by the economic crisis of the time. This seemed to make the development, which had become less profitable because of the wetland, no longer viable and eventually the developers withdrew their application to build on the site.

The wetland had a major impact on the deliberations from a number of perspectives. Firstly it took romantic associations that were connected to the environment (Barnett and Scott, 2007; Death, 2006; Owens, *et al* 2004; Pepper *et al*, 1984) and therefore to Huddle Park and located them in more scientific and legalistic discourse. Critics have suggested that environmental concerns tend to be ignored in deliberative systems (Bell, 2005; Dryzek, 2000; Hailwood, 2005). It seemed however that the environment was being taken very seriously because the wetland was backed by powerful legislation and vigilant activists. This created a key non-negotiable element in the EIA and put the city onto the back foot. One would expect this would lead to more deliberation because the power imbalances had been evened out and there was now more room for discussion in the process. This is not what happened however. In the last section of this chapter we will examine how the final part of the Huddle Park process unfolded.

Beyond Participation

Critics of deliberative democracy have been concerned that the system does not automatically lend itself to collective consensus decision-making. They argue that it is not always in the best interest of actors to deliberate who might rather engage in bargaining behaviour to get their preferred outcome (Gaus, 1997; Knight and Johnson, 1997; Michelman, 1997).

This type of politics was in evidence toward the end of the fight for Huddle Park. The development was no longer profitable and so the consortium left the process entirely. The space now no longer had any tenant at all. After some time a call was made by the council for new potential investors to undertake the management lease of the property. At the same time the city began re-fencing and fixing areas that had been vandalised. Unfortunately it still

wouldn't abolish the clause reserving its right to evict a potential tenant after six months and as a result nobody applied for the lease. The construction of the new fence also only stretched half way round the course before it was stopped, apparently because of financial constraints..

At this point and for the next few years, Huddle Park went into a serious decline. The golf course no longer operated, the clubhouse was stripped once again and even the driving range that had operated throughout the saga closed because the owner felt unsafe on the premises. He reported that the grass grew so high that a fully grown person could stand in it without being seen. The only people left on the site were the former caddies and the city council workers who lived in the compound. For a while it seemed everybody's worst fears about the park might be realised..

One of the criticisms of the HEAD league was that they spent too much time simply opposing the council and were not proactive enough in trying to get Huddle operational again. Some believed that this was because of the shortage of resources while others believed that the league was simply too focused on legal strategies as a means to force the city to maintain the area.

As a result of this criticism and virtually no movement on the issue, two new groups now became active. The first was Friends of Huddle Park, comprising activists who had worked with the HEAD League but now wanted to see if they could push the process along. The second was a group called Froggy Ponds which was new to the area and was looking for a space to create an eco-Park. This research has primarily focused on deliberative and participatory processes between the city, the developers and community entities. The addition of these two groups, however, created a new inter-community rivalry which is itself worthy of further discussion but for reasons of space, cannot be covered here. Suffice to say that despite several false starts, much suspicion and some fairly acrimonious exchanges between various parties; a thirty-year lease was eventually signed. The deal gave Friends of Huddle Park 130 ha of Huddle while a small area was sublet to Froggy Ponds. At the same time however, the city had been secretly negotiating again with the developer and by using the original alienation order passed by the City Council many years earlier, it managed to sell the entire property off without going through the any of its previous procedures. This meant that the HEAD league was not able to use some of the legal tools at its disposal to try and halt the process; and by the time it discovered that, it was too late to do anything. The final effect was

that the property would now be subdivided with the activists retaining their lease on 130 ha and the investment consortium gaining 53 ha in areas that were not wetland.

For the activists this was a serious issue. On the one hand they still did not want the consortium to develop any part of the property; while on the other they were aware that any attempt to try and overturn the sale of the land might jeopardise their partition as well. At the time of writing the activists were deciding on the strategy they would use to oppose the process yet again, as a new EIA had been implemented for the development of the 53 ha.

Thus the EIA had seriously affected the process but not necessarily in the expected manner. It had allowed the activists a stronger platform than that of the city processes to oppose the development, and although the frequent vociferous arguments did not get them the result they wanted, the issue of the wetland did. Having been successful in forcing the developers off the project, there was still no consensus around the debate. At the end of the process there was in fact no agreement at all. None of the various parties was satisfied with the situation. Instead the issue resembled more an uneasy armistice with the activists and developers eyeing one another across an imaginary boundary line while the groups remained firmly entrenched in their positions.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the deliberative processes operating outside the ambit of the Johannesburg administration. This process of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was located within the higher authority of the province and ran parallel to those which were undertaken by the city. Another difference was that the EIA was operated by professional consultants whose salaries were paid by the developers. This created dynamics for the development process that were not apparent in the city's deliberative procedures. The chapter begins by examining the role that EIAs play in general before going on to assess how the one for Huddle Park operated. It shows that there were a variety of responses to the EIA as well as a number of complaints about how studies were handled. It also shows that the actors in the EIA did not engage in the deliberation in the way that the theory predicted, in that they did not seek consensus. The focus of the parties was rather on gaining extra power within the process. In the case of the activists, this meant using arguments that they believed would hinder the development. A number of arguments used by the activists are examined and the

effectiveness measured and explained. It also follows the evolution of Huddle Park from a development issue into an environmental issue. It highlights the key role that this change had in affecting the development, making it at first smaller and then later quite untenable. Following this it then explores the political situation after the withdrawal of the development and the final outcome when it was re-introduced.

Chapter 7 - Discussion

Introduction

Having examined the empirical evidence regarding the Huddle Park political process, this dissertation now discusses the implications of these findings. It looks at the key role played by spatial visions in the case of Huddle Park and explores why it is that this vision was so powerful. It then focuses on the ways in which middle class residents engage with the democratic system, the methods that they use and why they use them. The last section examines the effect middle class residents have on city politics and the methods by which they are able to make themselves more powerful. It then concludes the study by summarising key outcomes before suggesting potential research topics for the future.

The Importance of Vision for Suburban Political Action

The study confirms literature that argues that cities are important political spaces unique within their national contexts (Purcell, 2003; Swyngedouw, 2004; Sassen, 2002). It also shows how they can provide spaces for small scale political projects and as a platform for active citizenry (Bosniak, 2000; Kadalie, 2006; Leon, 2006). The political outcomes produced at Huddle Park were the direct product of the urban context in which it was operated.

The erosion and eventual fall of apartheid, changed the key aspects of the way the city was governed as it tried to deal with some of the economic, political and spatial problems created by that system. As democratic cities try to solve issues their agendas and actors coalesce around key institutions and form regimes (Stone, 1989; Stone, 1993). Part of the of new regime of Johannesburg was an economic arm that attempted to deal with the problems of serving a wider populace, creating investment finance and curtailing urban sprawl. In order to achieve these aims the city instituted a combination of expense cutting, income generation and compact development (Beavon, 2004; Dowding, 2001; Tomlinson, *et al*, 2003). This eventually formed the key aspects of the economic arm of the regime. In addition to this economic arm a new political arm of the regime was formed to focus on the enabling of a greater political voice for the city's residents. This was based on a set of political theories. These are known as deliberative democracy (Benhabib, 1996; Elster, 1997; Habermas, 1997 Rawls, 1997).

This change in regime undercut the standing of Huddle Park and made it less of a priority in the affairs of the council. In fact its very strengths as a large area with three public courses in close proximity to the city now made it a natural target for development in terms of the agenda of the economic arm and the connection between big business developers and the city. This was opposed by many of the residents who articulated their concerns through the regime's new political arm that was supposed to be inclusive and responsive to citizen participation. This tension between the two arms of the regime gives an understanding as to what created the urban context for the politics around Huddle Park. It also gives the first indications of how middle class residents operate politically in urban spaces. What it does not explain, however, is why Huddle Park had such a mobilising effect when many other issues failed to get the same amount of attention.

The most effective way to understand the opposition to the development is by using a spatial paradigm. By this measure the protests were largely a result of the unique spatial characteristics of the park which enabled activists to create a discourse that could be used to mobilise residents. In order to understand this discourse I have relied on an extension of Lefebvre's spatial production theories. This takes the notion of representational space and argues that it is the fundamental driver of suburban politics (Purcell, 2001). This view sees middle class action as being energised by attempts to reconcile tension between the vision of the "suburban ideal" and the actual reality of suburban life. Through the unique vision that the activists weaved together around Huddle Park, they were able to keep the issue politically important for many years. By understanding this vision in more detail it is easier to understand the mobilising factors which can drive long term middle-class activism.

The first key part of this vision was that Huddle was a very large space whose development would affect many of the residents in its proximity. It was therefore easy to get across to residents the slow growth arguments common to these sorts of growth machine debates such as increased traffic, degradation of the environment and pressure on infrastructure (Clavel, 1986; Davis, 1992; Harding, 1995; Molotch, 1976; Molotch and Logan, 1990). Secondly there is a strong sense of sentimentality attached to the park. Some of this is generated by golfers who used to play on the course, whilst others relate to the naturalistic aspects of the area, enjoying its status as a green lung and the idea that it could one day serve the community. These attitudes are connected to the spatial identity that people attach to their surroundings. Huddle Park is designed with the urban pastoral in mind. The urban pastoral is park planning style which seeks to create an air of tranquillity in the park (Bachin, 2003;

Cranz and Boland, 2004; Mbembe, 2004). Such spaces offer the benefits of therapy, recreation and spirituality which accrue from its presence (Anyinam 1999; Collins, 2009; Gesler, 1999; Manzo and Perkins, 2006). Residents identify with the importance of having such space in the area.

These sentiments are also connected to the fact that Huddle Park is a public space. Often spatial politics can be driven by conflicts over who has the rights to use public space (Dovey, 2001; Ehrenfeucht and Loukaitou-Sideris, 2007; Habermas, 1989; Low, 1996; Mitchell, 2003; Van Deusen, 2002; Staeheli and Mitchell, 2006). In the case of Huddle Park however, very few people used the area. Its publicness was more important because it suggested that although the park was owned by the municipality, it belonged to those who lived around it and in fact to all the residents of the city. These factors created a reservoir of sympathy for the notion that the park should be retained and that no-one had the right to sell it off.

The other reason for the significance of the publicness of the space was that special procedures needed to be followed before it could be sold and/or developed. It is easy to underestimate how important this was for the politics around the issue and the final outcome. Being public meant that the sale and development of Huddle Park had to go through several time-consuming processes with various different bodies. This is very different from the sale of other private golf courses in the area where the decision to sell off a piece of land was under the authority of only by an elite group of members and so was achieved reasonably easily.

While city officials were frequently unresponsive to residents' concerns, their public position made them vulnerable to criticism and pressure. It was because of the public ownership of the land that residents could make use of democratic and technical mechanisms for their campaign. These were entrenched by the design of the political machinery in the city and enhanced by other technical mechanisms (Ballard, 2008; Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Rakodi, 1997; Sowman and Brown, 2006). The public processes surrounding the sale of the park also gave residents a matter around which they could mobilise and an opportunity to contest the decision of the city. This did not guarantee protection for the park but the public process did open up the possibility of scrutiny, the chance for added resident input and consistent criticism. This was not a great deal of power but the vigilant use of what there was slowed the process down considerably. Without the public aspect of the course it is likely that Huddle Park would have been developed many years earlier.

Understanding the Heterogeneity of Suburban Political Action

The use of a spatial vision paradigm is also helpful in broadening our ideas of how we view middle class public activism. By using it we can better understand such groups as a component of civil society, particularly as part of South Africa's wide array of groups (Ballard et al, 2006; Bucek and Smith, 2000; Castells, 1983; Cohen, 1997; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glazer, 1997; Gottdiener, 1985; Habermas, 1995; Martin, 2009; Pollak, 2009; Pichardo, 1997). At the same time the paradigm gives one an opportunity to differentiate between and understand middle-class groups separately from larger national movements (Ballard, 2006; Friedman and Reitzes, 1996; Glaser, 1997; Tomlinson *et al*, 2003; Vigne, 1997). Despite notions about suburban residents being apathetic and not interested in local affairs a vision-based analysis shows how committed long-term activism is possible under the right conditions. It also shows that middle-class activism is often more varied than has been generally portrayed by scholars. A strong strain of thought running throughout the literature on the middle-class is that these groups are separating themselves from the rest of the city. These approaches often focus on one aspect of middle-class politics such as race or class, seen as the key driver (Ballard, 2002; Ballard, 2005; Baud and Navtej, 2008; Davis, 1992; Fernandes, 2001; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002; Lemanski, 2006; Mitchell, 2003; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002). The vision paradigm means that suburban action is understood as developing from a spatial politics connected to a specific vision. This can take into account issues of race, class or gender but does not privilege one factor (Purcell, 2001). Using this approach we can more easily unpack the varied responses of residents to the proposal.

Those in favour of the development arrived at their position through a combination of self-interest and fear about the future. Although this development would affect the suburban ideal, the reputable financial brands behind the initiative and the overall design meant the final product would be within the character of the suburb. They were afraid if they rejected this proposal, another "Malaysian" type development might be proposed and they might not be able to prevent its implementation. Other groups had self-interested responses to the development but they tried to weave in additional broader social objectives such as the environmental program proposed by the neighbouring private golf course. These groups threatened to become oppositional but actually focused their energies into negotiating concessions out of the developers.

Those opposing the development were motivated by a range of values. These could broadly be classified under the headings of saving the environment, a sense of common ownership, local pride, their own self interest or, even for a few, a sense of aesthetics. These values were not consistent with all those who opposed the project but there was enough overlap to create a coherent vision for action. This vision persisted despite the possibility of a bigger threat to the suburban ideal in the future should the activists succeed.

The fight for Huddle Park also tells us a fair amount about the ability of suburban groups to mobilise opposition. The long term nature of the fight to save the park and the varied tactics used by different group's shows how grassroots campaigns can emerge from these spaces. Despite this ability to mobilise members of suburbia however, only about 1300 people actually signed objection forms. These actions rate highly against other forms of participation in long-term governance structures, such as community policing forums and local ward councillors (Mattes, 2008). It rates rather poorly, however, in terms of voting in the local government elections. This suggests that voting is still the extent to which democracy is practised in the suburbs; and although Huddle Park was an exceptional event in terms of suburban participation, the general apathy involving direct democracy is still apparent.

The campaign also shows the kinds of action that middle-class residents choose to use when they do get involved with political issues. They made frequent use of public meetings as well as objection procedures and negotiation where necessary. They also tended to rely heavily on the media to engage democratically; and activists spent much time talking to their local community newspapers. Over and above this they were quite willing to debate issues over regional radio stations and newspapers. Letters to the editor and op-ed pieces were commonplace, and even social media was successfully used by the activists, especially with the creation of applications like Facebook. This focus on the media is something middle-class activists do remarkably well, especially when mobilising around public events. This helped enhance the participatory culture of the area and began to affect broader discourses. These functions are important for expanding democracy at the local and even regional levels (Ballard *et al*, 2006; Habermas, 1995; Jimenez, 2007; Young, 1986).

This contribution that the middle-classes makes to the democratic process is an important one since they are sometimes accused of undermining it (Baud and Navtej, 2008; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002). In fact residents are willing to engage with the process of democracy and

believe it is important to be involved in order to have their voices heard. It proves that the system enjoys strong perceptions of procedural fairness which theorists hope will result from properly organised deliberative forums (Cohen 1999; Christiano, 1997; Estlund, 1997; Knight and Johnson 1999; Michelman, 1997). This is not to say that the residents necessarily understood their role very well or that they had the proper political tools to make the process work for them. The abilities of different resident associations to influence the city vary wildly. Some work with the city well others struggle to get them to respond. Also, while middle-class residents have the ability to mobilise successfully around the city's democratic and technical processes, it does not necessarily make them very effective. The mobilisation of objections, for instance, was generally ignored by the city. The mobilisations helped to get the issue debated in the press and gave legitimacy to organisations but did not move the authorities. The residents are more likely to have agency through public participation processes outside of the city's mandate.

Public participation is supposed to provide input for effective development (Ballard, 2008). The activists however saw it as a window of opportunity to try and slow down or halt the development. The participation processes did not really provide for this kind of intervention but did give certain types of power for the activists to use for this purpose. Its most important empowerment was the ability they had to criticise the participation both in substance and in process. Here being part of the middle-class helped the activists because they had the language, the financial knowledge and the cultural resources available to them to engage effectively in public participation. This enabled activists to introduce new arguments, provide their own evidence and mobilise additional support among residents. Their hope was that through the fluidity of the participation, they would be able to hone in on an argument that would give them more power in the development process. This is something that can occur within participation spaces (Ballard, 2008; Cornwall, 2008; Williams, 2004). They were nonetheless very suspicious both of the participation process and of those who were supposed to administer it. These kinds of attitudes can occur when participation groups feel that they don't have genuine input to processes (Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; White, 1996). They were constantly concerned that it might be a process that the city and developers were simply going through the motions. This stemmed from the idea that the large financial muscle and political will behind the project made the development a foregone conclusion. This is an occurrence that has been noted in both the theoretical literature of deliberative democracy and

in the practice of environmental impact assessments (Knight and Johnston, 1997; Wood; 1999).

Nonetheless participation remained their only viable political strategy since they had already voted and mobilised against representatives governing the city. In addition they did not have the ability to lobby key figures in the political establishment in order to change the policy. The only institution that they totally believed would give them an unbiased hearing was the judicial system. This is in line with attitudes observed by other studies of middle-class groups in their interactions with the local state (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). They also lacked the resources for alternative and "unreasonable" actions like protests and civil disobedience which in any case were viewed with distaste. This constantly weighed on their minds as the potential last resort that they would have had to take to save the park. This option while effective was also risky, especially as the city had been careful to avoid procedural errors that had been challenged legally in other development attempts. It was also likely to be a very expensive option when faced with the deep-pocketed financial firms. The focus on legal strategies is largely defensive and cannot be used to compel the city into action. This hampered pro-active mobilisation and activists spent much time fighting the development but much less pressuring the city to develop the park according to their vision.

The Effect of Middle Class Politics on Johannesburg

If tension between the economic and political arms of the city regime could be assessed, which arm would be considered more powerful? The study confirms what others have argued about before: that there are a number of serious flaws in the system of deliberative democracy in Johannesburg (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). The city has managed to develop a number of institutions that approximate the theoretical requirements of reasonable debate, rational decision-making and consensus-building (Ballard, 2008; Benhabib, 1996; Benit-Gbaffou, 2008; Cohen, 1989; Elster, 1997; Gervais-Lambony, 2008; Habermas, 1997; Healey, 1992; Rakodi, 1997; Rawls, 1997; Sowman and Brown, 2006). These institutions are well entrenched in the city's political structure and residents do make use of them to articulate their concerns to the city administration. It is however often hard for these voices to be heard because the power in the city is held by in the mayoral committee (Benit-Gbaffou, 2008). It is also interesting to note that the residents have been able to increase their deliberative voice by

making use of technical and participatory institutions that were not necessarily designed for this purpose. It is at this mayoral level that the economic agenda of the city is set and through which the powerful bid specifications for development to large corporate takes place. Therefore when the high up economic arm of the regime is opposed by the residents through the grassroots deliberative democratic institutions, it is the former that is privileged and a more centralised planning process results.

This explains the relative power of the city of Johannesburg and its corporate regime creator that it can make and drive decisions through its planning procedures if the requisite political will is present. The city is at its weakest when development plans are not carefully considered or decision-making is fast-forwarded, such as in the case of the "Malaysian" development. In these cases residents are able to challenge the development processes through activism or legal means. If however the city is considered in its approach, it is far more difficult for residents to oppose its actions.

In these situations where the city is powerful it is also much less likely to listen to the concerns of residents. The concern evinced by deliberative theorists that in imbalanced power situations there may be a disincentive to negotiate, seems to be applicable here (Gaus, 1997; Knight and Johnson, 1997; Michelman, 1997). This is reflected in the fact that residents found it difficult to influence the city's planning and deliberative mechanisms because the city was simply not interested in listening to them. They were far more likely to get their voices heard at the provincial level through professionals in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Due to the increased influence of the EIA, activists targeted this institution to try and mitigate the power of the city, a move which showed that although the city was powerful, this power was not absolute. It was still accountable to and contained by legal restrictions, technical processes and democratic inputs. Without interest from the public these can be marginalised or even ignored by the city, but with increased activism and scrutiny boundaries are created within which the authorities have no option but to negotiate.

This does not mean that it is easy for middle class residents to affect the city at this scale. Even with these additional input abilities in the EIA space, account must still be taken of power dynamics in deliberative systems (Mouffe, 1999). By focusing their resources on provincial participation the activists were powerful enough to slow down decision-making and create minor adjustments to planning outcomes. This however is the extent of their power within these forums. Unless activists have a way of correcting the power imbalance in these

circumstances it is very unlikely that they will have the ability to stop the process. In the case of Huddle Park the wetland was the key issue that changed the debate.

This was crucial because until that point, activists trying to save the Park had been reliant on a combination of slow growth arguments and legal technicalities to try and prevent the development. This is a common strategy in other cities of the world (Davis, 1992). The discovery of the wetland injected a new and very serious obstruction into the trajectory of the development. Unlike other arguments it combined the strong scientific epistemology favoured in EIAs (Freund, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2004) with a legal framework that made mitigation almost impossible. This provided some counter action in the EIA process giving non-human actors more relevance. Often there is criticism of the anthropocentric focus of deliberative systems (Bell, 2005; Dryzek, 2000; Hailwood, 2005).

Its inclusion, however, was not a foregone conclusion. The issue of the wetland was entirely marginal in the initial scoping report on Huddle Park because of the use of a limited definition and the fact that the previous SETPLAN study of the area was ignored. Once the activists had discovered this missing information they had to work hard to incorporate the wetland onto the agenda of the EIA. Once they had established the veracity of the wetland, however, the entire frame of the debate around the development was altered. Activists were able to focus on the wetland as a non-negotiable issue and challenge the developers as to its extent on the site. The reason for this debate was partly due to the inexact nature of wetland science, and to the inexact legislation. This ambivalence is common in the area of environmental science (Jordan and O'Riordan, 1999; Owens, 2000; Sowman and Brown, 2006; Zografos and Howarth, 2010). It was this ambivalence that allowed for the exclusion of the SETPLAN from the EIA and the generally narrow wetland definition used in the EIA. Once the fact of the wetland was established, however, it worked in favour of the activists because they were able to marshal this uncertainty to argue for a wider definition of wetlands, a broader notion of how they are impacted and the imposition of larger buffer zones around their edges. This was a crucial battle for each side: the residents wanted there to be a maximum amount of wetland while the developers were hoping that its area would be seen to be minimal and thus they would be able to ignore them in the development.

At this point the activists were finally able to affect the agenda of the city because the issue of the wetland began to undermine the viability of the development proposal. It was only through this unpredictability that is sometimes found in participation processes, (Ballard,

2008; Cornwall, 2008; Williams, 2004) that the mobilisation and input efforts of the activists became effective. The successful exposure of a wider wetland definition significantly increased the amount of area not able to be developed and therefore increased the areas of open space. This in turn caused a complete layout change and reduction in the number of profitable dwellings. Without the wetland it would have been impossible for the activists to have stopped the process, but even with its inclusion the development possibly would still have gone ahead. It was other factors that eventually destroyed this possibility, including those of rising costs, increasing logistical requirements, a change in the demand for golfing estates and the global property recession. These took time to become powerful enough to have an effect and the additional two years' delay brought about by the wetland did much to undermine the financial sustainability of the project. It was only when power relations evened out; leaving the city with no other options that the city began to engage with the community. It is only at that point that the engagement starts to resemble the deliberative model as predicted that it should (Gaus, 1997; Knight and Johnson, 1997; Michelman, 1997). Even when this did eventually take place the city continued to negotiate in private with the developers. The final outcome resulted in the divided status of the park.

This leaves a question as to the actual effect of the activism of the middle class residents on the democratic character of the city. The spatial framework used to shows that the narratives put forward by the activists were not exclusively self interested and therefore cannot be judged as being part of the canon of middle class literature devoted to understanding these actions as being part of class and race (Ballard, 2002; Ballard, 2005; Baud and Navtej, 2008; Davis, 1992; Fernandes, 2001; Hook and Vdoljak, 2002; Lemanski, 2006; Mitchell, 2003; Landman, and Schonteich, 2002). In addition the deliberative frameworks used in this study also show that in terms of procedural fairness the activists were engaged with the democratic process in a place where this is not a common practice. This can only increase the interest and engagement in the area and must be measured as having met this particular criterion. There is a question of whether some form of substantive fairness was achieved. The fact that the activists were able to secure at least some land for the public and a much larger proportion than was originally proposed does argue in favour that this objective was achieved. Beyond these frameworks however there is still a question of how this form of politics fits alongside other political struggles including those related to identity, redistribution, fundamental rights, prejudice, democratic inclusion and social justice. This is a much a larger question to consider and would have to involve more focus on the goals of these various struggles and

how they related to one another and to the middle class how they are related to one another. Such a discussion is however beyond the mandate of this dissertation. In terms of the outcome of the activism one can look at the various actors and how they benefited. Certainly the middle class activists did benefit from the portion of the land that they won. The caddies on the other hand faced potential eviction if the building plans went ahead. The question of whether they are able to retain their livelihoods in the new community development and how many different types of people have access to the park will determine how just the final outcome is eventually.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

The Result of the Fight for Huddle Park

What can be said about the end result of the fight for Huddle Park? In effect the activists gained a sizeable proportion of public and open space, more than they would have had the development been allowed to go-ahead. The original development had proposed that 30 ha of the property would remain public and 120 ha overall would be privatised open space. By the end of the process the community had closer to 130 ha directly under its control, to be rehabilitated for public open space use. They did not however win the entire battle with 53 ha of the site still being proposed for development and the activists still opposing this process.

With this result in mind what conclusions can be drawn about Huddle Park in the politics of the city? It is important to re-look at the original questions of the study. I asked why it is that the Huddle Park issue was so controversial in an area normally disinterested in local government politics. What did this process look like and how does it fit into notions generally held of middle-class politics? What does this tell us about politics in the city and potential trends that might occur in the future?

Understanding the Drivers of Politics around Huddle Park

The answer to the first question is that a number of factors went into making Huddle Park an important issue. The context was created by a city regime that incorporated a tension between the key policies which were driven by its economic arm of development institutions and corporate entities and the oppositional views which were articulated through its political arm of deliberative institutions and technical procedures. The activism was created by an explicit threat to the spatial identity of the long-time suburban dwellers and their notion of the suburban ideal. Part of this was generated by fear of growth costs that would be incurred with the development in the form of increased traffic, crime and a strain on infrastructure. In addition to these, activists in the area were able to construct a strong vision of public development. This vision was created using a number of components including the historical spatial identity of the park in the area, the articulation of local autonomy planning discourses, its status as a "green lung" and the fact that it was a public space. These combined to form the

notion that the city was stealing a commonly owned environmental gem from the residents that could be enjoyed as a community space if properly managed. This vision was potent enough to oppose the privatisation of the park and shows the importance of spatial vision in galvanising public action in suburban areas. Its shows that despite claims of apathy, the middle class can be politically active for long periods if they get behind a vision with the correct constituent parts.

Mobilisation, Participation and Huddle Park

This brings us to the second question: that of how the action was perceived and how we understand it within current thinking around the politics of the middle class. The study shows the usefulness of using a spatial vision paradigm in order to interrogate middle class politics. Through this it was found that there is definitely space for a range of responses within middle-class politics. There was certainly much similarity with other studies of the middle-class that focus on withdrawal and self-interest. There were also groups that did not conform to these notions and were engaged democratically as active citizens. The use of a spatial vision approach as opposed to other criteria such as race and class meant the ability to accommodate a more textured approach to the topic. This avoids problems of essentialising all middle-class action as being problematic and enables a better understanding of all kinds of political middle-class behaviour.

What is also clear is that middle class groups are in the main happy to engage with the democratic process. The system is seen to have procedural fairness and residents believe their interests can be represented their needs. They saw engagement as their democratic right and also as a vehicle that should be seen in a positive perspective as a potential method for influencing outcomes. Very often interaction is fairly basic and simply involves voting for or interacting with the ward councillor. Activists on the other hand can be involved simultaneously in a number of institutions and can also make consistent use of the media as well as their own internal platforms in order to drive their agenda and create a program of action.

This was despite the fact that they were often highly suspicious of deliberative mechanisms and questioned whether they would be treated fairly during the engagement process. The manner in which the deliberative system is set up makes it difficult to hold the city to account.

Johannesburg does have a basic deliberative infrastructure; this is unintentionally augmented by technical and participative procedures which give residents extra voice. Activists have the ability to influence maintenance and general planning by interacting and mobilising around deliberative institutions. However this only lasts as long as they remain in line with decisions taken by the regime. This agency evaporates once the residents start to disagree with the decisions taken by the city. At this point deliberative structures simply become a way of treating citizens with contempt and feeding them what the city believes is correct. The process then becomes highly centralised and extremely top-down in nature. This created a great deal of suspicion and animosity during the Huddle Park debate. It undermined the kind of respectful consensus-building that the system is supposed to promote. Despite the considerable mobilisation around Huddle Park, the residents in reality had very little power to change the mind of the city through deliberative processes. The reason that these groups continued to mobilise regardless of the process was that they had very few political options available to them. Mobilising still offered them the chance of increasing debate and legitimacy as well as the hope that they would discover something that would assist them in defeating the development. Ultimately, however, they believed that a legal route would be the final step if they were to get a fair hearing.

The activists had more agency inside the provincial public participative aspects of the development process through the EIA. They were still unhappy that the participation was being paid for by the developers. But despite this they were more successful with their activism in this forum than with the mechanisms of the city. This was because through a combination of non-cooperation, criticism, their own inputs and public pressure they were able to better affect the process. Even though these actions were more successful in affecting the EIA, the activists could still not balance out the power dynamics between themselves and the city. The developers through the EIA still were able to drive the process, and without the discovery of the wetland the participation may not have made a material difference to the final outcome.

Despite the fact that wetlands have a large number of legal issues attached to their presence, their existence seems to have been overlooked or initially missed in the EIA study. It required the activists to dig up the information and then insist on its inclusion into the agenda of the EIA. Once it was there, it gave them the legal clout and power they had been seeking to force the city and developers to reconsider their decision. In some ways the activists were fortunate that this wetland existed in the park but its inclusion was as much as a result of the activism

as it was to the physical reality. This is evidence of the unpredictability of participation and the fact that it is not a foregone conclusion. It also points out where middle-class action is strongest in the politics of the city. The wetland became an issue precisely because of the kinds of resources that the middle-class activists had at their disposal: professional knowledge, time, cultural capital and money. While they had fared badly within the wider democratic system, they were able to fight the city at the provincial level with the assistance of these resources.

The Impact on City Governance and Future Research

This brings us to the issue of what this process tells of the potential impact that middle-class activism may have on the politics of the city. It shows how the regime of the city can be challenged their civic action actors even at a local level but it also underscores how strong these frameworks can be. The activists managed to score an important victory and increased fourfold the public space share of the park, but they could not secure the entire property. They only gained this victory after the city had run out of options and was willing to negotiate with the residents. The outcome reflects the extent to which each side was able to control the process. Given the issues of the wetland and the activism, there was little the city could do to continue the development. Without the wetland however, sheer activism was simply not enough to induce the city to change its mind. This again does not reflect the consensus model on which the city is supposed to govern, but instead shows something more akin to a negotiated stalemate. Regime theory here is shown to be an effective tool analysing this particular set of suburban political circumstances. It is able to take account of the forces of business and city conduct that lead to this particular situation but it is also able to take account the forces opposing the regime the spatial strategies that are invoked to do this.

Given this information, how can future research promote the issue of how middle-class activism can affect the city? What this research has exposed is certain key features of middle-class action that can be used as a potential model. These include activation by a vision of an emotive issue laced with public concern, intense engagement with democratic and participative channels, considerable activity in the media and a reliance on the legal system. It suggests that the local state may ultimately be successful and more powerful but that the middle-classes have the ability to extract important concessions in the process. The debates around suburban metering and e-tolling may be cases in point where further study could be envisioned. It is also important question what role and affect the middle class has on the rest

of the politics of the city. Whilst the frameworks provided create a solid basis on how to understand the way in which the urban middle classes operate but says much less about whether this is legitimate. Although the dissertation did explore briefly some deliberative notions of fairness and spatial narrative there are arguably many other notions that could be included in the assessment of middle class politics which shed greater light on its place in the city. Integrating this into wider debates about spatial dynamics, resource distribution and urban policy would also add to understanding to these issues in new ways.

Appendix

Interviews

Activist, 04 July 2011

Activist, 29 June 2011

Consortium Representative, 18 August 2011

Huddle and Environs Anti-Degradation League Representative, 11 July 2011

Johannesburg Property Company Representative, 18 August 2011

Local Councillor, 05 July 2011

Linksfield North Residents Association, 29 June 2011

Orange Grove Residents Association representative, 13 July 2011

Resident, 24 June 2011

Resident, 10 July 2011

Resident, 12 July 2011

Resident, 12 July 2011

Resident, 17 July 2011

Royal Johannesburg Golf Club Representative, 08 July 2011

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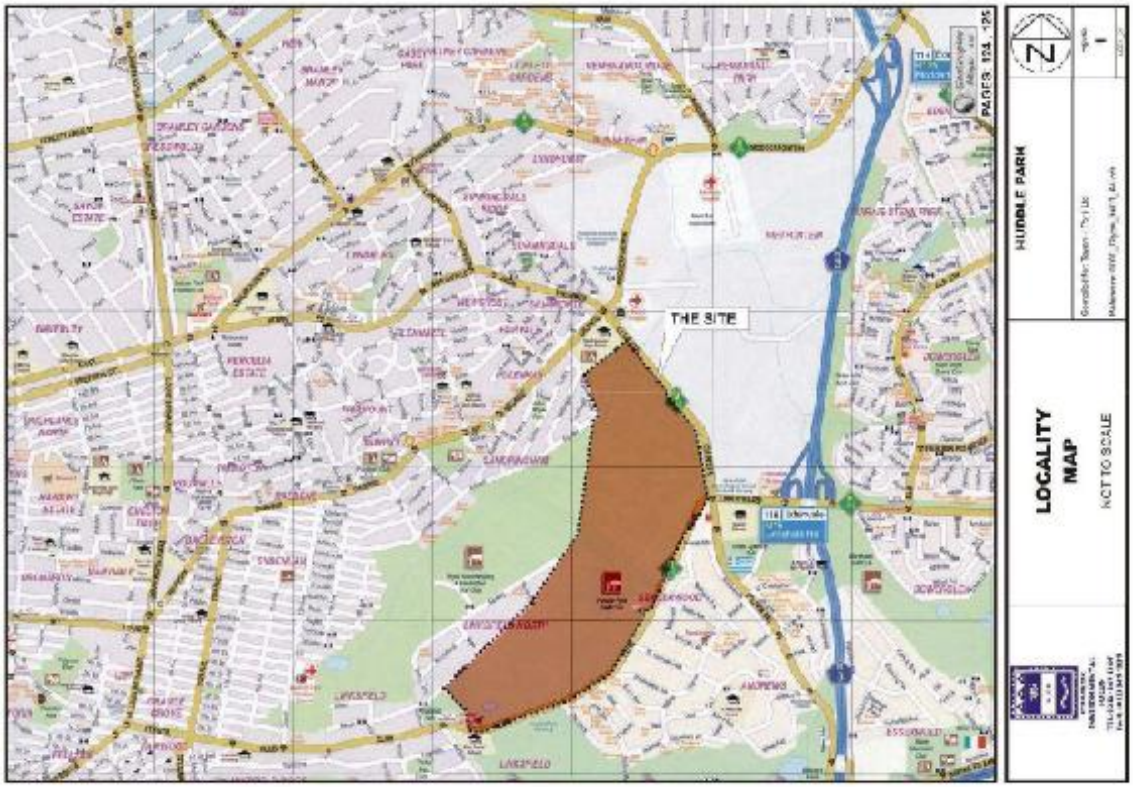


Figure 1. Locality map, which indicates the study area.

Image of Huddle Park marked in centre in brown. To the left is Royal Johannesburg Golf Course, between the two courses is Linksfield North further left is the suburb of Orange Grove, toward the lower left hand corner off map is the CBD. Below is the suburb of Linksfield and the protected area of Linksfield ridge. To the right of Huddle Park is the Sizwe Tropical diseases hospital and further right the municipality of Ekhureleni. (SEF, 2005)



Figure 14: A refinement of the layout above, with less encroachment into the floodlines.

The original development plan taking into hundred year flood lines but not wetlands (SEF, 2005)

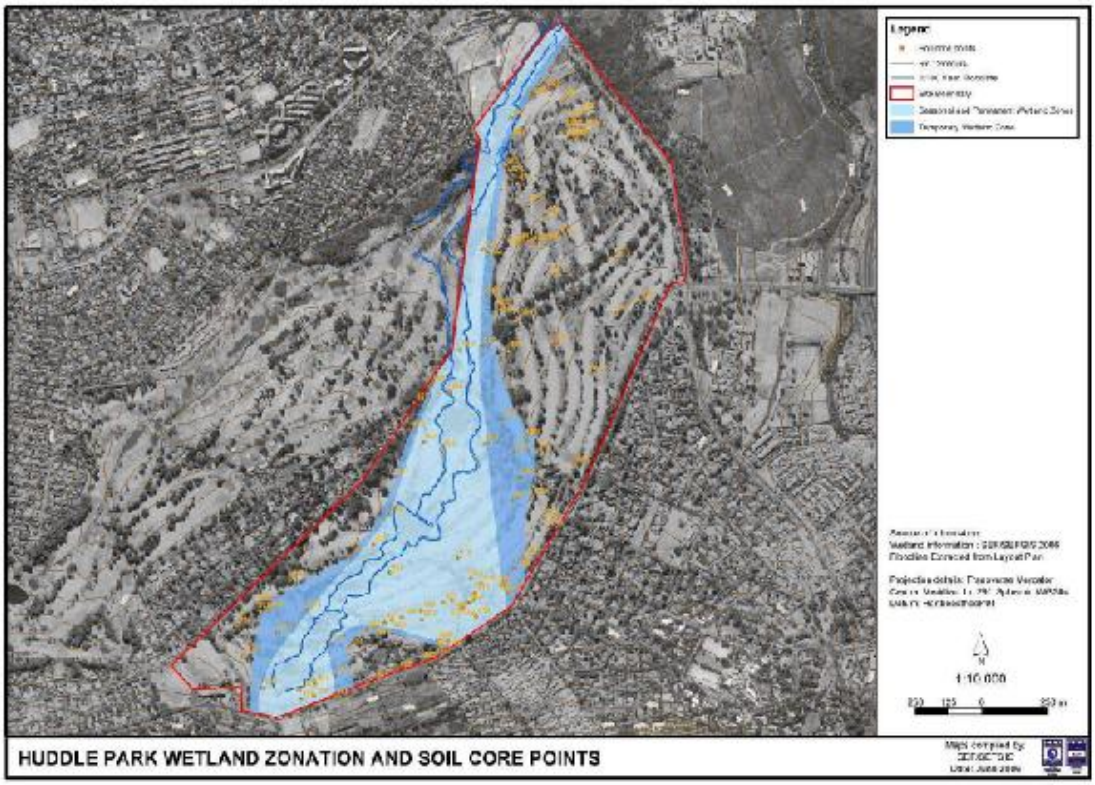
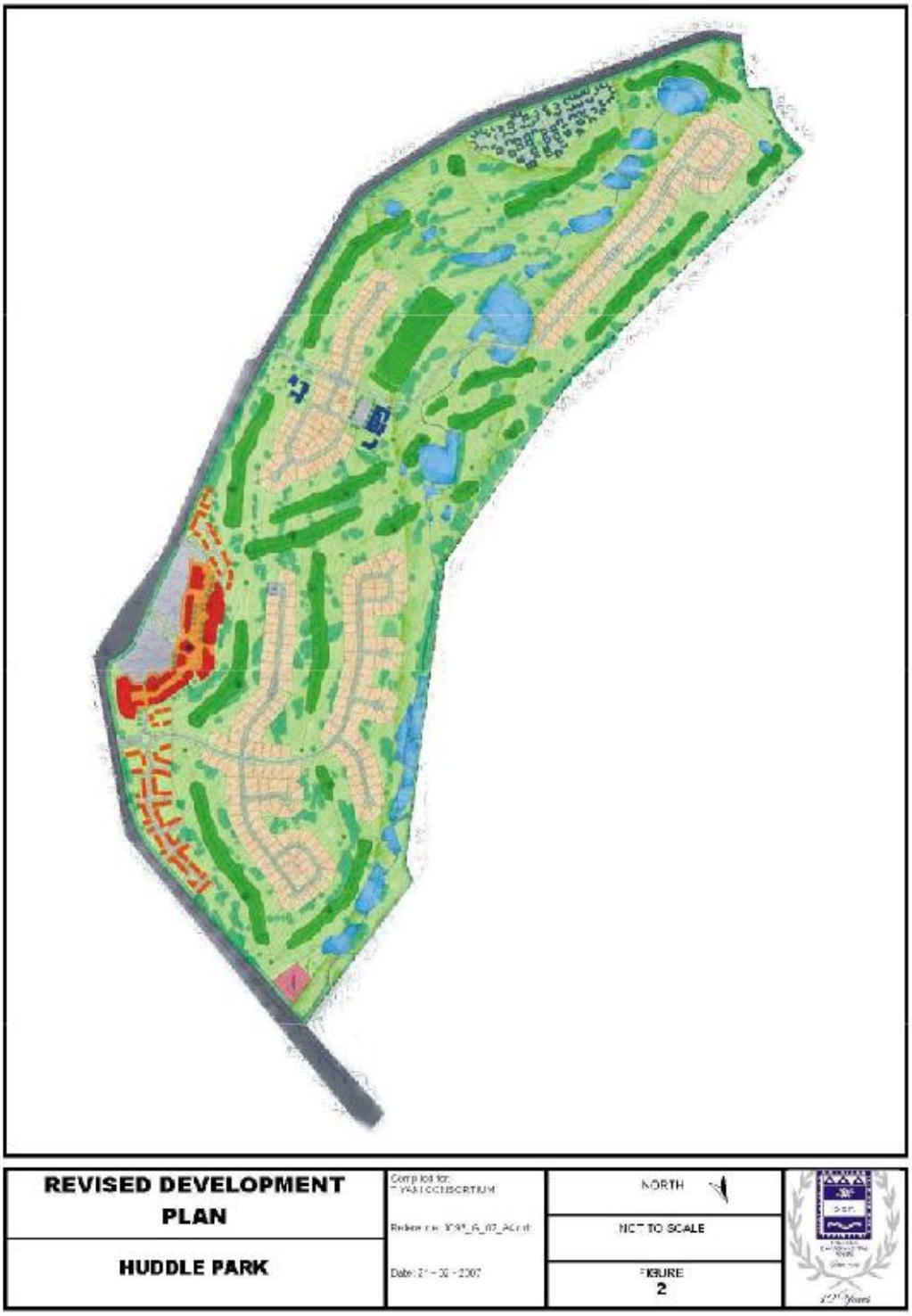


Figure 4. Different wetland zones of wetness with soil sample points.

Image of wetland areas discovered by residents (SEF, 2005)



Revised development plan after wetland is taken into account (SEF, 2005)



Prost



HUDDLE PARK PARTY AND PROTEST

24 November 2007
11am till 11pm

Party in the park!

Lets rock for 196ha of public open space!

Keep it green and clean!

Stop the greedy council selling off our park!
Stop a massive green lung being
turned into offices, shopping centres
and rubbish cluster homes!

Musicians! Stalls! Golf stuff?

The place is virtually done as a major golf
venue so bring your braais, frisbees, boomboxes,
guitars, drums,blankets and friends and
lets have a rocking summer day!

Reclaim the park!

At Huddle Park, Club St, Sandringham area,
so its very close by!
Entrance by recommended donation of R20
for the leaflet fund.

http://savehuddlepark.googlepages.com/

Wanna volunteer or contribute? savehuddlepark@gmail.com

Above: Protesters at Huddle Park (Author, 2007)

Below: Leaflet Advertising Protest (Fuchs, 2007)





Images



Above:

Top: Wetland Area Huddle Park (Laserson, 2007)

Middle: Fairways with birds, Linksfield Ridge behind (Laserson, 2007)

Bottom: The clubhouse during the period of neglect (Fuchs, 2007)

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