



Bryanston Riverclub Community Forum (BRCF) meeting minutes held at Bryneven Primary School Bryanston on 13 November 2017 at 6:30pm.

Present:

Karl Meissener- Roloff (KMR)
Justin Jonckheer (JJ)
Matt Shelley (MS)
Karen Soderholm (KS)
Göran Soderholm (GS)
Rosie Stubbs (RS)
Mike McLaren (MM)
Mark van Jaarsveld (CAP)
Janet Sutherland (JS)

Introduction

Before the meeting started KMR mentioned that due to its informal nature, no register was being kept, but if any newcomers had arrived due to fliers or posters and would like to become a member they could speak to KS after the presentation.

KMR introduced the agenda and advised that the BRCF is primarily a security forum which has gradually been branching out into other activities which are complimentary to the security initiatives.

KMR spoke about the BRCF committee comprising volunteers and for residents to bear in mind throughout the presentation that if anything resonates with them that every bit helps even if just an hour a month to reduce the workload for the current committee. The good news is that the committee has recently increased with a few additions.

Crime Statistics

KMR started the presentation focusing on crime and the statistics relating to the crimes with the area. He explained the split of statistics across the whole area between the original BRCF area and the newly expanded Extension 1 (Feb 2016).

KMR went on to explain about why so little detail is available from the police reports and advised that JS was there as the CPF representative and residents could talk to her afterwards.

KMR explained the distinction between “contact” versus “soft” crime and the rationale for the distinction. Contact crime has significantly more information typically for CAP to act on as victims can record specifics of the event (time it took, place, what the individuals were wearing, saying, etc.).

KMR discussed the SAPS consensus that WhatsApp is deemed to be social media and that for this reason residents are not permitted to disclose detailed information about crimes. Privacy has to be respected and disclosure can compromise investigations amongst other things.

Resident Question - when statistics are reported on, why are murders glossed over? Why are there not 2 red stars indicated on the area map for the 2 murders, which occurred in the recent past, as not referring to them again makes people complacent. Reporting and reminding residents of the bad data will reaffirm why they are paying what they are. KMR agreed and this was noted.

KMR advised that cable thefts contribute significantly to crime statistics for Ext 1 area. CAP intervened in July 2017, and they stopped until about 3 weeks ago, but a few incidences have recently occurred again so there is the need to keep up the pressure on the Spruit.

“Other” in the statistics includes trespassing, fraud, noise, bylaw infringements and attempted crimes.

KMR advised to keep in mind that the Ext 1 is a smaller area so the statistics are deceptive. Ext 1 is an exposed suburb because it is actually smaller and has a lot more open spaces and cables are soft targets.

A substantial discussion was had regarding CAP’s inability to add additional vehicles to the area because of the expense - it was discussed further later in the presentation.

As far as contributors of crime are concerned (or crimes perpetrated from vehicles entering and leaving the suburb), individuals in vehicles seem to be the biggest problem and CAP suspect they contribute to the cable theft because of the speed at which the perpetrators act and the inability of police or security companies to locate them.

A resident raised the fact that Ext 1 has a lot of construction going on contributing to the crime stats. KMR responded re CAPs request that residents call in suspicious activity. Not much occurs in Ext 1 compared to the main community area. The simple rule is that if there are 2 or more men in a vehicle or on foot, the resident noticing it must call it in. Even if the caller is not a CAP member, it doesn't matter, they must please call it in so as to increase the available suspected criminal activity data.

JJ confirmed that residents can actually call in concerns in any area in Johannesburg.

A resident asked about building. She has had all personnel checked by CAP. It however became a problem practically to have every new person checked every other day. What is the solution?

CAP responded that prevention is more important rather than apologising for inertia afterwards. Residents must not feel they are wasting CAPs time. They are to always call no matter what and CAP can decide if they can handle the workload.

CAP explained the difference between logging a construction versus an alteration. Construction is when the resident is absent and the site is a complete building site whereas a renovation is when the resident is still there and it is smaller and sub-contractors such as electricians and plumbers come through intermittently. There may be challenges when vetting staff, but it is important that issues with the process are logged through complaints, then we can start to deal with them. CAP lauded the resident for doing what she is doing. The practical solution is that if there is someone different on your site, call in CAP to come and check the new individual.

The discussion then turned towards displaced persons in the river and related information about them.. Displaced people on the Spruit are mostly employed and do have homes. Generally they are not paid a living wage and that is why they are on the Spruit. A building contractor should always employ people who are legally allowed in South Africa ensure they are being remunerated properly and that they are provided transport to and from the suburb each day.

Another resident suggested in the interim that an ID gets scanned in and sent through to CAP so as to manage the time issue and resource capacity. All managed efficiently according to another resident. It was self-service and CAP did conduct a surprise visit to verify.

Another resident commented about the Developers being a different issue as there is no control with them.

CAP confirmed that they conduct flash raids when workers are being picked up or dropped off and perform the checks then with the Developers. There are more rights if the Developer is formally appointed. There is limited vetting ability if they are not appointed officially.

CCTV Initiative

It is still largely the same as previously presented. BRCF originally planned to prioritise license recognition cameras because crimes are mostly vehicular based. BRCF financial assessment of the beta solution including funding was completed; however Vumacam entered the market recently which changed the economics of camera deployment.

Instead of buying the infrastructure, Vuma offer a rental option which is much better as there is far less administration and at a price point which no other providers can match. This means the roll out can occur a lot quicker. Anticipated installation date of cameras is Q1 2018.

JS advised that the CPF did a trial LPR in the Bryanston Drive circle to test the viability of the cameras on the 8th November. No results available yet.

KMR pointed out the northern part of the slide presentation illustrating where the cameras would be located and advised why there are no dots there as Andre Snyman (EBlockwatch) has already deployed cameras



there. KMR discussed the data sharing with these cameras so that we avoid duplicating infrastructure. Therefore BRCF plan to commence installing cameras where the red dots are positioned at the main traffic inflow points into the suburb and then at the yellow dots.

The monthly cost per LPR camera quoted to be R1000 is the cost per camera, including maintenance, monitoring, insurance, power and data connectivity.

A resident queried the long term liability re the committee's obligations re their arrangement with the service provider. The previous committee became liable for about R300k. CAP advised that this initiative will be contracted by CAP on behalf of the BRCF. There is thus no liability for the BRCF through this approach. KMR confirmed that the data privacy laws are a key consideration.

A resident queried the prioritising of license recognition cameras versus infrared on the Spruit. CAP responded citing the Louis Botha initiative and the success with this type of camera. He acknowledged that vehicle license plates can be easily changed, but hopefully with the speed with which the information can be processed, it will be faster than the speed at which the criminals can change their licenses. We will have to cater for technology changes, but if we rent the camera equipment, then we can change as the need arises by not owning the infrastructure. We will always keep abreast of new technologies and innovations.

Of the camera network being rolled out by Vumatel (estimated around 9000 cameras), 3000 will be license recognition cameras. If every service provider focuses on the same technology, there will be a huge benefit with this technology. We just need to evolve faster than the criminal.

A resident queried whether they can privately get involved, integrating their camera with the network and CAP responded yes, a resident can wire up their own streets to install cameras on street corners etc.

Volunteers and Vagrants

Bylaw infringements are a big issue and we need help there!

KMR mentioned the 3pm meeting with City of Jhb on the day of this BRCF meeting (13 Nov). Craig Hutton arranged the meeting with the City of Jhb. BRCF now have a final view on the fact that we cannot rely on the City to assist with the vagrant issue. All avenues are exhausted. CAP has conducted 6-7 raids over the past year. Chris Santana, the Councillor of Ward 106 has been very successful by employing a contractor to remove vagrants, which KMR suggested that perhaps the BRCF could do, to see if we can get better results. Lengthy meetings with representatives of human rights have identified all sorts of issues about which the City officials are equally frustrated. It's a complex issue and we need to find ways to address it hence the need for a committee member focusing on the by-laws.

Other Matters

The Party house at 46 Belgrave was raised. Residents and CPF have escalated it as a problem. The City of Jhb legal department have allocated them penalty rates, which are 4 times the normal rates because of their not using their property in line with its zoning and approvals, which seems to be having no effect. The matter needs to go to the High Court, but it is not prioritised so it may take long periods to see change. Municipal courts are coming on line shortly to focus on bylaw infringements. The legal department at the City of Jhb advised that the BRCF can escalate matters to them directly.

JS asked that residents please add any information they have as the CPF has a lot of evidence. The SASRIA Act of 2010 section 44 requires that everyone's affidavits are necessary to help the case. Col Killian at Sandton SAPS is responsible.

A Resident spoke up about getting joint statements to be put forward. He complained about residents not doing anything. KMR asked how the BRCF can help. The resident advised that we need access to another local resident's cameras to help with this Party House. The resident is at no. 48. KMR agreed to take this matter off line.

JS advised that there are party houses everywhere. Someone comes and offers to pay a resident to hire out their house. This is illegal. The owner gets the money and invitations are sent out and the guests then pay a cover charge and then pay for liquor without a liquor license having been issued. It is illegal to charge

an entrance fee at a private house. JS asked that all residents please advise of any invitations found re these sort of parties. Send an email to Janet or Rob of CPF.

Rosie Stubbs Presentation

RS informed the residents that their initiative comprises a group of mostly working mums. Nannies take kids to play and realised need for more formalised facilities and they wished to extend the neighbourhood space to enable the children to play for a longer duration of their lives.

They want to create a contained place, install a jungle gym and make it an engaging playground. Kids can play and develop coordination and have a good time. Stuart Woolmington owner of the Danilo's centre has engaged with City Parks to adopt the park. He has a vision for the park and understands the demographics from the centre's perspective as well. He wants to attract tenants who will help create a destination environment for locals to walk to on weekends.

RS said they were open to ideas. The needs will evolve with the children.
The Halloween party was phenomenally supported. Ticketing allowed them to raise R5500.

The next event is on Dec 3rd - Carols by Candle light. It is being advertised on Facebook and the BRCF website. A strong sense of community will really improve the fight for increased security rather than the community being fractured and isolated creating opportunities for criminals to undermine security.

CAP Vehicles

A third vehicle is planned across the entire Bryanston River Club CAP area. This will be made possible by the area across Bryanston drive wanting to be included in the CAP area. They want to become part of the BRCF community, but CAP can't support them without another vehicle and for that they need more sign ups.

A resident informed the meeting that ADT have lost 2 vehicles recently in the area without the courtesy of advising anyone in advance. KMR advised that the BRCF are trying actively trying to engage and redevelop relationships with ADT. Cliff Taylor has been trying to manage it. The relationship started this year again, but it is very disappointing that the area lost 2 vehicles. Funding has become a problem it seems. The BRCF continues to engage with the ADT, but don't seem to be getting anywhere. The relationship seems to be one sided at this stage. The loss of 2 vehicles doesn't seem to have impacted the crime stats.

A resident asked about Tigers Milk. The noise levels are always escalated. There is a court case with the Jacksons regarding the legality of the building. The owner is engaging with the JMPD and they are going to install sound proofing. Often the noise is from another house, but pressure continues.

The generator issue was raised. KMR suggested that the issue is emailed to info@brcf.co.za as the BRCF has a contact at COJ regarding Noise.

A resident asked if ADT residents move to CAP can we not then get another vehicle without having to extend the borders. KMR acknowledged absolutely, but does a third vehicle in this space make sense? The point of a third vehicle is to extend the range. A 2 man vehicle is beneficial because they can alternate driving and it's better for 2 CAP representatives to interview sometimes rather than 1 person.

A resident queried the CAP public space donation. KMR responded in detail. He advised that the actual cost to provide an effective security armed response per person is about R1200. Donations made to CAP are tax deductible, but a service cannot be rendered for a tax deductible amount. Hence contributions to CAP are split between an armed response component (not tax deductible as it is a direct service) and a Public Space donation which is fully tax deductible. Every amount paid to the public space will accelerate the deployment of cameras as well as a third vehicle being launched.

A resident asked if CAP's representative, Thelma monitors new residents moving in? Yes.

Finally in closing a resident queried the nursery school opening in Brooke Avenue. It is apparently a main thoroughfare therefore business rights are permitted. Density was discussed and KMR advised that if seriously concerned residents can elect to petition against it.



The meeting was thereafter closed at 19:45.