

aerial photo from 1931

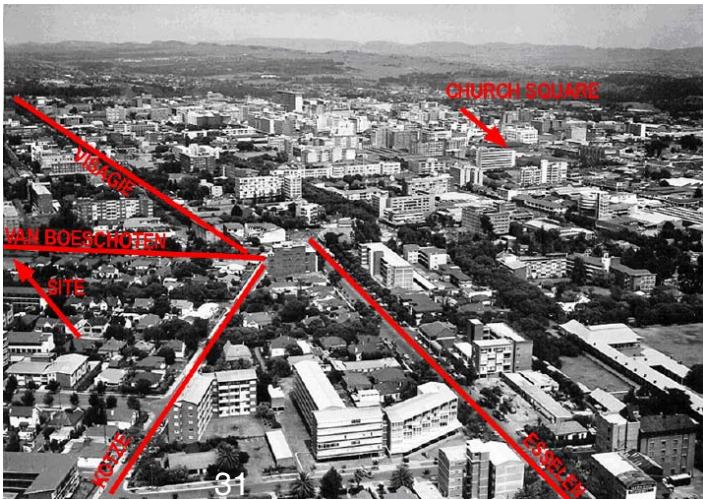
# 10

## history

"[M]usic dominates, reigns actually, harmony; and harmony itself reigns over all things."

*Le Corbusier, 1949*

aerial photo, including site, from 1950



The establishment and development of Pretoria was also not possible without movement. The first and deciding factor in the layout of Pretoria is the local geography. Flanked in the North by the Daspoort and in the South by the Timeball Hill Mountain ranges, large-scale movement has traditionally been dictated by these two boundaries. The Steenhovenspruit in the West and the Apies River in the East are features that have changed the direction of the city grid.

Ndebele settlements already existed since the 1400s and Afrikaners settled in 1840 to create a service centre for ox wagon. It was proclaimed a town in 1855 and soon after a town grid was established with Church Square at the centre. Church and Market (later Paul Kruger) Streets were the main axis and streets were still wide to allow for the turning of an ox wagon. The city grid presented the opportunity for expansion in all directions and this was initially the case with the 1864 government buildings and the moving of the market East in 1882. This cleared space for the second church on Church Square. When Paul Kruger became the president of the ZAR (Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek) and the economy was bolstered by the movement of the gold rush on the Witwatersrand, the city grid was densified. After the "Treaty of Vereeniging" in 1902 the British put their stamp on the city by demolishing the church on Church Square in 1904 and strengthening the North-South movement by emphasising the Paul Kruger Axis. In 1908 the Apies River was canalised and lost its natural movement, being used as a storm water channel. 1931 Pretoria was declared a city and the movement along the North-South axis emphasised more with the building of the City Hall to establish Pretorius Square on the extension of Paul Kruger Street from Church Square. This is about the time when the city reached its geographical limits on the North and South and the only solution was for the movement to shift in an East-West direction.

The first act was to declare Marabastad, which had been established West of the Steenhovenspruit, a slum in 1940 and move all the inhabitants further West to Atteridgeville. Segregation continued and another township appeared to

the far east of the city, namely Mamelodi. Even further West the homeland of Bophutatswana appeared. To make sure that this work force would not be lost to the white population, a system of subsidized bus and train transport was established to link Mamelodi in the East and Atteridgeville in the West to the city. Longer distances, like Mabopane in Bophutatswana, were also linked.

Together with the forced movement in an East-West direction, there was an increase in population growth. Increased wealth also meant that suburbanization started. Geographical limitations channelled this expansion in an East-West direction and suburbs and suburban shopping centres flourished. Traditional city functions were suburbanised and moved out of the city. New roads were needed and an extensive highway scheme in 1967 reinforced the East-West movement. The city started to densify in the 1970s and 1980s. There seems to be no stopping this East-West expansion of the greater city and distances seem to increase, cutting off the suburbs from the centre. Pretoria is a well-connected city – with a car; and this main emphasis is only in the fast moving East-West direction.

The traditional North-South movement has been reduced to purely historical. The main artery feeding the city from the South is Nelson Mandela Drive and here the powers-that-be saw the opportunity to re-establish the prominence of the gateway into the city. Urban design frameworks were drawn up by several parties and the current one in use is by Urban Solutions Architects and Urban Designers. The Mandela Development Corridor (MDC) aims at restoring the North-South movement, decreasing the dependency on vehicular transport (especially private car ownership) by focusing on pedestrian movement and link Sunnyside and Arcadia to the inner city. This axis had been neglected and human needs set aside in favour of higher economic gains. Still, the MDC has to be lucrative for investment to ensure its survival, but to keep this survival active the residential component has to be increased in the corridor and this will only happen once there is a balance of amenities, a safe and easily

aerial photo, including site, from 1955



Burghers' Park, 1931



aerial photo from 2005



legible and accessible environment with a strong focus on human proportions and natural forces. Space should be designed along these guidelines and all the movement systems brought together to contribute to the overall harmony.

The site chosen to be the field for this movement lies at the beginning of this MDC. This entry to Pretoria has not been defined well and no proper edges exist to aid orientation and legibility, no landmarks either. The site sits on the boundary of three very different districts or zones. To the east lies the residential and business district of Sunnyside and to the West the old and statuesque Pretoria CBD, with a lot of heritage value. To the south lies an educational district dominated by the premises of UNISA. The North has seen a phase of the MDC framework being implemented with the building of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). This building increases the height and edge definition of the corridor and forms a gateway for the movement through it. Furthermore, the site forms part of the Apies River walk – as proposed in the Integrated Spatial Development Framework ISDF for the Pretoria by the Capital Consortium. This ISDF must be taken as a guiding factor, due to constant changing and lack of proper implementation rather standing on its own.

study of maps reveals how Market (later Paul Kruger) and Jacob Mare were always a prominent axis on the grid with government buildings and parks in them. Van Boeschoten (very much later Nelson Mandela) followed the line of the Apies River culvert and was always seen as a promenade with Lovers'Walk and various Apies River schemes over the years trying to romanticise the culvert, none ever

map ca. 1911



map ca. 1918



map ca. 1924



Images from the important axis of Jacob Mare and market, showing how important buildings framed the vistas of these streets at very early stages

A glance at history reveals the significant axis the site borders on. The main source of pedestrian movement is the Pretoria train station. From here commuters will either make use of taxi transport or walk to further destinations. These lie mainly to the North in centre of town or the East towards Sunnyside. A walk from the station to the site takes approximately 15 minutes, which is not much and done by many commuters. To do this, they would first walk North on the important historical axis of Paul Kruger Street, previously known as Market Street. From Paul Kruger Street they would turn right into Jacob Mare Street, another very important historical street, which houses the Melrose House and Burghers' Park across of it. Some well designed Modern residential blocks are on the northern and southern side of Jacob Mare Street. The building edge becomes fragmented towards the East of the Street, until there is a big jump after Prinsloo Street, where the Drie Lelies Building has been erected in the 1980s to house employees of the Post Office. The building sits far from the road edge and does not react to Jacob Mare Street. It now stands vacant. Crossing Nelson Mandela Drive, Jacob Mare becomes Rissik Street, a quieter street and the home of a lot of academic institutions like the old Normal College, Oost-eind School, facilities of the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and UNISA.

The project site lies on the corner of Nelson Mandela Drive and Rissik Street and is currently used as parking for the Breytenbach Theatre. The buildings on and around the site date from roughly three building phases in Pretoria. Firstly, there is the Breytenbach theatre, which was initially built as a sports hall, then used as a weaving workshop, a morgue and later became what it is known today. It is a tall brick structure with a pitched corrugated roof painted green. What is of interest here is the prop storeroom and workshop on the western side. These will be incorporated into this project. Secondly, there are

Jacob Mare East from Market (Paul Kruger).1890s



Market Street.1928



Parkzicht, corner of v.d. Walt and Jacob Mare.1959



Kitchener residence (Melrose House),1901



Burghers Park kiosk. 1936



Corner of Rissik and Troye



Victoria bridge, Jacob Mare. 1907



residential houses in the precinct, dating from the 1920s and 1930s and have corrugated iron sheeting roofs and mostly wood window and doorframes. Some of them have wood figure carvings on the stoep. They are currently used for gastronomy and residential. The MOTH club is an example of Modern Movement architecture with very little architectural value. It is in the process of being altered and through the years many alterations have left their mark on the structure. Due to its age it has some heritage value, which will be respected. Thirdly, the apartment blocks are examples of late modern architecture with the ones in the middle well detailed and conducive to better movement. The one on the S-W side of the precinct does exactly the opposite and is probably the biggest problem in bringing across the movement.

**JACOB MARE STREET.** named after Jacobus Phillipus Mare (1823-1900). Underwent many name changes, initially known as Mare, then in the 1920s as Paul Mare, later Jacob Mare. The folk song "My Sarie Marais" was written by J.P.Toerien for his daughter Susanna Margaretha Mare

**VAN BOESCHOTEN LANE** (later Nelson Mandela). named after Johannes Gerhardus van Boeschoten, influential in Preroria from 1862 and later became mayor. Fought for the keeping of Church Square. Brother started the first school in Marabastad.

The average annual rainfall varies between 380mm in the North to over 700mm on parts of the Waterberg. The rain season occurs November to March, with the peak in January. 50-80 rainy days may be expected. The rain is unreliable, thus 12% of all years severe drought may be expected.

The average daily maximum temperatures may vary from 32°C in January to 22°C in July, with extremes of 42 and 31 respectively. Average daily minimums range from 18°C in January to 4°C in July, while extremes can reach 8°C and -7°C respectively. Days are often very oppressive in summer, whereas winter nights can be particularly cold. Frost occurs on average between June and August.

Winds are light to moderate and from a N-E direction except during thunderstorms. In early spring or during weather changes the wind has a southerly component.

The duration of bright sunshine exceeds 80% of the possible in winter and 60% of the possible in summer. This has a major influence on how buildings perform regarding comfort, etc.

The total cloud amount (of the macro and mezzo climate) is a minimum during the winter (June). A maximum is reached during the summer, peaking in January. Solar radiation along with the solar intensity influences the orientation of the building mass. An ideal situation would be a mass with a predominantly E-W axis (maximizing the northern and southern façade – where climate control can be achieved most effectively). However, knowing that the site does not allow for this, the use of shading devices becomes a necessity



Some extremes are possible, like snow falling in Jacob Mare in 1930.

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## climate

conclusions:

- harvest rainwater, even if it might not be so reliable
- harvest grey-water
- harvest daylighting
- harvest solar gain for heating of building and water
- harvest winds for cross-ventilation
- harvest shade through external shading devices
- harvest nature...responsibly

Breytenbach Theatre from 1900 through to ca. 1960, starting off as a gymnas-tics hall, a weaving shop, a morgue, until it became the Breytenbach Theatre



back of Breytenbach Theatre, current



aerial photo of site 2005



SITE



aerial view of MOTH Club

N-W showing Nelson Mandela Drive, Drie Lelies building and dip



N from MOTH roof



S from MOTH roof



S facade of MOTH Club



empty site N of MOTH



N fside of MOTH Club



dip in site





# HISTORY MOVES IN CIRCLES

**APIES RIVER UP-GRADING-1950s, 1970s, 1990s**



**DEMOLITION OF HERITAGE-1890s continually until present**



**NAME CHANGE OF JACOB MARE-1900, 1920s, 1950s, 1980s**

## Jacob Maréstraat: Finale besluit oor naam kom later

DAAR is nog nie 'n finale besluit geneem of Jacob Maréstraat voortaan slegs as Maréstraat bekend sal staan en of die huidige naam behoue sal bly nie.

Dr. Herman Rex, lid van die Stedelike Advieskomitee kumente is van Jacob Maré se nageslag afkomstig. Die raad het besluit dat die aangeleentheid terugverwys word na die Advieskomitee vir uitsluitel. Die Advieskomitee se vorige aanbeveling was dat Jacob Maréstraat voortaan slegs as Maréstraat bekend sal staan. Rissik- en Wal-

Dit is die stadsraad se beleid dat die oudste naam verkieslik behoue bly wanneer 'n naam as gevolg van duplisering of om enige ander rede verander moet word. Dit verseker dat geskiedkundige name nie verlore gaan nie. Devenishstraat in Sunnyside aan die ooskante tot

*JAKARANDA April 1980*

**CONDITION OF PAVEMENTS-1950s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, present**



Newspaper articles from all times in Pretoria's history, highlighting that certain issues and problems seem to receive attention every couple of years, without ever really being resolved. Nevertheless, these problems are vital for discussions about the city and its health. Public debate is necessary, no matter what the topic, to make city dwellers take possession of their city once more.

This project will not try to solve these age-old problems (except for that of the pavements), but rather acknowledge the fact that they exist and try and instill possession of the city through proper perception of it. Once the dweller acknowledges his city once more, perceiving himself as being a part of it, will he take possession and care for what is his.



These factors influence the process of translation. All the movement is taken into account, the final goal being a total harmony. The building on the site must reinforce this wish and strive to live in harmony with the total movement, making harmonious dissonances on and around the site. Harmonious movement in time and through the spaces of the building should result in proper perception, legibility and identity.

