

02

REVIEW & REASONING



2.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Prior to the implementation of apartheid policies, Marabastad was a socially and culturally diverse community which founded Mamelodi Sundowns football team and invented Marabi music. After fifteen years of a shift in policy, Marabastad is still devoid of urban and social amenities

In the publication “Spaces of Global Cultures, 2002: 49”, King affirms the necessity of social and cultural infrastructure in places of cultural multiplicity. The infrastructure accommodates their complexities and facilitates a place for social interaction and intercultural cross pollination. This process is required to ease tensions between race and cultural groups, and it implicitly addresses the issues of identity and a sense of belonging.

Goal Statement:

The dissertation transforms and enhances the existing social space into a stimulating and engaging “place” which accommodates existing rituals of living, work and play, whilst affording freedom of expression and choice.

Research Questions Reviewed:

- Does the design proposal promote interaction amongst cultures whilst engaging with the individual?
- Does the design respond to its urban context and environment?

2.1.1 Sub Problem

The dissertation addresses environmental and ecological concerns within this community. The Steenhoven Spruit canal is polluted and affected by crime along its length. The community, particularly the immigrants acknowledge the spaces along the length of the canal as a dump site and places to seek shelter overnight. This dissertation serves to re-instate the status of this canal as a safe vibrant social resource offering opportunities for income generation.

Research Questions Reviewed:

- Does the proposal enhance the livelihood of the community?
- Is the design proposal considerate to the canal flow patterns and its immediate environment?

2.2 ASSUMPTIONS & DELIMITATIONS

Assumptions

Land claims and/or property rights on adjacent sites marked for development will not restrict the proposed development on the proposed site.

The dislocated community will want to return and there is sufficient housing in the development to cater for them and the locals currently working there

The proposed site is earmarked for infrastructural development. Any development that occurs on the proposed site after commencement of the dissertation is not considered.

Delimitations

In an ideal situation the following aspects amongst others, form part of social and cultural activities.

- Political
- Educational
- Language
- Music & Dance
- Art and crafts

However a number of constraints (including time and availability of contact persons amongst others) may result in acquiring inadequate information of particular cultural subject matters.

2.3 CLIENT PROFILE & BRIEF

Client Profile

The proposed clients for this dissertation are the current community working and residing in and around Marabastad. In addition, the marginalized and dislocated community seeking relocation and reintegration into Marabastad will also be supported.

Brief

The brief focuses on instating social amenities in Marabastad to create opportunities for income generation whilst predominantly addressing the lack of social and cultural infrastructure in Marabastad.

As per the interview with the representative of the Marabastad Interest Group on May 20th 2009. The community requires a multifunctional urban platform that encourages vibrancy and engages with the individual. This platform is a social interchange of people with different cultures, incomes and needs. It accommodates both organized and spontaneous activities to cater for the community, the tourists and the city of Tshwane.

2.4 RELEVANCE OF STUDY

The community of Marabastad lacks social and urban infrastructure promoting interaction and quality of life. The study's relevance is as a result to address the social ills within Marabastad by proposing social amenities to enhance the community's experience of space. These amenities provide a sense of place and belonging to a previously marginalized community once considered a slum. Currently, Marabastad is littered mostly along the Steenhoven Spruit canal and crime levels are higher in this region. The study integrates the canal into the community's daily activities, thereby transforming the canal into a resource. This addresses the issues of safety and crime whilst providing a pleasurable place for leisure, living and working. It transcends space from an intervention to a place of belonging which offers security, pleasure of use and ownership.

2.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

To enhance and promote social and economic activities in Marabastad, by creating a safe and secure place where the community spends time. This will be a catalytic strand in the creation of urban space and continuity within Marabastad. This process allows integration of fragmented spaces within Marabastad and acts

to explore the relationship between Marabastad's relationship with Pretoria C.B.D.

2.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY REVIEW

Interviews

First Interview

There was need to interview a Marabastad Interest Group representative in order to understand the community needs. This led to the interview with Laura Lourence who is currently the head of the Marabastad Interest group and also works for the Tshwane I.D.P

Date : 20 May 2009

Time : 0900 hrs

Place: Tshwane I.D.P offices

Q. Marabastad was once a vibrant community with social and cultural diversity. Are there any social or cultural programmes in the current community?

A. Currently this community does not have significant activities as compared to the previous community. However, the government is redistributing spatial resources and this will see Marabastad with a Jazz square within the next six months. The Jazz square will be occupied by the Zion Christian Church on Sundays.

Q. Why a Jazz square? Is it in the best interest of the community and what programmes are within the square?

A. South African Jazz originated in Marabastad. Today, people of Marabastad play music at street corners, market stalls and at the taxi rank because they either have large gatherings or they form . This is a clear indication of the role of music within this community. The Jazz square gives a place to express themselves whether they listen to “kwaito” or “raggae”. The square does not give defined programme, it is just a platform that allows for sitting, dancing and trade. Yes, the square is what the community needs at the moment. It gives them a place to mingle and chat.

Q. Apart from the Jazz square, are there any other social or cultural programmes proposed for Marabastad by your department?

A. We have proposed social activities such as braaing along the Steenhoven Spruit canal. Initially we had proposed a stadium but this faced resistance from the community, so we are putting a soccer field next to the canal as well.

Q. How do you propose to address the issue of immigrants in Marabastad and are they accepted in this community?

A. That is a delicate issue which still needs to be resolved. The proposed framework facilitates social and cultural activities for all. We can only hope they are accepted, if not already.

Q. How do you address the issue of job creation?

A. The framework focuses on mixed use housing for the community resettling in Marabastad. They need to have income generating activities to better their lives. We are also promoting informal trade by adding more stalls around social infrastructure.

Interviews

Second Interview

There is need to interview an architect involved with issues of identity in places with similar social dynamics to Marabastad. Peter Rich is the architect interviewed because of his experience and successful design interventions in Alexandra township and Mapungubwe.

Date : 15 May 2009

Time : 1920 hrs

Place: Peter Rich's residence

Q. Are there any underlying principles or common threads when one designs space in an African context?

A. Traditionally it was done through social order. Before the Ndebele or Zulu looked at making space, they looked at the social relationships of gender. You can identify a culture, the wealth of a community and the number of women one has by looking at the spatial arrangement. But these are traditional values and people do not follow them anymore.

Q. Is it possible to apply these principles of ordering in an urban context?

A. One has to look at the elements used in traditional African architecture. They are not particularly African. It is thought so because Africans explicitly used the courtyard and this was largely due to African climatic conditions. The essential lesson in traditional African architecture is about space making not social hierarchy. The issue is looking at spaces around buildings to create an enclosure

Q. Marabastad has diversity in culture. How would you address the issue of illegal immigrants?

A. Because they are far from home, they need to feel comfortable, secure and a sense of belonging. Therefore the idea is to create a nice, secure environment which offers ownership.

Q. Do you know any successful projects that have dealt with such issues?

A. I designed the Nelson Mandela Interpretation centre in Alexandra. It addresses similar issues through facilitating space that promotes interaction between different cultural groups. The project learns from its context and the community feels like they identify with the building because they helped to make it and they identify with the language of building.