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**Global Studio 2007 Project Manager**

Jennifer van den Bussche, University of Sydney & Deakin University
MONDAY JUNE 25

7.45 AM - 8.45 AM
REGISTRATION
Lobby, School of Architecture and Planning

8.45 AM - 9.15 AM
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS and WELCOME
Room: A1

Alan Mabin, Head of School
Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand

Beatrys. M. Lacquet, Dean
Faculty of Engineering, University of the Witwatersrand

Anna Rubbo Global Studio International Convener
University of Sydney, Australia
ALL DAY PLENARY

MAKING PLACES in SOUTH AFRICA: PROCESS AND PRODUCT
ROOM: A1
Overcoming spatial discrimination has been a major concern in the creation of the new South Africa. Via a number of case studies these sessions will critically examine a range of cultural heritage design and planning initiatives from a range of perspectives including those involved in design and community development as well as commentators on these processes. Key issues will be the effectiveness of these professional/community collaborations in building ownership and identity, and the degree to which local people have been the agents of development. How effective have these place making initiatives been and what lessons can we learn?

9.15 AM - 11.00 AM
Session 1
Chair: Anna Rubbo
University of Sydney

Making the Alexandra Interpretation Centre
Peter Rich
University of the Witwatersand

Walter Sisulu Square, Kliptown
Pierre Swanepoel
studioMAS

Discussants
Lisa Findley
California College of the Arts, USA
Mpethi Morojele,
MMA
11.00 AM - 11.30 AM
COFFEE BREAK

11.30 AM – 1.00 PM
Session 2
Room
Chair: Tunde Oluwa
MMA

The Idea of Seed Plan Placemaking: An Enabling Framework in Public Space Intervention
Piet Louw
Piet Louw Architects

Red Location. Port Elizabeth
Jo Noero
Noero Wolff Architects, University of Cape Town

Newtown Renewed
Basil Brink
University of Johannesburg

1.00 PM – 2.00 PM
LUNCH

2.00 PM – 3.30 PM
Session 3
Chair: Pietro Garau
University of Rome, La Sapienza

The Architectural Role and Dilemma
Fanuel Motsepe,
NOA Architects
Muti Market: Designed for one thing, used for another?
Mpethi Morojele
MMA

Narrative Shifts in Architecture
PT Raman
University of the Free State

3.00 PM- 3.30 PM
COFFEE BREAK
3.30 PM- 5.00 PM
Session 4
Chair: Lisa Findley
California College of the Arts, USA
The Alexandra Heritage Centre: Beyond Architecture
Jo-Anne Duggan
Heritage Agency, Cape Town

Space-Discourse/Space
Jonathon Noble
University of the Witwatersrand

African-ness through Building and Idea: New South African Museums and Exhibitions- The Emergence of New Heritage Practices
Crain Soudien
University of Cape Town
TUESDAY JUNE 26

Urban development and renewal can be positive forces in improving the lives of the urban poor. Too often the urban poor experience the opposite, through forced relocation and evictions. Sessions focus on a range of approaches to urban development and renewal, including the potential for communities of the urban poor to have better access to remittance funds, green technologies and sustainable livelihoods. Sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday will also focus on professional/community collaborations in response to emergencies, and address the potential for professional education and practice to contribute to urban development and renewal in positive ways.

9.00 AM – 10.45 AM
Session 5
URBAN RENEWAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
Chair: Henning Rasmus
Paragon Architects

Inclusive, Productive, Well-governed and Sustainable: The Blueprint for South African Cities
Sithole Mbanga
South African Cities Network

The Making and Shaping of the City: the Role of Metropolitan Government in the Transformation of Johannesburg’s Spatial Landscape
Phillip Harrison
City of Johannesburg

Discussant
Alison Todes
Urban Rural and Economic Development, Human Sciences Research Council

10.45 AM – 11.15 AM
COFFEE BREAK
From 5.00 PM

**ORIGINS CENTRE Triple Volume Room**  
*University of the Witwatersrand*

6.30 PM – 9.15 PM

**PBBC OFFICIAL OPENING, WELCOME & RECEPTION**

Alan Mabin  
*Head of School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand*

Loyiso Nongxa  
*Vice Chancellor, University of the Witwatersrand*

Pietro Garau  
*UN Millennium Project Task Force on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers; University of Rome*

Anna Rubbo  
*Global Studio International Convenor; University of Sydney*

Peter Rich  
*Global Studio Local Convenor; University of the Witwatersand*
11.15 AM – 1.00 PM
Session 6
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON URBAN CHANGE
Chair: Llewellyn van Wyk
Commonwealth Association of Architects President, CSIR

Three Ways People are Building Better Cities
Paul Pholeros
Architect, University of Sydney

Cities and Migration: Impacts of Remittances in the Developing World
Jennifer Traska Gibson
USA

Rebuilding Aceh through Local Wisdom and Local Strength
Azwar Hasan
Forum Banda Aceh, Indonesia

1.00 PM- 2.00 PM
LUNCH

2.00 PM- 3.00 PM
Session 7 A
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON DISASTER AND EMERGENCIES
Chair: Gabriella Carolini
Columbia University, USA

Patrick Columbel
Emergency Architects, France

Integrated Transport: an instrument for Change?
Caroline Sohie
Arup, UK
2.00 PM – 3.00 PM
Session 7B
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND RENEWAL: SOUTH AFRICA AND CHILE
Chair: Adriana Abdenur
New School of Social Research, USA

Philipi Cement Factory: Towards Development of a Productive Housing Landscape in the Cape Flats.
Jo Noero
Noero Wolff Architects, University of Cape Town

The Diminishing Scale of Segregation
Rodrigo Tapia
Pontificia Universidad Catolica, Chile

3.15 PM – 3.45 PM
WALK TO CONSTITUTION HILL with student guides
Tour Constitution Hill and Museum
Tour of Constitutional Court

6.00 PM- 7.00 PM
5th annual Rusty Bernstein Memorial Lecture
Women’s Jail, Constitutional Hill
Securing Rights to the City in Times of Redevelopment
Nathan Edelson
City of Vancouver, Canada

7.00 PM- 9.00 PM
RECEPTION
Women’s Jail, Constitutional Hill
Newtown Renewed – a Review

Basil Brink

Newtown, a district in the western inner city of Johannesburg, has a long history of urban renewal of contested inner city space.

The City Council of Johannesburg’s councillors, planners and consultants have guided and driven Newtown’s renewal planning process since council-owned buildings were vacated in the 1960s. Redevelopment proposals have been changed and revised, often without public participation. Projects have been abandoned, amended or shelved with resultant long delays in implementation.

This review of the renewal of Newtown commences in 1968 and ends in 1995 with the first democratic elections of local authority representatives.

The Council’s profit-driven approach to the renewal of Newtown excluded, or evicted Newtown’s indigenous marginalized cultures, such as squatters, street vendors, minibus taxi drivers and homeless people.

Several conclusions can be drawn, including that narrow personal and party-politically motivated agendas diverted resources and led efforts astray from their intended proper public purpose and that a fragmented, exclusive ‘culture’ was planned for.

Planning should be flexible and participatory to meet the changing needs of the diverse cultures that intersect and integrate in Newtown.
NEWTOWN RENEWED - A REVIEW

1. Introduction
The City of Johannesburg (COJ), formerly the Johannesburg City Council (‘the Council’), envisions Newtown as a ‘cultural district.’ The Council has for many years attempted to redevelop and renew this contested inner city space. Its ‘cultural precinct’ is located within the cultural district located on properties mainly owned by the COJ. These properties have over time been the focus of the Council’s planned renewal and redevelopment of Newtown. Since municipal buildings were vacated in the late 1960s, the Council’s councillors, planners and consultants have promoted and guided Newtown’s renewal process. In line with this vision, over a period of almost forty years, formerly vacant historic buildings have been, or are presently being adapted and re-used as museums, theatres, art galleries, music venues, offices and a hotel.

Empty buildings and open land in Newtown have been occupied by homeless people and squatters over the years, who have regularly been evicted or forcibly removed from buildings earmarked for re-use. In the mid-1990s, at the behest of the Council’s Director of Culture, many shacks were demolished in an attempt to preserve a ‘positive’ image of Newtown. Shacks also had to be removed at the start of construction of the Mandela Bridge, and again immediately prior to the opening of this bridge in 2003.

A paper by Segal and Brink (1994) identified several key milestones in the redevelopment of Newtown. These milestones serve as the point of departure for this paper. In addition, an archive of press clippings collected by the author during the 1980s and 1990s is used to illuminate Newtown’s planning and attempted redevelopment process over time. Newspaper reports need to be considered with some circumspection, however. Interviews with, or press releases by the council’s councillors, officials and its public relations department present an overly positive, at times inaccurate, version of actual circumstances. On the other hand, articles not based on Council press releases, whilst uncovering contested areas and conveying alternative points of view should equally not be taken as correct in all respects.

2.0 Milestones in the redevelopment of Newtown

The period under review - 1968 to 1995 - is introduced by the completion of the elevated double-decker motorway, which enclosed Newtown within the inner city.

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1 The cultural district is bounded by the Braamfontein railway yard to the north, Henry Nxumalo Street (previously Goch Street) under the elevated M1 motorway to the west, Dolly Rathebe Road (previously President Street) to the south and the Queen Elizabeth Bridge and Harrison Street to the east. Other changed street names in Newtown: “Pim becomes Gwigwi Mwebi and West Street becomes Ntemi Piliso Street.” (Fraser 2004)
2 See Segal & Brink (1994) and Brink (1995) for the history of Newtown.
3 The cultural precinct is bounded by the Potato Sheds to the north, Henry Nxumalo Street to the west, Dolly Rathebe Road to the south and Miriam Makeba Street to the east.
4 The Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) is responsible for facilitating development proposals and projects in Newtown - access www.jda.co.za and www.jowrg.co.za for more information.
5 As it forms part of future research, a review of development planning for the largely vacant Transnet, SA Rail Commuter Corporation and council properties in northern Newtown between Carr Street and the Braamfontein railway yard has been excluded.
area was completed. (Segal and Brink 1994:259). This review terminates in 1995, the year in which local authority representatives were democratically elected for the first time in South Africa. (Beavon, 1997:175) A new, at times also contested, 'developmental' dispensation for Newtown and Johannesburg followed.  
This paper is divided into four periods:
2.1 1968 to 1985 - The Motorway, Market Theatre and the Mallows, Kirchhofer and Green Reports
2.2 1986 to 1990 - Urban Design Competition, Turbine Hall and Potato Sheds
2.3 1991 – The ‘Culture’ of the Cultural Precinct and the Chinese Interlude
2.4 1992 to 1995 - Hot Air, the Winds of Change and the ‘Vacuum that Needs to be Punctured’

1968 to 1985 - The Motorway, Market Theatre and the Mallows, Kirchhofer and Green Reports

Introduction
During the period from 1968 to 1985 South Africa was in the grip of 'high apartheid', dramatically punctuated by the Soweto uprising in 1976 and increasing civic turmoil by the mid 1980s. (source?)
The fresh produce market, the power station (Turbine Hall) and the abattoir in Newtown closed down in the 1960s, thereby providing the Council with a strategic opportunity to redevelop 59 hectares of inner city land and buildings. The Council owned approximately 30%, or 19 ha, of this Newtown area. Whilst realising the importance of the redevelopment opportunity in 1974, the Council classified as 'secret' five volumes of comprehensive proposals produced by eminent professionals in 1978. These reports were shelved for two years, to be made public only in January 1981. As a consequence, a strategic opportunity to redevelop Newtown was lost, never to be regained.

The construction of the M1 Motorway was completed in 1968. The west façade and some structural bays of the historic fresh produce market building were demolished to make way for the elevated M1 motorway (Kamstra and Holmes, 1982:41). In the following year Newton was in a state of decay, mainly due to the continued indecision of the Council about the future of the area it was itself vacating (Beavon, 2004:174,175). The Council had not prepared any development plan for the Newtown area even though it had begun to implement its 1965 plan to close and move the abattoir and the fresh-produce market to a new site to the south-east of the city. The tram sheds on West Street were vacant and derelict (Beavon, 2004:174,175). The potato sheds to the north of MuseumAfrika also stood vacant (source?).

In the early 1970s industrialists that would otherwise have located their industries in easily accessible industrial areas such as Newtown were incentivised by the apartheid regime to rather locate in distant ‘Homelands’ (Brand, 1974:99). Dr Leslie Green, an internationally recognized authority on city management, set out the principles for urban development co-operation between the public and private sectors in his first Green Report to the Council in 1974. In his second report which

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was completed in 1975, Green applied the 'public-private' principles contained in the first report to the redevelopment of Newtown (Mandy, 1984:318).

On 21 June 1976, five days after the Soweto uprising, the curtain was raised on the first production at The Market, a theatre complex in the eastern section of the converted historic produce market building in Newtown (Schwartz, 1988:13). The Market theatre soon became an internationally recognised venue where protest or struggle theatre, poetry and music were provided with a platform, albeit under the close critical scrutiny of the apartheid regime. Later that year the 'Africana Museum-in-progress' relocated from the Johannesburg Public Library to the large vacant area next to the Market theatre in the former fresh produce market building (Segal and Brink 1994:260).

In 1977 the Council commissioned the eminent town planners Wilfred Mallows and Max Kirchhofer to make recommendations for the redevelopment of Newtown. Mallows and Kirchhofer produced a three-volume report:

- Volume 1, which was completed in December 1977, related Newtown to the central city
- Volume 2 provided the status quo of the area in detail, and
- Volume 3 contained proposals for the coordinated redevelopment of Newtown (Mandy, 1984:318)

The 1974 and 1975 Green Reports accompanied Mallows and Kirchhofer's three-volume report, which was presented to the Council in December 1978. Intriguingly and somewhat inexplicably

"...the Council's management committee classified them [the reports by Mallows, Kirchhofer and Green] as secret, prohibited their publication and put them on a shelf to gather dust. ...After much agitation by the Press, the CBDA [Central Business District Association, formed in 1977 with Nigel Mandy as the chairperson] and other bodies, these important reports were eventually released for public information at the end of January 1981." (Mandy, 1984:318)

Mallows and Kirchhofer's Report proposed that

- Parking garages should be provided below the M1 motorway and Mary Fitzgerald square
- A prestige office node should be developed west of the Stock Exchange site
- A new recreational zone should be established close to the existing Market Theatre
- A new transport node should be constructed north of Bree Street on the site where the Metro Mall was completed close on thirty years later\(^7\)
- A new shopping centre that would be sustained by the proposed prestige office node and a possible international Trade Fair Centre.

The architects Kamstra and Holmes (1982:41) voiced their concern that these proposals, which did not come to fruition, would have created

\(^7\) In 1979 there were 200 to 250 hawkers selling fruit, vegetables and food to passing commuters at railway and bus stations on the margins of the Johannesburg CBD, including the 'African bus terminus' at Bree Street in Newtown (Beavon, 2004:209-211).
"...yet another sterile precinct...in the name of "re-development", or, worse still, in the name of "culture".

Mallows and Kirchofer completed Volume 4 of their Report in 1984. They once more recommended that a prestige new office precinct should be developed, but, as in Volume 3, did not support a residential component in Newtown because of perceived air and noise pollution in the area. Volume 4 was well received by both professionals and developers (Segal and Brink, 1994:260).

The implosion in 1985 of four cooling towers that were seen by many as important historic landmarks, was regarded as an undemocratic decision (Segal and Brink, 1994:261). Various organizations, including the CBDA, the Simon van der Stel Foundation and the South African Institute of Architects strongly opposed their imminent implosion and hoped for a last-minute reprieve. Despite these protests, the dramatic implosion of two of the four cooling towers went ahead on 16 June 1985 and was witnessed by spectators at distant vantage points.

2.2 1986 to 1990 - The Urban Design Competition, Turbine Hall and Potato Sheds

The period from 1986 to 1990 was a tumultuous time both in the history of Johannesburg and South Africa. The year 1986 marked the centenary of Johannesburg, but in view of the level of political unrest resulting in the declaration of two States of Emergency in 1985 and 1986, the celebration of the centenary became a muted affair. Prime Minister FW de Klerk and his Nationalist Party government released Nelson Mandela from prison on 2 February 1990 and the African National Congress (ANC) and other previously banned organisations were unbanned (source).

As one of the few visible manifestations of the centenary commemoration of Johannesburg’s existence in 1986, a section of Wolhuter Street in Newtown was closed and paved to create a pedestrianised forecourt to the Market Theatre - the ‘Anglovaal Mall’. ‘Kippies’, a pub and jazz venue, was housed in a newly constructed replica of an abandoned Edwardian public toilet building close by.

In 1986 the Council advertised a national urban design competition for the redevelopment of the Newtown area, which was won by GAPS a Johannesburg-based consultancy firm of architects and urban designers. In their winning submission, GAPS put forward a land release strategy to fund future infrastructure and public amenities (Segal and Brink, 1994:261). Clarke (1986) considered that the major positive feature of the submission by GAPS was that it retained Newtown’s human scale and that it sought to establish a clear web-like structure of connected spaces, activities and important buildings, without being a final, cut-and-dried masterplan.

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* "Control of culture by a small group is not control of thought directly. Rather it is the control of the ability to use thought and understanding. Culture, at any one time, is the agenda of what is imagined to be possible. Culture is not simply the evidence of an unequal economic system. Culture is its foundation, its support, its means of justification and influence, and the context within which that system sustains itself." (The Shelton Trust, 1986:9)
Progress with the renewal of Newtown remained slow. In 1987 the Council agreed to the creation of a colourful Potato Sheds open-air market scheme. *(The Star* October 15, 1987) where:

"the sheds will be divided into shops or stalls...The informal sector will be encouraged to trade in the market and it is expected that many Flea Market stall holders [on Mary Fitzgerald Square] will seek covered accommodation in The Potato Sheds...The plans provide for two cinemas, and open air cafes and restaurants...Work is expected to begin in January 1988 and to be complete by October..." *(Planning, November 1987:38)*

As time would tell, these proposals did not see the light of day. Also in 1987, the Council’s Planning Department issued a booklet to promote the renewal of the inner city, optimistically entitled *‘Johannesburg - The Renaissance of the CBD’*. Newtown was identified as one of sixteen ‘recognised development pressures’, ranging from ‘SATS decking of the railway lines’ to ‘Kerk and Fraser Street pedestrianisation’. The following precincts in the greater Newtown area were identified in the booklet:

- ‘The Newtown Precinct’ between the M1, Bree, President and Harrison Streets
- A smaller ‘Market Precinct’, which includes the MuseumAfrika, the Market Theatre and the Potato Sheds
- A ‘New Financial Core’ between Market and Jeppe Streets
- A ‘Focus of Informal Sector’ where the Bree Street bus and taxi rank was located, presently the Metro Mall.

In the preface to the booklet, Alderman Eddie Magid, Chairman: Planning and Environmental Committee, Johannesburg City Council, pinned his developmental colours to the mast:

“For its part, the Council must join forces with the private sector... with a view to the protection of existing investments in the context of factors such as urbanisation, population growth and unemployment...the City Council is anxious to co-operate with private investors and developers in exploiting the considerable potential of the central city area.” *(Magid, 1987:3 - emphasis added)*

The 1986 (?) GAPS winning entry for the Newtown urban design framework received a Project Award Citation from the Institute of South African Architects. GAPS elaborated on their winning entry:

“It [the Newtown precinct] is an area with great redevelopment potential and more specifically, exceptional opportunities to inject many cultural and revitalising amenities into the CBD. The majority of the area is in the City Council’s ownership¹, as are most of the largely redundant industrial artefacts.” *(Architecture SA. November/December 1988:20-21)*.

The number of licenses issued to street traders in Johannesburg increased dramatically from 1 004 at the end of 1987 to 7 000 by mid-1988 *(Beavon, 2004:211)*.

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¹ Magid’s overly profit-driven approach favours the private sector to the exclusion of other stakeholders. “Capitalism prevents genuine popular communication and the ability to determine locally the ideas and activities public resources should support.” *(The Shelton Trust: 1986:52)*

² Transnet and the Post Office’s approx 8 ha tract of vacant land to the north of Bree Street. Newtown did not receive much urban design attention. The primary focus for redevelopment was the city council’s vacant buildings and land to the south of Bree Street.
Accompanied by much hype the Turbine Square is sold (see Vermaak (1990) below) by the Council in 1989 to a property development group. This sale is fraught with difficulties that remained unresolved in 1994 (Segal and Brink:1994:261). *The Star* reported:

"Mr Magid appealed to the private sector to participate in the exciting
Newtown developments embracing shops, a major recreation centre, a
residential component, the adaptation of the Turbine Hall, pedestrian malls
and transportation nodes linked to other major developments in the CBD via
the Kerk Street mall." (Woodgate 1989)

The provision and funding of on/off ramps from the M1 freeway to facilitate access
into Newtown remained a major stumbling blocks to the implementation of the
redevelopment of Newtown. Officials committed the Council to the provision of the
on/off ramps in tender documents to assure tenderers of improved accessibility to the
area. However, in a public demonstration of uncoordinated action, Magid refused to
commit the Council to footing the bill for providing such important access.

"I personally will resist any condition by a tenderer that implies a financial
commitment by the council." (Woodgate, 1990)

Most tenderers made their offers subject to the construction of the on/off ramps at the
Council’s cost, which automatically excluded their offers from consideration by the
Council (Coetzee, 1990:49; *The Citizen*, February 16 1990). As a result,
redevelopment momentum was lost and interest in development opportunities in
Newtown waned, only to re-emerge with the call for development proposals for
Central Place 12 years later (source).

The Council accepted a R22,1 million tender for the sale of the Turbine Hall and
Boiler House. Magid described the sale as a "milestone in the development of the
CBD" The total cost of converting the building to a shopping centre was R142 million
(Vermaak, 1990). This development did not go ahead, possibly because as reported by
the Financial Mail (September 28 1990:67) shop owners in the Newgate shopping
centre located between Bree and Jeppe Streets close by, and that had opened its doors
in December 1989 were struggling to such an extent that they were contemplating
legal action against their landlord.

Johannesburg was not the only South African city which was experiencing woes in
getting urban renewal off the ground in the 1980s and 1990s. In the opinion of the
architect Andrew Murray the City Council of Durban was also not achieving much
success with urban renewal during this period. Murray (1990:29) put forward an
urban design framework with

"...a shared responsibility in a partnership between City planning officials,
professional bodies and commerce."

Whilst the Johannesburg City Council could not be accused of neglecting urban
design for the redevelopment of Newtown, (e.g. the Council’s national urban design
competition for Newtown in 1986), its self-interested focus on its own properties, to
the detriment of the rest of Newtown, was certainly, as was also the case of Durban, a
contributing factor to a lack of success.
2.3 1991 - The ‘Culture’ of the Cultural Precinct and Chinese Interlude

While negotiations for a new democratic dispensation for South Africa commenced at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park, the cultural diversity of the country attracted more and more attention. For example, Klaaste (1991), then editor of the Sowetan newspaper and the initiator of the concept of ‘Nation Building’, maintained: "The rich diversity of various cultural strains that have been struggling to live harmoniously under apartheid should be allowed to develop naturally. ... The lesson is thus that South Africans should respect their diverse cultures."

His sentiments were echoed by the architect Alan Lipman (1991) who asserted that: "the roads to desired futures must lie at our feet in the dignities of everyday living. They occur wherever people celebrate, bring vibrancy to public life: at informal markets; at taxi and bus stops; at impromptu street-corner gatherings; in the cadenced dances and chants of open-air, robed prayer meetings; on grassed suburban sidewalks, in parks whenever men and women override the day-to-day injuries done to their citizenship."

The Council branded Newtown as a ‘cultural precinct’ of Johannesburg in 1990. This brand building was based on the presence of the Market Theatre in Newtown and the redevelopment of the Africana Museum-in-Process next to the theatre in former fresh produce market building facing onto Mary Fitzgerald Square. The Council's rather simplistic conception of culture as the 'higher things of the mind' - Art, Literature and Music (Giddens, 2001:22) - did not recognise the fact that diverse cultures contested physical and cultural space in Newtown:

"Johannesburg's complexity is about the layers of histories, identities and cultures that have, in different epochs, appropriated and imprinted themselves in the city." (Kihato, 2006:206-207)

The City Planning Department's 1991 document ‘Newtown Cultural Precinct’ initiated a public involvement programme. Arts and music groups or individuals were invited to fill a perceived cultural vacuum in Newtown, thereby improving the rates base and reducing the maintenance cost of Council properties (Segal and Brink 1994:262). At this time planning of a R50 million cultural museum complex on four levels within the former fresh produce market building (now known as MuseumAfrika) commenced (Clarke, 1991).

In line with its new development strategy for Newtown the Council also approved the lease of the Potato Sheds to the Afrika Cultural Trust for a token R49 a year for 20 years. The Trust intended to develop a ‘cultural village’ that would include all forms of art by the disadvantaged (Woodgate, 1991). The aspirational vision for the redevelopment of the Potato Sheds included:

"A 1 000-seat concert hall, a 350-seat public theatre, a 150-seat training theatre, a 200-seat mobile theatre to reach the township communities, four 100-seat mini-cinemas with studio facilities for students and three dance studios are planned". (Burgers, 1992b)

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11 "Approval was granted despite an unfavourable report by Johannesburg’s spy network in 1989 after management committee member Eddy Magid ordered an investigation into ACT, whose trustees include Anglo American director Bobby Godsell, Sowetan editor Aggrey Klaaste, First National Bank’s Jimmy McKenzie, Premier Group chairman Peter Wighton and Harry Oppenheimer's daughter Mary Slack." (Woodgate. 1991)
Except for a children’s activity centre most of these facilities never materialised.

Further projects on a grand scale were conceptualised. In November 1991, the architect Stuart Douglas, then employed by Protekon, the building services division of Transnet, approached GAPS with an ‘at risk’ proposal for a ‘China Town’ high density residential and retail complex on a site owned by the Post Office, now the Brickfields housing development. Erky Wood of GAPS referred to this site, later occupied by squatters, as the ‘vacuum that needs to be punctured’ in order for northern Newtown to become fully developed.12 ‘China Town’ was not built, in all likelihood because of the lack of demand for such inner city medium-rise housing at the time.

2.4 1992 to 1994 - Hot Air, the Winds of Change and the ‘Vacuum that Needs to be Punctured’

Introduction
Negotiations for a peaceful transition to a democratic South Africa were conducted at Kempton Park during this period of political uncertainty and social upheaval. 33 000 poor African people moved into the central area of Johannesburg between 1991 and 1992. They occupied vacant buildings, for example the Turbine Hall in Newtown. The Central Johannesburg Partnership (CJP), composed of members from big business, local government and civil society, was formed in 1991. The CJP’s working committees had limited success in dealing with hawkers, mini-bus taxis and homeless people in central Johannesburg and Newtown. As urban blight became more evident in the inner city and Newtown, the Council neglected its responsibilities to enforce by-laws that would halt the ever-increasing decay (Beavon, 2004:244).

In mid-1992 the Council’s planning department received responses to its public involvement programme from 22 organisations representing theatre and drama, the visual arts, dance, literary arts, film, video and television, music and arts educational institutions. As a result, the planning department conducted a development participation workshop, or ‘charette’, for representatives of these interested organisations. Development principles, alternative design concepts and points of consensus and conflict emerged. The architects and urban designers Albonica Sack & Barnes facilitated the charette and collated the proceedings in yet another conceptual urban design framework for Newtown Cultural Precinct which was structured to: “…express the value of the elements, which give the site its character and respond to the needs of its occupants. Conservation principles are applied to historic buildings13 and account is taken of the industrial elements. The scale of the development, urban design principles address linkages, edges, views and open space.” (Segal and Brink, 1994:263)

Likewise, Johannesburg’s new Director of Culture Christopher Till, had great plans for Newtown. Regardless of the fact that only ‘affordable’ rentals would be charged

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12 Personal communiqués to the author by Stuart Douglas and Erky Wood.
13 “The perennial enthusiasm which is fostered for ‘our heritage’ is an example of one such stereotype (serving “...to divert attention from the complexities of interaction to the simplicities of an externally directed culture”) It points attention backwards and undermines all activity except that which conforms to what is classified officially as ‘culture’. It does this by affirming the official version of history and then romanticising it. This determines the agenda of references for the future” (The Shelton Trust. 1986:25)
Till believed that the redevelopment had the potential for generating considerable income and he hoped to create:

"a vibrant cultural centre – an all-year Grahamstown Festival...[to] serve the community, bringing in tourists and providing the facilities to underpin culture as a development strategy for the city." Rents will be in the 'affordable' category as most of the bodies attracted to the precinct are organisations-not-for-gain, though restaurants and businesses orientated towards the arts will help to make the centre commercially viable..." (St Leger & Chetty, 1992 - emphasis added)

Stakeholders in the area supported the branding of Newtown as a 'cultural precinct'. Mary Slack, the newly-appointed managing trustee for the Market Theatre Foundation, expressed the wish that people would flock to Newtown where they would have a choice of theatre, restaurants, music and the use of a youth hostel, which would attract young people to the area. Yet the perception that the theatre was on 'the seedy side of town' persisted and Slack maintained:

"by filling Newtown with people, particularly if they are residents, and with things going on, it would no longer be seen as dangerous and a chore to go to the theatre." (Sparks, 1992)

In late 1992 the Council approved the construction of mini-bus taxi terminus on the eastern perimeter of Newtown on council-owned land north of Bree Street (Burgers, 1992a). This site was to be developed 10 years later only as the 'Metro Mall'.

The development of the 'Johannesburg Tourist Trade and Convention Centre' (JITCC), to be built on decks in the airspace above the railway lines in the central city at a cost of R1,2 billion, was announced in 1993:

"The trade centre will be joined to the Newtown and Kaserne bus and taxi ranks on the eastern side of town in Bree Street, which will themselves be transformed into the Metro Mall with shops, eating places and other facilities for commuters...A total of R3,467 billion will be poured into the city before the end of the decade." (Perlman, 1993)

Given the ambitious scope of this proposal, Magid hastened to admit that the revival of the inner-city of Johannesburg depended on getting people to live there and to push up the quality of life in the area (Perlman, 1993). In the same year the Turbine Hall’s conversion to a themed shopping centre is announced:

"The centre ['The East Indian Centre'] will be first major addition to the Johannesburg retail market since the Carlton Centre, and it is hoped it will form the nucleus of further development in the western CBD." (Wilson, 1993)

This conversion was never implemented.
Christopher Till continued to punt Johannesburg's need of a 'cultural heart'.

"The development of the Newtown cultural precinct should provide a safe environment in which to experience the cultural resonance of an African continent with all its diversity...The council is offering land, buildings and

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14 "But the trivialization of historical process reflected in promotional material...should be seen as an attempt – common to projects of this (V&A Waterfront) type – to create a particular image which can be marketed effectively both to potential investors and to a carefully targeted clientele." (Wilkinson, 1994:267)
R20 million over the first two years of development. Investors will play an important role... " (Madlala, 1993b)

Till’s comments indicated that Newtown was unsafe and that the process of urban renewal had yet to begin. Conditions on the ground were succinctly summarised by Mr Barney Neppe in a letter to The Star on 9 March 1993:

“I am unfortunate enough to work in Newtown, and our office building in Goch Street is surrounded by indescribable filth on the so-called pavements, railway lines, streets, the Fitzgerald Square and the Old Market site.”

In early 1994 homeless people began to set up a camp of shacks little more than a city block from the entrance to the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. When the Council attempted to shift them off the open site, some of them simply moved into the adjacent derelict turbine hall of the former central power station, where they continued to live in unhygienic appalling conditions until 2002 (Beavon, 2004:245).

Shack dwellers also begin to inhabit the site of the present Brickfields housing complex. The squatter camp replicates the “full blown slum and shanty town” (Segal and Brink 1994:254) of the original Brickfields settlement on the same site some 100 years previously. Informal settlers become part of the Newtown Cultural District. During subsequent years Christopher Till, JCC’s Director of Culture, repeatedly requests the Post Office, the then owner of the site, to remove the squatters. In 1997 Till, desperate to preserve the image of Newtown, arranges for the demolition of the shacks and sends the bill to the Post Office.15

The South African Breweries (SAB) announces that it intends to build visitors’ centre in Newtown which will exhibit the history of beer. (Van der Westhuizen, 1994) The Council announces a capital injection of R28.5 million over two years into the cultural heart of the city. Developments will focus on the old electric workshops, the municipal hostel and mechanical workshop buildings. In addition the reopening of the Africana Museum in the old market buildings on Mary Fitzgerald Square was scheduled for mid-1994. Despite perceptions that the area is rundown, Kippies Jazz club is to be extended and the planting of trees and landscaping of the area will be undertaken. (Myburgh, 1994)

No other significant renewal progress is made in Newtown during 1994.

- An urban design strategy – ‘Newtown Cultural Precinct’ – was said to be in the pipeline. (Segal and Brink, 1994:265)
- The proposed R300m Turbine Square retail development which had been mooted for the past four years was said to be about to be resurrected. The Financial Mail (1994) reports that “…a further complicating factor is that the city has given the go-ahead for two other retail developments in the general vicinity – Metromall off Bree Street in the north and the proposed Westgate shopping centre near the Magistrate’s courts.”16
- Mention is also made of the proposed developments at the Afrika Cultural Centre and proposals for the Transnet Museum, (Myburgh, 1994).

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15 Personal communiqué by C Till
16 The existing Newgate shopping centre (Financial Mail 1990:67) is overlooked in these comments.
The media becomes more sceptical and increasingly critical of progress and promises made by the Council regarding Newtown. Marsland (1994) provides a retrospective of the unrealised renewal and Council inaction:

“Ever since city planners wrinkled their noses at the urban blight on the western side of the city centre 20 years ago, models have been built of castles in the sky. Many projects (were) proposed to transform the district from a dumping ground and home for hoboes into a kind of Greenwich Village or SoHo. In the interim, the once opulent facades of historic old buildings have been left to decay amid empty promises of facelifts and rejuvenation. Despite plans for canals, theatres, concert halls, entertainment complexes, museums and open-air markets, the only development that took place was the Market Theatre and the double-decker freeway...”

Friedman (1994) is equally critical of the Council’s plans for a renewed Newtown:

“The plans are certainly big on ambition but noticeably short on how and when, given the fact that the model of the development is merely a broad “concept” to be implemented over the next 25 years... Most importantly, in articulating their vision of this cultural utopia, the city council seems to have overlooked that what is needed most is to build on existing resources and the expertise and hands-on experience of the current Newtown stakeholders.”

Poor lease and urban management are highlighted by Bhagowat (1994):

“...the Newtown Cultural Precinct near the Market Theatre is falling apart and tenants have threatened to withhold their rentals. Tenants claim the city council has been claiming market-related rentals after promising to charge the non-profit organisations R100 a month. ...In addition, the council stopped providing cleaning and security services this month.”

Despite promises made by the Council role players such as the Director of Culture and planners, functioning entities, such as the flea market managed by the Market Theatre, suffer due to the lack of basic amenities, such as parking and adequate security. Newtown remains a prime example of urban blight. (Woodgate, 1994)

Conclusions

Conclusions are drawn to avoid further fragmented, flawed and failed attempts to renew Newtown and areas like it.

From 1986, when the Council was armed with its first development framework, councillors and officials accorded a narrow music and arts ‘cultural’ identity to Newtown. This cultural branding, communicated by way of ambitious plans and positive public relations, failed to attract the property developers and investors at which it was targeted. The Council treated individuals and organizations supporting cultural healing, such as the Market Theatre and the Afrika Cultural Trust, with distrust and suspicion, as did the apartheid regime.

Councillors and planners did not subscribe to ‘cultural democracy’.17 Newtown’s indigenous marginalized cultures were excluded from participating in planning

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17 “Cultural democracy is a way of breaking up and replacing that imposed (dominant) culture with cultures which are open, accessible and plural. These democratic cultures allow people to develop and communicate social meanings within their own lives, and to participate in the creation and
processes. Music and arts cultures were given preference, and were lured to Newtown by the promise, later broken, of low rentals.

The Council’s self-interested approach to redevelopment excluded the marginalized cultures of Newtown, including:

- The squatters in informal settlements, who erected shacks on various vacant properties in Newtown, e.g. the Brickfields site and an area north of the Metro Mall, before they were forcibly removed and the structures demolished.
- Occupants of vacant buildings, e.g. the Turbine Hall
- The informal sector, e.g. street vendors and hawkers. Stalls at the Saturday flea market on Mary Fitzgerald Square were ‘formalised’, e.g. a fee was payable prior to taking up an allocated space.
- Drivers of mini-bus taxis
- The inner city’s homeless.¹⁸

Such indigenous cultures contribute to “...the dignities of everyday living” and provide clues to politicians and planners of “...the roads to desired futures.” (Lipman, 1991)

Councillors, for example Eddie Magid and later Ian Davidson, guided Council decisions on what was to be developed, when and by whom. However, they were not necessarily experienced or qualified in urban renewal processes or development. Their party-politically motivated agendas diverted resources and led efforts astray. An enormous amount of time, money and effort was wasted for more than thirty years because of personal or party-politically motivated agendas.

Top down, centralised planning and decision-making is present in many city councils, with perceived advantages of greater consistency, improved coordination and tighter control. The disadvantages of such planning are typically that the needs of communities are not determined or met; that plans are not amended in accordance with changing circumstances and that proposals will not be supported. The top down and at times secretive approach, evident during the years under review, resulted in abandoned, amended, shelved and unimplemented redevelopment plans and projects.

History shows that Newtown is a unique, vibrant place where diverse cultures, the marginalised, the excluded and the poor intersect and integrate. The Council allowed conflict between its own interest and the interest of citizens to cloud its judgment and incorrectly guide its action. The Council often prioritised the pursuit of profit from its own properties at the expense of the public and private good in the rest of the Newtown Cultural District. Public, private and informal sector needs and demand were not properly assessed, making effective development of the council-owned properties unsustainable and mostly impossible to achieve.

¹⁸ The presence of many homeless people in the inner city is evident from the purposeful delay until summer of the upgrading of Johannesburg’s Park Station “...to accommodate the homeless during winter, the developers announced yesterday.” (Mlangeni, 1994)
References


Madlala C.(a) 1993. ‘Jo’burg revamp plan.’ *The Star* April 28 1993. (Front page)


