



22 June 2013

Dear Editor,

We write in response to the article of 20 June 2013, "A farm - and a sense of pride flourishes again in city's heart" by Sheryl Ozinsky, Mario Graziani, Kurt Ackerman, Tanya de Villiers and Mark Stead.

The Board of Reclaim Camissa remains firmly unconvinced and in fact dismayed by the contents of the article. At the time of the Oranjezicht City Farm application to the city, Ozinsky was a member of the board of Reclaim Camissa. As such, she was well aware of the organisation's prior application to the city. Her trusteeship and fiduciary role vis-à-vis Reclaim Camissa is not addressed or mentioned in the letter, which remains cause for concern.

The article also does not appear to deal with the terms and conditions under which the publicly owned land and municipal water have been made available (our understanding, based on reports in the press, is that it is free of charge).

We wish to state that while we support and have promoted the concept of urban agriculture, it is not appropriate on this land. This was indicated to Mario Graziani and Ozinsky when introduced to one another by (Caron) von Zeil. Reclaim Camissa wishes to work collaboratively with other organisations, in order to protect the city's water systems.

Protestations by the city and its officials to impute culpability on the board of Reclaim Camissa with regard to failure to supply missing information or not having responded to the city's request for information, lack credibility. Reclaim Camissa has supplied both councilor (Gareth) Bloor and the Cape Times with proof of the voluminous correspondence between itself and the city as far back as 2006, inclusive of comprehensive proposals clearly identifying the applicable tracts of land and the nature of the projects. These records clearly indicate that the outstanding matter in each sequence of correspondence has been final responses from the city. In addition, the board of Reclaim Camissa has, on numerous occasions offered to enter into collaborative agreements with the city.

A further worry is that a project with water security and water sanctity for the greater good of our society, which if implemented would place Cape Town in the forefront of 21st century eco-urbanism internationally, should have been subjected to, what at best can be described as bureaucratic indifference. Reclaim Camissa, despite having duly applied for the requisite permissions as far back as 2006, appears to have suffered from 'fatal red tape syndrome', whereas a project applied for in 2012 under the auspices of Ozinsky, without a necessary change in land-use, and despite its location over a substantial supply of freshwater, appears to have been given various permissions from the City. The exact extent of which, according to the correspondence we have received from a variety of city departments, appears to be uncertain at this stage.

There is too much confusion about the facts to seek responsible discussions and negotiations. Accordingly as a starting point, the board, as concerned citizens of a constitutional democracy, respectfully asks that the city establishes a task force to investigate fully the matter in order to establish whether the processes and any approvals comply with all applicable legislation, and that all parties involved have acted accountably, transparently and in accordance with the legal requirements of applicable legislation. And the findings of the task force be made available to the public. This would allay our and other concerned citizens' fears. Let the facts convince us.

The Board of Trustees, THE RECLAIM CAMISSA TRUST 2882/2010

Prof. Tony Turton, Ms. Caron von Zeil, Prof. Dave Dewar, Ms. Kiki Bond-Smith, Mr. Mac Limbada, Mr. Mokena Makeka.