

2005/10/25

Dear friends and neighbours

This letter has a double purpose: The first is to encourage those of you who might not yet have seen the transformation of the Liesbeek river bank opposite Riverside Road, to take a look at what Dr Joan Parker and a few helpers have achieved since early last year – 2004. The two routes to get there are:

- A: walk or drive down Almond Street, turn right at the end and 40 metres further on, follow a short footpath down to the stream.
- B: walk or drive down Fig Street, turn left going downhill to the footpath just beyond house Number 20 Riverside Road, and then right down the path to the stream.

Secondly, this is to suggest that if anyone is interested in helping to improve the small area on the Fernwood side of the Liesbeek, please contact me by phone or e-mail. (See my contact details below).

Background: The brief story behind the ‘Bishopscourt Village Liesbeek Rehabilitation project’ is as follows:

In early 2004 Bishopscourt residents asked the Department of Storms Water to cut down and clear the major alien vegetation which was rampant on the banks and which, as some of you may know, has posed a major security risk in recent years.

Council workers completed this work over a few months last year, but were not able to do the further work of general clearing and maintenance. So Dr Parker and her helpers decided to ‘get stuck in and cut down the ginger alongside the river and generally tidy up’. As Joan says, ‘we just got carried away and the rest is history’. (If any of you are interested in reading the more detailed history, I can make copies of a letter listing some 25 tasks and processes completed which resulted in the present transformation).

At present work continues on the Bishopscourt side of the river with the support of different bodies and individuals: Chas Everitt estate agents pay the salary of Matthews Moetsi for three days a week. The Dept of Parks give plastic bags, wooden & metal stakes, collect rubbish and provide the services of an occasional skilled labourer using the Parks’ weedeater and brushcutter. The Bishopscourt Residents’ association assists financially with monthly expenditure on small items required. Residents have been generous in giving cash, a tool shed, petrol pump, a water tank, plants and metal stakes. Joan Parker tries be at the river Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11 am to 4 pm, with a break for Lunch.

If you are interested in any way, we could meet to discuss what is possible within the bounds of our busy lives. This letter will have a very limited distribution to only those Fernwood residents living near Almond and Fig Streets. I hope that more people will become involved as the project grows.

Yours,

Sarah-Anne

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