# Bergvliet Meadowridge Ratepayers' Association

Bergvliet Meadowridge Ratepayers Association
BMRA
*for the good of the community*

***Celebrating 75 Years of Service to Our Suburbs***
***Responsibilities, Challenges and Achievements***

***Keeping a careful watch on applications for residential and commercial developments and responding to proposed City of Cape Town policy documents and decisions***

## ***BMRA Responsibilities***

Our area has faced many challenges over the years.

One of BMRA's primary responsibilities is to maintain standards and values in our area and to respond to proposals or policies that could have a negative impact on our suburbs.

As such, we keep a watchful eye on planning matters: applications for developments, subdivisions, removal of title deed restrictions and departures.
To prevent commercial creep into the residential area, the Association guards against land use contraventions, illegal signage, and anything that could impact negatively on the character of the area and erode standards and values.

We also, where appropriate, give input regarding municipal by-laws and policies, maintenance of municipal infrastructure, traffic, roads, drainage, electricity, water, rates, health, environment, amenities and, when necessary, provincial legislation.

In doing so, the Association has faced many challenges in maintaining the look and feel of the neighbourhood.

The negative consequences of over-densification and in appropriate development proposals are to the detriment of the area as a whole and include:

- the impact on the natural environment – fewer trees, gardens, grassy areas. Less bird and insect life. Less rain water absorption into the earth.
- increased traffic, parking congestion, speeding, traffic jams.
- increased demand on educational and sports facilities.
- increased pressure on already overloaded and ageing infrastructure such as sewerage / water pipes and pump stations, electricity capacity.

In guiding appropriate development, the Association has had many battles, not only with developers, but also with the City of Cape Town.

The Association seeks to guide development in a manner appropriate to the area and maintain our standards and values.

## ***Some Successful Achievements - The Rebel Bottle Store***

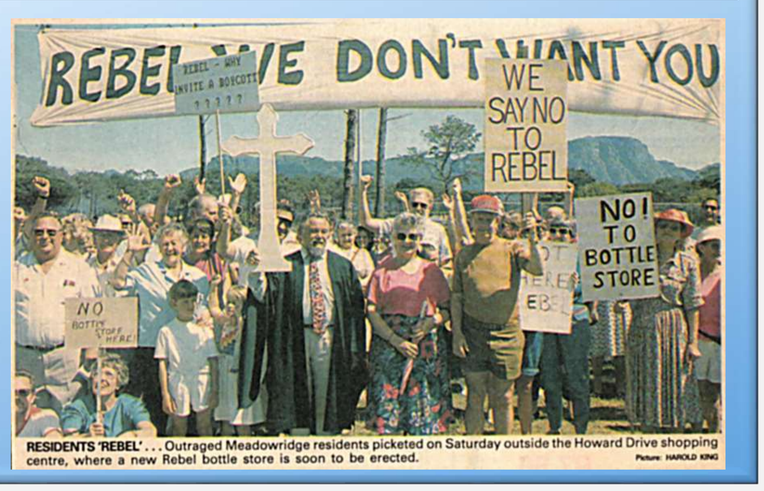
In 1992, against the wishes of Bergvliet-Meadowridge residents, the City of Cape Town Liquor Board granted Rebel Bottle Stores a licence to operate a discount liquor outlet in Meadowridge.

**"The Liquor Licensing Board apparently did not consider any of our objections to be of any value."**

On grounds that the Liquor Licensing Board did not consider our objections to be of any value, BMRA launched an action in the Supreme Court (now the High Court) to set aside the granting of the licence.

A local letter: "I would like TP (Rebel MD) to spend one week working in the same area as the bottle store in Heathfield. The drinking, fighting, swearing and urinating in the doorways is unbelievable. It would be tragic if this were allowed in Bergvliet/Meadowridge".

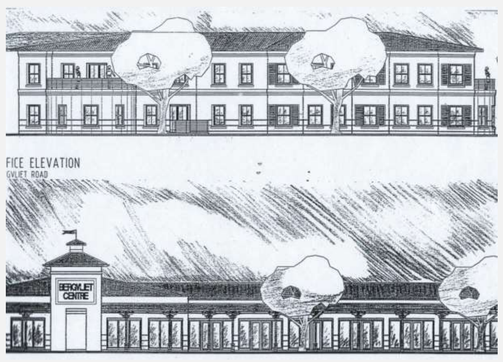
A massive operation was set up by BMRA to:
- raise funds for the court application
- raise awareness & collect funds outside Park 'n Shop
- intensify a "Boycott Rebel" campaign
- protest and raise awareness with the display of banners at the building site and encourage schools and churches to do the same



RESIDENTS 'REBEL'... Outraged Meadowridge residents picketed on Saturday outside the Howard Drive shopping centre, where a new Rebel bottle store is soon to be erected. Picture: HAROLD KING

The BMRA operation was successful and the Rebel Bottle store in Meadowridge did not go ahead.

**Instead of offices & shops**




**We welcomed an area-appropriate development**

## ***Proposed Shopping Centre – where Stodels is now***

In 1999 developers were keen to erect a shopping centre on this site. This proposal was strongly opposed by local residents who were supported by BMRA. The residents did not want commercial development of shops, offices and warehouses within the residential area. After a concerted campaign to stop the shopping centre, the developers abandoned the proposal and sold the portion of land they had purchased and in time Stodels bought the land and developed the area-appropriate Stodels Garden Centre which is much loved and well frequented by local residents.

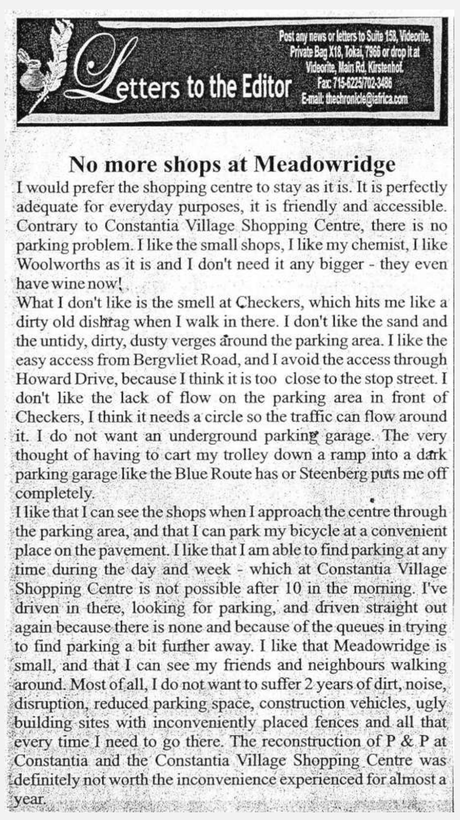
## ***Proposed Meadowridge Park 'n Shop re-development***

In 2007, an application was made to substantially enlarge the shopping centre at Park 'n Shop Meadowridge by increasing the retail area from 9500m² to 22000m².
If approved, the re-development would have consisted of a three storey building with basement parking.

Along with other pertinent reasons, many residents felt that it was unnecessary to erect another mall-type retail centre in Meadowridge when the Blue Route and Constantia Village Malls are situated within easy access. (This was before the Emporium was built at the Ladies Mile / Spaansgemacht interchange.)

The letter displayed here to the local newspaper at the time sums up their sentiments.

The proposal for the Firgrove Centre didn't meet with success and was shelved thereafter.


Letters to the Editor

Post any news or letters to Suite 153, Videorite, Private Bag X18, Tokai, 7966 or drop it at Videorite, Main Rd, Kirstenhof.
Fax: 086-6225702-3486
E-mail: thechronicle@iafrica.com

**No more shops at Meadowridge**

I would prefer the shopping centre to stay as it is. It is perfectly adequate for everyday purposes, it is friendly and accessible. Contrary to Constantia Village Shopping Centre, there is no parking problem. I like the small shops, I like my chemist, I like Woolworths as it is and I don't need it any bigger - they even have wine now!
What I don't like is the smell at Checkers, which hits me like a dirty old dishrag when I walk in there. I don't like the sand and the untidy, dirty, dusty verges around the parking area. I like the easy access from Bergvliet Road, and I avoid the access through Howard Drive, because I think it is too close to the stop street. I don't like the lack of flow on the parking area in front of Checkers, I think it needs a circle so the traffic can flow around it. I do not want an underground parking garage. The very thought of having to cart my trolley down a ramp into a dark parking garage like the Blue Route has or Steenberg puts me off completely.
I like that I can see the shops when I approach the centre through the parking area, and that I can park my bicycle at a convenient place on the pavement. I like that I am able to find parking at any time during the day and week - which at Constantia Village Shopping Centre is not possible after 10 in the morning. I've driven in there, looking for parking, and driven straight out again because there is none and because of the queues in trying to find parking a bit further away. I like that Meadowridge is small, and that I can see my friends and neighbours walking around. Most of all, I do not want to suffer 2 years of dirt, noise, disruption, reduced parking space, construction vehicles, ugly building sites with inconveniently placed fences and all that every time I need to go there. The reconstruction of P & P at Constantia and the Constantia Village Shopping Centre was definitely not worth the inconvenience experienced for almost a year.

***Keep abreast of the many applications BMRA receives for comment / objection by joining the Association. Support us and make your voice heard!***