



9 June 2016

Reclaim the City, Press Statement: Premier Helen Zille must #StopTheSale of Tafelberg

Today is the deadline for submissions on the proposed sale of the Tafelberg site in Sea Point. This afternoon Reclaim the City marches on Tafelberg. Cape Town residents from across the metro send a clear message to Premier Helen Zille and the Western Cape Provincial Government: #StopTheSale of Tafelberg and develop the site for affordable housing! #StopTheSale of all prime public land in the Cape Town and work with residents to reverse apartheid in our city!

The march is the culmination of months of tough campaigning to #StopTheSale. During the submissions period over last three weeks, in particular, Reclaim the City supporters have come out in numbers to support this call. The campaign has gathered more than 800 written submissions and over 3700 petition signatures from residents across Cape Town who object to the proposed sale. We will hand deliver these to the offices of the Western Cape Department of Public Works for consideration by the Premier and the Provincial Cabinet.

Black, working class members of the Sea Point community have spoken clearly and bravely about the pain of life under current conditions in their neighbourhood. They have shared compelling stories of separation from their loved ones, strict curfews and restrictions on visitations. They have described the traumatic lack of freedom while living under constant threat of victimization by employers and landlords. Their voices and experiences are the foundation of the campaign.

Reclaim the City has matured and experienced much over the last three weeks. We have experienced racism and resistance from wealthy people in Sea Point and our city who refuse to accept that working class, black people also have a right to stay in beautiful and well-located areas. When we went to the promenade to draw a chalk mural in support of an inclusive city, the City of Cape Town sent Metro Police officers to silence and intimidate us. Our rights to freedom of expression and equal access to public space were not respected.

In spite of this oppression, we have proven that a majority of Capetonians from all different backgrounds, races, and income brackets stand united in the call for a desegregated city. The pain of poor and working people, those who have struggled for housing and access in the city, has been heard by wealthier residents on an unprecedented level. For that reason, the rise of this campaign represents a historic and unifying moment in our city.

Through the submissions period, we have also made history in public participation on decisions about the future and use of public land. This is how it should be: government must encourage and accept the participation of ordinary people in decisions of public interest and importance.

Once the submissions are handed over, it is the responsibility of the Premier and the Provincial Cabinet to carefully consider what has been written in each one. On that basis

they must make a final decision on whether or not to sell Tafelberg. This presents them with an incredible opportunity to show that they are committed to reverse apartheid spatial planning in Cape Town. We ask that they hear the pain of people living in this city and that they act with integrity.

Reclaim the City is a young campaign, but this struggle is an old one. For decades workers in Cape Town were excluded from- and unwelcome in the city due to apartheid. Today, many people still feel and experience that exclusion. This campaign is about more than just Tafelberg. It is about saying that everyone has a right to live in an area where they have access to work, education, good services, security and dignified living conditions. It is about saying that government must use its land assets to help our city realise that vision of a rainbow nation, where we can undo the injustices and segregation of our past and live alongside one another into the future.

The campaign to Reclaim the City will not end with Tafelberg, and the diverse voices that have come together will build from strength to strength to mobilise for the proper use of state land, to realise the vision of a truly inclusive Cape Town.

March details:

Today Reclaim the City marches on Tafelberg and hands over submissions to #StopTheSale

Where: gather Sea Point Pavilion

When: starting 1:00 pm, Thursday, 9 June

For comment:

Thandeka Sisusa (RTC Spokesperson, Sea Point) 072 593 7713

Lukhanyo Madyibi (RTC Supporter, Nyanga) 083 331 8963

Tim Wolff-Piggott (RTC Supporter, Rondebosch) 084 986 1048

For other queries:

Daneel Knoetze (Head: Communications, Ndifuna Ukwazi) 073 535 8401