



MANDELA BAY HERITAGE TRUST
c/o EAST CAPE INSTITUTE OF
ARCHITECTS
21 ALFRED TERRACE
CENTRAL
PORT ELIZABETH
6001
Tel: 041 585 8037
Fax: 041 585 9415

26 September 2014

For Attention: ALL BUILT ENVIRONMENT PROFESSIONALS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

RE: NOTICE FROM THE MANDELA BAY HERITAGE TRUST REGARDING INTERESTED PARTY COMMENTS

Dear all,

Thank you to all parties for your dedication to following heritage approval processes and allowing us, the Mandela Bay Heritage Trust (MBHT) to comment on the heritage related work that you have undertaken or are undertaking. It is noted that the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), that is now 15 years old, promotes public participation and we believe that this is good for heritage. We are writing this letter to you to introduce or to reintroduce ourselves, describe what we can do and inform you of our new policy to charge an administration fee for written comments.

1. WHO WE ARE

We, the MBHT, are a small group in Port Elizabeth made up of Architects, Historians, Designers and other interested parties that combined afford the Metro a wealth of experience with heritage matters.

Our principle aims are to protect and educate the citizens of the Metro regarding heritage, its value to us and why it is important.

- Protect: any buildings and places in the area that are of particular heritage merit. This may include details, design, materials and even street scapes from any era past. Also, we think about heritage being more than just about buildings and architecture. We also think historical and social associations and the natural environment are important heritage considerations.
- Educate: the general public on the importance of maintenance and protection of their heritage properties – be they commercial, industrial, or residential. We also are interested in creating awareness about issues such as history, culture, museums and tourism.

We believe that there is such a thing as good architecture, good city making and good building practise and it is these principles that we would like to see developed. The integration of new and old is a very important aspect to consider. Alterations, additions, and demolitions are on the rise and a number of very important and beautiful buildings have been lost over time due to work being undertaken without the relevant permission in place. These permissions do exist. They exist for a reason and they need to be monitored which is where we have an interest.

2. THE NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

All work to buildings older than 60 years need approval by the Provincial Heritage Resource Authority (PHRA) before been approved by the local authority. This includes work such as boundary walls and garages. Generally, if the works are minor and do not detract from the heritage value of the building and its neighbours it is quickly approved. The application is done by filling in the forms attached and issuing to the PHRA. They are then assessed by a permit committee in Port Elizabeth and either not approved, approved with conditions or approved. The meetings where this takes place are usually monthly, on the last Friday afternoon of the month, held at Bayworld in Port Elizabeth. This is a meeting open to the public. Minutes of the decisions are made and circulated afterwards.

There is also a certain period after the decision where any objections to the decision can be made. Once all this is concluded a permit is issued to the property owner or owner's agent. At this stage the property owner can ask for municipal approval for works or demolition. The Municipality cannot approve any application without an approved PHRA permit, if applicable.

3. WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

We can provide you with a written or verbal comment on your property and your proposed intervention. This can assist you in making heritage decisions and this comment satisfies (along with neighbours signatures) the public consultation portion of the PHRA application form.

For us to be able to make comments, you need to provide the following:

1. Photographs of the property.
2. Proposal for the property. What do you intend doing with it?
3. Details of the proposal.
4. Short motivation for the action.
5. We may ask for a site visit. Generally for demolitions we do prefer to hold a site visit.

We have a small 'comments committee' that I circulate information with and then we prepare a comment. This is usually written in an email or formal letter that can be attached to your application to the PHRA or the NMBM, if you wish.

4. NEW ADMINISTRATION FEE

We have been providing this service for about two years now and prepared between 50 to 60 written comments. As you can understand, this has become time consuming (but necessary!). At our working committee meeting of 05 September 2014 it was agreed that we would charge an administration fee of R100, 00 per written comment. The MBHT is a not for profit and not a VAT vendor.

5. PLEASE NOTE

Our comments by the Comments Committee of the MBHT are prepared with appropriate but limited consultation. It is an opinion only and has no legal authority. It is the responsibility of the applicant to liaise with the relevant authorities with regard to legal approval to make the modifications to the building. The authority for issues relating to the National Heritage Act is the provincial Heritage Resource Authority (PHRA), who can be contacted as follows:

Ms Africa Fishile
Administration Officer of EC PHRA
Telephone: 043 – 745 0888
Email: nmaxongo@ecphra.org.za

Our opinions are of aspects relating to the heritage significance of the proposals to the property and is not a comment on Town Planning or municipal approval issues. The opinion is intended to satisfy section 8 of the Provincial Heritage Resource Authorities 'Application for Permit' application form. The MBHT reserves the right to follow up on the application and to monitor its progress.

We look forward to engaging with you positively on heritage matters in the future.

Yours sincerely

Lyn Haller
Secretary
For the Mandela Bay Heritage Trust