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THE KEEP

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ISDF Report #1: The Disturbing, Independent Report

Posted on [Jan 30, 2014](#) by [Mike Hampton](#)



The Knysna ISDF, the planning for our future (and the rest of my life) has had our town in an uproar.

Lauren Waring (Municipal Manager) and Mike Maughn-Brown (Town Planner and ex, and possibly future, Knysna property developer) said, "Let's award the ISDF tender to Chris Mulder (Knysna's biggest property developer), his wife, his son and some of their mates who're calling themselves by the legitimate sounding name of Knysna Creative Heads Consortium (KCHC). They don't even need a website for their business... but, hey, it's only the next 30 years of the public's future they're deciding... not ours, we'll make our bucks (through salaries and nogal) and be safe no matter what happens."

The DA then chucked their oversight role out of the window because big business and secret party funding is the unofficial party motto. **Besides, they'd already committed to walls instead of transparency, spending instead of austerity, so why spend so much effort changing policy so as to fulfill their election promises.** Besides, they've got better things to do like dodge the many potholes on their way to their newly decorated offices.

The ANC reckoned they wouldn't object cause they're not in power (although someone could've pointed out to them that they're suppose to be the opposition). Or maybe it's just that they're hoping they'll be getting a share of a 10% BEE deal in some billion dollar forestry company that may one day sell some of their prime real estate for mega profits after moving their operations to the Eastern Cape.

COPE thought-

wait, whose COPE again?

Parody or truth above? I'll let you decide. Or the future...

Last night, Bianca Currie, the independent researcher from NMMU (Nelson Mandela metropolitan University), released her report on Phase 1 of Knysna ISDF (Integrated Strategic Development Framework). It's title of Stakeholder Engagement contained the pre-wording of **"Impartial Report"**. Currie is a Phd Student, under Professor Christo Fabricius, of the Sustainability Research Unit.

I met her once, months ago, directly after the misnamed ISDF Interaction meeting in which Mayor Georlene Wolmarans threw her toys out the cot, Chris Mulder got upset with me and Susan Campbell and Mike Maughn-Brown had a heated conversation. I answered Currie's questions but mistook her role as one in which she was working for Chris Mulder. I'm glad that i was mistaken because her report is invaluable and, no matter how well worded it is, facts are facts... **and the facts query the health of the ISDF and highlight the conflict between the Knysna Municipality and the public (which the former refuses to address).**

Then there's the cover letter which suggests that the Mulders, CMAI, Urban-Econ. Marike Vreken and the rest of the Knysna Creative Heads Consortium are more interested in their private club than answering the public:

"Knysna Creative Heads Consortium expressed they had time constraints and would also like to meet with the Knysna Municipality before providing us with feedback. They were happy that we release our report without their feedback incorporated, saying they would publish a reply separately in their own time. We look forward and hope to receive their publishable feedback and comment as we feel our report is deficient without it. **The report was completed in November 2013 and, after several requests for feedback, which were not forthcoming, we felt that delaying the release any longer (more than two months since the report was completed) would detract from its relevance and usefulness to the process at hand.** As soon as feedback is received we undertake to release a second edition containing their response verbatim unless they wish to keep their response as a separate document to our report as indicated."

In the summary of the full report, it states that, **"Another significant issue emerging from the Knysna ISDF process is the unresolved conflict between the Knysna Municipality and the civil environmental groups. The dispute is not being acknowledged and has been left to fester breeding suspicion and mistrust in the process."**

It is important to correct Miss Currie here lest she perpetuate the myth that the Knysna Municipality has attempted to install i.e. it's a bunch of loony greenies fighting all development. Firstly, the majority of objectors are regular citizens, some retirees, who were appalled at the process being handed over to Knysna's biggest property developer. Of the few environmentalists involved, they seek responsible development and not development no matter the cost.

As i don't believe that the process has legitimacy without our interaction, or the tender being given to the Cape Town company who actually won it (and would have had less conflicts of interest), i'm going to jump ahead in my summary of Currie's report, to [Report #2: Is conflict being resolved?](#)