



YEOVILLE STUDIO is a research and learning initiative, driven collaboratively by the Wits University School of Architecture and Planning and the Yeoville Stakeholders Forum, and supported by several other partners. It aims to produce quality academic research that is relevant, useful and of interest to the Yeoville community.

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Johannesburg, 11 April 2011

Dear Market Traders Representatives,

Unfortunately, I was unable to participate in the Trading meeting organised by the City on the 6th of April at the Yeoville Recreation Center, due to prior commitments. One of our students was able to attend. He reported that serious accusations have been expressed by you against Yeoville Studio, stating in particular that it had been 'manipulating' street traders in the workshop process leading to their position paper.

Yeoville Studio wishes to put the records straight, in light of these allegations. Yeoville Studio has no hidden agenda. Its aim and mandate have always been clearly and publicly stated: to support communities with research findings and expertise so that they can explore various futures for themselves. We have participated with various community groups in Yeoville to make this happen through guidance and not interference. We also, as you are well aware, have discussed with you (on April 5th) about facilitating a market design workshop with all interested market traders, to listen to their issues and aspirations and help them formulate what they want collectively for the market. You enthusiastically supported the idea at the time.

During the meeting of April 6th, it has also come to our knowledge that you expressed dissatisfaction regarding the results of our research on trading in Yeoville, as presented in a previous meeting (March 22nd, 2011). We at Yeoville Studio are surprised to hear that you were not aware of the research since you yourselves were interviewed as Market Traders Leader and Manager and were actually key in the research process. We understand that our research results might not please everyone; they might also not be well understood. The findings might be seen as incompletely capturing of the Yeoville realities, and call for further research or clarification. We are aware of that and are happy to discuss our research findings with market traders in order to clarify issues on both sides.

It is perfectly understandable that you fight for your business and livelihoods. While fighting against street traders, it was a logical political move to attack Yeoville Studio as a support that street traders have been mobilizing. Such an attack however might be short-sighted, as you might be depriving yourselves as market traders from access to the resource and assistance we offer. Once again, we assist each group that requests our support – on the basis of mutual trust and respect.

Regards.

Claire Benit-Gbaffou, Yeoville Studio coordinator

CC: Xolani Nxumalo (DED), Maurice Smithers (YBCDT), George Lebone (YSF), Angelina Motsepe (Street Traders representative), Zaabe Mogwaza (Region F).

YEOVILLE STUDIO PARTNERS:

