

Annual General Meeting- March 20th 2013

Chairman's Report

Ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you all to our AGM 2013. I take this early opportunity to thank members who have served on the committee this past year and all those who in one way or another have given their service to the Association. The AGM gives an opportunity to report or reflect on activities, successes or challenges of the past year and also vote in a new committee to run the affairs of the association in the coming year.

At the EGM last year it was resolved to form a KLDA Trust for purposes of protecting the funds currently held by KLDA. This is now in operation and the Trustees, Mr. Irving Mclean, Mrs. Mary Okelo and Mr. Lau Larsen have, under the Trust, already taken over the various fixed deposit accounts previously held by KLDA.

Also, last year the Committee reported that a communications strategy was underway. This strategy was finalised and is now being implemented. One of the key points in the strategy was the hiring of a PR person to take up communication and member recruitment on a daily basis. Ms Rose Karobia has recently joined us to carry out this role.

In carrying out its mandate every year, the committee focuses on key areas of concern chiefly;

Planning and Development, Security, Water, Roads, Power, Planning and Development, Security, Water, Roads,
I will now make a few remarks on some these key areas.

Planning and Development

KLDA took the proposed Karen Central development adjacent to Karen roundabout to the National Environment Tribunal (NET). NEMA had granted a license for the development and KLDA opposed this on a number of environmental grounds including: the existing sewer is utterly inadequate and the pond is already a hazard, water provision to the area is inadequate, increased traffic will lead to even greater jams, the development contravenes the Karengata Local Physical Development Plan. The

NET accepted that the Karen sewer is an environmental hazard KLDA is reviewing its response to other parts of the ruling, including apparent factual errors.

As well as reviewing a number of environmental impact assessments (EIA) KLDA is in discussion with a number of large-scale developers and details will be appearing on the KLDA web site.

They include:

- The Hub – formerly Rusty Nail where (another) shopping mall is proposed. The project report for the environmental impact assessment has been reviewed by KLDA and lodged with NEMA.
- CEMASTEVA on Karen Road where we have been attending site meetings with CEMASTEVA and the Japanese contractors. This has been following agreed plans but we recently learned that CEMASTEVA plans to construct a warehouse on site.
- We understand that Hillcrest School plans to sell approximately 18 acres of land adjacent to Langata Road while retaining the land where the school buildings are located. This has raised a number of issues with stakeholders and negotiations are currently taking place.

Many residents have commented on the current building work adding stories to Tana House at Karen Shopping Centre and asked if it meets building regulations, particularly with regard to safety. KLDA met the Town Clerk and raised the issue. The Town Clerk directed a senior member of the planning department to investigate and report back. Since then, and despite many attempts to obtain feedback, there has been no response from CCN. In a new initiative the KLDA sub-committee responsible for development, known as the 'Karen We Want' (KWW) has begun to draft a new development strategy for the area to update the Karengata Local Physical Development Plan that was gazetted back in 2006. We are all well aware that in many instances the authorities, especially CCN, have ignored the KLPDP and agreed to anything that developers want to do. Now, backed by the new constitution and a new system of local government, KLDA plans to be a catalyst enabling residents to decide the future of their own neighbourhoods.

Security

The refurbishment works of the Karen Police Station are ongoing under the auspices to the Karen Police Station Project Management Committee. The committee comprises of various stakeholders including the KLDA, Lang'ata Constituency Development Fund which is providing the funding to a tune of Kshs.2.9M, and the Architectural Association of Kenya

offering professional services free of charge.

The first phase of the works at the Karen Police Station is complete and work is about to commence on the second phase. Once the work is complete, it is expected the station will have more humane facilities and a better environment to work in than has hitherto been the case.

Water

Serious water shortages have continued over the last six months. KLDA organised a water forum where residents met with officials from the Nairobi City Water & Sewerage Company and Athi Water Services Board. It was surprising to note the low turnout despite the many complaints regarding water received at the KLDA office. Subsequently a consultative group to fast-track services improvements in Karen has been formed and includes senior officers from the Athi Water Services Board and the NCWSB. KLDA is to nominate one person to represent the interests of residents and volunteers are welcome.

KLDA sponsored Ms. Helen Katangie to join the board of the Nairobi City Water & Sewerage Company and it is hoped that she will assist in alleviating the water shortages experienced in the area.

Roads

Design work for the dualling of Langata road from the Bomas junction to Karen was presented to KLDA by the Kenya Urban Roads Authority. It was agreed that KURA would communicate to KLDA on progress to allow us to contact the landowners along that corridor who may be affected by the widening. However Mr. Kiminza of KURA intimated very recently that there had been reluctance by landowners affected along the KWS/Bomas section, to give up land until the new National Land Commission is in place.

Communications

KLDA communications strategy is now being implemented. A strong communications sub-committee comprising of Lorna Abungu, Tom Mboya, Alex Mathenge and Graham Alder has been working hard to revive the website, and ensure that KLDA is fully active the social media. We are now on Facebook and Twitter where updates are posted as they happen. KLDA brought on Board Rose Karobia who will work together with the Communications Committee to enhance a two way communication with members and with the general public. She will be responsible for KLDA News, our web site, face book page and twitter feeds. Most importantly she will be developing relations with the neighborhood associations to ensure that your needs are served. This calls for all members to be active on social media for updates, visit the KLDA website, follow KLDA on twitter and suggest on topics that you would want discussed on Social evenings.

Representation

In 2012 KLDA implemented the provision in the constitution to have six places on the main committee for representatives of neighbourhood associations (local residents associations) to ensure that KLDA services fully meet the needs of residents. The response of the NA's has been mixed with some areas having keen and active representatives while others have not played a constructive role and in fact have rarely attended meetings. This is a challenge for the coming year and by the time of the 2013 AGM I trust we will have solid candidates nominated for the committee.

In concluding I would point to the two following challenges in the coming year:

- Expanding membership through neighbourhood associations so that Karen and Langata has a strong and respected voice at city, County and national levels,
- Updating the LPDP so that residents can exercise their constitutional right in determining the future of Karen and Langata.

Finally ladies and gentlemen I want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Graham Alder who has served this association with complete dedication and commitment for close twenty years as a member, Vice Chair, Chair and lately as the head of communications. Graham will be spending quite a lot of time outside the country and will therefore not be readily available as hitherto been the case. Let me also at this juncture thank Sarah Alder who as you know has continued to render her very valuable service and expertise on issues of developments in the area. The association will greatly miss the services of both Sara and Graham but most grateful to their services to the association. We wish them well in all their endeavours.

I wish the incoming committee every bit of success in the service of this great association.

Vincent J. Kambo