



Association of Professional Heritage Practitioners

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
24 AUGUST 2020**

at 12:00 via Zoom Conference Call

PRESENT: Jenna Lavin (JL), Louise van Riet (LvR), Gavin McLachlan (GM), Emmylou Bailey and Claire Abrahamse (CA)

GUESTS: Maurietta Stewart (MS), Robyn Humphreys (RH) and Rike Sitas (RS)

APOLOGIES: Ursula Rigby (UR) and Adre Aggenbach (AA)

Secretary: Muneerah Karriem (MK)

1. Opening and welcome

JL welcomed ExCo members noting the attendance of Maurietta Stewart, an APHP Candidate Member, Robyn Humphreys and Rike Sitas who would join the meeting at 1pm to discuss the letter Maurietta authored regarding Heritage Practice and Justice in terms of item 6.1 on the Agenda.

2. Attendance

Recorded as per minutes.

3. Apologies

UR and AA tendered their apologies.

4. Approval of Agenda

It was agreed to approve the Agenda.

5. Approval of previous minutes

The minutes of previous meeting held on 20 July 2020 was approved.

6. Matters to be addressed

JL noted that matters to be addressed at this meeting included:

(1) Heritage Practice and Justice (2) SAHRA Survey Project (3) Professional Development and Professionalisation Engagement (4) Updating APHP Constitution (5) Interaction with Authorities (COCT, HWC and SAHRA) (6) Draft policy for deployment of electronic networks (7) Revisions to Ethical guidelines and disciplinary process and code of conduct (8) Accreditation Matters (9) Membership fees - request for extensions and no reply defaulters

6.1 Heritage Practice and Justice

- JL noted the deferment of this matter up until the guests joined the meeting at 1pm.
- JL welcomed MS, RH and RS who joined the meeting at 1pm, briefly introduced herself and asked fellow ExCo members to do the same, noting AA and UR tendered apologies.
- MS introduced herself and her colleagues noting their shared perspective and questions on heritage practice and asked them to elaborate further regarding their particular work focus.
- It was noted that:
 - RH, an archaeology PHD student at UCT echoed her endorsement of the letter MS authored further noting her unanswered questions she has regarding what is it about archaeology that excludes communities and how we engage with stakeholders.
 - RS, a director at the African Centre for Cities leading on the socio cultural type of work at the Centre also noted her endorsement of the letter MS authored, further noting her concerns around how the heritage narrative at present seem to revolve around the built form and built environment and the Centre's interest in looking at the social, cultural and intangible aspects and how they relate with the built and environment form, citing the Centre's research project: 'whose heritage matters' in trying to understand from both a built and intangible scale what that means for policy and practitioners in terms of how they think, act and do heritage work.
- MS by way of introduction to her letter noted that it stemmed from a place of anger generally and globally around heritage representation in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement and cited 3 components that her letter wished to address:
 1. the flurry at which these things gets talked about but never truly embraced and run with to influence change and practice which she felt formed the crux of the matter.
 2. why APHP's list of candidate and accredited members remains untransformed, who registers with the APHP and based on conversations with other black heritage professionals in the field, their discomfort about joining APHP.
 3. The question of justice and race, given our history within the city and country, and how heritage is strongly linked with justice and how representation therefore matters in heritage because of these two things.
- MS noted that the position paper that emanated from APHP's conference in 2019 focused on social and intangible heritage, how it fits within the law and trying to grapple with it in development applications, acknowledging though there remains a vast amount of research unharnessed and the potential lack of enough professionals with the expertise to deal with it within a heritage framework.
- MS further noted that whilst the position paper was clear on the social and intangible aspects it wasn't very clear on justice and race and how representation therefore matters in heritage; her letter, particularly the first two paragraphs mirrors what was raised in the position paper but goes further to mention a few practical suggestions to deal with the crisis of representation in heritage and how the law remains flat in how we deal with issues of social and intangible heritage and what kind of advocacy work can be done.
- MS noted that the narrative within the City is unfortunately driven by their political ideals, but despite this, she feels as a heritage practitioner, that one has to speak for justice and representation, even as officials, irrespective of the political environment one works within.
- RH agreed with MS adding that whilst there are many stakeholders in Cape Town who are vested in their heritage they feel excluded from the conversations because the City only deals with those recognised as professional and questioned how we could get these communities involved.
- RH further noted that there are also heritage courses at both UCT and UWC, but that is not what one sees when it comes to development and what is taken seriously when considering

how to manage heritage in Cape Town; she questioned how we could get all these stakeholders together to focus on a set of clear goals that recognises the history of Cape Town and the history of heritage in Cape Town.

- MS noted whilst she knows that APHP's accreditation of members are built environment focused mostly, there are other bodies of knowledge that does not necessarily sit in the museum or interpretation of artefacts sector, but knowledge about cultural community based inventory, where a whole set of professionals are emerging from, thus opening up a host of people who can become heritage professionals but don't fit the registration criteria of APHP.
- RS agreed, noting that heritage and culture in terms of sustainable development goals have emerged, which is key in building justice sustainable cities; She further noted that she has had extensive engagements with the European Union and countries elsewhere, where heritage and policy is starting to break through in this area creating a more inclusive practice across the built environment sector.
- MS added that a director at the African Centre for Cities, (couldn't remember his name off hand) had lots of talks on this and on our perspective of heritage, how it fits in and whose voices are heard the loudest, how it impacts how decisions are made at HWC and other provincial committees or the City and who sits on those committees, noting that whilst she knows there is this a call made inviting people but how do we start to shift those things that make a difference to being heard.
- RS agreed and added that we are sitting in a situation where colonialism is still entrenched and heritage practice should therefore be undoing or actively trying to think of ways to incorporate culture and heritage belonging, unfortunately we have a history of strong lobby groups, whether as rate payers associations or heritage organisations who have the time and resources and can lobby quite actively for their heritage compared to other voices that are less visible and audible; This is one of the things that the heritage sector needs to advocate for because if justice isn't at the forefront then something is wrong; RS further added that most of us all know this, but how to do it, and there needs to be active challenging and unravelling of policy spaces, practice spaces, social and public discourse around it.
- JL acknowledged that there are inherent problems in how the system is running at the moment, but noted that APHP:
 - have been trying with changes to the vision and mission statements to include transformation,
 - are currently busy updating APHP's constitution to be very explicit around transformation.
 - accreditation guidelines has been changed to be more inclusive but agreed the membership still do not reflect what these changes intended.
- JL thanked MS, RH and RS for their willingness to engage with APHP and fully agreed that that the face of APHP needs to be more representative and that things must change in order to make APHP a more welcoming space for diverse voices.
- JL noted and acknowledged that there is a historical reason for APHP being this way in that before the current changes to the accreditation guidelines, APHP's accreditation process was not equitable nor directed with the intention of attracting diversifying voices, there have however been changes made over the last 4 to 5 years to rectify that, unfortunately it has not made much of a difference and APHP thus welcomes such engagements in how to make it a more welcoming space for diverse heritage voices.
- JL also noted that APHP's accreditation guidelines is in the process of being aligned to the model EAPASA (Environmental Assessment Practitioner Association of South Africa) uses whereby applicants will be asked to demonstrate competence in 6 core competencies in order to be recognised as a heritage professional; JL welcomed MS, RH and RS input into this process as well.
- EB welcomed the point MS made about the law and the way it's set up; citing that being the difficulty APHP finds itself in, in how to include the conversations around justice and race in

- terms thereof;
- EB further noted that whilst she personally feels social and cultural significance should be mandatory in heritage applications, the goal and ambit of the professional association is to work with the law within development which is tricky to change other than to embrace people with the necessary knowledge and experience to come in, but the law makes it difficult and it almost comes down to each individual practitioner to include that or not as both national and provincial authorities don't have the capacity to develop these social and cultural significances guidelines at the moment.
 - EB noted and acknowledged that this isn't the way it should be, but what is happening at present; she informed that APHP have discussed this and are looking at developing these set of guidelines for its own purposes and welcomed MS, RH and RS inputs into these.
 - LvR agreed with EB regarding the initial formation of APHP in that there is a legal process that has to be managed in terms of heritage and to try and set standards; she noted that it may be a case of trying to broaden what the association is about since it's aim is to produce and hopefully go the route at some point, of being nationally registered professionals, much like doctors or engineers; she questioned however, how APHP is to keep its standards up to a certain level to maintain the legal aspects but include everything that needs to be included because at the moment there might have to be a split, noting there are those people who just want to do their assessments in a manner registered to do, but at the same time we also need to embrace all the other bits and pieces that add to the these processes without it being a mere tick box exercise.
 - LvR further noted that as the accreditation committee liaison on the ExCo, membership applications are assessed in terms of applicants' education and experience within certain fields, is it at a level we require and has this person successfully submitted heritage reports/assessments around the legal aspect, which is still built environment focused at the moment but welcomed inputs from MS, RH and RS in how we can bring in the intangible and social aspects.
 - EB also noted the education gap in terms of how heritage studies were done historically in order to be a heritage professional versus what is required now and applauded Naomi's approach in bringing in these social and intangible aspects as a different way of thinking, which is a challenge for those who did their studies historically, unless they did anthropology or any other social studies; EB welcomed the fact that this is being discussed on a professional level, which wasn't the case before and feels hopeful that change will come via the students doing heritage studies now.
 - EB further raised however the generational gap where in young officials and younger committee members serving on these authorising committees find it challenging in having to deal with committee members who have been around a long time, have a wealth of experience and power. Education in new ways of doing heritage is critical and new ways and voices needs to be tangibly supported, specifically by APHP in their vision for transformation in the sector.
 - MS noted that she felt there were two conversations at play, one definitely being the profession and how it works at present but another around reckoning; reckoning about our past, how the profession has come to the way it is and why; she cited a webinar she watched by the Association of Black Archaeologists in the USA about 2 months ago, just as the Black Lives Matter movement took off and many statues were being dismantled and how that webinar helped her formulate her thoughts around heritage practice here at home.
 - MS felt that this reckoning is very necessary as there are a lot black heritage professionals in pain, she referenced the decision by DEA&DP that will result in the River Club being decimated unless the activists are able to stop it and other examples such as inappropriate consolidations on the edge of Bo-Kaap over looking into people's backyards, people being told that they are land invaders in Woodstock but have lived in these homes for generations all resulting in leaving black professionals that have to deal with it with a lot of anger because they have no real voice in those decisions that are taken.
 - MS challenged APHP as well as other associations or bodies representing the profession or

- a part thereof to say we recognise this, to sit in that moment and reflect on how implicit we have been in shaping our cities and pushing out vulnerable voices before we can move on.
- MS proposed that a platform be created for black heritage professionals to be in a space that is led by black professionals and facilitated by an independent person in order for them to share what they have been dealing and sitting with as professionals within this space.
 - MS noted the discrimination she experienced and witnessed whilst working as a young 19 year old Town Planning professional at the City under Melanie Attwell, Chris Snelling and Stephen Townsend; having then left to study to Environmental Management, returning 16 years later and witnessing the same behaviour.
 - MS went on to ask that it be placed on record that she found it appalling that someone like Stephen Townsend can do an HIA for the Two Rivers Urban Park and co-modify and sell off the First Nations land, and further wished for it to be placed on record that she felt he represents everything that is wrong in the heritage profession and has for many years and that this has to be reckoned with, the issue of what he represents.
 - MS noted coming back to the first part of the two part conversation at play, that she understands the issues of the law in terms of social, cultural and intangible significance but feels that this can be dealt with afterwards because it's merely a case of putting minds together and advocating for change, which in her view isn't hard nor impossible; she referenced the amazing work CA has done in Salt River in representing social values inside and outside buildings, noting that there are professionals who are doing it and can do it.
 - MS went on to mention the second part of the two part conversation at play being the reckoning, which she felt was the crux of the matter and in which she felt that the following be reckoned with and addressed:
 - how black professionals have been, whether purposefully or inadvertently badly treated in this space,
 - whose voices are the loudest and what we are going to do to unravel colonialism and the mind-set of colonialism in the practice whether intentional or not.
 - how certain heritage practitioners sell off the heritage of the people and holding these unethical professionals to account
 - MS further mentioned that there has to be a different way of looking at heritage and it cannot just be looking at it through the letter of the law, it has to, in addition be looked at from a philosophical and a place of reckoning with a city and our country that has a past of displacement, slavery and racism; that it needed to be faced head on otherwise things will never change and our conversations about HIAs and social impacts are not going to be deeply impacted if our research is not impacted by a philosophical stance.
 - RH agreed with MS adding further that often the injustice, racism and marginalisation comes in with the following statements: "I'm just doing my job, I'm just following the law, I'm just doing the public consultation" and these form the foundations of racial injustice and marginalisation and there has to be some sort of accountability, especially if we say we all for transformation.
 - RH further noted that the association's role is to help people get accredited so they can implement the law but to also recognise that the very things around transformation that we want to change happens within that space, so there needs to be advocacy for it.
 - RS agreed, further adding that it is a cop-out to say "I'm just following the law" because there are actually so many inconsistent pieces of legislation that could be called upon; the stance given that we have been asked to work with this piece of legislation, therefore we can do it, is inconsistent as there other pieces of legislation that are completely contrary to it that and could further other kinds of voices, so it's about thinking creatively and being nimble around it.
 - RS noted as well that it is the dismantling and recognising of how these things have been embedded not only in the landscape, but in legislation in the built environment and these deep forms of racism and prejudice are very material and it takes a material approach to undo them.

- JL agreed that as the committee representing heritage professionals, she understands and fully agrees that things need to change and that the time to do it is now; she welcomes the recommendation of holding a sit down in some form and that it be managed and run by black heritage professionals.
- MS noted that the sit down is not meant to be an exercise where the word 'sorry' is said, or to make people feel guilty; she and fellow black heritage professionals want it to be a platform where heritage professionals in general sit and listen and be in the discomfort for long enough to actually reflect on that and then come up with actions; she added that it's not about "I'm sorry", "what must we do", here is letter acknowledging, it is about sitting, listening and being in the discomfort, which is uncomfortable for all but very powerful, because only after that can there be true reconciling.
- MS cited the webinar by the Association of Black Archaeologists as being a very good reflection of the same issues we are dealing with here and agreed to forward it to the ExCo.
- EB posed the question, wanting to confirm who should chair the meet, as it was mentioned earlier that an independent person be approached to chair it because of the nature of such a platform and the many interpersonal issues that have gone on and peoples fear in general.
- EB referenced the diversity workshops held at the City many years ago where we had to sit and listen to each other and it was in a space that had nothing to do with your work, which she felt was very good.
- EB further mentioned that the difficulty of course would be to get people to come, especially those who need to be there and questioned what happens if they choose not to come.
- MS answered that this round table/workshop should be a collaborative talk not just with APHP, but a body of heritage professionals from UCT, Archaeological associations, ACC (African Centre for Cities) etc
- MS further added that we need to start talking about this and while it's not a specific APHP issue, recognising that APHP is the body that represents heritage professionals whether they registered yet or not and that it was the obvious place to place her letter because of who the association represents and what it represents at present.
- EB cited that it might be useful in framing it in a way that those who choose to be present are those willing to participate versus those who choose not to come.
- MS acknowledged the interpersonal issues between APHP and others and felt that it might be better placed if its collaboration, but those interpersonal issues will have to be reckoned with in the conversations.
- RH cautioned in having these conversations turn into a debate noting that despite all this, we might not be able to change the Stephen Townsend's of the world, but if we can get to a point where based on people's shared experiences it's not questioned but tabled and acknowledged.
- MS noted that we don't have to solve what that space will look like today, but that we start thinking about it, which organisations and who are collaborated with to have a combined space, but liked the modus operandi the ACC uses of confrontation, prodding and provocation to get people talking.
- LvR enquired if this something that can be taken countrywide, so that it's not just a conversation amongst practitioners' perspective in this side of the country.
- MS noted that the webinar she attended attracted over 2000s participants, so this is a possibility.
- LvR however further noted the pros and cons of in person versus an online platform but acknowledged that it does broaden and facilitate easy access though.
- EB noted that the space for engagement needs to start and that we start with the people who do heritage work and allow for emotional outpouring because heritage work is emotional.
- RS noted the emotion and use of the phrase 'to sit in the discomfort' MS used earlier as something that struck her in that, that is what people in general struggle with because discomfort means that we have to accept that maybe our jobs and our professions and the way we do things should stop; that entirely new things are needed and to be able to have a

conversation that say that certain disciplines replicate and enshrine the same kind of thing over and over again and these are the conversations happening at universities currently.

- RS further added that any kind of public process needs to really think about discomfort as a productive space, as a place where you really have to face the demons of what we do and the things we do in our everyday and professional lives that have impacts; she added that webinars or any online platform is not necessarily a bad thing because in person, people often check themselves a little bit more, whereas with the virtual distance there is a lot more confidence because your body is not at risk which allows for an emotional outpouring and to be able to step away, so there is another kind of engagement there.
- RS continued to say that these sorts of engagements that allow emotional outpouring is very helpful because we sitting in a situation where, Cape Town, especially has decided on a development logic that is incompatible with justice, so a property driven, market driven development is incompatible with social and spatial justice in many ways, which is something that must be reckoned with as we sitting with these two competing logics and what do we do with that and where do we situate it.
- RS, whilst agreeing with MS about looking at heritage philosophically, she felt that it should also be looked at politically, not party politics, but politically in terms of where you stand on particular issues, knowing the decisions we make have repercussions.
- RS noted from an ACC point of view, she was happy to continue posing these questions because it's what the Centre does.
- MS enquired if this is something ACC can hold as a conversation in the heritage space and RS confirmed that it would be but in collaboration with others, otherwise it just becomes another ACC or university led thing.
- JL welcomed this idea and that APHP would love to collaborate with ACC to make these conversations happen.
- JL noted APHP's attempt to start having these conversations at our conference in 2018 but that it did not go far enough and therefore appreciate and welcome this opportunity to work together on growing this space to allow for the conversations to happen.
- RS cautioned though and noted the importance of holding different spaces for different kind of conversations because one type of format isn't necessarily going to work for everything, citing the ACC's work with facilitators who work a lot with race and transformation and while they are also very important spaces that need to be held, they are spaces where white people shouldn't be in because of the history of this country.
- MS and others agreed, noting nobody wants it to be a destructive space.
- It was agreed that **EB** would set up an email trail between MS, RH, RS, JL, CA and other ExCo members to start putting everyone's thoughts to paper on ways to make this round table discussions a reality.

6.2 SAHRA Survey Project

- CA gave a report back on the 20th August meeting between the SAHRA Survey Project Subcommittee and Clinton Jackson of SAHRA noting:
 - The subcommittee's hesitancy to engage up until the structure of the project has been strategically thought through.
 - Clinton was advised to confirm whether the plan would just involve the collection of data and if the intended aim would be that this data would be interpreted by suitably qualified persons at a later stage as this would affect the type of training that is required from APHP.
 - That subcommittee members felt it was not their job to design the process and that a chairperson could only be decided upon up until the frame of reference is clear and understood.
- ExCo noted the project plan Clinton emailed subcommittee members after the meeting and

- admittedly agreed that it needed to be more conceptual.
- ExCo noted further to the email, that SAHRA had been informed that deployment was cut down to 260 and flags on government buildings and intangible heritage would no longer form part of the project.
- It was agreed that JL would contact Clinton via email to discuss the outcomes of the meeting and together with CA and EB see where they could assist him.

6.3 Professional Development and Professionalisation Engagement

- LvR reported that the document is still in circulation amongst the Acc Comm members and will hopefully be completed and up for discussion at our next meeting.
- JL informed ExCo that she unfortunately had not been able to set time aside to action this item that it's on her to do list and requested that it remains on the agenda up until she completes it.

6.4 Updating APHP Constitution

- ExCo agreed to table the proposed changes to the APHP constitution at the next AGM and that the track changed document form part of the AGM Agenda pack to be forwarded to the membership next year.

6.5 Interaction with Heritage Authorities/Institutions

- ExCo noted that the 29th June APHP and HWC meeting recording had been received and sent to UR who had since emailed ExCo members the transcription thereof.
- It was agreed to follow up with UR regarding the minutes and should she be unable to get to it that a fellow ExCo member step in to assist.
- ExCo agreed to ask Maurietta Stewart sometime during our meeting if she would be interested to assist APHP with the development of the social significance guidelines when she joins the meeting at 1pm.
- JL noted that the 3rd June meeting recording between APHP and SAHRA had been received, minutes completed and would be sent to SAHRA for comment.
- JL further noted that the next meeting with SAHRA would take place on the 14th September but a time still needs to be confirmed.
- It was noted that the SAHRA survey was discussed under item 6.2 on the agenda.
- It was agreed to defer the COCT report back till UR's return at our next meeting.
- AA informed ExCo that she still awaits feedback from the Gauteng PHRA and Tshwane municipality, which she hopes to get as more Government offices begin to open with lockdown restrictions being lifted.
- JL informed ExCo that she had been approached by the Middleburg Heritage Conservation body regarding their appeal against a demolition permit that had been dismissed by the very official of the Mpumalanga Heritage Resource Authority (MHRA) who approved the demolition permit in the first instance and the lack of progress to a further appeal made to the Mpumalanga Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation (DCSR) in terms of section 49 of the NHRA.

- JL reported that the matter was eventually heard at a meeting on the 30th June between the Middleburg Heritage Conservation body, Mr Ben Moduka, the official in question and Mr Singh of MHRA; representatives of the DCSR and herself as an observer; this appeal was however dismissed as well.
- ExCo noted the fact that the minimum requirement for PHRA's is having a process for appeals in place; which most PHRA's, apart from HWC do not have.
- It was further noted that SAHRA itself should be checking up on the PHRA's every two years to ensure that they are functioning and have processes in place.
- It was agreed that **JL** would draft a letter addressed to Mr Singh of the MPHRA regarding appeal procedures, copy in SAHRA on the letter and raise the above with them at the 14th September meeting.
- **EB** agreed to in the meantime draw up a table of the different PHRA's, their contact details and noted issues for SAHRA's attention.

6.6 Draft Policy for deployment of electronic networks

- JL confirmed that she had forwarded the document to HWC and SAHRA, but had no response from either.
- **EB** agreed to put a comment together on behalf of APHP.

6.7 Revisions to Ethical Guidelines and code of conduct documents

- ExCo agreed that the final version of the document tabled at the 20th June meeting and endorsed by ExCo should be affixed an APHP letterhead and sent to the membership.

6.8 Accreditation Matters

- It was agreed to ratify Acc Comm's recommendation that Xabiso Sidloyi be awarded candidate membership.
- ExCo noted that whilst each PHRA have their own particular processes regarding section 34 and 35 applications, applications in terms of section 38 have to be managed strictly to the letter of the law in terms of the NHRA; something which the ECPHRA is not applying correctly.
- ExCo agreed to the possible drafting of standardised application templates to be put together and run by ExCo and Acc Comm; **LvR** agreed to attempt to put something in draft.
- ExCo however noted their concern around the current composition of Acc Comm in light of Maurietta Stewart and her colleagues' discussions around transformation and justice.

6.9 Membership Fees - request for extensions and no reply defaulters

- ExCo agreed to a membership fees extension to that of 31 December 2020.
- **JL** agreed to draft the email on behalf of ExCo to the noted defaulters asking them to kindly confirm their intention regarding their membership and that the membership fees deadline for 2020/2021 has been extended to 31 December 2020.

7. Other Matters

- There were no other matters discussed.

8. Date of Next Meeting

- It was agreed that the next meeting would be decided upon via email.

9. Closure

- The meeting closed at 14.00.