

CONSULTATIONS

Taxi organisations

While the survey was being conducted, four consultative meetings were held with taxi operators in the area – from End Street in the east, Rissik in the west, Commissioner in the north and the highway in the south. These meetings brought the six and later eight taxi associations together to discuss ranking and holding solutions in the Faraday Precinct with the project team and the Metro Council's taxi management structures. Two meetings were held with the Gauteng Taxi Council and one with their business unit, the Gauteng Taxi Co-op.

At a third meeting with the extended group of eight taxi operators there was some reservation about the size of the rank, which was design for 200 taxis only. Taxi operators felt it should accommodate more taxis. The tension, however, seemed to be mostly between the taxi operators themselves rather than with the project.

See Appendix 1 for a summary of taxi organisations and routes and commuter movement patterns.

Traditional Medicine Traders and Healers

In addition to the surveying of and conversations with traders and healers, two workshops were held with the representative body of healers, the dominant group in the Faraday muti trading area. The first meeting introduced the project and obtained the views of the group regarding the project. The second presented the proposals in more detail and obtained the comments of the traditional healer representatives on the development proposals, the issue of project phasing and relocation, and approach in the implementation phase.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Conservation was represented at this meeting to discuss issues related to conservation and future collaboration. Similarly, the Johannesburg regional health department was invited to discuss possible collaboration related to health matters. In both cases, the interaction was positive and its was agreed to continue discussions with the aim of collaboration. See letter to the Department in Appendix 2.

A formal response to the project plans was requested of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Conservation (see letter attached, Appendix 1). This will need to be followed up the JDA with the aim of securing on-going collaboration.

Informal Traders

The number of informal traders in the area is small and there is apparently no formal group representing the traders. Conversations were held with traders in the course of the fieldwork but no formal workshop was held with them to discuss the project. The MTC indicated that the minimum number of trader

places or stalls required for viability is 220. This is therefore the figure that has been assumed in the design of the scheme but the structure is flexible such that it can be adjusted according to demand for space.

A number of meetings were held with Keith Atkins and other staff of the MTC to discuss trading space and management issues. Their ability to commit to an approach, however, has been hampered by uncertainty regarding their status and role.

SARCC/Intersite

Two meetings were held with Intersite and SARCC to discuss their land holdings and issues that may affect them or that they may have wanted to raise. The main issue they wanted to raise is related to the Faraday station. Peter Haan reported that it was their intention to extend the rail service to the East Rand in the medium to long-term. This means that the station should not be prejudiced by developments above, i.e., in the area the architects now refer to as Faraday Place, because the station may have to be extended to accommodate greater traffic. They would, however, be willing to consider proposals by developers for the land.

Regarding the abandoned building on their land holdings, the information provided was that there is a lease over the building that it is about to expire or has been defaulted by the leasee. Intersite wants a letter from JDA confirming intentions, budgets and programme before they will commence with any action to terminate the lease.

Local shopkeepers

Shopkeepers on the site have been informed about the project - more discussion to follow.

SURVEYS AND CONVERSATIONS – STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Commuters

The commuters can be divided into three categories: taxis, trains, and those on foot.

The interviewers handed out letters of introduction and explanation to commuters (see Appendix 2). Letters were not handed out in the morning as commuters were in a hurry, and only interested in the interviewers' verbal introduction. In the afternoon, English and Zulu letters were given to commuters who showed an interest, and also to the stationmaster and the platform ticket controllers, so that interviewers could go to the platform with respondents.

The interviews took place on Tuesday, 10 July, from 06h15 to 08h00 and again from 16h00 to 18h00 by four interviewers.

- Morning

The area starts to get busy just after 06h00 when people and taxis start appearing (there were no private cars and only one bus was observed). People start to come out of storage bins and shacks, and fires are lit. Hawkers put their goods out along the pavements and the shops open.

Morning commuters come mainly from the south: Soweto, Dobsonville, Orange Farm, Lawley, Ennerdale, Freedom Park (one white woman comes from Florida). They come mainly by taxi (into Sauer Street) and one person (from White City) by train. They then walk to Faraday, either to their place of work nearby in factories, shops or offices, or to get a connecting taxi to the south (Rosettenville, Bassonia) or the East Rand.

Interviewers focused on 'Westgate walkers'. Thirty-eight were interviewed walking from the Westgate taxi rank into Faraday Station. All 38 were workers, ie not people coming to shop, either at Faraday or in town. Most people accepted the interviewer's request to walk with them while asking questions. A few declined, stating reasons such as being in a hurry or just not wanting to talk. (The interviewers noted that the pedestrian paths are not clear and in some cases even dangerous.)

The commuters purchase snacks, sweet things and cigarettes from the hawkers on their way to work. A few may buy warm vetkoek or scones. They don't use the toilets – which only open at 07h00. Responses to the question of whether commuters shop at Faraday or not range from: some do shop there; some say there is nothing to shop for; some shop in town; and the place is not clean.

Although the morning commuters are directed and in a rush to get where they are going and the facilities are of little interest to them, hawkers are more numerous around the Faraday Street area in the morning than in the afternoon at the same place – when commuters have more time.

The time spent waiting for a taxi at Faraday is short, just until the taxi is full. Some of the commuters have been coming through Faraday for years, others only for a few months. Some come to or via Faraday morning and evening, some only in the evening. Many come this way five days a week, some less, a few on Saturdays. Some people go back a different route in the afternoon. In general commuters feel safe using the rank. Only a few men expressed concerns about crime in the area, but no women felt unsafe. The presence of many people is the reason given for no serious sense of insecurity. But commuters made a clear distinction between the place and taxis – there was a strong feeling that the taxis are unsafe and that taxis are driven badly.

On the other hand, the 'uncleanliness' of Faraday was cited again and again with people saying the place is 'unclean', 'dirty', 'untidy', 'unhealthy' and 'those people must go'. Out of 69 interviews only 2 people admitted to buying muti from the muti market. Commuters said that they go to a doctor if they get sick and that they don't buy muti – 'the muti might have expired and be a health hazard to me', 'those people make the place dirty', 'the muti market must be moved someone' and 'they must have stalls or something'. However, the interviewers noted that in all the time they spent at Farady the muti market itself was never unclean or untidy. On the contrary, each seller's area is demarcated, produce is neatly displayed, there are no papers lying about, the pavements are kept spotlessly clean. It would seem that negative responses to the muti market by the commuters reflects the absence of any relationship between the commuters and the sellers/healers, and an urban-rural bias, and a possible ethnic perception.

The commuters feel that Faraday could be improved with the addition of shops (most probably for afternoon shopping as they are in too much of a hurry to shop in the mornings); toilets; pedestrian crossings – and an improvement in taxi behaviour. The interviewers observed that the roads are dangerous for walking, pedestrians have a very narrow path, there are deep holes where concrete slabs are missing, hawkers take up space from the traffic light into the station area and consequently pedestrians are forced to face the taxis. At the Eloff street crossing traffic comes from all directions and there is no pedestrian right of way and within the Faraday area pedestrians have to grab each other out of the way of cars and taxis driving too fast and carelessly.

The bustle ends at around 08h00 when the pedestrian traffic stops – at this time the muti people lift up their plastic covers and come into the open.

- Afternoon

Thirty one people were interviewed in the afternoon/evening: nine entered the taxi yard from the service road from Wemmer/Jubilee; at Faraday Station, 10 from the east and six from the west entrances; three from Stott Street; and three from taxi to taxi in the yard. Most use the train five days a week, some use the train six times a week and one uses it seven days a week.

Without exception, the train commuters come to Faraday from their place of work – the East Rand, the city centre, Faraday surround, Alberton and the south – and head for home in Soweto, Sebokeng, Orange Farm and Lenasia. They do the reverse of what they did in the morning. Once at Faraday Station their waiting period varies from half an hour to one hour – this is due to trains being removed from the timetable without prior notice to commuters. Because they have more time on their hands there is much more casual shopping from hawkers who sell chicken portions, vegetables and cooked meat. Some people pick up groceries at Price Busters. People are very familiar with each other and socialise.

The afternoon train commuters like nothing about Faraday – especially not the muti people and they vehemently deny using muti. As with the morning commuters, no relationship exists between the commuters and the muti market. They also don't like the toilets in the station (not to be confused with the toilets in the muti market which are run by the council). Faraday station is also dangerous after 18h00: there is no lighting; shops close; toilets close; and muggings/theft take place, especially of cellphones at the end of the month.

The afternoon train commuters would like shops and toilets at the station (but certainly not an ATM!).

Again, the afternoon taxi commuters are mostly workers, but there were a few students. They come by foot or by taxi to catch another taxi (one came for a bus) and they are en route to Soweto and the Vaal Triangle. Their waiting time is about ten minutes, or until the taxi is full. They do this five or six days a week. The passage from Wemmer/Jubilee Road is dangerous for pedestrians, as taxis use the road and there's no pavement. Although the morning commuters complained about the driving of the taxis, the afternoon commuters did not make this comment! Very little shopping takes place (only one person catching a bus bought stuff at Millers).

Shops, toilets, shelters, increased security, removal of the muti people and a general upgrading of the area were all cited as what could be done to improve Faraday taxi rank.

As regards the question of 'housing in town', the responses depended entirely on the respondent's living situation. The train commuters for the most part are long-time township residents, who have housing in the township – in which case they will recently have obtained tenure, and therefore own and live in the most desired housing product available. Others are paying off bonds. However, people who said they were renting in backyards showed interest in possible 'town' -housing. Comments were made about the cost of transport, and the immediate proviso was raised about what rentals might be.

Taxi operators/drivers

Preliminary discussions were held with the three taxi associations in the area – Faraday, Imzameyethu and Diepmeadow (with 120 taxis between them) – and permission was refused to interview taxi drivers because the associations felt they would then want to be represented in 'the forum'. Eventually, after telephone conversations with each association 'permission' to talk to the drivers was granted and letters were sent to the associations confirming this and also requesting that marshals and drivers be informed that interviewers were coming. A letter in English and Zulu introducing the process (attached) was given to each person interviewed and 17 interviews were done: 12 with Faraday (of 80 taxis) and five with Imzamayethu (of 20 taxis). Interviews with the Diepmeadow association were abandoned as drivers did not appear until 15h30 when traffic started, and it was clear that no communication or arrangements for the interviews had taken place.