Housing in Yeoville-Bellevue: learning from low-income living in an inner city suburb

Sarah Charlton
Wits School of Architecture and Planning
28 February 2012
Housing in Yeoville-Bellevue

1. Portrait

2. Binaries and spectrums

3. Accounting for neglect

Comments on research and policy
Yeoville Studio is a research and learning initiative driven by a collaboration between the Wits School of Architecture and Planning and several community partners. It aims to produce research that is relevant, useful and of interest to the Yeoville community.

**Housing research and projects:**
- Housing Stories (2nd year architecture students) 2010
- Working and living in Yeoville (3rd year planning students) 2010
- Housing management stories: learning from 5 buildings in greater Yeoville (3rd year planning and politics students) 2011
- MScDP research report ‘Learning from the ‘informal’ rental market’(Simon Mayson) 2011 + 2012
Housing Roundtable Seminar Series

Yeoville Studio is convening a series of roundtable discussions to consider, from our experiences and research in the greater Yeoville context, the crucial matter of affordable housing in the inner city of Johannesburg. Speakers from Yeoville Studio will present alongside those from the broader inner city context.

Session 1: Accommodation Options

Session 2: Management Issues

Session 3: Housing, the Economy, and the Neighbourhood

Wednesdays 9, 16 & 23 November 2011
16:00 – 19:00

Session 1: New Seminar Room, John Moffat
Session 2 & 3: Postgraduate Seminar Room, South West Engineering Building

Yeoville Studio is a research and learning initiative, driven collaboratively by the Wits University School of Architecture and Planning, the Yeoville Stakeholders Forum, and the Yeoville Bellevue Community Development Trust, 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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Housing Roundtable Seminar Series

Session 1: Accommodation Options

Med Kwesiga, TUHF
Jak Koseff, CoJ
Lebo Mashego, AFHCO
Alison Wilson, Housing Consultant
Simon Mayson, MSc Development Planning Student
Kirsten Doermann, School of Architecture and Planning
Lone Poulsen, ACG Development Planners and Architects (Respondent)
Margot Rubin, Wits University and Housing Consultant (Session Chairperson)
Housing Roundtable Seminar Series

Session 2: Management issues

Rory Gallocher, Johannesburg Social Housing Company
Jens Pederson, Médecins Sans Frontierès
Zunaid Khan, City of Johannesburg Department of Housing
Claire Bénit-Gbaffou and Margot Rubin, Wits University School of Architecture and Planning
Kate Tissington, Socio Economic Rights Institute
Tanya Zack, Tanya Zack Development Planners (respondent)
Chairperson: Marie Huchzermeyer, Wits University School of Architecture and Planning
Session 3: Housing, the economy and the neighbourhood

Josie Adler, eKhaya Neighbourhood Programme
Tanya Zack, Tanya Zack Development Planners
Melinda Silverman, University of Johannesburg, architect and urban development consultant
Mpho Matsipa, School of Architecture and Planning, Wits University
Mamokete Matjomane, School of Architecture and Planning, Wits University
Yasmeen Dinath, researcher, NRF: SARChI, Development Planning and Modelling, Wits University (Respondent)
Neil Klug, School of Architecture and Planning, Wits University (Chairperson)
01.03.2010
Looking for 3 guys to share a big lockable bedroom. Rent R1800.
Contact 0823611768
Source: MScDP research report ‘Learning from the ‘informal’ rental market’ (Simon Mayson) 2011 + 2012
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RENTAL PER MONTH</th>
<th>TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION</th>
<th>INCOME PER MONTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R0</td>
<td>a shared room</td>
<td>R5600 (R1200 per week)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R0</td>
<td>floorspace in a room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R0</td>
<td>a room</td>
<td>R4800 (estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R100</td>
<td>part of a room</td>
<td>R1400 (estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R110</td>
<td>a room in a hostel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R300</td>
<td>part of a room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R450</td>
<td>a shared room</td>
<td>R300 (girlfriend assists with rent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R600</td>
<td>a flat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R650</td>
<td>part of a room</td>
<td>R500 - R800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R650</td>
<td>part of a room</td>
<td>R2000 (estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R700</td>
<td>most of a flat</td>
<td>R12000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R700</td>
<td>part of a room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R800</td>
<td>a shared flat</td>
<td>R1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R800</td>
<td>half a room</td>
<td>under R1000 (husband's contributes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R800</td>
<td>a room</td>
<td>R520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No info</td>
<td></td>
<td>R690 per day (turnover)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1000</td>
<td>a room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1100</td>
<td>a cottage</td>
<td>R1400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1200</td>
<td>a flat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1300</td>
<td>a room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1400</td>
<td>a room in a flat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1500</td>
<td>a flat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1500 + R800</td>
<td>a room + a workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1700</td>
<td>a room</td>
<td>R16000 (estimated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2500</td>
<td>a flat</td>
<td>R5000-R7000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plot profile: Free-standing house with 5 backyard rooms
Number of tenants: 28
Overall rent collected (inc services)
R13 500-R16 000 per month

Source: Housing management stories: learning from 5 buildings in greater Yeoville (3rd year planning and politics students) 2011
Source: Housing management stories: learning from 5 buildings in greater Yeoville (3rd year planning and politics students) 2011
Pennyville residents in stand-off with the Red Ants, November 15 2011 at 09:00am
The Sowetan
Source: Spaza shop keepers, the City and the Local ‘community’- The case of Yeoville. Matjomane, M 2011
Areas of debate

- Advocating for recognition and status in the eyes of the state and society
- Housing policy and strategies
- Other policies – eg public health
- Ways in which the state view areas of the city under pressure and conceptualises interventions
- Describing and explaining phenomenon


Accommodation as:

• access for the poor, a foothold in the city, a way of marginalised or excluded people gaining a spot from which to survive, and thrive.

Or

• contamination by poor and unruly people sullying prime land and bringing down property values, corrupting, destroying, undermining precious stock
Suppliers of housing as:

• unscrupulous landlords exploiting the poor and vulnerable

Or

• entrepreneurs, seeing a gap in the market and stepping in where the state and bigger private players have failed
The public environment is seen as

- developing a new richness, a quality of ‘urbanness’ lacking in many SA cities

Or

- as messy, unruly, and disorderly
In clearing buildings the City is

• a violator of human rights including the right to housing

Or

• Fulfilling its obligations to prevent unhealthy and unsafe conditions
Accounting for relative neglect

- Bigger political visibility of other housing crisis
- Faith in the housing programme as the solution
- Housing lens - tenure paradigm
- Complexity overwhelming.
- Operates without the state
- Hidden interests?
- Limited tenants mobilisation
Yeoville Studio Partners