

## Battle of the sign boards By Bev Mortimer

Too many estate agency boards have negative implications for St Francis Bay and are bad for business.

New rules are to be drawn up and should these not be obeyed illegal boards will be removed and there will be consequences.

This was the general consensus among seven St Francis Bay agents who attended a meeting hosted by St Francis Tourism and the SFB Residents Association (SFRRA). The meeting was called to address the situation about estate agents boards and the bylaw protecting it.

According to newly elected chairman of Tourism, Peet Kemp, local community associations and business owners said: "This is it! We have an obligation towards ourselves and our own investments to restore St Francis and surrounds to the beautiful place we fell in love with."

Chairman of the SFRRA, Nigel Alken said the overleaf of advertising of property has more negative implications than what is good for the seller. "We are here to discuss a workable situation taking control of what is important to us."

Meeting that access boards throughout the village and at major intersections are in fact bad for business. The principals of the seven estate agencies will meet this week to finalise a bylaw, within the law, suitable for the St Francis area.

"St Francis Tourism is happy to take responsibility of this project with the help of its members," Kemp, said. "But in return, offenders will have to contribute towards an earmarked community project, such as the entrance garden or a new community board."

"We won't stop here," Pest said, "before season we will address all outdoor signage, working within the Kouga bylaws to make sure excessive advertising and dilapidated signboards don't have a negative impact on visitors and tourism."

Commenting afterwards, John Cooper, principal of Harcourts said Harcourts and he personally fully support the Residents Association's initiative to call a meeting of agents to address the agents boards is due. "It has been too long overdue and needed to be addressed urgently."

"The meeting was very pro active and all stakeholders were agreeable that the boards needed to be addressed. Not all principals were present."

"Agents and agents need to take responsibility and to understand the Village image is bigger than the individual agent! The Village looks tacky, untidy and does not project a good impression."

"It was agreed that principals will meet this week to iron out the rules and put it in black and white for all agencies to sign the agreement. For this to bear fruit, we also agreed that there will be a fine if an agent does not adhere to it. Penalty to be paid to tourism to get board back, dedicated person to police the boards if not taken down within times agreed," Cooper continued.

"I believe the agreement can only work if their are consequences. Pay if guilty!"

"Other signage in town which is also illegal will also be addressed. Agents signage, signs for other signage in Village, what needs to be addressed. Lots of illegal signage: illegal occupation of buildings with illegal signage, signage from businesses outside of St Francis etc. Some agents suggested a total ban of boards it is not possible to ban all boards."

Cooper added that the Municipality does not have the manpower or competency level to attend to signage. "We as residents, business owners need to take control of our destiny and manage issues in our Village ourselves," he added.

Pam Golding's Richard Arderne said: "It would suit us to have boards banned completely, but we are not in a position to do that. We are happy to go along with any reasonable proposals to improve the image of St Francis Bay."

"All estate agents should be encouraged to be more considerate about taking their boards down on Mondays. We at Golding Properties have an employee whose sole job on Fridays and Mondays is to put up and take down boards, but he could be diverted to making signs on those days if boards are banned."

Mark of Enid Pretorius Properties believed it was a good and necessary meeting. She agreed all estate agent signs by the entrance to town and along the road into the village area are "an eye sore."

"It was agreed that there will be a meeting regarding the putting up and taking down of the signs -- such as that of putting them up on a Friday and then take them down on a Monday. If everyone operates things should be better," Marks said.

Pest concluded: "We want to go back to the days when the focus was on the natural beauty of our area, that is why people come here, and why others live here."

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Get more words you can make from the letters. No words to be less than 4 letters. Every word has to contain the middle, bold letter. The goal is to also find the nine letter words. No plural nouns, capital letters, slangs or foreign language words (except those accepted in the English dictionary). This month's goal: 203 words excellent, 30 words good, 50 words fair. The solution is on p18



SAPS 042 200 1817/ 10111

Calibre Security

042 294 0038

G4S 042 294 1303

Smhart Security

0861 10 15 16

NSRI 042 294 0131

Doctors 042 294 0047;

042 294 0719

Ambulance 10177;

Private Ambulance: 042 291 0749

Fire department:

042 291 0283

Flooding:

Willie Botha: 082 857 2253

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: 042 291 0250

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