



Artist's impression of the new Muizenberg police station.

## Police station plans under fire

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RESIDENTS and community organisers traded ideas on how best to protest against the proposed R100-million Muizenberg police station, debating the merits of demonstrations outside Parliament against an indefinite occupation of the SAPS headquarters, at a Saturday meeting in Khayelitsha.

The Social Justice Coalition (SJC), which has been campaigning for more equitable distribution of police resources since September, called the meeting.

Sixty-plus people attended, with many recounting how poor and under-resourced policing have left their communities unsafe.

In September, SJC. Equal

Education and the Nyanga CPF sued the SAPS for disproportionately distributing police resources toward "wealthier and whiter" communities.

The Muizenberg station project, announced on April 6, has become a symbol of that inequality. Nyanga has one station yet it has been named the "murder capital of South Africa" each of the past five years.

SAPS says it is waiting to secure a location for a police station in Nyanga, but it has failed to find one over the past three years.

The SJC contends Muizenberg needs a police station but they say it's in the wrong place. SAPS is seeking to renovate and expand the old station, a 112-year-old building in a middle-class area. To expand it,

the city will have to blow up the side of a mountain, SJC researcher Dali Weyer said, which would account for part of the steep cost.

"Our question is, 'Did the Department of Public Works ever look for a different piece of land, potentially a piece of land closer to where the majority of people that district services live and could it have been cheaper?'" Weyer said.

Frank Bokhorst, the CPF chairperson for Muizenberg, said he had met the neighbourhood watch groups for the suburb's wealthier communities and they agreed that the station should be placed in Vrygrond.

Yet even if these communities agree, the plan for the R100m station is still active.