



The Magazine of the
National Urban Development Policy
Special Edition | February 2014

stadt:pilot special

Generating Effective Public Participation

- ▶ Which interests are pursued by whom?
- ▶ What role do the right methods play?
- ▶ How does participation culture take shape?

National Urban Development Policy:
a Joint Initiative by the Federal, State
and Local Governments

Editorial

Civic participation has been a vital part of integrated urban development in Germany for some time now. Hardly a project, hardly a procedure in which citizens are not participated. Civil participation with two stages in formal planning procedures – one early and a second for decision preparation – is considered exemplary. However, even these forms of public participation formalized in the 1970s have come under increasing criticism over the past years: too schematic, too intransparent, and finally and foremost: too intangible in their impact on the real world. So it seems about time to give it all a very close look.

What kind of participation are we talking about? Who wants to, who can and who should be involved? How can different stakeholders in the planning process find a common language? And who is the source of the decisive impulses – city residents, or city officials and investors? The often responded demand to “do more participation” is not enough. To the contrary, this harbours the risk of starting off prematurely under unclear circumstances. Many participation procedures stall or even fail in this manner, because framework conditions are not stated clearly, questions are posed perhaps half-heartedly or not at all, out of a fear of difficult answers. If the results are then not duly taken into account in further planning, the next stage can easily be hardened fronts, civic protest and the oft-cited German “Wutbürger” [angry citizens].

The National Urban Development Policy, for which the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) is responsible, is a joint initiative of the federal government and the states, cities and municipalities in Germany. In this setting, the topic of public participation was addressed in the project series “City and Urbanity”. In addition to various conferences and a youth competition focused on this subject, over the past two years 15 exemplary pilot projects were monitored, supported and evaluated, following a country-wide project call with significantly more than 200 candidates. Despite the different planning issues, standards and urgencies, they had a common goal: leaving established paths and developing transparent processes to enter a conversation with the citizens in a trustworthy manner. The results of these projects are now visible and provide opportunities for reflection and learning.

With the aim of nurturing such reflections, “workshop conversations” have been established in the framework of the National Urban Development Policy. Which is why in early 2013, representatives of the pilot projects, planners and investment experts from Germany and abroad met with researchers and administrative staff in Munich, to discuss citizen participation for three days at the site of a pilot project. The outlook extended beyond individual procedures. How can the “effects” of civic participation be improved, and how can positive “after-effects” be reached? How can the ground for greater participation culture be consolidated?

The results of these workshop conversations were the basis for a special edition of the *stadt:pilot* published in June 2013. *stadt:pilot* is a magazine that was created in 2009 by the former Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development (BMVBS) and its subordinate authority, the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR), and is published once or twice a year. It covers the pilot projects of the National Urban Development Policy in the context of current questions of integrated urban development.

This issue is a special English-language edition edited for an international readership. Selected reports from the pilot projects, guest contributions, interviews and other information on the topic are gathered here.* We hope we can offer international readers an interesting and lucid excerpt of the ongoing discussions on public participation in Germany.

The magazine opens with two first-person accounts (see right page) of the early days of public participation in Germany in the 1970's. Next are reports from various pilot projects, plus an example from the Netherlands. They exemplify what good practices in complex social conditions can look like and what challenges they must overcome. Subsequently, experts discuss the state of affairs and strategies for the future. This issue concludes with a number of recommendations for the strategic use of instruments and methods. The central insight: If you look closely, think about participation and planning procedures as a correlated process, then you can ask pertinent questions. And whoever is willing to do that will listen to the answers carefully and create favourable circumstances for a strong culture of participation.

Not all of the terminology used here will be common knowledge throughout our European readership (or beyond), which is why a short glossary has been added at the end of this issue. References to further English-language reading on National Urban Development Policy and the German planning system have been added as well. We hope you enjoy the read!

* All contributions in the magazine reflect the state of affairs at the time of its original German publication in June 2013.

Flashback

The Drilling of Thick Planks by Carola Scholz



I've lived in Frankfurt am Main since 1975 and in this piece I would like to call to mind two Frankfurt "resident heroes" who led successful fights against property speculation and urban destruction – and won them in the end, with their perseverance and incorruptibility. In the 1960s and 70s, Odina Bott headed a 700-strong initiative that fought against the destruction of Frankfurt's foundation-era [Gründerzeit] West End, together with the students' urban squatting rebellion of the time. Their efforts are to thank for the development freeze of later years, the West End development plan and an ordinance of the State of Hessen against housing misappropriation in the early 1970s. When I was elected for the local council, the admirable West End

fighter only was a committee member for her parliamentary group. But her commitment and empathy for the needs of the district were unyielding and tireless. Paraphrasing Max Weber, she told me, the committee rookie: "Politics is the long and tedious drilling of thick planks." Odina Bott passed away in 2000, 77 years old. In West End, a small square commemorates the "resident hero".

I met Hannelore Kraus, owner of a small inn in Frankfurt's Gutleutviertel district, at the beginning of my time as a council member in Frankfurt (1989). She also – almost by herself – won an urban housing fight: against the so-called Campanile, a 268 meter skyscraper that was supposed to be built between Hauptbahnhof – the main train station – and the Gutleutviertel quarter. At the end of the 1980s, the magistrate wanted to implement a so-called new urbanism as the guiding model, including a "new generation of skyscrapers". A few hours before the municipal election in March 1989, the head of the building authority was instructed to grant a partial construction permit for the extremely controversial tower which was supposed to become Europe's tallest high-rise building. It was known that Hannelore Kraus' neighbourly consent, a prerequisite for the construction of the tower, was missing. Hannelore Kraus hadn't been impressed by either the government's skyscraper-urbanism myths, or the 5 million Euros that the investment group had offered her. She never gave her neighbourly consent. A later city government was able to take back the permit. The project remains unrealized to this day.

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A Rethink by Peter Zlonicky



Langenberg today: the railroad track at the bottom of the frame, the bypass built in the meanwhile in the upper left corner

1970: A young city planner wins an urban design competition for the historic centre of Langenberg, receives the assignment to develop a redevelopment masterplan plan, becomes conflicted about it ... and gives the assignment back. What happened? There is a highway in the valley, running right through the oldest part of town. The idea of a bypass is deemed problematic: Interference with the landscape of Bergisches Land, with gardens and residential areas would be unavoidable. The jury sees a solution of striking simplicity in the first prize's idea for a different traffic route. The road could be routed above the railroad line. There would be no problems with the topography, no direct encroachment of private property. During the public meeting of the local council, discontent could be felt in the audience: An elevated road, close to the upper stories of the houses next to the railroad tracks? How far will the noise reach beyond the buildings? How intrusive are

the plans exactly? A first action group writes a petition, argues emphatically, hands out leaflets. The planner has second thoughts: "Is there something here that I haven't taken into account, that I underestimated? Obviously the people affected directly have a viewpoint that I did not see in my models." The council sticks to its decisions, there are talks with the action group, the planner asks for the annulment of his contract.

This experience changed my view of cities: existing buildings and structures, residents, participation need a different quality of planning. In 1971 the Städtebauförderungsgesetz [promotion of urban development law] introduces the social plan, in 1976 the Federal Building Law ushers in early public participation. Nothing ever stays the same? Well, other stories remain untold.

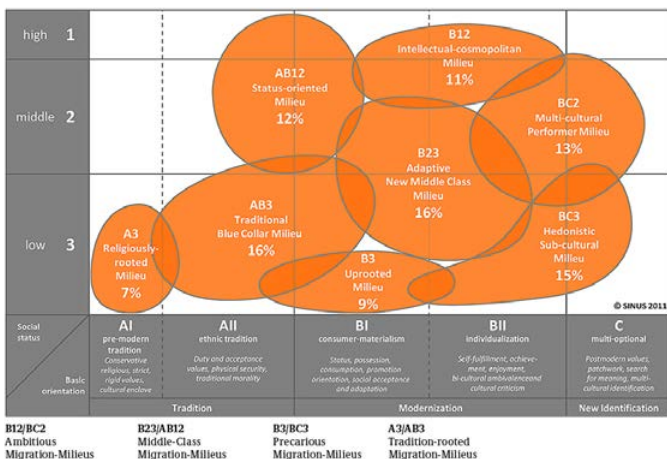
The author is an urban planner, professor of urban design and member of the board of trustees for Germany's National Urban Development Policy.

How Ludwigsburg Searches for New Players in Urban Development Involvement Welcome

An urban development concept that is devised with some degree of public participation, is acknowledged by the municipal council and then turned into a lovely illustrated brochure and filed away? Not in Ludwigsburg. Here, one talks about a “participatory process that reacts to current developments”.

The first two Future Conferences took place in 2005 and 2006 – 96 citizens worked together with 16 representatives of the city administration and municipal council, developing visions and principles in the first part. The second part then focused on lead projects, measures and networks for implementation. As the common thread for civic participation, it was agreed to hold a Future Conference every three years, to review the progress of the concept and specific implementation suggestions. In this “learning” process of urban development, Ludwigsburg seeks out intensive dialogue with other municipalities – including partners in the vhw city network. “Citizen-oriented integrated urban development” is the task the 15 member municipalities so far have cut out for themselves. The vhw (Federal Association for Urban Development and Housing) supports them in this endeavour, with milieu analyses, among other things: In other words, it observes closely which living environments and lifestyles influence residents’ view of the city or their willingness to participate, and how. The respective interests and the disposition to join in deviate from milieu to milieu. “The toolset offers possibilities to establish assessments and develop strategies on this basis” describes Dr. Thomas Kuder, responsible for the vhw workshops on integrated urban development /dialogue. It was well known who had made use of available participation in Ludwigsburg so far. “In the preparatory phase for the Future

Conference in 2012, we asked ourselves: Who haven’t we reached yet? How can we widen our participation processes even further?” says Tobias Großmann who works at the department for sustainable urban development. In particular, immigrants and young people were not represented equivalent to their share of the population. The people in Ludwigsburg were able to change that – and not only because twice as many participants were invited as in 2005, 2006 and 2009. A project week in cooperation with a local grammar school had introduced the students to the unwieldy term urban development – afterwards the step to active participation in the Future Conference was a small one. The internet platform www.MeinLB.de, created in the course of a pilot project for National Urban Development Policy, is an important instrument to better embed participation possibilities and especially to support the discussion of opportunities for involvement. It went online shortly before the Future Conference took place and is a companion of urban activities since, e.g. with video contributions. At the same time it wants to enable urban development from the bottom up by letting anyone from Ludwigsburg who wants to initiate projects and search partners for their implementation. While the outlook for the platform seems good thanks to the tightly knit connection between online and offline formats, a few months of test operations were enough to make clear that community management will remain an ongoing effort for which viable solutions will have to be found after current funding runs out. And ‘digital residents’ who participate via internet platforms still are not at home in all milieus. While it is a goal that www.MeinLB.de reaches the immigrant population in due time, the planners are observant of the fact that they have to pursue other avenues in order to win over these fellow citizens for greater participation in urban development. vhw and Q / Agentur für Forschung [agency for research] led 31 interviews with Ludwigsburg residents from different cultures and ethnic groups in the summer of 2012. This took into account that the immigrant milieus are just as nuanced as the majority society. The goal was not only to find out something about personal needs, interests and attitudes concerning civic involvement and participation – the aim was also to collect contacts that might



Sinus milieus are an instrument with which immigrants can be analyzed with the same degree of differentiation as the majority society. Successful participation strategies should take this into account.



Future conference in Ludwigsburg, 2012: A mirror of the milieus of urban society

serve as a foundation for further developments at a later date. For the Future Conference, this proved to be viable, at least in principle: as reported in an evaluation by the city network, it was “younger, more female and more immigrant” in 2012 than in prior years. But on the neighbourhood level it remained difficult to achieve participation among immigrants equivalent to their distribution throughout the milieus. They are approached via opinion leaders, for example in the international culture associations. “They are not mere bystanders, but collaborate at eye level. When the goal is to improve the living environment in a neighbourhood, cultural backgrounds take a back seat” comments Saliou Gueye, the commissioner for integration in Ludwigsburg. But not nearly everyone who could or would like to get involved actually comes to the events. In the course of the current compilation of neighbourhood development plans, the department for sustainable urban development takes the insight into account that not all milieus can be reached with the same medium. Tender documents for a collaborative planning procedure were first presented at an event, and then complemented by those present. Afterwards vhw conducted telephone interviews on a random selection basis. Their results now round out the

documentation. All this is not only a lot of work, it also necessitates a smart bundling of resources. This can only work because Ludwigsburg has been breaking new ground in terms of administration as well: the “sustainable urban development” department is nearing its fifth birthday. As a cross-sectional department, it reports to the mayor directly. The workforce-neutral merging of responsibilities from three departments was a prerequisite for connecting and progressing the eleven subject fields of the urban development concept. As a result, the combination of different funding and research programmes in terms of a holistic participation approach becomes possible as well: In this vein, the qualitative study on the participation of people with an immigration background was funded by the BMBF [Federal Ministry of Education and Research] in the course of the project Zukunfts-WerkStadt [future workshop city], the question “How can we complete the energy turnaround together?” is being dealt with in the framework of an INTERREG project, and National Urban Development Policy made the multi-media elements possible.

More Information (mostly in German):
www.ludwigsburg.de, www.MeinLB.de

Perspective

Ludwigsburg is an example that shows how citizen participation can be integrated into urban planning sustainably and effectively. The Civic Participation Research Centre assesses citizen participation in a comparison of the criteria a) inclusion, b) effectiveness, c) citizens’ empowerment and d) quality. Using this as a guideline, this process proves to be a good practical model for citizen participation: a) Inclusion: Thanks to the solicitation of milieus that are not actively involved yet, more than the already active citizens are reached (low “socio-economic distortion”). b) The fact that citizen participation is not approached as a one-off signifies that citizens’ contributions are taken seriously. If this stops working, it should make itself felt immediately in the success rate of the next invitation. c) Offering those involved in the process broad and extensive information can help activate and strengthen their role as citizens. d) I see the greatest opportunities for improvement in the quality of the implementation of the procedure: Can those who were not previously active form an uninfluenced opinion, or do those citizens have an advantage who are rhetorically adept and have greater previous knowledge (avoidance of jury effects)?

Overall this shows that the process now is well established and that the city of Ludwigsburg can indeed claim to be a role model. It is to be hoped that this trend-setting participation model will be continued for a long time and can serve as an example for citizen-oriented integrated urban planning in other cities.

Dr. Volker Mittendorf is head of the department for direct democracy at the Research Centre of Civic Participation at the University of Wuppertal and belongs to the advisory board of the vhw city network.

Who Participates Whom in St. Pauli (and Saarbrücken) or ... “... what is this Gentrifwhatchamacallit, anyway?”

Changes in the neighbourhood sometimes happen a little too quickly for the people in Hamburg-St. Pauli. The aim of GWA St. Pauli e. V. therefore is to give them a voice, help them network and bring them together with policy makers. Looking to learn from each other, the Hamburgers therefore recently invited colleagues from the Saarbrücken pilot project. There, in the Malstatt district, the residents also organize themselves and increasingly take on responsibility for their quarter.



“There are so many different people in the district who are engaged in its development – this is a huge wealth of knowledge”, says Janne Kempe, neighbourhood coordinator with GWA (Gemeinswesenarbeit – community work) St. Pauli e. V., based at Hein-Köllisch-Platz square close to the world-famous Reeperbahn. She coordinates the pilot project “St. Pauli selber machen” [approximately “DIY St. Pauli”], aimed at turning the tables: Not administration, policy makers and investors enlisting the participation of residents, but the other way round. The people in the neighbourhood should know and understand what is happening, know their rights and options for action. Attractively located between the developmental poles HafenCity and Neue Mitte Altona, prestigious projects have been realized over the past few years including the “Dancing Towers”, designed by the architectural firm BRT, or the Bernhard-Nocht-Quartier with high-class apartments, benefiting the whole of the growing city of Hamburg. But rents and purchase prices for housing are reaching new heights. In the view of many residents, decisions about the projects are made without their consent. Since more than 35 years, the GWA is close to this reality, knows structures, sensitivities, important places. In its opinion, St. Pauli should retain its reputation as a tolerant and lively district, even in ten years’ time. Currently a lot of energy is flowing into the controversy over prominent objects like the Niebuhr high-rise or the ESSO Houses at Spielbudenplatz, whose future is unclear. “Information transfer to the places that are affected by restructuring”, consequently is one of Janne Kempe’s goals. And the ‘12-point plan as a ripcord against gentrification’, for which

a petition campaign currently is ongoing, takes things a bit further: “Disclosure of all plans” and “take nothing for granted” are central demands.

Gentrification = “Alles Schickimicki”

The articulation of inhabitants’ interests is supported in many ways. With the help of project partners at the Hamburg universities, innovative formats have been developed within the framework of the pilot project. Sabine Stövesand, Professor for Social Work, advises the team of GWA St. Pauli e. V. and helps the inhabitants with their wishes workshop. But it is one thing to express wishes, but quite another to make them come true! Many years ago in the course of protests against a construction project, this is how a small park (“Park Fiction”) designed by residents and overlooking the harbour was formed in the neighbourhood, which is very popular today. In addition, Prof. Jesko Fezer from the Studio for Experimental Design and his students offer free design consultation for residents. They help with the design for a pub, develop bar tables for chats in the hallway or help make small apartments more usable with a few simple measures. In this vein, creating solutions for everyday problems occasionally triggers activities in the neighbourhood. The people living on Hein-Köllisch-Platz square are very familiar with the connections and goings-on in their neighbourhood, even if gentrification in their words is “alles Schickimicki” – it’s all just fancy schmancy.

Translating things into simple, understandable language and creating structures to directly approach residents, that is what the GWA staff does every day, with residents, nightclub operators and shop owners. They take on more responsibility now, plan small activities like the flower planting last spring or organize exhibitions in public spaces. They also were an instrumental part of many of the events at the Protest Culture Week just recently. Relations with administration and policy makers are good. With representatives of the municipality and the parliamentary groups of the district assembly, there have been coordination meetings and round tables, some with the participation of investors. Increasingly, it is people from St. Pauli itself that take up positions or make a stand. From the perspective of the municipality office director Andy Grote, the ESSO

Houses (possibly also the Niebuhr high-rise) are probably “the last areas in south St. Pauli where clashes with large-scale investor planning are still to be expected.” Now the highest goal is the preservation of existing architectural and social structures. The preferred development perspective is “a moderate densification to increase the proportion of subsidized housing, but without serious interference with the streetscape”. Since 2008 there is an urban, and since 2012 a social, conservation ordinance. In future, these instruments should have greater impact.

On the Way to a Culture of Participation?

But one can also learn from others. Which is why in March, colleagues from the pilot project “Bottom Up!” in Saarbrücken came for a visit. There in the Malstatt neighbourhood, another approach to urban development is being applied from within community organizing. Anne-Marie Marx has 30 years of experience in this area and currently is coordinator of the neighbourhood organization “Malstatt – gemeinsam stark!” [Malstatt – strong together! – MaGS] She witnessed the decline of the mining industry and the ensuing structural transformation,

“years of depression throughout the region”, as she describes it. MaGS succeeded in spreading a bit of optimism. Using methods from community organizing, numerous requests to improve the situation in the neighbourhood were



St. Pauli meets Saarbrücken



The “Dancing Towers” and the ESO Houses, plus Hamburg weather

developed in individual interviews, distilling public opinion in four action groups, and presented at a neighbourhood meeting. The administration will comment on the implementability of the measures in the summer. This approach shall become routine over the next few years. In St. Pauli, too, the aim is to work on such a structured dialogue. According to office director Grote, the situational strategy shall be continued in the future: “For the area, there is no cookie-cutter approach regarding civic participation. The formats must be customized and project-related, as in the past.” At GWA, thinking is headed towards a process-linked participation culture. “The district should provide facilities on-site in the neighbourhood as a permanent means of participation”, says Janne Kempe, because “the people in the negotiation processes will only have an enduring voice via continuous efforts that go beyond individual projects.” Exciting times in St. Pauli (and in Saarbrücken, too).

Perspective

Community Work as a Starting Point for Urban Development

Community work [Gemeinwesenarbeit – GWA] is aligned with the development of a functioning community, and not with the implementation of a subsidized project. This is the great difference and advantage over the participation processes with a direct connection to temporary measures and funding sources that have (almost) become the rule of municipal routine. Stemming from the context of subsidized projects, they come with a risk of limiting conceptual scope; access often comes with a high threshold, connections to the lives and settings of many residents are lacking, who more often than not have more pressing concerns than the improvement of the neighbourhood. Community work on the other hand has a broader approach, is aimed at educational processes as much as at specific improvements of material conditions in the neighbourhood. It is long-term in nature, and very flexible regarding communication with, approach to and integration of residents in the neighbourhood: the goal is not that people implement their preconceived notions and interests in a project as quickly as possible. Instead individuals come together, with their wishes and feelings – creating a setting for new ideas and suggestions for improvements.

In Hamburg-St. Pauli, many projects show that it is possible to position residents’ wishes against investor interests from within community work, and pursue a usage- and needs-based, just form of urban development, even under developmental pressure. And this can be organized within comparably small budgets. If one were to aspire to a culture of participation, as the German Association of Cities demands, then the support and funding of community work at the municipal level would, in my view, surely be part of it.

Simon Güntner is a Professor for Social Sciences at the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HaW-Hamburg). He supports GWA St. Pauli e. V. in the pilot project, e.g. with the moderation of meetings.

The High Art of Participation

The Citizen as Placemaker

Co-decision, decision-making and self-government describe three levels of participation. They are particularly suited to projects involving civil society groups that become agents in urban development. For municipal politics, planning management, and also for the participating citizens themselves, this represents a great challenge. All roles are defined anew: policy makers must stick to outline decisions, planning management must open up the planning procedure for the cooperation with users, and the participants themselves must assume responsibility for the shaping of the urban environment. Motivations can vary. In Munich, creatives are included directly in the development of plans for the re-use of central buildings. In Dutch Almere, a new neighbourhood is being created where future residents themselves will be able to plan and build with the greatest possible freedom.



This is what it could look like: impression taken from the award-winning design by the TELEINTERNETCAFE planning team

Munich: Developing a Platform for Placemakers

How can you turn creatives and artists who have been creating temporary uses in an urban conversion area for years into placemakers, participate them directly in the development of a diverse location for living, culture and knowledge? You develop a platform format where they can not only communicate with other interested parties, but also devise plans together. Munich's Department of Culture and Department of Urban Planning and Building Regulations followed this route for the development of the Kreativquartier on Dachauer Straße. Successfully. The first step was to use the platform to carry out a competition of ideas to find the best design and usage concept and an administrative model for two huge landmarked buildings. In future, the buildings should offer space to work not only for the creatives who had already created temporary solutions for themselves, but also for others from around the Munich area. More than 100 participants came right at the start. In the end, 24 teams were formed and put themselves to the ambitious task. In a series of workshops, they received dedicated expert support. Finally, five groups were selected for the further qualification

of their concepts in July 2012. Starting out as a user, they can become a project developer, and finally the project's umbrella agency. The first step of creating space is complete. Sometimes developments gain momentum from an unlikely source. In May 2012, the idea competition's jury awarded the prize for the urban and landscape planning for the development of the overall site. The winning design by the team led by the Berlin planning office TELEINTERNETCAFE proposes a cautious approach rather than extensive demolition. So the many existing creative usages also become the spatial starting point for urban diversity, ready to radiate into the whole neighbourhood. This has positive repercussions for the development of the two buildings. Jutier Halle and Tonnenhalle [Barrel Hall, a former munitions production site named for its architecture] are no longer just a "receptacle", but two of the numerous features forming the character of this quarter. In late February 2013, the jury of the idea competition consequently selected the entry "Tonnenviertel" [Barrel Quarter] by the Membran Urban team. As stated in the explanatory memorandum, it "enables – particularly due to its architecturally and spatially convincing idea – the open and multi-disciplinary, processual development of the two halls". And it corresponds with the equally open development of the whole area. So what's next? The next participation-related question needs to be posed. Because the role of the creatives as placemakers will change now. But do the creatives actually want this to happen? At least not all of them. "I'm a sculptor, too, so I can't spend all my time with the development of the neighbourhood, nor do I want to. In the end,



Participants of the five groups who qualified for the second round of the competition "Kreativen Raum schaffen" [creating creative space]

active participation should lead to a greater space that encourages artistic production" says Christian Schnur, head of the artists' atelier in Hall 6. But administration planners also have

to ponder how much to ask of the creatives when it comes to participation. To better formulate the current focus issues in the planning process, four similarly ambitious projects from Linz, Basel, Hamburg and Rotterdam were invited recently to share experiences. Where should specific plans commence? Can the competition platform be extended and become a permanent opportunity for placemakers and other actors?

At a later point in time, this will include investors who want to realize residential projects on Dachauer Straße. Will they get involved in the collaborative process with the placemakers and join the platform? If so, will it be possible to turn the special flair of the area and its users into the quarter's defining quality in a cooperative process?

Almere: "Do It Yourself Urbanism"

The legal framework in which owners can plan, build and subsequently alter buildings is quite restricted in most cities. Too restricted in some situations, says the Dutch architecture and urban planning office MVRDV. They have turned the tables on traditional top-down urban planning and conceived 'city' from a radically user-oriented vantage point.

How can citizen's interests and initiatives develop freely? How much freedom is possible, and how many rules are necessary? Can a city organize itself, for the largest part, with little or no administration? "Freeland" is the resulting concept. For the new district of Oosterwold in Almere, MVRDV have expanded it into a development strategy – a huge testing ground for urbanism in the making. Ultimately, MVRDV have posed the question

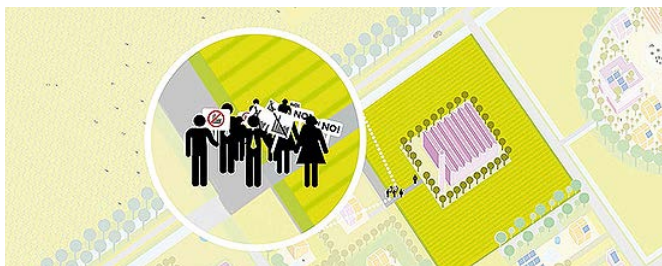
of participation in relation to actual self-governance. From this vantage point, they search for – in a figurative sense – the right method for urban development: "Freeland". The central idea of the concept is liberty. It is considered both in the sense of libertarianism, and of tolerance, benevolence and consideration. Because not everyone can do exactly what they want, of course. "Freedom comes", as an animated trailer for "Freeland" puts it, "hand-in-hand with responsibility". However the citizens of Oosterwold will not only look upon their neighbours with moderation and maybe generosity, but cooperate with them, too. For all aspects of infrastructure normally outsourced to local governments need to be taken care of by the citizens themselves – right up to energy and food production and design procurement. The benefits of the highly regulated and preconceived-by-planners city hardly exist in Oosterwold:

Instead citizens are radically liberated to build what they want, within a set of logical constraints that preserve the area's quality. There is an online planning instrument, "The Housemaker", that helps the builder with the construction of her house, and for urban design, "The Landmaker" is on hand with advice, also a matchmaker between future inhabitants.

This sounds both exhausting and fascinating. How does such a "free land" organize itself? What rules get thought up, ad-hoc, aimed at making coexistence pleasant – with all that freedom and tolerance, and smoothly running garbage collection as well? Whether it achieves a new degree of democratic participation or levels off with partnership and outsourcing is yet to be seen. At any rate, an exciting experiment!



The possibilities to follow individual ideas as citizens, owners or tenants when implementing something, are strictly limited in many urban areas



An individual's maximum freedom can unfold only in relation to the interests of neighbours



In Oosterwold – almost anything goes

Civic Voices from the Pilot Projects

"(...) Politicians and citizens working together is a nice ideal, but establishing citizen participation is hard work. This should not surprise or disappoint anyone. Citizens are busy with the present. Challenges at work, (...) child-care, house building and, if there is any time left, a hobby, holiday trips and social life determine everyday life. Citizens feel neither responsible nor well-equipped for shaping the future. This is considered the quintessential task of (...) elected representatives."

Participant in civil workshops, Coburg

"I think it's important that people help design the place where they live, wherever they're from originally."

Integration commissioner of the city of Ludwigsburg

MARGINS

CHANCES

FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

PARTICIPATION

DESIGN

"Citizens must be involved, even if this seems difficult for some people in politics and public administration. Timely information about complex issues creates transparency. The electoral successes of the Pirate Party show – or they should – that more and more citizens are sick of merely serving as ballot fodder, and being brushed off with 'inevitable' comments again afterwards."

Civic comment from the comments section at <http://hannover.zukunftsbild.net>, Hanover

"(...) I already participated in the redevelopment of the Kirchberg area and I think that what we achieved together is worth it. In the Spaces and Places action group, I help keep this up so that Kirchberg becomes and remains a nice place for all."

Resident of Malstatt, Saarbrücken

"The idea was: If we plant something, residents will come down and ask: 'What are you doing?'; that a conversation can then develop, and that we can then tell them why we are even carrying out a wishes workshop. And some of them then actually said: 'We could also do this, and what about that...' We were thrilled."

Long-time resident of the ESSO Houses during the wishes workshop at the ESSO Houses St. Pauli, Hamburg

"It's good that the citizen advisory board is also on Facebook now."

From the open citizens meeting, Apolda

"Landscape is not destroyed by wind turbines. Is 'destruction of the landscape' not a point of view of an older generation and therefore a generational problem?"

17-year-old student on the compatibility of the expansion of wind energy with the goals of landscape protection, Region of Hanover

TIME HORIZON
LASTING
PROCESSES
CONTRASTING MINDSETS
VIEWPOINTS
DIFFERENT APPROACHES
MEDIA VARIETY

"In the long term some wishes or ideas are ill-considered. I'm thinking of different generations, today your suggestion might be good, 10 years later you might decide differently; a teenager today, and in ten years' time, maybe a mother/father of a child etc. (...)"

Citizen comment on the collection of requests for the transformation of the Main river bank, Aschaffenburg

"Sustainable participation is based on local knowledge, receptiveness for simple and concrete proposals from the population, as well as credible communications established over time. It simply is not enough to keep calling for the responsible citizen and then deprive him of taking part in the practical implementation of citizen participation. (...)"

From the discussion in the council of spokespersons of the citizens advisory committee on the continuation of participation after the end of the pilot project, Apolda

"1. Citizen participation should take place before the architectural competition, or else some specific citizen requests cannot be integrated into the work of the architect. For example the plan proposed by many here in the forum, to move private transport underground. (...) 2. The participating citizens should have an idea of the costs needed to realize specific plans. Otherwise, all suggestions are placed on a wobbly footing. I can't go shopping without checking my wallet first."

Comment on a post in the online forum for the City Bahnhof Ulm train station, Ulm

"I think, more than anything, you have to learn to endure. Some things take just a little longer. You could see the development of this area as the development of a social sculpture, a kind of mobile in motion."

Choreographer in the Kreativquartier [creative quarter], Munich

"Now I finally know what you have to struggle with all the time."

A sculptor addressing two city administration officials during a planning workshop; a nice example for the growth of mutual understanding, Munich

CANDOUR TRANSPARENCY

UNDERSTANDING EXPERIENCES

"Our car costs us 30 cents per km (...). If the car sharing price is higher, that would rule it out."

Resident's opinion from the mobility survey, Greifswald

"Because the kids need to be driven to school, to therapy sessions, recreational activities, sports events or doctor's visits, you often are dependent on a car, not to mention shopping. How could that work with car sharing?"

Resident's opinion from the mobility survey, Greifswald

CONDITIONS CONSENSUS-BUILDING POSITIONS WISHES

DIVERSITY OF NEEDS AND VALUES

"I think the idea of car sharing is great. It would allow me to go on trips with friends, regardless of bus routes & timetables, or occasionally even major shopping trips without having to own a car myself. (...) We want car sharing!"

Resident's opinion from the mobility survey, Greifswald

"Great idea! But it must be affordable enough for students, or else we won't use it."

Resident's opinion from the mobility survey, Greifswald

A Real Culture of Participation Makes Our Cities Stronger

At the end of the last decade, several events called the certainty of urban planners into doubt that they were headed in the right direction concerning public participation. Even the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development and the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR) detected this insecurity in their observations of the field, and addressed it at various levels. Including national urban development policy. So where to, now? What has to be done to foster the growth of a greater culture of participation in our cities? Stephan Willinger from BBSR asked Dr. Konrad Hummel, the mayor's commissioner for conversion in Mannheim.

Stephan Willinger: Dr. Hummel, if you look at the current debate of citizens' participation, what stands out?

Dr. Konrad Hummel: I am under the impression that public participation currently is shedding its skin once again. We suddenly are dealing with citizens in participation whom we would never have expected ten years ago. Today there are groups that conduct so-called go-ins – petition drives and other activities – in a professional manner, and these are not disadvantaged but privileged citizens. For a city's policy and administration, this means that we don't reach some parts of the city population at all. In those cases, we're chasing our own tails with our established methods of participation. On the contrary, my concern has always been to see every citizen as part of civic participation.

Willinger: Is our definition of civic participation in urban development too narrow? Do administrations ask too many questions that are of interest only to themselves, and do they neglect to take citizens' interests into account?



Dr. Konrad Hummel

Hummel: I can only talk of Mannheim, of course. Our city administration certainly has already achieved a lot in the course of its administrative reforms ("Change Mannheim" was the key word). But my experience is that more has to be done before the dependable management of the complexities of

integrated urban development is a reality. 50% of my work consists in the coordination of five huge departments, so that they then get just-in-time decisions right, in communicating with the public and in negotiations with businesses. This kind of interaction is in line with the classical governance process described so wisely in research. But implementing this is very difficult. Our instruments still cannot keep up with expectations of flexible action.

Willinger: In this respect, you describe a fight between old and new patterns of participation. So we are in a transitional phase. Where is participation in the framework of planning processes headed?

Hummel: In the history of civic participation, we can distinguish four phases. The first stands out for its authoritarian notion of democracy, the citizen was asked only if it was deemed necessary. Then came an enlightened phase: Let's see if the citizen has a good idea of his or her own (§ 3 Baugesetzbuch [Federal Building Code]). This in fact had an effect well into the 1990s. Then came the dissolution of city and state authority. The sovereign that involves the citizen is itself no longer truly sovereign. It has become the hunted, has been laid low. The sovereign is supposed to involve the citizenry, but it should tell the citizenry...

Willinger: ... I am no longer whom you once knew. I am not capable of as much as you believe.

Hummel: Exactly! And that is where the two modern phases come from. What we observe is that the instruments of participation are second nature to the public, from letters to the editor to public campaigns. This leads to an arms race on both sides, with almost cold-war-like undertones. Expert opinion necessitates counter-opinion, moderation leads to mediation. The result: participation becomes more and more elaborate, cumbersome and costly. One example: a 50-year-old urban planner faces off against a retired 65-year-old colleague. Both know their instruments, if need be they'll take it to court. In and of itself, this is not much of a problem, but looking at the bigger picture, it is. Because these kinds of processes put off 90% of the other people. We are seeing a decline of spontaneous participation and an increase of formalized contestation instruments.

Willinger: In the end, such growing dissatisfaction, in combination with disappointed expectations, exerts pressure on policy makers. What's your reaction?

Hummel: Policy makers begin with a few repairs of our old house, so to speak: Now you can lodge an appeal against a number of state-level planning processes. We know who will do so. But that doesn't reinforce broader participation much at



Impressions of the conversion areas in Mannheim

all. This is why I think that we should focus more on the fourth phase. We should concentrate on how the whole breadth of city society can be integrated into the participation process.

Willinger: What needs to be done to enable that?

Hummel: First of all, I have to accept that there are many people who can't commit hours of their time to town hall meetings like the retired city planner. What are the instruments that I can make available to a busy 35-year-old family man? Bridgeheads are needed here, connections between administration, individuals, and also associations, via whom he can latch onto the process. That is why the Mannheim guide system is so important to me. To avoid any clichés: The guides don't support the citizens in the face of the all-mighty administration. They try to win as many people as possible as actors in a governance process. This is about a clear distribution of roles and rules that make the processes more fluid and transparent.

Willinger: What are the budding new roles for citizens?

Hummel: Citizens have at least two roles: One as a decision maker. And one as an entrepreneur who invests, builds a house and rents it out. For example, residential groups and building cooperatives initially alleged that I would sell off the first barracks to a major real estate company. Which is why I took this group of stakeholders particularly seriously, involved them in the process often, and finally told them:

"We have an investor now, but we will not give him all the houses. But from now on, as a potential residential group and building collective, you are not just politically active citizens with an idea, you are investors yourselves. That also means that you will negotiate with the other investors on an equal footing – and that we will moderate this." So now their paths cross on the site, they help each other out, lend advice, notwithstanding the fact that they are low-budget builders on one side, and high-end producers on the other. These are great moments of democracy. But that would not even get mentioned in a Standard German Encyclopedia of Civic Participation.

Willinger: Your expectations are ambitious. On the one hand, it asks for the development of public participation as an ongoing process, in which an already overextended administration must create interfaces, propose dialogues, absorb information, offer feedback. On the other hand, people aren't allowed to retire to their old role of malcontent, sharing responsibility instead.

Hummel: If my assumption that we need a qualitative leap is correct, then trust, a change of structures, changes of perspective are important. And in this, an administration that tries to return to experts' lines of argumentation with

yet another statement and another expertise, is not exactly helpful. If the administration is stressed financially, needs to accomplish more with fewer staff, then this reflex is plain wrong. Because the energy that is expended in writing a 30-page statement for the local council only intensifies the mistrust among residents who will then just react with a 30-page statement of their own.

Willinger: In one of your recent texts, you toy with a concept of energy and write that civic energies are not used up but regenerated if you deal with the citizenry in good faith. Doesn't that outline what we generally describe with the term "participation culture"?

Hummel: What I mean when I speak of regenerative energy is that the potential for trust among stakeholders is renewable. Criticism is possible and necessary, but not criticism that makes anyone lose face. So, in that sense: Yes – we are talking about greater participation culture.

Willinger: How do you explain to politicians that they should increase their involvement in conflict-rich communications with citizens?

Hummel: It is my opinion that we need conflict, need arguments, need clarification. But: Things often escalate because we stumble into something unaware and haven't thought it through. So that means more preparatory work for policy makers and administration. The gains however are incomparably greater. We should not forget that social harmony and urban cohesion come under threat from time to time – even here. It always is the most expensive to kick-start something with borrowed energy when it actually already is too late.

Willinger: You say that policy makers and administration do not do enough to systematically think the process through. What do you do differently in Mannheim?

Hummel: From my point of view, there are three central principles that we apply in Mannheim: The first principle is that the process has to be designed as a learning system, in order to be able to react to the situation at hand individually. The second principle again does not depend on the individuals involved, and therefore is transferable to other places and cases: Administration and citizenry need a clear cut separation of responsibilities. This includes: The municipal council always remains sovereign, from the beginning to the end of the process. And the third principle finally is: We have to approach certain groups directly: Who do we suspect of holding the (regenerative) fuel for a specific topic's future? Where are these people? To find and involve them, that is what I send out my guides for. Because after all, city society includes everyone.

Participation versus Planning? An Appeal for a Change of View

by Frank Schwartze

The discussion in Germany about the role of participatory processes in urban development is marked by the debate about how two seemingly separate areas can be brought together. On the one side is 'planning', the state or municipal control of developmental processes in cities and regions, preparing decisions and determining their implementation in a sovereignly legitimized and instrumentally supported process. On the other side 'participation', collecting and integrating suggestions and concerns about the planning project from "the planners" in a parallel process. The current picture is dominated by the idea that the planning field is an independent process that must enable participation in formal procedures, may do so in informal procedures, and needs participation in development oriented approaches. Based on this understanding of two separate areas, the fault lines that have been discussed with growing intensity in the recent past can be described accurately:

- in the planning field, the area of participation is consulted too late, too superficially or only pro forma;
- decisions have already been made in planning that cannot be challenged let alone reversed in the participation area and
- all in all, the area of participation seems like a confusing expression of the heterogeneous interests of a differentiating diverse society that the secluded field of official planning is ill-equipped to react to.

The answer lies in new and especially in more creative participation formats and procedures. Participation, or so it seems, often is carried out as an end in itself, and after the procedure ends, the question arises how the results can be anchored in planning, how they can be integrated and implemented. The consequence is overwhelmed planners on one side, and resigned participants on the other, leading to a hardening of the rift between the fields. With this approach, it becomes difficult to eliminate obvious flaws and problems in the cooperative shaping of urban development processes.

Planning as an Integrative Process

Therefore a change of view is needed that stops considering the two areas separately and sees 'planning' and 'participation' as two parts of a common process instead. If one looks at 'planning' according to Healey as a process of managing land use conflicts between public and private interests (cf. P. Healey, 1998) in addition to its responsibility for spatial quality, then dealing with divergent interests and issues in this process is the

core element of planning, and participation equals planning. Planning is the coordinated process of decision making for a forward-looking solution of specific tasks. This process is not independent, but is a process integrating and coordinating divergent interests, of which citizens' interests are a part. From this point of view, the question no longer is how well (or badly) participation is organized and institutionalized vis-à-vis the planning process, but only how a transparent planning culture and related capability to integrate different interests and issues can be cultivated. The understanding of planning as a decision-oriented process integrating different issues and interests that is influenced by stakeholders leaves the idea of an all-controlling, all-forming planning administration with a self-image as an objective custodian of the common good behind. With the renunciation of this (self-)image and the recognition that participation and planning are the same process, questions concerning participation and planning culture can be raised in a more precise and problem-oriented manner.

Scoping of Interests

A requirement for environmental issues that was integrated into German building and planning law in 2004 could be adopted for participation as well. At the time both a scoping process, recording in advance environmental interests and issues that planning might affect, and a reporting process were introduced, unveiling in a comprehensible way how these issues are dealt with in decision making. Why can't this requirement of an integrated and integrating planning process be extended beyond environmental affairs, e.g. to the interests of citizens, and be used for the "scoping" of citizens' interests for the necessary procedures and integration mechanisms – the participation formats – to be applied strategically for the further development of the process? Under such circumstances, participation formats would no longer be supplemental measures, but would instead, depending on the individual case, on the determined challenges and situation, become one tool of several in the planning process that serve the legitimate integration of interests.

A Change of Understanding

Moreover the current conflicts and discussions regarding participation in planning and its role in the planning process are dominated by two misunderstandings. They are a result of the way planners see themselves and necessitate an altered understanding in addition to a change of perspective. One

misunderstanding lies in the assumption that in discussing planning decisions, citizens rationally assume responsibility for the common good – which in theory would include their interests – as represented in planning. Criticism of a planning procedure is seen as serving (individual) interests and is often received as an attack against the common good personified by the planner. Consequently, participation procedures are seen and executed as educational procedures, aimed at explaining the underlying necessity of a specific project to the citizenry. So participation becomes therapy, of the kind that Sherry Arnstein already delegated to the bottom of the ladder of participation in 1969. The second misunderstanding assumes that the decisions that are important to the planning administration are the same decisions that are important to citizens. This leads to participation processes that are developed and implemented with great effort while possibly not generating as much interest for a specific project among the public.

On the other hand, procedures that are assessed as rather unspectacular are not tended to sufficiently, given a background of limited funds and capacities, which leads to conflicts flaring up for which no adequate measures for the integration of interests are at hand. Such a transfer of common good and problem sensitivity to individual citizens is difficult. It is faced with a public that has a wider spectrum of interests. It encompasses strictly individual as well as higher-level and common-good interests. With the latter on occasion being used to champion individual interests. Besides, citizens are pragmatic in championing their interests and paying attention to planning processes. Against this background, an only poorly attended planning workshop can be an expression of the pragmatic decision that the planning administration enjoys a high level of trust and that the separate representation of interests is not necessary.

From Participation in Planning to Strategic Participation Management

So the discussion about participation should bid farewell to the idealized notion that interested citizens will in effect selflessly dedicate themselves to the planning process. Instead, the objective is to realize that the citizens' interest in its many manifestations and forms of organization is an issue to be considered just like the already well-established issues of the environment or economic actors. They are allowed self-advocacy and pragmatism as a matter of course. If this is accepted for citizen participation, the outlook is extended to a strategic understanding of the integration of interests and to a subsequent participation management.



Professor Frank Schwartz (centre) during the workshop conversation "Public Participation" in Munich

This is characterized by

- the scoping of interests ahead of time;
- asking pragmatically how extensive participation shall be in each situation, and which methods shall be used – independent of formal provisions, based instead on the state of interests and conflict;
- clarifying when a window for participation opens in the course of the planning process, and how it must be designed for citizens' interests to be recorded effectively (key words: definition of questions and format selection).

Participation in the Sustainable City

Such a change of perspective and understanding is a crucial building block for the implementation of sustainable urban planning. As opposed to the sprawling expansion of cities over the past decades that mostly led to conflicts with the environment and subsequently to the integration of environmental issues into the planning process, sustainable urban development will lead to an increase of collisions of interest, because it will take place in existing communities, in the form of concentration, reconstruction and the renewal of structures and infrastructure. For this, the planning culture in sustainable cities needs the vital instruments to integrate divergent interests.

The author was a mentor of the workshop discussion "Civic Participation" in Munich and is professor of urban design and town planning at the Lübeck University of Applied Sciences. He also is a managing partner of insar consult, gesellschaft für stadtplanung, architektur und regionalberatung.

Lots of Talk – and No Impact?

How Effective Participation can Succeed

by Kerstin Arbter

As a matter of fact, it should be clear how participation processes can be designed effectively. There are successful examples, and many guides and manuals have been published in recent years. But occasionally, processes fail nevertheless. That is why Kerstin Arbter, a Vienna expert for public participation, calls to mind four aspects that are crucial for successful participation.

Convey the Influence that Citizens Have

First, it is important to know the respective subject of participation. This not only requires detailed knowledge of the project and the process steps (such as preliminary planning, urban land use planning). It also needs to be clarified what influence policy makers and administration want to allow the citizens and whether they can actually promise the consideration of the results. Only then can the suitable participation question be articulated, and can the suitable methods of participation (in practice, often a mix of methods) be selected. Assistance is available, e.g. the “method grid” from the Vienna Book of Participation Practice [Das Wiener Praxisbuch Partizipation], the Berlin Participation Handbook [Handbuch zur Partizipation des Landes Berlin] or the North Rhine-Westphalia Toolbox for Dialogue and Participation [Werkzeugkasten Dialogue und Beteiligung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen]. In any case, the methods must be adapted to the situation at hand.

Make it Clear what Citizens Can Achieve

Before participation begins, it should be communicated what options citizens actually have to influence an outcome that will be seen through by political decision makers. Possibly, not all results can be applied fully. Three approximate levels of influence, derived from the ladder of participation, can be distinguished. Citizens

- introduce their ideas or opinions on occasions like citizen councils or planning workshops, without any ensuing obligations;
- negotiate consensual solutions with administration and / or planners. The proposal is presented to the decision makers as a shared recommendation;
- join the decision process– extremely rare since decision makers have to share their decision-making powers with the citizens.

Present the results transparently

Usually the appropriate democratically legitimized decision-making bodies decide about the consideration of proposals. The Austrian standards of public participation illustrate how to go about this: Decision makers should explain and make transparent, why one argument was taken into account while

To take account of citizens’ contributions comprehensibly is to

1. publish them without alterations,
2. to review them,
3. to group them by subject,
4. to expertly examine their benefits and disadvantages,
5. to discuss them with citizens – wherever possible,
6. to evaluate if and why contributions are to be incorporated,
7. to again document this and
8. also publish it.

another one was not. The arguments should be expertly evaluated for this, and processed in a manner that renders them suitable for introduction into the planning process. Finally they should be presented together in a report for publication. In it, it should be explained and established which arguments were adopted and which were not. Such an easily understandable overview should be a standard part not only of formal, but also of informal procedures.

Cultivating Points of View and Mutual Respect

Successful participation depends not only on properly applied methods, but also on the attitudes of politicians, administrative staff, facilitators and citizens. In this vein, the Vienna Book of Participation addresses attitudes conducive to participation in its chapter “Attitude First – Technique Later”. Central elements are dialogue at eye level, the willingness to change perspectives and view the matter at hand through the eyes of the respective “others”, respect and taking contributions seriously. This sounds easy, but in fact it is a real challenge for many involved. Whoever really is interested in cultivating a culture of participation should foster improved attitudes. In other words: Participation processes lacking respectful attitudes shouldn’t even be set in motion.



Kerstin Arbter is an expert for public participation in Austria. She supports municipalities, cities, states and the Austrian government during effective participation processes. She is the author of several handbooks for public participation. www.arbter.at

Strategic Use of Instruments and Methods

Good Tools Wanted!

There probably is no other field in urban development with the same level of experimentation with various tools and methods as the area of civic participation. So it is no wonder that in the National Urban Development Policy's pilot projects, testing and trials were carried out vigorously, expanding and furthering their tool box. At that, it is important to keep in mind: Methods are not ends in themselves! Before they are selected, the themes and issues of participation need to be sorted out. And afterwards, the results should be recorded and documented appreciatively. Four examples:



Moving Images

Even if the image obviously is a montage: It makes a lasting impression on the viewer, it stays with him. The montage is a creation by art students from Saarbrücken. Designed like a

construction sign, it called attention to the pilot project "Bottom Up!" and its initiative "Malstatt – gemeinsam stark!" [Malstatt – strong together!]. The Malstätter Rinne, a ten-track-wide railway gorge, had suddenly become a beautiful park with a Ferris wheel. The subtext "Change is possible!" aimed to raise awareness for the district and its development among its residents. The provocative act promptly showed effect. More than 100 interested residents came to the district assembly at the end of February, and optimism has been spreading in Malstatt ever since – even without a Ferris wheel.



Describing Everyday Life in the Neighbourhood

45 residents of Kinderhaus, a district of Münster, kept a diary about their life in this neighbourhood for six weeks. Subjects were covered daily and weekly, reaching

from a spot's lingering quality to thoughts on town centres. The city administration wants to use the residents' voices to develop a neighbourhood development concept for Kinderhaus. The neighbourhood – characterized by lots of greenery, and a juxtaposition of bourgeois single-family homes and large-scale housing complexes – has a conflicted image. With free reports and standardized survey items, diary keeping was selected as an instrument to capture the diversity of opinion in the neighbourhood. The residents themselves were satisfied, too, since they could voice both suggestions and concerns about ongoing developments: The diary authors now want to increase their involvement with their neighbourhood.



Everybody is a Traffic Expert

Involving residents in the long-term overall urban transport planning, can that work? "You bet!" was the answer in Leipzig. Residents were invited to pro-

vide their expertise and suggestions as daily users of transport infrastructure. The Leipzig residents' competition "Ideen für den Stadtverkehr" [Ideas for urban transport] in the framework of the mobility master plan 2025, represented the catalyst for participation in transport planning. In order for such a residents' competition to resonate, people have to be able to address what they are really interested in. In addition to proposals for the city as a whole, ideas at the district and neighbourhood level were sought out. More than 600 innovative ideas were entered, among them street-art signs pointing out the next tram stop, an inventive car sharing approach and the project "Autoarmer Augustplatz" [Reduced-car-traffic Augustplatz].



Social Media – Administration Podcasts

In Aschaffenburg, the youth organization Stadtjugendring organized an online dialogue via social media about the redesign of the riverfront Mainuferterrassen in

the course of the pilot project. The debate has already brought about a lot of great ideas, insights and activities. It was possible to involve the local youth scene in the process with competent and intensive engagement. Clear communication rules and engaging formats are part of this recipe. The short feature broadcast by Jugendradio Klangbrett – a German radio station for younger audiences – is an interesting example in which an administration official and a city representative comment on the implementation of citizens' proposals.

Available in German:
http://www.buergerbeteiligung-mainufer.de/pdf/Beitrag_Mainufer_2013.mp3

Glossary

National Urban Development Policy

The National Urban Development Policy is a joint initiative of the BMUB and the BBSR together with the states, cities, municipalities and associations in Germany. Its goal is to explore the issues of urban development processes, the instruments of the Urban Development Promotion Programme, as well as general planning and building within a public discourse. Since 2008, nearly 130 pilot projects have been implemented in the areas of civil society, the social city, economic development, building culture, climate protection and regionalisation.

The Projects of the National Urban Development Policy

The pilot projects were launched in order to find new instruments to cope with large policy challenges such as demographic change, social cohesion and integration, economic development and stability, climate protection and the move towards alternative energy sources. They allow new methods and approaches to be tested in practice. To pursue this approach, the National Urban Development Policy 2007 launched the “project series for cities and urbanity”. They give cities and towns the opportunity to try out new methods for the urban development tasks they are facing. The insights from the pilot projects are considered when advancing legislation and subsidizing urban development.

Urban Development Promotion Programmes

To enable cities to cope better with their new tasks and challenges, the Federal Government supports the creation of sustainable urban structures with a wide range of funding opportunities through urban development promotion programmes. The Federal Government’s financial assistance is supplemented by state and local authority funds. The objectives are the strengthening of inner cities and town centres in their urban function, taking into account the protection of historic buildings, as well as creating sustainable urban structures in areas affected by significant urban function losses and the urban development measures for eradicating social deprivation coupled with it.

(Integrated) Urban Development Concepts

(Integrated) Urban Development Concepts play an important role in the context of urban (re-)development and are increasingly required for funding from the Urban Development Promotion Programmes. Unlike formal urban land use planning, Urban Development Concepts mostly focus on plans concerning the goals and means of future urban development. They are informal tools and less regulatory, giving the municipalities a framework to conduct processes with a long term perspective. The concepts often include dialogue-oriented instruments like urban forums and workshops. Their aim is to reach an agreement on, and support for, objectives and guidelines for the urban development.

Based on: (Pahl-Weber, Dietrich Henckel (Eds.), 2008 pp. 264)

Federal Building Code

About 40 years ago, urban development (in Germany) was undergoing profound social and economic changes, such as slower growth, a declining birth rate and increasing costs for energy, infrastructure maintenance and continued restructuring in the industrial sector, as well as a shifting of values. It became clear that the Federal Building Law which was being drafted at the time provided inadequate tools. Hence, in addition to the Federal Building Law, new tools were implemented, in 1971 the Urban Development Promotion Act led to an increase in participation. Wider public involvement was implemented, e.g. in the form of the establishment of early public participation in the Federal Building Law in 1976. Also comprehensive planning, financial compensation and stricter statutory regulations for environmental issues were introduced, inner development was brought to the fore. In 1986 the Federal Building Law and the Urban Development Promotion Act were amended and combined into the Federal Building Code. The implementation of an obligatory scoping and reporting process for environmental issues in 2004 introduced the active advance clearance of affected interests in this field, as well as the declaration of the extent and form of their integration into the decision process.

Based on: (Pahl-Weber, Dietrich Henckel (Eds.), 2008 pp. 36)

Further Reading

English-language information and many publications are available at the National Urban Development Policy website.

http://www.nationale-stadtentwicklungspolitik.de/cln_030/nn_343522/EN/NationalUrbanDevelopmentPolicy/NationalUrbanDevelopmentPolicy__node.html?__nnn=true

Further information on the German planning system:

Elke Pahl-Weber, Dietrich Henckel (Eds.), The Planning System and Planning Terms in Germany, A Glossary, Hanover, Germany 2008, a brochure by the German Academy for Spatial Research and Planning (ARL) in Hanover. The publication is available as a free PDF download at: <http://shop.arl-net.de/the-planning-system-and-planning-terms-in-germany-216.html>. The contents are also accessible as a German-English glossary at the “Commin” project page. <http://commin.org/en/bsr-glossaries/national-glossaries/germany/>



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