

Schipperskwartier, another kind of seduction. Your project, ready while you (a-)wait!¹

Urban development projects often are radical, protracted and complex processes that do not immediately present tangible results onsite. Most of the time, for inhabitants and users it is a matter of waiting and much (or maybe a little) “a-waiting”.

In the planning process of the Schipperskwartier (Sailors quarter) we made a conscious choice to deal with that “waiting” and “a-waiting” in a different way in order to release inhabitants and users from this passive role and to integrate them into a dynamic process.

This paper by no means wishes to be a theoretical dissertation on participation, but rather the report of the attempts, the course, the experiments, the experiences and finally some reflections on participation in the Antwerp Schipperskwartier (Red-light district) from the perspective of a project manager.

How it started: a petition and a prostitution policy plan.

The Antwerp Schipperskwartier or red-light district is the most northern part of the Antwerp inner city. This district is locked in between important areas of urban development such as the old harbour district, known as the ‘Eilandje’ to the north, the historic city centre and university neighbourhood to the south.

Over the years morphological and mental walls gradually seemed to close in on the neighbourhood, shielding it from the ‘outside world’. At the same time these ‘walls’ had a greenhouse effect on the shady activities within: prostitution and questionable commercial activities thrived.

During the 1980s and 1990s various issues resulted in a disturbance of the former balance between prostitution and living. These included international processes and trends: the expansion and professional organisation of the prostitution scene, the fall of the Berlin wall and the inflow of East-European women, the legalisation of prostitution in the Netherlands,... and local actions such as the demolition of entire perimeter blocks and the building of social housing complexes in these new voids in the urban fabric contributed to this evolution.

BEWONERS SCHIPPERSKWARTIER ZIJN OVERLAST BEU

ANTWERPEN — Met duizend handtekeningen maakten de bewoners van het Schipperskwartier gisteren aan het stadsbestuur duidelijk dat ze de overlast in hun buurt beu zijn. Elke nacht rijden honderden automobilisten, glurend naar vrouwelijk schoon, door de smalle straatjes. De zogenaamde «carrusel d'amours», trekt ook door de aanpalende straten. Het gebrom van de wagens houdt de bewoners uit hun slaap. De buurt wordt ook door vandalen geplaaagd. «Ze urineren in de brievenbus», zucht één van de bewoners, «het is niet één keer, maar bijna wekelijks dat dat bij mij gebeurt». Om de baldadigheden tegen te gaan, eisen de ondertekenaars dat er permanente politiebewaking komt in het Schipperskwartier. Ten slotte willen ze dat stadsreiniging vaker door hun buurt passeert. Nu blijven sluisstortresten soms wekenlang op straat liggen. — ADA Foto
Romy Meyers



Not surprisingly residents sounded the alarm bell in '97-'98 and presented a petition to the city council. Window prostitution at that time had fanned out to cover 17 streets of the neighbourhood and seemed to tighten its grip on the residential fabric. The more shady commercial activity was mainly concentrated in 'Falconplein' square, and an adjacent street, 'Klapdorp'.

In 1999 the Antwerp town council responded with a prostitution policy plan, which tolerated prostitution in Antwerp, albeit under certain conditions. The most striking condition, from an urban planning point of view, was the demarcation of a window prostitution area². Different demarcation models were elaborated and finally the council decided in favour of the V-

model, a window prostitution area comprising three streets that would generate as little nuisance as possible for the residential fabric.

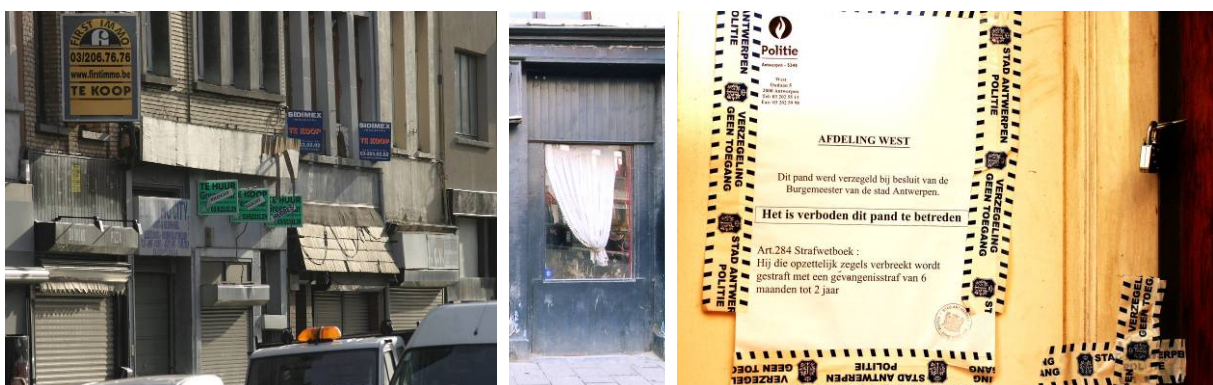
Although the entire project started with a petition of inhabitants in '97-'98, all attempts by the city to involve those same inhabitants in the elaboration and implementation of the prostitution policy led to nothing. Out of fear of reprisal by the prostitution sector they kept mum. Contacts with inhabitants during this first phase of the project were, out of sheer necessity, informal and most of the time anonymous.

This contrasted strongly with the heavy and highly mediatized battle that the prostitution sector started against the policy. The window prostitution house owners and “managers” were very keen on participating in the outlining process of the policy. Albeit to avoid their golden egg from falling outside the demarcated zone.

The Antwerp town council however wished to implement a demarcation in order to improve the quality of life of the residents and the working conditions of the sex workers; their aim was not to benefit those house owners with a sheer financial interest in the quarter and a house in a quiet neighbourhood in the suburbs. Out of necessity the emphasis during this phase was on communication and information; time and again the city council explained its policy and tried to focus on the voices that couldn't be heard in the public hearings and the media.

The policy plan was executed in 2000-2001. Prostitution houses outside of the three-street zone were closed down. At the same time the police force cracked down on the trade in counterfeit goods in the infamous Falconplein. By 2002 the results of this approach were visible and spectacular. Organised crime seemed to have chosen the easy way out and left Antwerp. The longed-for peace and quiet returned to the neighbourhood.

Too quiet as soon became clear. The clean-up operation resulted in a neighbourhood with the features of a ghost town. The vacancy rate in some streets and in the most important squares rose up to 80%. A spontaneous revival did not seem likely. The state of most buildings was deplorable and the new “balance” between the quarter and prostitution, which had been enforced by the city, was extremely fragile. The old retainers seemed to have turned their back on the quarter but still owned most of the real estate and as such kept a strong return ticket in their pocket.



The city had to consolidate its efforts if it wanted to reduce the presence of police officers in the neighbourhood and really turn the tide. The prostitution policy and the attack on counterfeit trade had not only created the possibility but also the necessity to implement an integrated territory oriented policy in this area.

Early 2002 a planning process was initiated. The goal: the development of an endorsed, well-founded and integrated vision on the quarter.

A ghost town and an integrated territory-oriented approach: “Schipperskwartier, a seductive quarter in Antwerp”.

The controversial issues were dealt with in a decisive way. The execution of the prostitution policy was anything but an easy task. But by 2002 the determination of the Antwerp town council had strengthened the belief of the remaining inhabitants in the neighbourhood's chances. Now the themes of the debate were shifting from nuisance, prostitution and crime to living, working, culture, recreation, greenery, ... the willingness to think along and this time also really participate was present.

In October 2002 around 150 inhabitants participated in the information and consultation round in which the vision, that had been developed by a multidisciplinary task force of the city, was discussed, refined and completed. They discussed the main lines and the different sub projects. By means of an interactive exhibition priorities and remarks could be pointed out. A walk through the neighbourhood with stops along the way and explanations regarding the different strategic projects was developed in order to invite people to walk around their quarter and look at it with new possibilities in mind.

The report that resulted from this process formed the litmus test for every annual action plan that followed in the next years and in which budgets and people were allocated to the projects.

By the end of 2002 a vision text with the title “Schipperskwartier, a seductive quarter in Antwerp” was approved by the Antwerp town council. The vision includes a number of main principles, a spatial strategy and a wide range of strategic projects, addressing the hardware and software of the neighbourhood, ranging from fun events and public services over the renewal of streets and squares up to large-scale building projects.

A project house and a dynamic participation plan.

The main lines had been established, the priorities were known, but the real work, the elaboration of the 16 strategic projects still had to start. This meant designing, negotiations, procedures, lobbying, estimates, the recruitment of staff, presenting subsidy reports, ... a lot of work, that was invisible onsite.

It was obvious that the enthusiasm of the inhabitants, which had been generated during the process of drawing up the vision text, would soon be lost and that the inhabitants would be left waiting with their great expectations. To avoid this two actions were taken.

The first action was the “Stadsmagazijn” community centre. The former city warehouse was completely run-down and had become a home for squatters. It was renovated and became the pilot project in the redevelopment of the neighbourhood. Even today it still plays a key role in the restoration of the social fabric, as it has become the ‘headquarters’ of community activities and initiatives. A good example is “neighbours cooking for neighbours” that brings different neighbourhood groups and actors together. For instance during the last edition the inspectors of the prostitution police squad invited the neighbourhood for some home-made paella.



But it also serves as a project house for the overall development of the quarter. Nearly all project ideas were born, elaborated, discussed and exhibited in this building. As an intermediary between inhabitants and the city the employees of the community centre are the first to know when the works on a construction site are slowing down, where people are creating new illegal dumping places or when the gossip factory is set in motion. They constitute an irreplaceable antenna for the planners (in their ivory towers), who, by their actions, constantly intervene in people's everyday environment without actually living there themselves.

Next to this, a dynamic participation plan was developed for the further execution of the vision text: a participation plan that went beyond traditional communication and participation techniques, which included newsletters and the obligatory hearings. In this respect we distinguish the 'canvassing programme'³ that focuses on the use and the appropriation of the project area by inhabitants and users and substantive participation by which inhabitants and users are given a say in the future project.

The canvassing programme: more than just a sop

In 2000 the canvassing programme was introduced in Antwerp as a new concept in participation policy.

"To the outside world canvassing programmes seem to be a series of 'fun activities', sometimes cultural, sportive or even commercial, and sometimes merely convivial. They target the people who live in the neighbourhood but also explicitly attract a broader general public. The canvassing programme operates in the 'space in transformation'. Through active use of this often unknown and unloved space inhabitants have the chance to inject meaning in these places and to appropriate them. Exploring the possibilities of the 'space in transformation' often inspires decisions taken within the urban development process."⁴

The canvassing programme is based on the relation between the inhabitant and his physical environment ; in the Schipperskwartier it mainly centred on the infamous Falconplein. Now that the shady entrepreneurs had been evicted, the "Red Square", which owed its nickname to the many Russian-Georgian owners, had been abandoned, without users. Inhabitants had no interest in this square that for years had been appropriated by criminal organisations and tourists in search of "Armani" jeans. They preferred to organise their neighbourhood parties in the public spaces on the edge of the quarter, rather than in the central public square that they didn't consider to be "theirs".

The goals of the canvassing programme in this square were simple: to explore the possibilities of the square through a range of activities, but most of all to let inhabitants and the rest of Antwerp rediscover this square in a different way.

During the first year "Bal Moderne", a bio market, a port film festival, a nautical market and a neighbourhood party were organised. In between the events the square was still deserted but people looked at it in a different way, now that they understood its possibilities. Applications to use the square and an increased demand concerning development possibilities for the vacant buildings around the square were noticeable after each event.

Two years later the bio market has since become a monthly event and operates as a potential identity for the square. The "Zomer van Antwerpen" (Summer of Antwerp), a cultural programme at city level has discovered the square as an interesting location and the neighbourhood committees have started to organise their parties more often in the heart of the neighbourhood. Slowly the square is being adopted as a space to party, to while away the time, to shop and to live. A tendency that will be consolidated in the planned renewal in which, "what was tried out in the canvassing programme will have to be substantiated."⁵

In 2006 Europalia Russia was the ideal excuse to once more depict the square as “Red Square” with a large open-air photo exhibition and a Russian cultural programme. In this way, with a wink to the past, the old square received a decent send-off before the renewal was initiated.



The canvassing programme for the Schipperskwartier not only focuses on the square itself but on all the spaces that are undergoing a transformation. For instance: big canvases were designed to wrap the buildings that were going to be renewed while awaiting the plans, the building permits, etc. During the last four years the neighbourhood was systematically portrayed by the local photography school, thus assembling a large photo album of the neighbourhood and its transformations that is regularly exhibited. People often tend to forget what it really looked like before, especially now that it is burdened by the awkward yoke of works and construction sites.

The canvassing programme is not intended as a sop; it must be seen as a series of activities to buy planners some time to quietly work backstage. Although it is hard to prove we are convinced that the canvassing programme not only has an impact on the neighbourhood's image and use, but also on the physical space. Buildings are renewed and new inhabitants and entrepreneurs make their appearance in the neighbourhood. Often they mention an activity of the canvassing programme as their first pleasant introduction to the quarter and its projects.



Substantive participation: more than one-way traffic.

After the substantive participation of 2002, during the process of the elaboration of the vision text, a specific participation plan for each sub project was developed, ranging from plain hearings with inhabitants of the neighbourhood for the renewal of a street, over tailor-made participation for specific target groups, to broad and intensive workshops for the larger projects. To illustrate these different approaches I will discuss two distinct projects here.

Strategic project Falconplein-zeemanshuis (Falcon square – seamen’s mission)

Inhabitants referred to the necessity to work on the Falconplein and the adjacent perimeter block around the seamen’s mission as an absolute priority in the vision text of 2002. Both the renewal of the square, as the central public space at the heart of the neighbourhood, and the restructuring and development of the fragmented space within the perimeter block to create new green space and a building programme with housing, economic and neighbourhood facilities (including the seamen’s mission) were included as ideas in the original vision.

As a result the project was included in the very first action plan for the Schipperskwartier (2003) that was elaborated. What followed was a period of functional and research by design to determine the spatial capacity of the site and its intended programming more in detail, to make some strategic acquisitions and to elaborate a PPP construction with SD Worx, that, like the city, owned, 40 % of the property within the perimeter block. The objective was to arrive at a project definition for the design teams.



Once again the inhabitants were involved. Fifty participants took up the challenge and, by the end of 2004, participated in an intensive workshop entitled “The best horseman is always on his feet”.³ Experimental methodologies had to provide input, not only for the town council and the five design teams that were assigned the task to present their vision on the project, but in the first place to start up the conversation among the participants.

The participants were divided into mixed groups. Probably for the first time, old and new inhabitants, young and old, local entrepreneurs, potential investors, ... sat down around the table. After a general introduction on the project each group, armed with a camera, set out to discover the project area with the assignment to capture three positive and three negative aspects on film. The result offered the design teams a clear overview of the qualities and downsides of the area from the participants’ point of view.

The result of the research by design was at least 3,000m² of green space. But what does this represent for inhabitants? The second methodology had to give the participants an insight in the scale of the planned green space and the designers in its intended programming. The intended green space could be built by laying out scaled cards on a game board. There were four categories: sports, play, greenery and events and a non-limitative list that stated how many cards a certain function required. For instance 15 sport cards to create a basketball field, 4 green cards form a solitary tree, 1 events card corresponded with 10 people at a neighbourhood party. In this way the impact of certain *desiderata* for the space became immediately visible without really designing it. Interesting discussions were launched and the participants proved that they were able to come to inventive and constructive ideas together. While at first every participant laid out his personal wishes (a basketball field, a fountain, shrubbery, a pick-nick area, ...) as monofunctional infrastructure on the game board, they soon started to make combinations and think about a more multifunctional and multiple use of the restricted space in order to give everybody a place.

Clear choices had to be made for Falconplein. This time the methodology consisted of an interactive poem in which certain words had to be put in place. These words covered different target groups (such as children, students, ...), traffic (such as parking, accessibility, public transport, ...), appearance (such as art, lightning, water, ...) and functions (such as restaurants, markets, housing, ...). By weighing the importance of those words against each other every group constructed its "Tribute to the Falconplein", in which for clear priorities were hidden for the design teams. For instance every group chose "parties" above "silence", "accessibility" was high on the agenda, but not necessarily in combination with "car".

At the end of the workshop the different groups organised a small exhibition to present their work to the others. One thing was definitely clear to every participant: "THE" inhabitant didn't exist, but together they had managed to generate some useful and realistic ideas on how the space could be shared to meet everybody's needs and which choices had to be made. No complaining, but discussion and, above all, a positive atmosphere.

The outcome of the workshop, as part of the project definition, was presented to the five design teams. And it came with its own obligations. The manner in which the design team would deal with the input from the workshop was one of the eight criteria included in the selection procedure.



At the beginning of 2005 Rapp+Rapp, in collaboration with WEST 8, was selected as laureate. Their proposal was presented to the general public in an interactive exhibition in which special attention was given to the link between the results of the workshop and the proposal at hand. For instance the photo methodology had shown that all participants saw the existing chip stall in the square as one of the strengths and qualities of the area. In the exhibition it was explained how the designers had given the chip stall a new eminent place on the square but also why they had chosen for a different appearance. The future users of the project, the children, were also involved through a game and role-play around the scale model.

During the exhibition week visitors could pass on their questions and remarks. Every evening a selection of these remarks was placed on the digital light board on the Falconplein to continuously generate discussion in the quarter and ensure that it would be a topic at the butcher and the newspaper store. And discussion was rife! Not everybody appreciated the proposal by Rapp+Rapp to demolish and rebuild the seamen's mission. But for every person that praised the architectural quality of the building, there seemed to be another who considered it to be a mistake.

The exhibition ended with an animated debate based on the questions and remarks gathered and an informal discussion afterwards between policymakers, the design team and the supervisors in the bar of the community centre, where the participants in the workshop spontaneously presented themselves as a sort of ambassadors of the design.

The collected remarks were included in an inventory as the end product of the advice round regarding the proposal and the beginning of the elaboration of the final design for the project area.



Today the final design has been completed. And although the main features of the initial proposal are still the same, some important adjustments have been made in view of the remarks by inhabitants. For instance the height of the two large-scale volumes within the perimeter block has been reduced and the distance between them has been increased. The building line in G. Belliardstraat has been slightly altered to allow maximum sunlight in the existing houses.

Additionally the Antwerp town council formally stated that it would rehouse the social functions that at present reside in the seamen's mission (the seamen's mission itself, the neighbourhood theatre, ...) as an answer to the general concern voiced by inhabitants that these functions would disappear along with the building.

Despite these commitments the protest about the demolition is still ongoing. Arguments and counter-arguments of the town council and the action committee have recently, and for the last time, been thoroughly expounded and weighed in different commissions during the public inquiry of the official procedure for the approval of the juridical plan. The policy-makers have decided to go through with the project as it is and want to further elaborate the project with all the different parties within this framework. In the next years several different communication moments as well as some participation initiatives (for instance the hearings for the final design for the green spaces within the project) will be organized in order to fine-tune the project, right up to its realisation.



The health house for sex workers.

In building the health house a very different approach towards participation was decided on. The health house was built in the centre of the prostitution area on a vacant lot owned by the city. It serves as the operating base and home for specialised, free and anonymous healthcare and relief work for sex workers and as a strong beacon in the poorly structured area.

At the start of the project a lot of attention was paid to the project definition. The building had to house a programme that was not exactly commonplace. A multidisciplinary building team, consisting of an architect and urban planner but also of medical staff and a 'hands-on' expert, produced an organisation scheme and specific criteria as input for the design competition.

Experience had shown that relief work towards sex workers had to meet a set of important criteria. Easily accessible, small-scale, confidential, anonymous and discrete were the main features, that also needed to be translated in the building's architecture. Even more than was the case for other projects this building would have to be accepted by its target group or it wouldn't be used.

The participation and involvement of the sex workers was thus crucial but also very difficult to achieve and a delicate matter. Generally, sex workers have a negative contact with governmental organisations. So it was not really opportune to organise meetings on behalf of the local government, all the more so since formal meetings did not suit this target group that longed, above all, for anonymity and discretion and consisted of a great diversity of cultures and languages.

Therefore the decision was made to organise participation through the intended user of the building. GH@PRO (Health house for Antwerp Prostitution) is a non-governmental organisation, which had built a relationship of mutual trust with the target group over several years. During the whole building process input was gathered through personal contacts in the field. A special role in this process was reserved for the outreach worker (a former sex worker). As a result of the strategic location of the building the target group could literally see the building arise. In this way the building team managed to gather the necessary input .

The success of the building since its completion in March 2005 proves that this approach worked to create the necessary support.



Some reflections

Participation is working on developing relations.

In the more traditional sense participation should be taken to mean 'to work on the relation between citizens and policy-makers'. In the Schipperskwartier we also focused on working on the relations between the citizens themselves and between inhabitants and their everyday surroundings.

Traditional public hearings often only function as a barometer for the general (dis)contentment of the citizen. In the substantive participation in Schipperskwartier the emphasis was not on the one-way top-down debate between policy makers to citizens (and back), but also on the dialogue among participants. In this way the urban project not only manages to change the physical environment but also contributes to the restoration of social networks and the insight that "THE" inhabitant does not exist and that policy-makers have to make (spatial) choices.

The canvassing programme was also aimed at the reinforcement of social cohesion. Next to this, it also very specifically impacts the sometimes difficult relationship with the everyday environment by using those "places in transformation" and giving them new meaning.

In brief, it may be stated that every form of participation in essence starts with correct, clear and regular information about the project in all its facets. In Schipperskwartier this traditional communication plan was completed with the canvassing programme and substantive participation.

Communication and substantive participation follow the milestones and decisions taken in the planning process. The canvassing programme is a result of its own logic, of course in relation to the urban development. The canvassing programme can be used, either to fill in a 'quiet moment' in communication or reinforce a peak in the communication.

Participation in Schipperskwartier comes with its own obligations. It requires up to 20% of the planning budget. The communication and participation experts are part of the part of the different steering and planning committees, and the communication and participation plans are structurally anchored in the overall planning process.

Participation as a guarantee for satisfaction

Often the quality of the participation process is measured to the extent that it creates general approval of the design and the final result. Naturally the intention is to arrive at a project that is endorsed, through participation but if unconditional approval is the goal, participation can easily be reduced to a cunning sales technique.

The participation process in Schipperskwartier was directed at participation, whereby certain aspects of the project, more than others, were subject to participation. For these aspects there was also a commitment to use the input to a maximum extent in the design. For instance the programming of the inner gardens in the Falconplein-zeemanshuis project was largely based on suggestions made by the participants of the workshop. It is also important to explain why other parts of the project did not require intensive participation but merely communication and consultation. For instance the choice to demolish or retain the building of the seamen's mission was not made based on the number of inhabitants that were pro or contra but by weighing architectural, financial and urban planning criteria.

When protest arises it is often perceived as a failure of the participation process. The media attention generated by protest actions tends to overshadow the participatory process

conducted and there is a certain danger that “the baby will be thrown out with the bathwater”. When placed in the right perspective, protest can be a valuable, most of the time unscheduled but not unexpected, part of the process.

Through protest inhabitants can get extra guarantees from policy-makers as regards the quality of those aspects in which they initially had no say, such as the guarantee to rehouse the social functions in a building of high architectural standards after the demolition of the seamen’s mission. Protest can, if properly channelled, lead to a “better design” and finally a “better urban project”.

Participation as a guarantee for a “better” design.

There are numerous examples of great designs that everybody seems to like and that were developed without any kind of participation. And there are designs that resulted from endless hearings, workshops and meetings that are no more than a tepid compromise.

We believe however that the participation process, as elaborated in Schipperskwartier led to a richer and more endorsed design.

Richer in the sense that designers and local policy-makers, through participation, got an insight in the assignment and the key issues at hand and were forced to make certain choices more cautiously, using with stronger arguments.

More endorsed, not necessarily in the sense of an unconditional approval by every inhabitant, but in the sense of the creation of insights in the choices that have to be made by designers and policy-makers.



A special role was reserved for the canvassing programme. The elaboration of the “use” of space during the planning and development process often found its translation in the design. The plans for Falconplein, for instance, pay a lot of attention to facilitating the bio market and events such as the “Zomer van Antwerpen”.

We do not believe though that the design process has to become a public activity and that Inhabitants can finally draw the lines of the plan themselves. Designing is a complex professional skill and designers have to play their own specific role. A regular check of the design process against the input of participation and immediate confrontations with inhabitants and users in the field however keeps designers, project leaders and politicians sharp and literally brings people in the picture. On the other hand this approach also tends to give inhabitants a better insight in the complexity of such a process and the sometimes difficult choices that have to be made.

You wish participation was science.

For many project managers participation is one of the most difficult parts of the planning process, often reluctantly contracted out to a third party. However the project manager has a tremendous responsibility in the participation process as a central figure between the

different communication and community services: he or she also has to gather, pass on and interpret the input.

For which aspects of the project is participation feasible and desirable? How do we involve the neighbourhood and when? Was a representative combination of neighbourhood groups present? How can we give future inhabitants/users a say in the project? Can the protest against the demolition of a building be explained out of fear of losing one's job or green space before the front door? When does participation mean an enrichment and when does it reduce the design to a compromise?

Participation creates concrete expectations for participants and requires a commitment, critical reflection as well as a healthy dose of "honour and conscience" from project leaders and policy-makers since the input is pliable, interpretable, manipulable and most of all volatile.

The participation process in Schipperskwartier grew from practice and is still being tested and refined by people in the field. The canvassing programme, which was used in the north of Antwerp in 2002 for the first time, has more or less become a familiar aspect of urban development with similar programmes in different districts. Some of the game methodologies, developed in Schipperskwartier in 2004, were reused and improved as participation methodology in preparation for the traditional hearings for the renewal of public domain.

Gradually, a theoretical framework will be able to be distilled from the practices in Antwerp but, in spite of the wishes of every project manager, participation will never become a science!

1 This paper is a further elaboration of the article "Uw stadsproject, klaar terwijl u (ver-)wacht", that was written with Hardwin De Wever and published in: Boudry Linda, Loecx André, Van den Broeck Jef, Coppens Tom, Patteeuw Véronique, Schreurs Jan (2006), "Inzet/Opzet/Voorzet. Stadsprojecten in Vlaanderen", Antwerpen: Garant-uitgevers. In this paper the case study of Schipperskwartier is actualized and studied more in depth.

2 The prostitution policy plan comprises a broad range of actions in the field of nuisance, criminal side-effects, improvement of the position of the sex worker and a first initiative in the redevelopment of prostitution quarters. The plan favours an "integral approach of prostitution" instead of symptom suppression.

3 "'Canvassing programme' is a translation of the Dutch concept 'Wervend Programma'. This is the concept that we used while thinking about our approach. 'Werf' as a noun means construction site, and our program is linked to some big construction sites in Antwerp. 'Werven' as a verb means 'to canvass', to promote an idea by bringing it to the people. Over the years we have stated time and again that we are not using the correct expression, but we simply couldn't come up with a better one. And maybe 'canvassing program' is not a particularly good translation of a not particularly appropriate word, but we couldn't find a better one." From: Nieuwinckel Stefan (2007) "The Antwerp canvassing program", paper for the 42nd ISOCARP Congress 2007.

4 Nieuwinckel Stefan, "Conceptnota Wervende programma's", July 2004.

5 Nieuwinckel Stefan, "Conceptnota Wervende programma's", July 2004.

The project " Schipperskwartier, a seductive quarter in Antwerp" received a number of awards in recent years:

2005 - "Thuis in de stad prijs (At home in the city Prize)" for integrated infrastructural projects awarded by the Flemish Government,

2006 - Special Award in the international DIFA competition and "Vlaamse Ruimtelijke planningsprijs" (Flemish Urban planning award) awarded by the VRP (Society for Space and Planning)

The health house for sex workers received the Johnson & Johnson Award for medicine (2003) and the building was awarded a prize by the Flemish Master Architect in the category of new buildings (2005).