



FACING UNCERTAINTY:

North Bank Ij as breeding ground for planning experiments of Transitory City



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1. Introduction

In the 70's scepticism about professional effectiveness in impact on society's well being (Schoen, 1983, p. 13), caused a crisis of planning. This was further defined as the crisis of confidence in what Donald Schoen named "technological rationality", as well as, positivistic science with its linear, sectorial, top-down approach (Cuthbert, 2007, Perez-Gomez, 1983). The flaws and limitations of profession became obvious, as well as the need for change from planning and designing as problem solving process. Professionals have admitted themselves not to have managed to solve social problems, avoid new problems occurring and attend reasonable standards of competence in relation to clients (Schoen, 1983, p.12). Furthermore, since the 1970s, post-industrial change in Europe has caused disparities in social, spatial and economic conditions in urban centres: 'a polarised map where certain cities enjoyed unprecedented boom and regeneration while others failed to absorb vast, often centrally located areas left discarded after the closure of industries decades ago' (Griffin, 2003, p.2).

However, in this same period creativity is given more attention as ability to portray flexibility, generate many ideas for a problem ('fluidity', 'brainstorming'), introduce new concepts and persevere in realizing them. The impact of gentrification as well as failure of market driven development to sustainable urban change creates opportunity for alternative models of development. Such models should allow creative energy from the city to flourish, making it possible for young and weak economies to thrive, potentially engendering what one might call a 'sustainable mix' (Griffin, 2003, p. 2-3).

In this light it is relevant to study the project at the North Bank of the IJ, Amsterdam. As an ambitious plan, it aims to respond to highly important contemporary issues, in addressing situations characterised by complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflicts. The project is of interest as it takes up the challenge to turn autonomous urban processes in a high-quality living atmosphere; a new approach meant to encourage dynamics of environment and recognize uniqueness of each case. Such holistic view, considering the interconnectedness of user, spatial context, politics and designer's intervention, requires adaptability, taking risks and time consideration. Therefore, it is interesting to observe how in the current case new ideas were incorporated in the 'traditional' way of planning, the echo they had until now and problems encountered.



fig. 1. Location map; source: google earth

2. Description

The structure of this case study is following the method suggested by Marc Francis (Francis, 2001). Next to the description and evaluation of the case, some theoretical reflection on complexity theory and urban catalyst will be presented, as well as concluding thoughts on lessons learned. More insight and information about the project development was acquired through discussion with the landscape architect, currently team leader Zuidas/IJ-oeverers at Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening gemeente Amsterdam, Pieter Klomp. He has been actively involved in this project from the starting phase.

Project name:	Transformation of the Northern Bank of the IJ (Noordelijke IJ-oever) (Masterplan for the North Bank of the IJ) - Part of the program 'Amsterdam returns to the IJ'
Location:	Amsterdam (780.000 inhabitants)
Date designed/planned:	2001-2003
Construction completed:	until 2030
Financial costs:	Unknown
Size:	430 hectares
Program elements:	10.000 houses and 200 boats will be assured for 22.000 residents. 850.000m ² offices, shops and facilities space, creating 17.000 jobs
Designer(s):	Gemeente Amsterdam, Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening and BVR adviseurs stedelijke ontwikkeling landschap en infrastructuur. BVR worked at this project only till 2007
Client:	The Amsterdam-Noord Urban District Council and the Noordelijke IJ-oever Project Office.
Maintenance and management:	Projectbureau Noordwaarts

2.1 Physical context

The site is located in Amsterdam-North, along the IJ-lake. Here the IJ-lake is leading into the North sea-channel that connects Amsterdam with the North Sea. This strategic position has made the site suitable for harbour-activities. The identity of Northern Bank is also shaped by the vicinity to the garden suburbs of Oostzaan, Buiksloot and Nieuwendam as well as to the marshland further away. In relationship to Amsterdam, the area is situated right opposed to the Central Station (fig.1), very close to the city centre. The site is good accessible from the highway, however towards the city the road connections are limited: there are three tunnels, a peripheral located bridge and three ferry services.

2.2 History and project background

The North side of the IJ was always considered 'the other side', whether as the place with gallons for executions or later on as a romantic leisure area (discussion with Pieter Klomp). Before the poldering the river used to be wider. In 19th century the north bank of the IJ was still occupied by agricultural fields. Then, around 1920, water-related industry and shipbuilding established



fig. 2. Project area; source: <http://www.archined.nl/nieuws/booming-amsterdam-noord/>



fig. 3. Study of the eventual urban vista of a section of the IJ waterfront.; source: Combe, 2008

here, including the Amsterdam Dry Dock Company (ADM), The Dutch Dock and Shipbuilding Company (NDSM), aircraft manufacturer Fokker, the Batavian Petroleum Company (later Shell), Cable Company Draka and Stork machine company. These industries as well as the building of the railway station created a barrier between the IJ and the city centre. Garden villages were built at this site for the workers. Both industry and the garden villages developed as a patchwork, with no coherent global planning (discussion with Pieter Klomp) (fig.2). In the 70s due to changing economic conditions the shipping industry declined. The area became attractive for industries moving out of town. This new initiatives aimed at creating jobs rather than assuring sustainability. Early 80s, a residential area was designed for the IJplein by Rem Koolhaas. At this time a plan for the development of the Southern IJever was developed, to make the area more appropriate for housing and business. In 1993 urban pioneers reached the North banks. Artists initiated new forms of art and culture, and the site became popular for small innovative entrepreneurs. Both were attracted by the cheap environment close to the city-centre. The growing interest in this area was directly influenced by the changes occurring in the city centre: 'During the 1990s the liberalisation of the economy led to a swift commercialisation and gentrification of the city centre threatening to suffocate its creative resources and resulting in a much discussed urban boredom. This development has opened up a new perspective for Amsterdam North, which can absorb the exodus forming a safe shore, where ideas, projects and programs that are too 'fragile' or too 'young' for the commercial competition of the central city will get grounding, time and space to develop' (Griffin, 2003, p.19). In the year 2000 Shell oil-company left its activities from a large stretch of the north bank of the IJ. Also other water-related industrial activities moved away from the site creating free space for redevelopments. Soon initiatives for urban development started to rise leading to cultural, economic and social vitality and heterogeneity. This further allowed Creative Industries to colonise the area, raising the prices for the area.

Regarding the context of initiative for a redevelopment project here, BVR (adviseurs ruimtelijke ontwikkeling) that had done many developments in Amsterdam was asked to deal with this area. This office is generally hiring sub-contractors. In the case of the North IJ these sub-contractors kept changing, so there was no continuity and a lot of money was spent. Furthermore, as BVR financial strategy was to present from the start the whole cost for such huge development, its proposal was not acceptable. That is when the municipality asked BVR to work with DRO (Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening gemeente Amsterdam) or it will lose the assignment (discussion with Pieter Klomp).

2.3 Decision making and planning processes

The potentials the site showed were reason for the policymakers of district Amsterdam-North to design a Masterplan in 2001. This Masterplan was aimed to give direction to the great diversity of initiatives that were happening, but still maintaining the spontaneous character of it. 'The relative anarchy of North is exactly what is needed to proclaim a free state on the River IJ' (Urban Catalyst and SDAN, 2003). For the whole Amsterdam, this plan would 'return' the IJ to the city. Thus, 'Amsterdam will no longer be the city on the River Amstel, but the city on the IJ' (Combé, 2008). Therefore, in future The Northern IJ Bank can have a valuable share in the growth of Amsterdam and implicit on the regional business climate (fig.3). It's not about competition, rather seen as opportunity for evolution and reintegration.

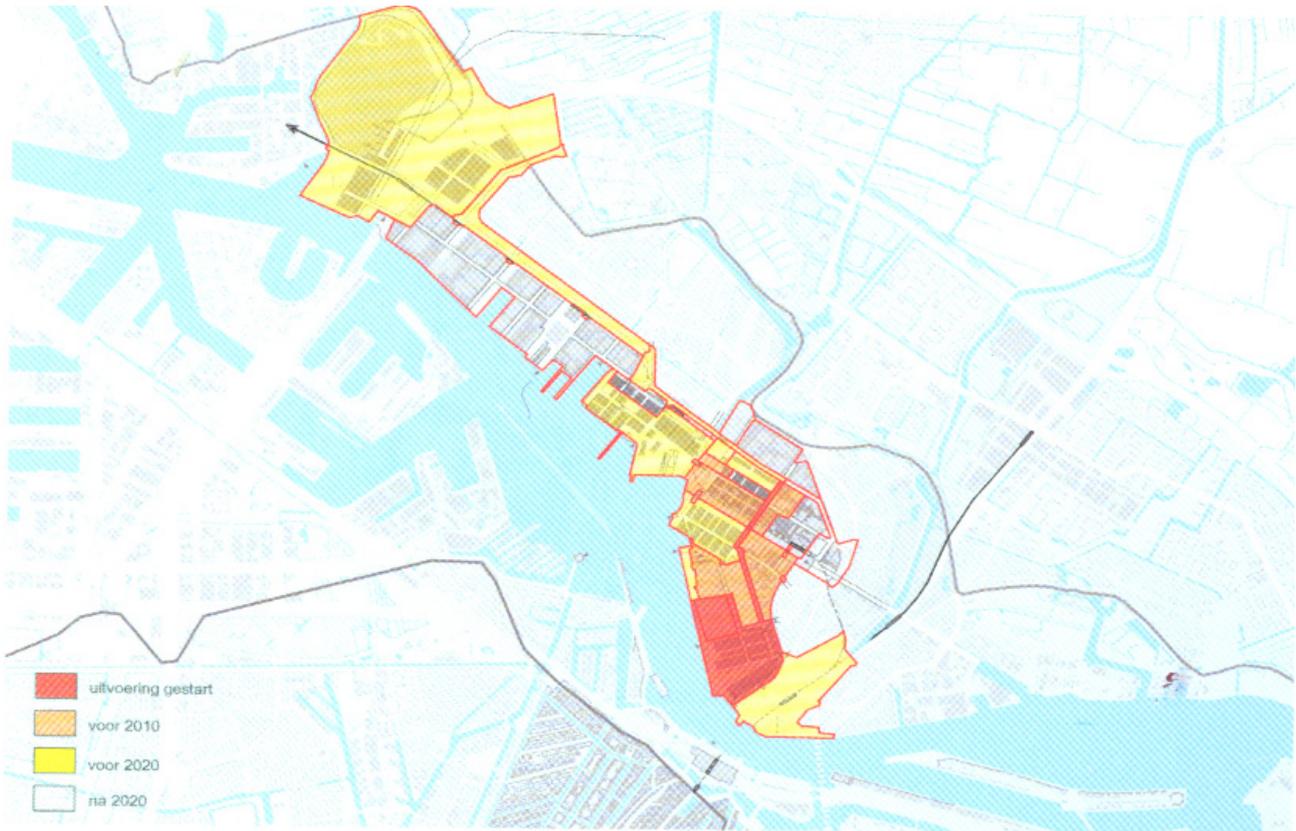


fig. 4. Development at different speeds; source: Harsema et al, 2004

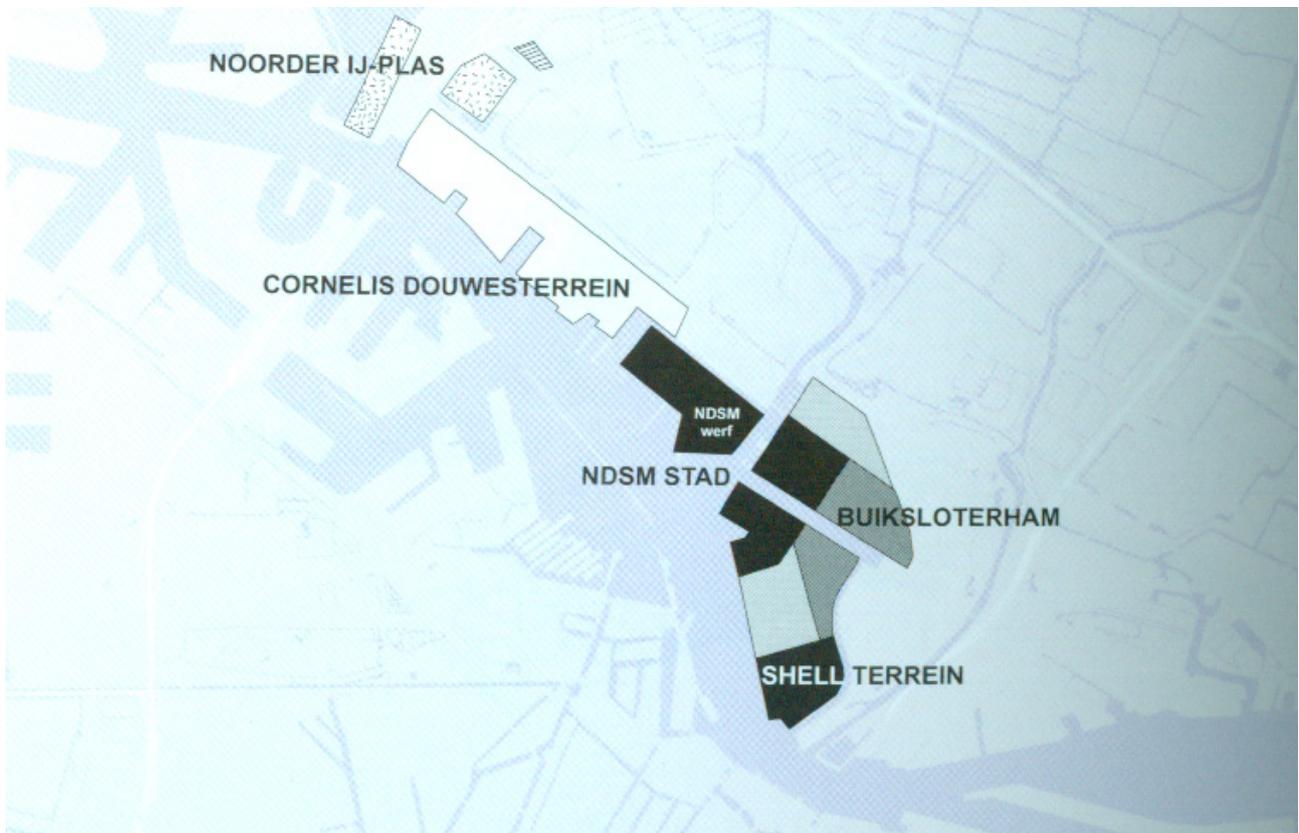


fig. 5. The different sub sectors; source: Harsema et al, 2004

The implementation process for the redevelopment of this area stretches over more than thirty years, consequently it faces uncertainties and the deadline is hard to predict. Thus, temporary uses will add up to the main structure strengthening and completing the development while remaining flexible towards the dynamics of development specific to each area. The premise was that 'temporary and permanent programs can complement each other' (Urban Catalyst and SDAN, 2003).

According to Willem van Leuven the principle of 'temporary use' is not well accepted because it is viewed from the wrong perspective, that is in relation to 'squatters', artists' (Urban Catalyst and SDAN, 2003). Reasons that favour initiatives as temporary uses are the following: Instead of leaving space vacant, waiting for reconstruction to start, people can be brought in and through spontaneous activities they can increase space quality and enhance its image. Such developments would impede the issue faced by many recent developments: uniformity, monotony, public space that does not appeal to local residents, lack of attention to public programs and services. This would further help prevent market stagnation, even leading to a good economic microclimate. These ambitions can be also regarded as 'testing ground for the future city', thus successful activities can actually be incorporated in the final plan and design. Opposed to regular planning, temporary planning must be responsive to diverse and specific initiatives, rising 'bottom-up'. Any surprising proposals should be turned into advantages and strengthen this plan. Jaap Draaisma states that temporary initiatives should be small scale and flexible and the investment costs should be low (Urban Catalyst and SDAN, 2003).

The challenge of translating these ideas into design guidelines raises numerous questions: 'Can urban planning enlarge rather than limit degrees of liberty? Not just the freedoms of individuals but also enlarge our collective capacity to act? What ways are available to make good use of the creativity and energy which city-dwellers have more effectively and in this way give a positive twist to the notion of a free city? How can people in North help shape and profit from urban changes and the processes required for them?

How to create a strategic and operative framework for working with temporary use? Which forms of temporary use do we want and what are our criteria? Do we opt for a village of city nomads, or for trendy mobile offices? Which demands do we place upon temporary users' organization, design, image? Is everybody welcome or are we going to select and if yes, how? How does the intake of temporary use take place? Does everything come in over decision makers and private networks, or do we open an intake (desk) ourselves? Are we active or passive?' (Urban Catalyst and SDAN, 2003)

These questions were answered through the decisions taken by the planning team. The Program elements for the urban regeneration plan, envision that 10.000 housing, 200 boats will be assured for 22.000 residents, as well as 850.000 m² of offices, shops and facilities space, creating 17.000 jobs (Made van der, H.). The development of the site will occur at two speeds (fig.4): In three potential and available locations restructuring takes place with high speeds. In the areas in between developments take place with a slower and more natural speed, acting as an extension of the current pioneer phase. Areas developed at rapid speed are: Overhoeks, NDSM and Buiksloterham (fig.5). The North IJ-lake area and the Cornelius Douwesterrain will develop at lower speed. This total plan is covered by three frame-works (fig.6): the waterways; roads; and green and public space. These frameworks connect the different locations with the surrounding landscapes and other neighbourhoods in Amsterdam-North.

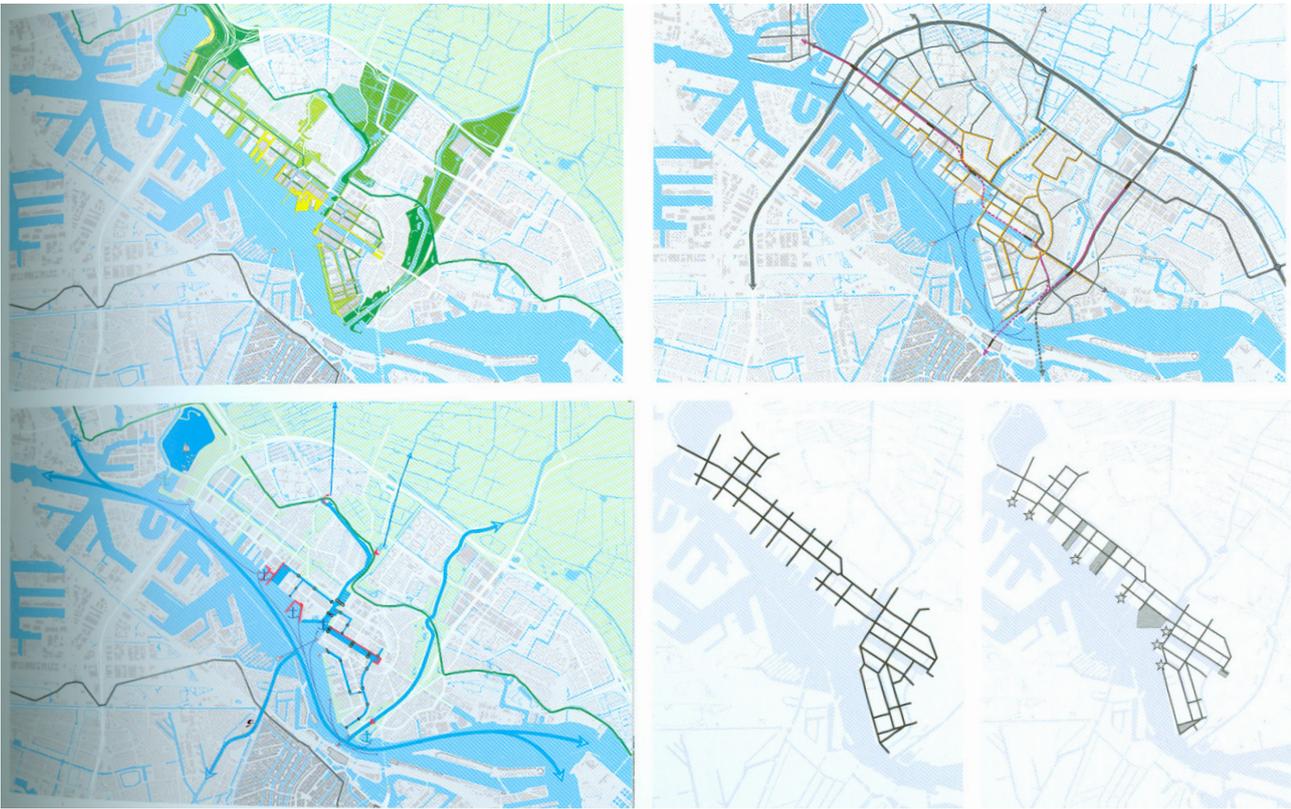


fig. 6. green and public space
 water
 traffic routes
 framework of roads and special places; source: Harsema et al, 2004

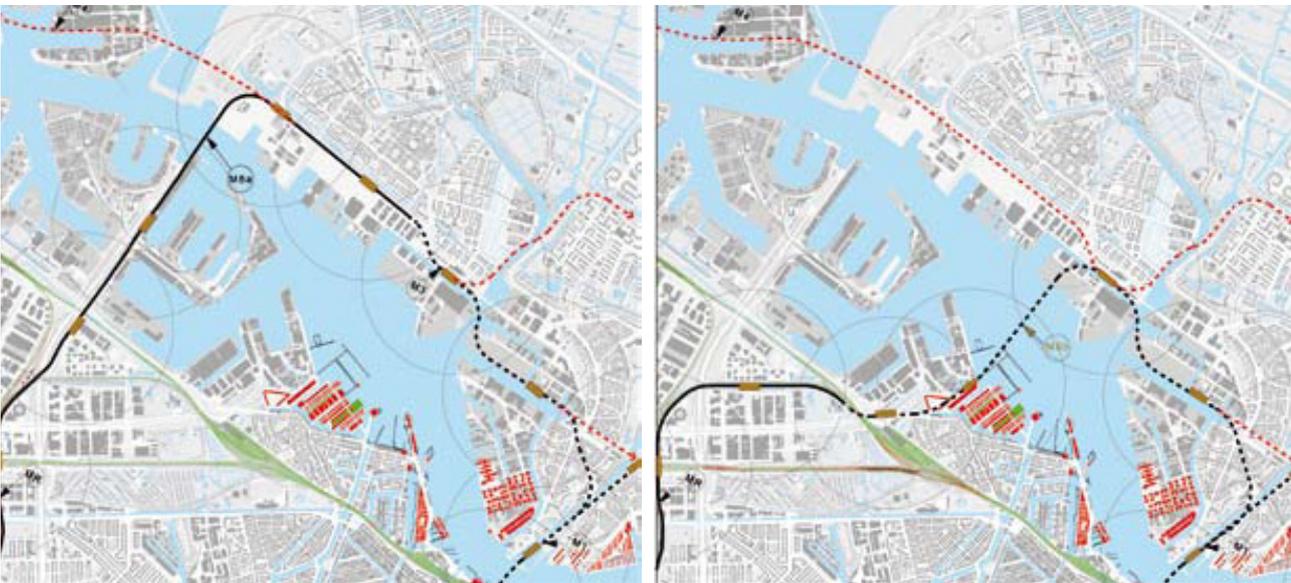


fig. 7. Plans for high speed metro line; source: Combe, 2008

Next to allowing temporary uses to deal with dynamics that cannot be foreseen, other considerations shaped the masterplan and the directives for each development area. The framework connects public space to green area at the waterfront through several green stripes. This decision was inspired by an existing green stripe cutting through the industrial area towards the waterfront. This would further re-establish accessibility of the garden villages to water. Furthermore a bottom up approach and incentive planning were implemented. For example the use of ferry instead of building a big bridge to start with and waiting to see what happens (In Rotterdam they first build the big bridge and the two sides show a strong contrast between poor and rich.). Through such key small investment public connection to these places becomes available for a variety of users. Also, quality of environment and experience was assured through architectural guidelines for the build area, while leaving public space as simple and open as possible (discussion with Pieter Klomp). Key concepts are mixed identity, cooperation of city and developers, strategy of down-scaling and direct organisation.

The City Council approved the zoning plan for Overhoeks in 2006 and the plan for Buiksloterham in late 2009. For the former NDSM shipyard and the Hamerstraat the zoning plans still need authorization. This four sub-sectors have the status of 'zoned industrial estate' within the definitions of the Noise Abatement Act, that is areas set aside for industry that produces a lot of noise. Consequently, it was necessary to modify this status before residential construction could begin. For most of the areas it was possible to achieve this without complications, because the heavy industry had already moved away, except for Buiksloterham (Bosman et al, 2011).

For the near future bicycle bridges are planned to increase accessibility. Other bridges will not be built if maximum use is not expected. Step by step the bicycle path along the IJ will be completed. For now there are still companies that need the waterfront. Also because of lack of money the municipality has to wait (discussion with Pieter Klomp). For the far future, high-speed metro linking North/South Line is planned (fig. 7). This will improve public transport links, having a radical impact on the relationship between the city centre and Amsterdam-North. The metro line will draw an axis for new urban development in Amsterdam-North. Also, development in the low speed project areas is anticipated.

The project is managed by Projectbureau Noordwaarts. This office is formed by a coalition of district Amsterdam-North and Centrale Stad. The coalition was formed to improve the rate of success of the big projects. There are big financial and procedural risks and these request the interest of different administrative levels. Noordwaarts is responsible for the development and realization of plans. This means that Noordwaarts is in charge of the quality, continuity, the money and the processes of this project. The tasks that Noordwaarts is concerned with are planning, site preparations, taking care of the legal and planning framework, and realization of public space, infrastructures, schools and healthcare-centres. The realization of real estate is done by project developers, investors and housing-corporations.

Concerning its budget, sectorial funds are available but not sufficient. As a consequence, in December 2007 Minister Cramer assigned a check for € 30 million for the project. This was meant to help accelerate the process of increasing the quality of the area, thus making it more attractive for development. The government's focus was especially in aiding Buiksloterham to cope with soil pollution, relocation of a concrete plant, construction of a green corridor ("green bank"), as well as development of infrastructure (roads and bridges).



fig. 8. Plan for NDSM; source: Bosman et al, 2011



fig. 10-12. Plans for NDSM Park, source: Lippe et al, 2009



fig. 9. NDSM yard current situation

Special attention needs to be given to the legal solutions found for the development of each area.

2.3.1. NDSM

For the NDSM (Nederlandse Dok en Scheepsbouw Maatschappij/ - Dutch Dock and Shipbuilding Company) Shipyard, a new residential area of about 2.500 houses and 375.000 m² for business, shopping, culture, restaurants, hotels and other facilities are planned.

Regarding the planning team, in the case of NDSM from 1998-1999 residents, businesses, artists, authorities of housing corporations, architects and stakeholders worked together for the plan, all in respect to the future users. Next to mixed economic and residential functions, the public space was given special attention as enabling the free expression for the pioneers. The artists involved in the planning are continuing to monitor the transformations especially concerning public space quality (Roobeek, 2008). Therefore, after planning was finished the artists engaged to bring initiatives to make a connection of the place with the new developments. Thus, they shifted from a first reactive stance to a pro-active one of filling in the commonly established framework (discussion with Pieter Klomp).

The different developments of distinct speed and process are running simultaneously, striving at maintaining a balance between reaching set goals and leaving space for the spontaneous and unexpected. The former NDSM shipyard was assigned to the Kinetisch Noord working group (involved in squatters' movement) as result of a competition. 'The local UC team has focused on the development of a temporary management plan employing temporary use scenarios for the future of the vast dockland area, which will accompany the urban master plan and involves the formation of an agency for temporary use. Both are unique and unprecedented planning tools designed to coordinate the 'puzzle' of numerous initiatives and spatial possibilities in the area, over time. The agency for temporary uses will function as a receptor of initiatives and will have an active role in initiating specific temporary use projects' (Griffin, 2003, p. 19). The tenants of workshops at the NDSM have received contracts of five years. The Kinetisch Noord is thus mainly concerned with establishing the required infrastructure for free expression and initiative, allowing each tenant to organize himself and trying to guarantee a certain freedom within the rules imposed by law. This initiative is supported by a municipal breeding fund, which allocated funds for the renovation of key elements of the structure (Harsema et al., 2004). Furthermore, the city council developed the cantijn as attraction and urban generator (discussion with Pieter Klomp).

25 million were spent only in maintaining the old buildings of the shipyard. In order to get this investment back, the decision was made to create housing areas (discussion with Pieter Klomp). Consequently, growth would occur by intensifying use within the set framework:

- the main feature will be contrast: between old and new, big and small
- the living area will be dense, while the area with the old shipyard buildings will remain open as area for low price programs and meeting place for those who live and work in the area (fig. 8).
- there will be a central parking on several levels (not underground because of the polluted soil) that would allow only pedestrian use in this place. Some levels of the parking could be occasionally used for festivals.

The artists' proposals focus on the public space (fig. 9), which is regarded as cultural heritage. Accordingly they envision it as a common ground, 'a playground' for everyone, encouraging free

- bebouwing < 35m construction height < 35m
- bebouwing < 110m construction height < 110m
- overige bebouwing other buildings
- interne binnenplaats private internal courtyard
- privé groen private green space
- entree gebouw entrance to building
- entree parkeergarage entrance to car park
- contour parkeergarage outline of underground car park
- weg toegankelijk voor auto's road accessible to cars
- voetgangers en fietsgebied pedestrian and cyclist zone
- vrijliggend fietspad dedicated cycle path
- brug bridge
- parkeerplaats on-road parking space
- water water
- publiek toegankelijk groen publicly accessible green space
- helling ramp
- bomen trees
- riet reed beds
- keermuur (retaining) wall
- trap flight of steps
- generaal pompstation general pumping station
- steiger jetty
- beton concrete



fig. 13. Plan for Overhoeks; source: Bosman et al, 2011

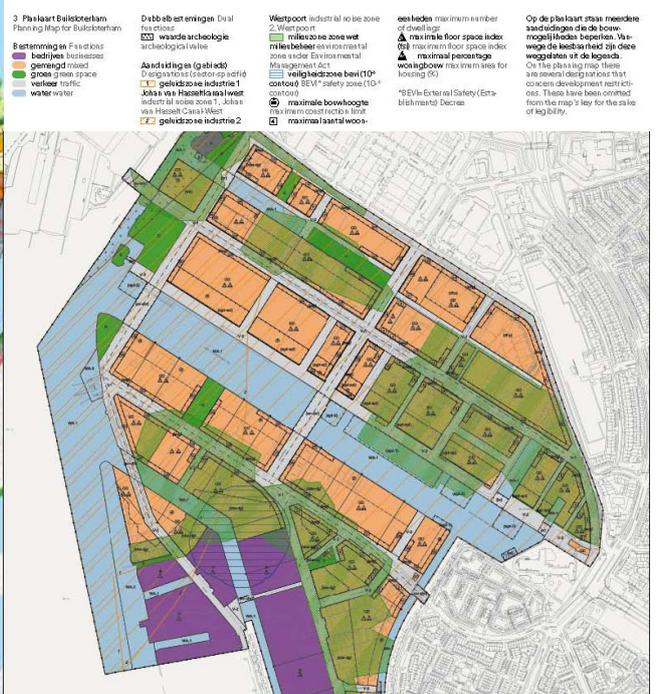
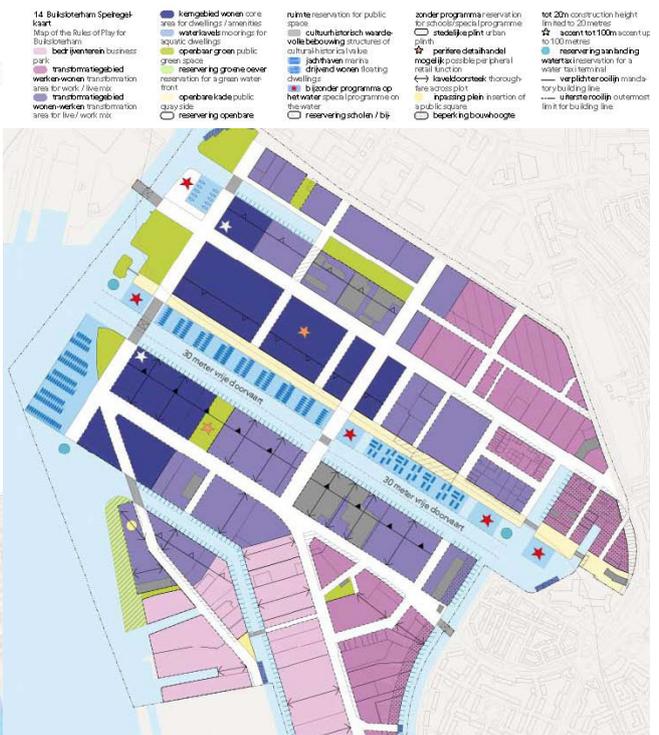


fig. 14-15. Plans for Buiksloterham; source: Bosman et al, 2011

expression and relaxation, against 'compulsive consumption' (Stuart et al, 2009). In creating this common ground the artists offer each citizen a voucher for a surface soil the size of his body circumference (fig. 10-12). Together with at least 49 other persons sharing same interest they can assign any use for an area besides work or housing. Each group will be in charge with the management and maintenance of the specific area. In case of disrespect to these rules the vouchers will be made available for others. Though proposals are quite free, they will be allowed only after consulting the organizers of this proposal (Lippe and Stuart, 2009).

2.3.2. Overhoeks

Overhoeks is actually still following the 'blue print' design, where all is planned from the start and there is no flexibility (discussion with Pieter Klomp) (fig. 13). Here 2,200 homes (80% free sector, 20% social rented) with density 150 per hectare and 130,000 m² for business, cultural institutions, restaurants and shops were planned. Due to constraints as soil contamination, parking areas are above ground.

2.3.3. Buiksloterham

In Buiksloterham, approximately 100 hectares of business will be redeveloped into a new residential and commercial area. This means that about 2.000 homes (1.640 apartments, 360 town houses) will be built. It is expected for this project to create jobs for approximately 8.000 people. Among the key concepts for this area are flexibility, small size, market-oriented work and focus on cost control relation to revenues.

A remarkable strategy used here, was that the City Council actively transformed only one third of the areas surface. This would attract further investment from private parties and in a future phase even at the scale of individuals (Bosman et al, 2011). Another novelty was the introduction of the sustainability tender. Following this system, land was awarded to parties as a result of a competition on the most sustainable plan (for example with buildings with zero emission) instead of the investor offering most money. This unique experiment in the Netherlands has led to imitation. However such approach also makes projects more difficult to judge (discussion with Pieter Klomp).

Regarding planning decisions, for Buiksloterham, instead of a defined plan a set of 'rules of play' has been formulated (fig. 14-15). This included several criteria for urban development, such as ensuring sightlines towards the water, maximum construction heights (for example: no high-rise at waterfront), building lines, the functions of buildings and public space. Others are the restriction of only one entrance to public street for each plot, and the interdiction of housing occupying 100% of the use for a plot (discussion with Pieter Klomp). Next to the general guidelines, a land development plan was outlined for the area.

The principle of zoning for each parcel was also taken into account. However, if the environmental impact of each stand-alone development may be acceptable, their combined effects may not be tolerable. One case of project with 'stamp planning' is the one for new headquarters of HEMA on the NDSM. Thus, except for a few cases the Northern IJmeer worked with global zoning. Global zoning requires a clear outline of a development. The current system focuses on legal issues and is often contrary to a flexible or progressive development methodology. Compelling the developers to exploit every plot for maximum as housing is one

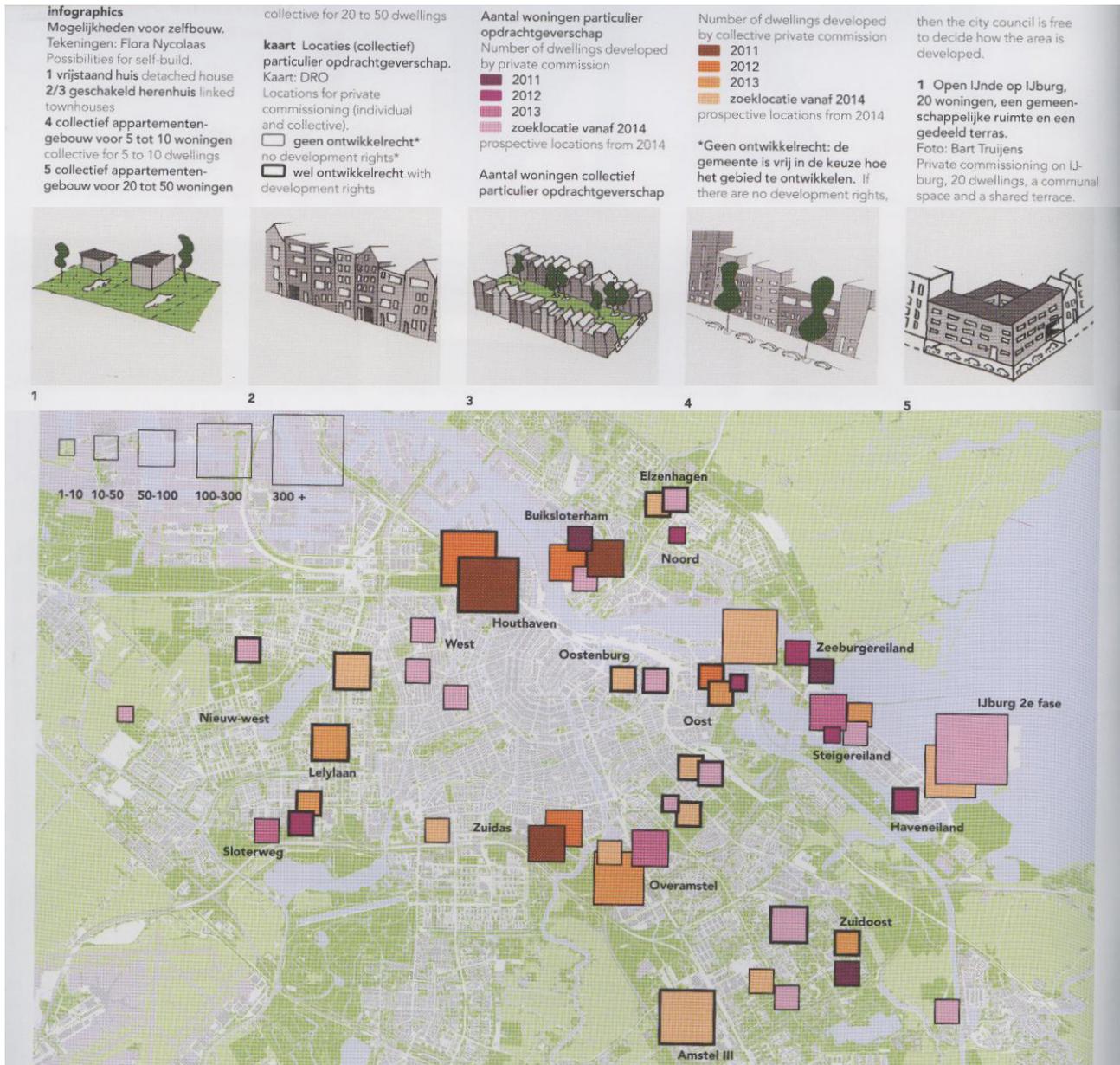


fig. 16. Possibilities for self build; source: Bor et al, 2011



fig. 17. Individual and collective self build plots; source: Bor et al, 2011

example (Bosman et al, 2011). To ensure some flexibility, although the zoning plan is obliged to give clear image of the development foreseen, the planners had to calculate in detail countless possibilities for developments for users to choose from. This required an immense amount of work (discussion with Pieter Klomp).

This solution, now being tested, is the development model of self-build (fig. 16). It follows the conviction that, 'involving local residents in the renovation gives them the opportunity to take the adaptation of these properties into their own hands' (Bor et al, 2011). The City Council is required to 'provide space and flexibility by ensuring that building locations in the city area open to all potential developers and by simplifying rules and procedures' (Bor et al, 2011). Such an approach would allow builders and residents to get in touch from an early phase. The urban planners would provide only 'building envelopes' describing position of properties on the plots and the building alignments. This is applicable both for individual or collective private commissioning (fig. 17). This solution of self development indicates that 'general policy will increasingly be translated into a tailor-made approach for a specific location' (Bor et al, 2011). Such proposals have already proven successful in the case of Steigereiland. Thus, one way out of the current problems is to selectively and strategically reduce land prices, focus on municipal ambitions and relaxation of municipal procedures.



fig. 18-21. Atmosphere at the NDSM yard

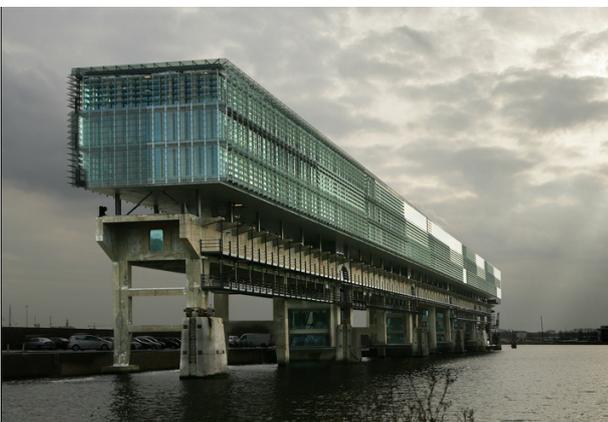


fig. 22. Kraanspoor; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/ndsm-werf/foto%27/> fig. 23. Art city; source: Bosman et al, 2011



fig. 24. Noorderlicht Café; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/ndsm-werf/foto%27/> fig. 25. Noorderlicht Café

2.4. Site analysis

The site analysis describes the separate sub sectors considering character, users and spatial quality. For this, traces and activities (Zeisel, 2005) allowed by specific behavioural setting were studied, sometimes accompanied by questioning the users.

2.4.1. NDSM

In an article of de Tanker the old Dutch Dock and Shipbuilding Company area is described as follows: ‘the NDSM wharf greets the visitor with a sense of expectation and potential. It’s an empty place that invites you to dream but also a place full of dreams direction. It’s rebellious, free and raw, but simultaneously slick and ambitious. This habitat radiates from hard work, hope and inventiveness. But for how long?’ (Asseldonk, 2009)

The spatial quality of this area in particular, but also in general for the whole project can be well illustrated using the design principles of ‘ecological democracy’ described by Randolph T. Hester (Hester, 2006). The ideas behind the North Bank IJ Masterplan promote freedom of expression (democracy) and call for connection between people and their environment and their interconnectedness (ecology) as well as the dimension of time (niche, temporary use).

The NDSM shows an industrial character, with the specific metal and brick hangars, containers and structures as cranes or ship ramps. The legibility of the site is facilitated by landmarks represented by old buildings that were maintained. However the interventions on each of them are unique and original, enhancing the *diversity* of the area without altering its identity. It’s a mixed use area where one can find garages, yacht harbour, cafes, student housing, business, shops, and the headquarters of numerous creative industries. It’s a ‘huge playground’ with opportunities for any kind of activity and recreation for diverse age categories (fig. 18-21). Thus, it is close to what Hester describes as city ‘clean enough to be healthy and dirty enough to be happy’ (Hester, 2006, p. 2) allowing creativity. One of the most appreciated architectural achievements is the Kraanspoor, a new building on the IJ on top of an old crane track, juxtaposing old and new (fig. 22). Another example is the Art City build inside the hall of the former NDSM shipyard (fig. 23), where the inside has been transformed into an assembly of artistic and craft disciplines, ‘Amsterdam’s largest cultural Incubator’ (Bosman et al, 2011). Kinetic Foundation North allowed here the growth of a complex of studios and workshops of one or two storey, aiming at a mix of emerging artists and supporting businesses, new media and old crafts, from no-budget, low budget and some budget initiatives. A skate park was also organized. These actions express the intention of *fairness* and *inclusion* in building a strong community. The result is a *vibrant* environment where human scale has been re-established in the otherwise over scaled shed. Festivals as ‘Over ‘t IJ Festival’ are inspired by the history of this place and the still visible elements of the past, a revelatory landscape.

One of the main generators for social interaction as well as enablers of indoor-outdoor continuity are the Canteen building Baanderij and Noorderlicht Café. They represent centres of *vitality*. According to Hester, ‘centres build socio-spatial capital, enhance deliberative democracy, and incubate ideas regarding locality’ (Hester, 2006, p.21). Baanderij, has served since 1957 as office, canteen and assembly hall of the NDSM. The building was renovated and maintained as part of the cultural-historical (industrial) heritage. Today, on the ground floor the brasserie “The IJ-canteen” is located and at the first and second floors are offices. It is attractive



fig. 26. The IJ-canteen; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/ndsm-werf/foto%27/>



fig. 27. Student housing; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/ndsm-werf/foto%27/>



fig. 28. Corridor student housing



fig. 29. STCA building;



fig. 30. Shell's Big Lab; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/overhoeks/>



fig. 31. Eye Film Institute Netherlands Shell Tower Overhoeks ; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/overhoeks/foto%27/>



fig. 32. Housing campus inner courtyard

for different income groups, gender groups and ages, offering a range of choices for indoor or outdoor activities (conferences, workshops, marriage, concerts, etc.). It is here where people can approach water (fig. 26). Sitting on the stairs close to the waterfront, one can enjoy the open views towards the IJ and the south bank, as well as admire the nautical relics floating near the shore. All this adds up to the unique identity of this area. On the other side of the huge 'playground' of transformed old buildings, companies halls and open space for skaters, children, graffiti drawers and other creative activities, lies the Noorderlicht Café, the most lively spot. Here the atmosphere is similar to a remote beach 'an alternative world' opposing the densely build and crowded Amsterdam over the river (fig. 24 and fig. 25).

Another special feature of the NDSM is the temporary student housing (fig. 27), realized in partnership with the district foundation DUWO from Delft and Rochdale AWW. It consists of 380 containers build on the edge of a unique location, the increasingly *lively* central yard opening towards the IJ. The idea of containers is a quick and cheap way of introducing housing, and also fitting in the context of the area. It's adding colour, while still matching with the dominant shade of rust and brick. However there are also some draw backs to this initiative. Although in a unique location, students are facing safety problems (narrow, dark corridors even at daytime (fig.28)) as well as uncomfortable living conditions due to lack of green around the containers.

This *empty* open ground, waiting for transformation is stage for daily use or events. All these are determining the *resilient* character of the area, the *multifunctional* uses being embedded in the particular setting of this area. This feeling of *centeredness* of this whole ensemble at local scale as well as for the north river side as a whole needs 'people to create it and maintain it' (Hester, 2006, p.23). Thus, the *connectedness* of the singular developments should continue to be cultivated during the future changes, following the principles set by the framework: complexity, equity, economy and resilience.

2.4.2. Overhoeks

Although mainly still in construction, the Overhoeks can be characterized as a very tidy development. Here, the development has been divided in several mixed use areas characterized by specific landmarks, building structure and height.

One remarkable building that has been rehabilitated is STCA, a complex composed of five wings of six storey perpendicular to the IJ (fig. 29). A second old building that has been maintained is Shell's Big Lab (fig. 30). Next to it the most representative landmarks arise: the Shell Tower Overhoeks and the new Eye Film Institute Netherlands (fig. 31). The later will include four cinemas, two large exhibition spaces, a café and museum store open their doors, thus a future *vitality* centre. Bordered by all this buildings, a housing campus has been developed, creating smaller scale courtyards for the future residents (fig. 32). One of the qualities of the area is the *particularness* achieved through the practice of conserving, repairing, and recycling.

The centre of Overhoeks area is stretching along the IJ bank, being represented by a strip of green, the Bank Park (fig. 33). This is the most successful place in this sector. The park links all areas and connects to the smaller green patches further from the river. It sets the ground for diverse activities from hiking, picnic, sunbathing, biking and others and is a *resilient* and *impelling* place due to its *emptiness*. A special collection of different types of elms, The Elms Arboretum, is also included in the park. Nowadays this spot is the liveliest in the whole area.



fig. 33. The Elms Arboretum



fig. 35. Name of the park



fig. 34. The Elms Arboretum - waterfront



fig. 36. Playground at housing campus



fig. 37. Playground at housing campus



fig. 38. Boomerang Casa; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/buiksloterham/foto%27/>



fig.39. Boomerang Casa ground covering

The residents of the new buildings as well as people from the city centre come here to enjoy the quiet atmosphere and openness to the waterfront. A wider platform follows the line of the waterfront, isolated by a green stripe from the biking and walking lane. Furthermore, the edge to water is not steep; rocks are gradually leading into the water (fig. 34). The name of the park is written in playful way on the ground (fig. 45), contributing to the individualization of this otherwise very ordinary and common green space. What is most valued about this place is that it is not as commercial and crowded as other areas in Amsterdam. Only element missing in user's opinion is more colour.

The comfort felt in the open space in front of the new housing campus changes as one enters the green yards. Although the plant compositions are rich and beautiful, the place feels cool and is mostly shaded, thus less appealing for outdoor activity. The playground next to it is also well designed, with quality material and planting (fig. 36). It is very sleek and tidy except for the rocks and sand spot that can serve to more creative ways of playing than conventional outdoor installations (fig. 37). Still, although visited on a sunny Saturday, as opposed to the park along the Ij, this place was deserted.

2.4.3. Buisklosterham

Buisklosterham has a rustic, harsh look, the area being used mainly for business and industry. Out of all the three high speed development areas, Buisklosterham is still at the beginning of its transformation, thus the qualities for community development are not yet brought forth. However, the value of this area consists in it serving as a testing ground for different solutions to facing future uncertainty as well as climate consideration. A clear centre cannot be identified yet, but the most successful results till now are represented by a cluster of buildings (old and new) at the eastern part, along the Asterweg and the canal. The most famous one, Boomerang Casa (fig. 38), is characterized by *adaptability*: a multi-tenant building that is lodging various creative and innovative enterprises whose structure can in future accommodate housing. Thus, its use can change but the fundamental form will be kept. Due to its height and particular shape it can be spotted from distance. However, as one approaches, the plain white concrete and the rough finishing are rather cold. Furthermore, it offers no possibility to stay or get closer to the waterfront, allowing only a distant view over the old garden cities and the canal. Details and texture are provided only at ground covering (fig. 39). Kaap Noord (fig. 40), one of the first new developments in this area, is structured as a small 'fortress' (fig. 41) where small workspaces are organized on several levels around a central square, creating a large multi-tenant building (fig. 42). The materials used combine rough, cold industrial materials with warm ones as well as surfaces with special detailing and patterns (fig. 43). Next to the canal, wooden docks as well as tables create a pleasant interface between building and waterfront (fig. 44-46).

A similar structure is used for 'te Platenenplein, where small studios on two levels are organized around an irregular shaped 'patio' with Platanus trees (fig. 47-49). The presence of vegetation adds more colour and energy to the area. Again attention to details determines the quality of space: the large windows give the whole structure a light feeling; the uncoated wood of the window frames depicts a special patina, contrasting with the shiny sleek metal facades; the structure of the different studios as piled 'boxes' with elements emerging from the facades, enrich the experience and add more dynamic to the place. Concerning uses this area concentrates offices, artist workshops, facilities for children all having the yard with trees as common ground (as the name indicates). This nested structure, bringing human scale



fig.40. Kaap Noord - streetview
source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/buiksloterham/foto%27/>



fig.41-43. Kaap Noord - structure and materials

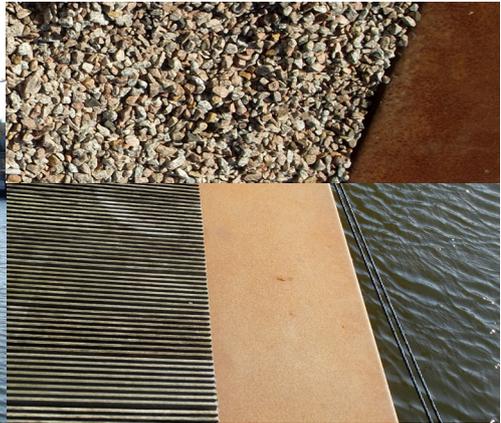


fig.44-46. Kaap Noord - waterfront



fig.47-49. 'te Platenenplein



fig.50. 'De Groene Draeck'; source: <http://www.noordwaarts.nl/projecten/buiksloterham/foto%27/>

to these clusters of mixed activity is reoccurring on several areas. This further enables intimacy and building a specific character for the autonomous developments to identify with.

Another successful example is 'De Groene Draeck' (fig. 50), the former boatyard of De Vries Lentsch yacht builders that now serves as a workspace for architects, designers and web specialists. *Selective diversity* is used in Buiksloterham as criteria for quality design. On this aspect, Hester states as a rule that 'the path to urban resilience is a selective diversity by which multiformity is maintained and enhanced within the unifying particularness of a given region' (Hetster, 2006, p. 172).

The presented sub sectors are not yet well connected to each other or to the surrounding garden cities. The only unifying detail for the whole project is the use of corten steel at the waterfront (fig. 51). Another common feature of the developments here are the organisation as nested hierarchy and the alternation of wild and managed nature.



fig.51. Waterfront marked with corten steel



NDSM yard - Art city - 'framework'

3. Evaluation

From peer reviews and criticism both positive and negative outcomes of the Transformation of the Northern Bank of the IJ are highlighted. The current achievements in the Northern IJ oever concerning reuse of industrial heritage, new programs and architecture, to festivals and public places are appealing. The Kraanspoor, the Over-the-IJ Festival, The Golden Pheasant hotel restaurant, the Eye Film Institute still under construction, as well as the first part of the green banks are good examples, among many larger and smaller initiatives (Combé, 2008).

The distinctive feature of the masterplan for Northern IJ Bank is that 'it does not provide a detailed final image. As general features and lessons, methods that proved efficient are: an integrated approach of a team composed of various professions and interest groups; the balancing of conservation and development (complementarity); making inclusive and performance-oriented open zoning. To this the following conclusion can be added: 'The longer the transformation lasts, the better the quality of the resulting environment' (Combé, 2008).

The weaknesses and strengths of this project result from its spatial, social, political and planning context. The development of temporary uses was due to the location of the area close to city centre, but still away from the mass developments and standardised new areas or old protected structures, making it a 'breeding ground' for small scale initiatives. Moreover, this approach of experimenting with small interventions, through trial and error, is a merit of the planning team. The bottom up approach and strategy of small interventions were used as part of the planning for the area's transformation process in order to respond to lack of money, having to deal with a complex development on a large time span. Thus, apparent disadvantages were turned into opportunities for a more sensitive and site specific approach. The development on two speeds is a good strategy in facing uncertainty and dealing with the current crisis.

Setting the framework for the whole project was the result of group effort of different professionals and interest groups. Furthermore, the zoning plans enabled some autonomous developments that were attractive for developers, still balancing such drives with needs for lower budget developments. Thus, temporary uses can actually influence the end project, even though they will be removed' (Pieter Klomp in SDAN and Urban Catalyst, 2003). Furthermore, it offers a high diversity of urban functions, embedded in a strong network of infrastructures, public spaces and natural environments. As presented when discussing each development area, the project had some support also from the city council and government, especially in helping to fulfil legal requirements and environmental issues.

However, regarding the use of a framework as opposed to blueprint planning, such approach does not automatically lead to a successful development. It needs the conditions of the market, as 'taking risks is a core task of the market, not government'. The stagnation caused by the current real estate crisis is challenging the effectiveness and flexibility of the whole planning. In Overhoeks, most developing parties are retreating. Even the 'bottom up' approaches are not encouraging enough for new offers. Thus, in cases as the current building crisis the government must take a chance (Combé, 2008).

Furthermore, due to its complexity and impossibility to control the quality of all developments, especially the 'stamp plans' were realised without relation to the surrounding. That is why for such large scale projects designers and planners have to accept heterogeneity in implementing the guidelines and can only make sure the framework is followed. Furthermore, due



NDSM yard - MTV footloose creative industry

to the relatively slow process and lack of money, quality of environment in areas being still in the middle of development is not yet portrayed in a coherent way. Also, time is needed for people to engage and for municipality to start investing more. Moreover, such urban transformation requires local's engagement and cooperation as well.

During the whole process of urban regeneration the effects of gentrification on the site's atmosphere can be explained by the dynamics between the different actors and interests. The special feeling of the NDSM lies in its freedom, culture, playfulness and timelessness, as well as the open and vast views (Stuart et al, 2009). Following the pioneer stage (a time of little or no rules, when the municipality had little interest in the area) the gentrification process started. One particular phenomenon observed in this case is that footloose companies are intentionally moving in an area with 'harbour industrial' atmosphere. The paradox is that once companies are footloose, the physical characteristics of a location become again important when developing a new image. By turning into a new central area of the city, as well as due to its special character, including the old buildings, many facilities, and features such as water, this area becomes highly attractive for such companies (Combé, 2008). MTV moved to the NDSM attracted by its concept; the idea of experimental industry area was very hip. Still, once there, it started to complain about paving, parking, lighting, benches. Thus, it wanted to change the atmosphere they came for (discussion with Pieter Klomp). Moreover, an organized and legal development imposes high standards of safety and hygiene (for example concerning fire and police service, or noise). Thus, one important result of the gentrification, next to rise of land prices, is the stricter normative regulations (Kallenberg, 2002). Both affected the image of the site and made it impossible for certain artists or craftsmen to continue using this space. Such changes no longer allow the 'messiness' that used to stimulate the imagination in this area that was 'always a working place', nor do they follow 'a slower time', but not slow, as before (Stuart et al, 2009).

Nevertheless, the impact of this project on the IJ river, and its potentials can already be appreciated. In future the river might function as a central space, its recreational and ecological values being brought to the foreground as well as its connection to the hinterland. Consequently, the North IJ bank will no longer be regarded as a 'thin strip of offices and facilities along the water, called a "waterfront"', but rather as part of the city (Combé, 2008).



NDSM yard - Amsterdam; source: <http://www.spr-waerts.nl/projecten/nds-sm-werf/foto%27/>

4. Theoretical issues related to the case

4.1. Field of complex adaptive system theory

The field of complex adaptive system theory (or 'complexity theory') studies how order is achieved in complex systems like galaxies, ecologies, markets, social systems and neural networks. According to complexity scientists living systems aspire to a state of dynamic stability also called 'edge of chaos'. Opposed to inflexible systems, 'systems on the edge' are sensitive to novelty and disequilibrium, constantly adapting and evolving. They are however not chaotic systems, as they hold an internal coherence that assures structure and continuity; in between rigid order and incoherent chaos. 'They are free enough to change, but stable enough to stay recognizable'. Translating this in concrete situation, one can conclude that: 'a vibrant democracy is an 'edge of chaos' form of governance; a healthy market is an 'edge of chaos' form of economics; a flexible and adaptive organization is an 'edge of chaos' institution; well-developed personality is an 'edge of chaos' psyche (Cleveland, 2005).

For now the actors involved in NDSM function as autonomous agents whose actions relate to the local situation. Their individual decisions, however impact each other by limiting or supporting them. Paradoxically, 'Cooperating with existing dynamics instead of struggling to control those dynamics' raise the possibilities that one can influence the whole (Cleveland, 2005).

Considering the leader position in such a system, he needs to provide an intended outcome accompanied by a set of simple rules, not by dictating actions, but by enabling agents to find the adequate position in this frame. They should balance agency (autonomy) and communion (belongingness). Such principles were experimented in the case of Buiksloterham with the 'rules of play' and zoning plan, trying to balance structure and freedom.

To avoid stagnation and death of a system the cycle of disequilibrium (disorder) and temporary stability (order) is needed. In this context the following five phases are introduced: emergence, exploitation, equilibrium, disequilibrium, reintegration or disintegration. Evolution is possible due to its 'capacity for coherence/memory and yet novelty/change' (Cleveland, 2005). In the case of the North IJ bank temporary uses were introduced as short term solution to solve the problem of degradation in the abandoned area. If the strategy proves successful it spreads and improves, entering the exploitation phase. Temporary equilibrium was achieved when these functions established in the area adjusted to the needs of the environment and were exploiting existing resources, in this case the good location and special atmosphere. Now, with the crisis as well as the pressure for new developments, according to the final plan (both pressures although opposed are challenging the current situation) the system is falling in disequilibrium: 'In 2009, the spontaneous development officially ended: there is a plan by developers. There is room for profit. The spontaneous become increasingly formalized through a strategy decision. There are now things that remain to be built' (Lippe and Stuart, 2009).

Bart Stuart, one of the pioneers in the NDSM fears that the site will go through a similar process as Westergasfabriek, where the commerce prevails and major events are held behind fences. Thus, the area will lose its open and rough character due to over gentrification (Veen, 2009). It is argued that for Westergasfabriek much of the atmosphere of the former site has been altered and that the space is no longer accessible for any kind of spontaneous expression. This danger should now be downing upon the North IJ Bank development. According to the complexity theory, places are in continuous change, no rules being able to freeze and so



Kraanspoor - conservation and development

maintain the same state. Temporary initiatives are a visible form of creativity. They by definition and nature of light can therefore respond quickly to changing demand (Asseldonk, 2009). Thus, if the movement for freedom of expression and keeping this area flexible to new initiatives is strong enough it should resist commercialization. Otherwise these activities will colonise another area and new businesses will come into the yard and identify themselves with the real culture.

When asking Bart Stuart about how he sees the changes at the NDSM yard he explained that this phenomenon 'starts like a light initiative and becomes heavier with money, policy and official approvals', thus going from light to heavy. He further argued that they as pioneers served their role and for now 'their time is expanded'. The artists and other pioneers acted as catalyst both in offering a refuge to those that moved out from the South bank of the IJ when developments there started, and then in attracting developments on this site. Once the process of gentrification was installed they became sceptical about the impact of the newcomers, which brought commercialization and a scaling up of the activities specific for the site.

Thus, it depends on whether the pioneers and groups involved in these new developments can either succeed in stabilizing at a higher level of functional fit with the environment or fade away; weather reintegration or disintegration will occur. The question is how to act for one or the other outcome.

4.2. The adaptive cycle

A similar system is the adaptive cycle presented by Gunderson and Holling 'In Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems'. This theory states that in a cycle there are phases 'marked by opportunity, creativity, and novelty-when good things can happen' (Gunderson et al, 2008, p.5). Novelty comes out as part of a cycle comprising four phases: rapid growth (exploitation), conservation, release (or 'creative destruction'), and renewal (reorganization). The study of this would lead to understanding when and how and whether an action is unsuccessful. As a result, at each phase the internal change of a system is modified, proving flexibility, resilience, vulnerability to disturbance.

The term *panarchy* is introduced as opposed to *hierarchy*, that generally is characterized by inflexibility, or top-down approach. Panarchy stands for the 'adaptive and evolutionary nature of adaptive cycles that are nested one within the other across space and time scales'. Two types of links, similar to the theory of system 'at the edge', are crucial in development of adaptive capability: One is the 'revolt' connection allowing change and novelty, second is 'remember' connection, building up on acquired potential on a lower level. These same connections relate to the principle of conservation and development, intended for the renewal of the old harbour area in Amsterdam. Improving existing situation rather than building from scratch should be preferred. Furthermore, multi-functionality is inherent to landscape as living and creative machine, as productive and performing ground.

Furthermore, 'in a healthy society, each level is allowed to operate at its own pace, protected from above by slower, larger levels but invigorated from below by faster, smaller cycles of innovation' (Gunderson et al, 2008, p.76). The initial idea of the plan for the North IJ bank as a development at two speeds, as well as maintaining low budget spontaneous initiatives follows the same reasoning. This is further emphasized by defining sustainability as 'the



NDSM yard - Noorderlicht Café

capacity to create, test, and maintain adaptive capability' and development as 'the process of rating, testing, and maintaining opportunity' (Gunderson et al, 2008, p.76). Bart Stuart stated that 'gentrification process is never 'installed' for the benefit of the early adapters', pointing out at the situation they as pioneers are in now; that is the impossibility to create freely. However, for a sustainable system, the role of such class of artists is indispensable; these creative clusters are relevant for the growth and evolution of a city and should not be forgotten.

4.3. Urban catalyst

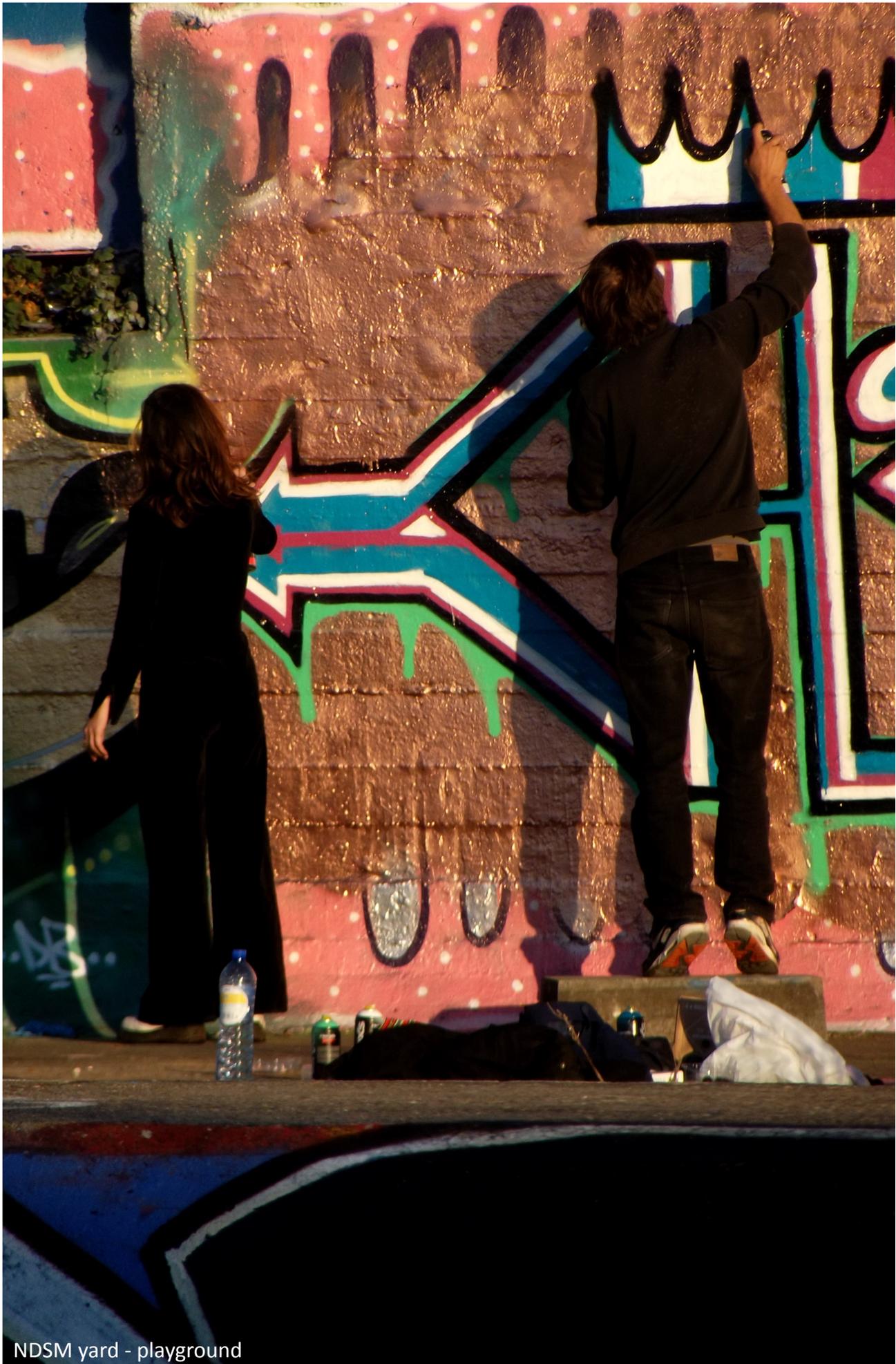
'Funded by the 5th Framework Programme "Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development", Key Action 4 "City of Tomorrow Cultural Heritage" of the European Union, the research project has investigated the potential of temporary uses as a motor of urban change, which has been hitherto largely ignored. Co-ordinated by ›Studio Urban Catalyst‹ at the Technical University of Berlin, an interdisciplinary network of 12 partners from five European metropolises – Helsinki, Amsterdam, Berlin, Vienna and Naples – has developed models of action and strategic planning tools, integrating the potentials of temporary uses into a long lasting urban development and forming an unique archive, which is now available to architects, planners, municipalities, developers, property owners and temporary users' (Griffin, 2003, p.1). The time gap till a vacant area is redeveloped grants opportunity to unplanned activity as uncertainty and openness attract and inspire (Griffin, 2003, p.3). This space-time relation is best illustrated as a niche development in a larger process. Furthermore, this approach offers the starting ground for development of 'cultural industries', as a shift from cultural consumption to cultural production. Moreover, it shapes life styles and trends as 'symbolic goods' (Griffin, 2003, p.7). Such initiatives develop generally in clusters sharing background, ideological motivation and value system. Thus a social network is built.

'The Urban Catalyst research team based its work on the assumption, that the informal and the formal are not contradictions' (Griffin, 2003, p.25). For an efficient integration of the two, first insight into unplanned patterns behind self-organized activities should be acquired, then prototypes can be inferred, followed by formulating them in models and tools available for all stakeholders. Moreover, formal procedures of planning, administration, management etc. need to be evaluated and strategies found for more flexibility and adaptability to change.

The application of this principle was explained at the beginning when introducing the value of allowing and encouraging bottom up and temporary uses, as well as the role played by the pioneers in enabling urban regeneration.

4.4. Strategic management from the bottom up

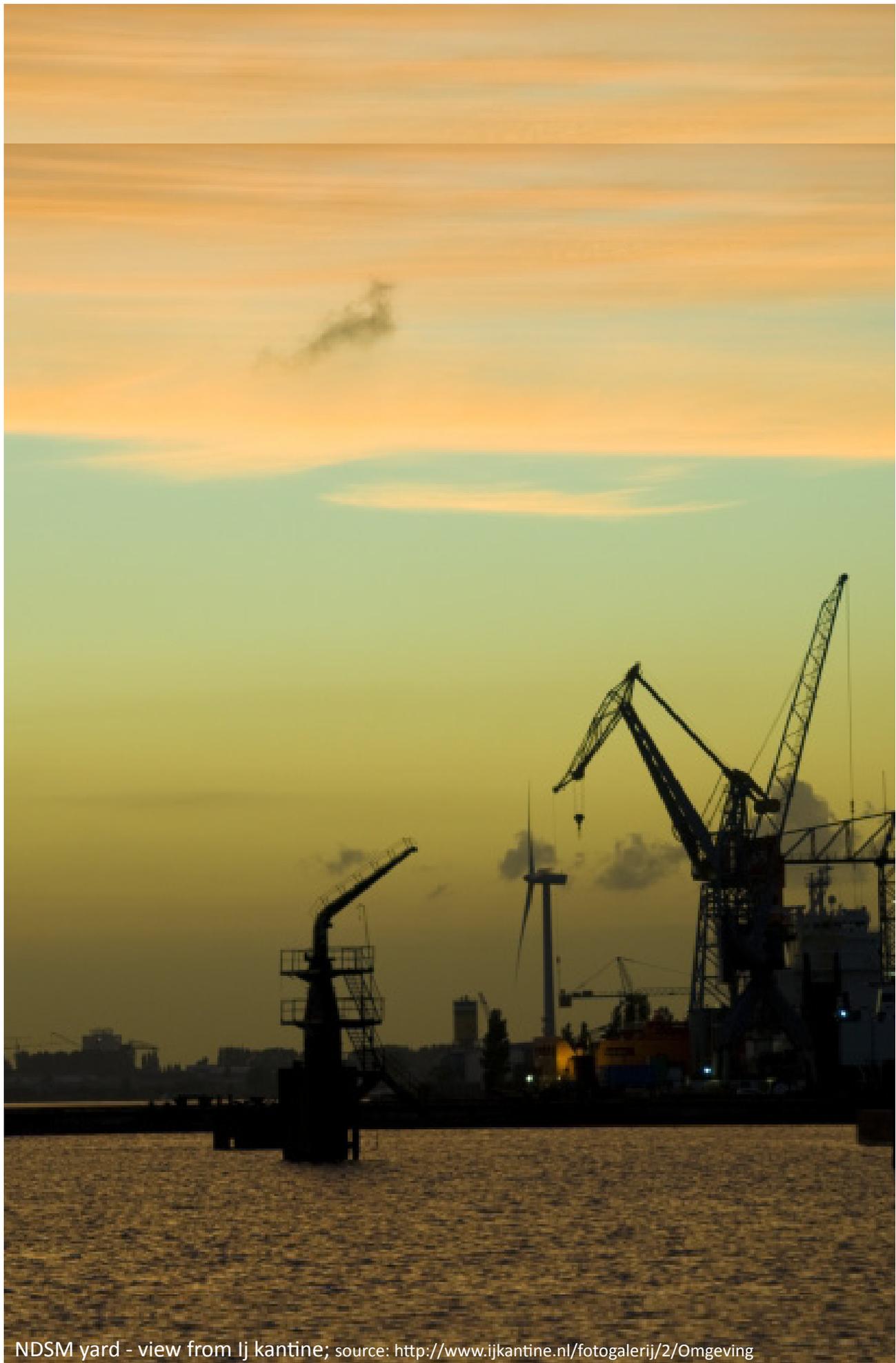
According to Stephen Toulmin and Bjorn Gustavson, strategic management from the bottom up (annexe) requires making optimum use of available knowledge. For this crucial values to be shared in a group are: '(1) frankness, openness and free communication, (2) mutual respect, (3) equivalence, (4) democratic dialogue' (Roobeek, 1996, p.69). Another relevant element of Strategic management from the Bottom Up is the knowledge platform. 'The knowledge platform is a transmitter and receiver of 'live' (strategic) questions in the organization', functioning through exchange of external and internal information (Roobeek, 1996, p.78). These can be considered when dealing with large scale transformations over a long period of time, in



NDSM yard - playground

deciding upon the team to work on the project.

The concept of co-design is relevant for developments as the one on the North Ij Bank. It is about designing for someone to take over, working through generations. Both for place making and spatial quality improvement, taking time and ordering time is essential. Such generative design should have a defined framework with inclusive and performance-oriented open zoning. After each phase of disequilibrium and rebalance, planning and design need to be readapted and reworked. For large scale territorial design the strategy is more important than quality design solutions. In the present case, the individual initiatives need to share common objectives, follow common laws and use the information from the common environment. That is, in the systems 'on the edge', 'autonomous agents networked together create non-linear dynamics' (Cleveland, 2005). It is sensitive to minor changes, through immediate communication, experimenting various possibilities and rapid action. The challenge lies in weighing order and chaos, as too much of each leads to the system perish. By engaging users in the design process, the implementation and the maintenance, they would feel more connected to a site. Once designers enable people to take charge of a place, care, engage, build a story around it, they will protect it.



NDSM yard - view from IJ kantine; source: <http://www.ijkantine.nl/fotogalerij/2/Omgeving>

5. Reflections

The recent temporary uses can be compared to the early pioneering phase of fast succession from abandoned farmland and meadow. They occupy a certain niche and then eventually transform in order for the area to evolve. The question is if something is getting lost and also if these groups of people need more support from professionals to avoid disappearance. Flexibility and openness should be shown by both sides: developers and temporary users, in an attempt to cooperate. All these developments already established on the North IJ Bank have been possible due to democracy, participatory approach, as well as marketing. When cityscape is beautiful and valuable, people are more likely to care. Thus, one can argue that beauty is directly linked to sustainability. This kind of approach may even contribute to democratizing the aesthetics.

When asked what lessons are to be learned from his experience with this project at the North Bank of the IJ, Pieter Klomp answered the following:

- For the municipality of Amsterdam, it should encourage the government to show a different attitude when it comes to urban developments. That is because; the government does not want to take risks and tends to sell rights to developers right away. For example on the NDSM yard, private developers own most of the area, this making it hard for small initiatives to survive.
- Furthermore, the city council should see whole picture and be patient with developments. It should be willing to face risks and find a way to control all costs without predicting the outcome.
- Related to the real estate crisis, he suggested that it can be overcome with little investments, step by step and seeing what happens.

There are lessons to learn also from the practice and principles displayed by professionals as Pieter Klomp. First, finding and testing new solutions for overcoming the crisis indicates the need for perseverance. This should be accompanied by patience in 'waiting to see how things develop' once a small intervention was made. Furthermore, as seen in this example, when dealing with complex developments one needs to try to understand the dynamics of the site. Actions in this respect were: incentive planning, trying to ensure cooperation between developers and existing users, making compromises but not on what is considered core of the project, showing courage in decision making, preventing the change occurred at the south bank of the IJ in the north.

In conclusion to analyzing the attitudes of both planners (landscape architect Pieter Klomp and his team) and pioneers (Bart Stuart and the other artists) involved in this project I sense their heightened awareness of the need for a new approach. Planners/landscape architects recognize the inefficiency of masterplan and blue print design for large areas, and are trying out other methods for a more sensitive solution. Artists are also searching for ways to collaborate with other forces to ensure their place and freedom; as their relevance and importance in shaping space has been revealed. In this regard, Bart Stuart is currently working with 20 other people on a new development called Brekland, having as key starting point: "how to design the light lucid, spontaneous situation of the beginning to last till later stages of the project. How to keep ourselves flexible?" (discussion with Bert Stuart). For the attempts of both sides I believe the North Bank of the IJ served as breeding ground and the gained insights will lead to further developing or perfecting these new approaches.

All the above mentioned indicate the relevance of this project. Dealing with future challenges, assuring quality of everyday living, and maintaining the special feeling of this place lie not only in the hands of planners, but also in the willingness to cooperate of business, residents, political powers as well as part time users. Being still in the middle of its transformation, the future of this area is still interesting to follow.

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7. Annexe

An example of step plan (Roobeek, 1996, p.76):

First: Explain the reason for the project to employees and company; explain the way that Strategic Management from the Bottom Up works. Then continue with the following steps:

- familiarization phase
- information on provisional strategic issues
- designing and implementing a SWOT analysis by strategy team
- final selection of the strategic problem area
- immersion in the chosen strategic problem using own knowledge and skills
- further in-depth exploration of the strategic problem by consulting external knowledge sources, and by getting started inside and outside the organization (working in subgroups)
- coming up with possible solutions and then discussing the pros and cons of the various solution courses
- choosing the direction in which the problem can be resolved
- formulating concrete objectives and conditions
- checking the financial options and other restrictions
- prioritizing the resources and actions so as to achieve the objectives
- the process of deciding on accountability and on the implementation of the action plans
- going back and comparing the objectives, actions and resources with the company's basic assumptions and overall strategy (contained in the Business Plan)
- evaluating the method and the results of the project