

Shayya, F. and Arbid, G. eds. (2010). *At the edge of the city: reinhabiting public space toward the recovery of Beirut's Horsh Al-Sanawbar*. Beirut: Discursive Formations.

Swidler, A. (2001). What Anchors Cultural Practices? In: Schatzki, Theodore R., Knorr-Cetina, K., and Savigny, Eike von. *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theoray*. London: Routledge. pp. 83-101

Tabet, J. (1996). *Al-I'maar Wal-Masslaha Al-A'amah [Reconstruction and the Public Good]*. Beirut: Dar Al-Jadid.

Tabet, J. (1998). From Colonial Style to Regional Revivalism: Modern Architecture in Lebanon and the Problem of Cultural Identity. In: Rowe, P. and Sarkis, H. (eds). *Projecting Beirut: Episodes in the Construction and Reconstruction of a Modern City*. Munich, London, New York: Prestel 83-105.

Tornaghi, C. (2015). The relational onotology of public space and action-oriented pedagogy in action: Dilemmas of professional ethics and social justice. In: Tornaghi, C. and Knierbein, S. eds. *Public space and relational perspectives: New challenges for architecture and planning*. London, New York: Routledge, pp.17-4. United Nations Task Team. (2015). *Habitat III Issue Papers 11: Public Space*, version 2.0. New York UN Habitat. Online, available at: <https://habitat3.org/programme/public-space/>. Accessed on 25 April 2017.

Yahya, M. (1993). *Reconstituting Space: The Aberration of the Urban in Beirut*. In: Khalaf, S. and Khoury, P. eds. *Recovering Beirut: Urban Design and Post War Reconstruction*. The Netherlands, Leiden: Brill, pp.128-166.

## NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Iqlimos, N. and Barrak, J. (2015). *Badaro Madinat Ashbah Taskunuha Marakez Ala'ab Al Tasliyah [Badaro a ghost town haunted by entertainment centres]*. Al Joumhouria 18 November. Online <http://www.aljournhouria.com>. Accessed on 25 May 2017.

Maddox, K. (2014). *Reviving Badaro's Swinging 60s Scene*. The Daily Star 15 May. Online: [www.dailystar.com](http://www.dailystar.com) Accessed on 25 May 2017.

Rahhal, N. (2014). *Reviving Badaro*. The Executive Magazine 9 May. Online: [www.executive-magazine.com](http://www.executive-magazine.com) Accessed on 25 May 2017.

Al Sahily, H. (2016). *Jwlah fi Azminat Hay Badaro [chronological tour in the Badaro neighbourhood]*. Al Modon 19 March Online <http://www.almodon.com>. Accessed on 25 May 2017.

Yaghi, Z. (2015). *Shari' Badaro A'awdat Al Rouh [Badaro Street: Return of the Soul]*. Assafir Newspaper 7 September. Online <https://assafir.com/>. Accessed on 25 May 2017.

## ID 1474 | TOWARDS CONSENSUS BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS WITH CONFLICTING INTERESTS: EXPERIENCES FROM URBAN AREAS KALARANNA, TALLINN, AND MEZAPARK, RIGA

Viktorija Prilenska<sup>1</sup>; Roode Liias<sup>1</sup>; Katrin Paadam<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tallinn University of Technology

[vprilenska@gmail.com](mailto:vprilenska@gmail.com) ; [roode.liias@ttu.ee](mailto:roode.liias@ttu.ee) ; [katrin.paadam@gmail.com](mailto:katrin.paadam@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT:** The case studies examine the conflicts between local communities and developers during the design and adoption of detailed plans for urban areas Mezapark, Riga and Kalaranna, Tallinn. The conflicts are examined via a series of semi-structured interviews with the actors involved in the conflicts, the communities, developers, designers and municipality. Stakeholder opinions are complemented with expert opinions. The case studies aim to discover the causes of conflict during the design and adoption process. The conclusion is, the conflicts arise due to (1) mutual bias between the stakeholders, (2) inadequate engagement strategy and (3) the lack of flexibility and initiative in the actions of municipality.

**KEYWORDS:** case studies, civic involvement, conflict, Kalaranna, Mezapark, planning, public space

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Following the worldwide planning practice Latvian and Estonian legislation introduced the requirement for public display and discussion of urban plans. The corresponding regulations were included in the legislation in the end of the 1990s. The actual activities, however, emerged in the end of the first decade of the 2000s. In the period 2008 to 2016 two plans attracted public attention, the plan of Mezapark, Riga, (2010- 2013), and of Kalaranna, Tallinn, 2003-2016. Both plans were dealt with the planning of public waterfront areas and caused significant public protests. The debate about these plans highlighted the growing public interest in shaping the city, the demand for greater public engagement in planning and the deficiency of existing civic involvement strategy, which encourages conflict instead of consensus.

The case studies explore the negotiations between resident communities, developers, designers and municipality during the design and adoption of the detailed plans. The negotiations are examined via a series of semi-structured interviews with the actors involved. Actor opinions are complemented with expert opinions. The themes, emerging from the interviews are complemented with the facts, derived from planning documents and the insights from the scientific research on participatory practices. The aim of the case study is to understand the drawbacks of current engagement strategies and to sketch possible solutions. The case studies are conducted in the framework of a broader research on civic engagement in planning in the Baltic countries, which aims to develop a locally viable methodology for public participation.

In the following section the authors briefly touch on key community engagement ideas and position the case studies and their context within research on participatory practices. Further on, the authors proceed with the research strategy, data collection and analysis technique. In the next section the authors introduce Mezapark and Kalaranna - the neighbourhoods in focus, and the planning legislation in Latvia and Estonia. The authors proceed with the findings of the research paired together with the discussion and make some connections to the scientific debate about participatory practices. The authors conclude highlighting the deficiencies of current civic engagement strategies and make suggestions for possible future improvements.

In the current article word sets public / citizen / civic and participation / involvement / engagement are used as synonyms.

## 2 THEORETICAL METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The discussion about the importance of civic involvement in planning was launched in the 1960s by the classic essays of Davidoff (1965), Arnstein (1969) and Friedmann (1973). Davidoff and Friedmann advocated the need for co-planning with citizens, for citizens provide experiential knowledge of places, which are being planned, and are end users of places, resulting from plan implementation. Arnstein, in turn, classified citizen engagement into levels, by the degree of citizen influence on decision-making. Since 1960s participatory planning thought was advanced (Forester, 1987; Healey, 1995; Innes, 1998; Sager, 2012) and discussed (Huxley and Yiftachel, 2000; Hoch, 2007) resulting into the so-called "communicative turn" in planning (Healey, 1996). Currently, communicative planning idea gained support among civic leaders and firmly established itself in the planning practice (Faehnle and Tyrvaenen, 2013; Shipley and Utz, 2012). Indeed, civic engagement legitimates planning decisions and promotes public support of plans, thus, facilitating plan ratification and implementation (Sager, 2012; Irvin and Stansbury 2004). According to Irvin and Stansbury (2004, p. 56) the question, whether to involve the public or not, is outdated. Instead, the new question emerged, what strategy of civic engagement is best.

Throughout its existence public participation in planning was praised and criticised. The supporters of the idea claimed, that it leads to balanced (and hence better) policy solutions, encourages mutual learning, trust and consensus building, promotes civic empowerment (see eg., Hoch, 2007; Faehnle and Tyrvaenen, 2013; Innes, 1998; Irvin and Stansbury, 2004). The adversaries argued about the managed nature of participation, which results into limitations to certain interest groups and questions, inefficient resource expenditure, conflicts and frustration (see eg., Connely, 2006; Doorne, 1998; Huxley and Yiftachel, 2000; Irvin and Stansbury, 2004). Both parties have their evidence, as participation is context and implementation sensitive (Connely, 2006). The engagement strategy which is efficient in the society with established communities and long tradition of public involvement in municipal policy-making might be inadequate for the society with emerging communities and no experience of co-planning (Hoyle, 2000).

Furthermore, a wellintentionedparticipation strategy might fail if implemented poorly or partially (McGovern, 2013). The casesof Kalaranna and Mezapark, which are examined in the current research, point out the importance ofcontext and implementation in civic engagement practice.

The current research studies the public involvement in the design and adoption of plans forMezapark and Kalaranna neighbourhoods. For a 25-year history of Latvian and Estonian independence theseplans produced the most resonance in the planning field and, therefore, were chosen as research cases(personal communication with Riga and Tallinn planning department officers). They illustrated how theadvantages of participation can be nullified by the inappropriate participation strategy, leading to informinginstead of empowerment, mutual bias instead of trust and conflict instead of consensus. These plansprovoked outcry from local residents, resulting into long-lasting fierce debates between communities,developers, designers and municipalities. Although, the opponents finally managed to reach a (partial)consensus, all parties were unanimously dissatisfied with the process (personal communication withstakeholders).

The study takes a methodological stance (Creswell, 2007), as the authors started with general studyof the cases, adjusting the research questions and data collection techniques as new information wasdiscovered. Initially, the authors focused on the desired and actual outcomes of the dispute about the plans.As the research proceeded, the focus shifted towards the dispute process, how did it advance and why did itcause dissatisfaction. Indeed, a well-designed and smooth process is likely to lead to satisfactory outcomes.

Whereas, satisfactory outcomes in case of an ill-designed and ill-implemented process is a matter of chance(Christensen, 2015). As the focus shifted, the following research sub-questions emerged: (1) What were thedeficiencies of public involvement process in cases Mezapark and Kalaranna? (2) What are the desiredchanges to the public involvement process in the future? Both questions lead to the following main researchquestion: How does the planning system in Latvia and Estonia should be modified to meet the growingdemand for community engagement in planning?

Answering research questions the authors applied mixed research strategies. The opinionsconcerning the deficiencies of civic engagement process (sub-question 1) and the desired changes (subquestion2) were gathered via semi-structured interviews with actors involved in negotiations. The interviewswere conducted with five actor groups: the citizens, developers, designers, planning department officers andexperts. The interviews were recorded in March - June 2016 and September - November 2016. Eightinterviews were conducted in Riga and six — in Tallinn. The interview length varied from 30 min to 2 hours.

Each interview was recorded, transcribed word in word and analysed with NVivo software. The intervieweeswere asked to comment on the participatory process, actors involved, conflict essence and resolution. Somecommunity activists presented their opinions in the media. These opinions were, also, included in the analysis.

The interviews and opinions were in three languages, Latvian, Russian and English, translated into English bythe authors. Analysing the interviews, the authors searched for common recurring themes and grouped them accordingly. In total, four themes, each containing two to five sub-themes, emerged. The themes are summarised in Table 1.

The opinions of the interviewees were verified against facts, derived from planning documents.Original graphic parts of both plans were examined. The original cover text for Mezapark plan (in Latvian)was reviewed. The text included building regulations for the planned area, citizen proposals and designercomments on these proposals. The cover text for Kalaranna plan (in English) was derived from thearchitectural competition task for the housing project in the area. The text briefly described the backgroundof the area, the vision and the competition task, which was developed following the building regulations.Additionally, the report describing the sequence of events during the planning process for Kalaranna wasexamined. The information about the cases available to the authors was unequal. For Mezapark there wasmore official factual information about the process and outcomes available to the authors. Resident opinionsabout the plan with designer comments were thoroughly documented. Furthermore, the quality of graphicand textual material for Mezapark was higher than for Kalaranna.

Themes, derived from the interviews, were complemented by the information from academic research sources on communicative planning theory, participation case studies and participation evaluation criteria. The research strategies are summarised in Table 2.

### 3 INTRODUCTION TO THE CONTEXT

#### 3.1 PLANNING LEGISLATION

Process	Outcome	Planning system	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mutual bias</li> <li>- absence of trust</li> <li>- absence of dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mezapark - dissatisfaction</li> <li>- Kalaranna - satisfaction</li> </ul>	<b>deficiencies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- late engagement</li> <li>- participation through protest</li> <li>- limitations (groups)</li> <li>- limitations (questions)</li> <li>- passive municipality</li> </ul>	<b>desired changes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- early engagement</li> <li>- flexibility</li> <li>- transparency</li> <li>- active municipality</li> <li>- research driven approach</li> </ul>

Table 1 - Themes derived from the interviews

Analysis of research articles and review articles	Analysis of emerging themes	Case studies
	interviews	planning documents, textual and graphical parts, other documents
complement ->	verify ->	<- support

Table 2 - Research strategies

### 3 INTRODUCTION TO THE CONTEXT

#### 3.1 PLANNING LEGISLATION

Following international practices, planning legislation in Latvia and Estonia requires public consultation prior to adopting binding urban plans. Until 1991 Latvia and Estonia were parts of the Soviet Union, therefore the built environment was planned and developed by governmental institutions in the framework of planned economy and rational planning (Paadam, 2009). Since 1991, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Latvia and Estonia transferred to free market economy and market driven urban development. The transition was impetuous, thus, initially planning legislation was copied from other European countries and later modified to fit local conditions (personal communication with Riga and Tallinn municipality officers). Currently, urban development is regulated by relatively fresh documents: "Spatial development planning law" (Saema, 2011) and regulations Nr. 628 "Regulations about municipal spatial development planning documents" (Cabinet of Ministers, 2014) in Latvia and "Planning Act" (Riigikogu, 2015) in Estonia.

In their essence planning legislations of Latvia and Estonia are quite similar. Municipality manages its own spatial development by means of comprehensive (territorial) and detailed (local) plans. Comprehensive plan is a plan for the whole area of municipality. Detailed plan is a plan for a part of municipal area, which is more detailed, than the comprehensive one. Both plan types are binding and consist of graphic (maps) and textual (regulations) parts. Both plan types require a public display with a subsequent public discussion of a plan before sending it for approval to a municipal council. Public display is a time span of one month when any citizen can familiarise oneself with a plan and submit an opinion or a proposal about the plan. Public discussion is a meeting where citizen opinions and proposals are presented, evaluated, accepted or rejected. If an opinion or proposal is accepted, the plan is modified accordingly. If an opinion or a proposal is rejected, the legislation requires to give a rationale for that. In both countries the final decision, whether to accept or reject the plan, is taken by a municipal council.

As planning legislation is valid for all municipalities, from small settlements (~1 thsd. residents per ~185km<sup>2</sup>, Baltinavas novads, Latvia, PMLP, 2016) to big cities (~700 thsd. residents per ~304km<sup>2</sup>, Riga, Latvia, PMLP, 2016), it sets minimum requirements for public involvement. Large municipalities are free to organise additional participatory activities. "I think the municipalities should apply the practice [of complementary engagement activities to those, required by law]... at their own initiative. These [activities] could be as recommendations... and the municipality could apply them, if it wants...", says a planning department representative from Riga. A planning department representative from Tallinn supports the opinion: "For each municipality it is possible to work out their own methods... the aim of the law is not to be very precise... because there are so many different possibilities and so many different municipalities with their own resources".

### 3.2 MEZAPARK AND KALARANNA - THE NEIGHBOURHOODS IN FOCUS

Although, requirements for public involvement in development of urban plans was included in the planning legislation in late 1990s, actual participatory activities started to emerge around 2010s, when a debate about the plans for Mezapark and Kalaranna took place. According to municipal officers, interviewed for the case study, plans for Mezapark and Kalaranna had most public resonance compared to other plans. Both plans deal with waterfront public space accessibility issues.

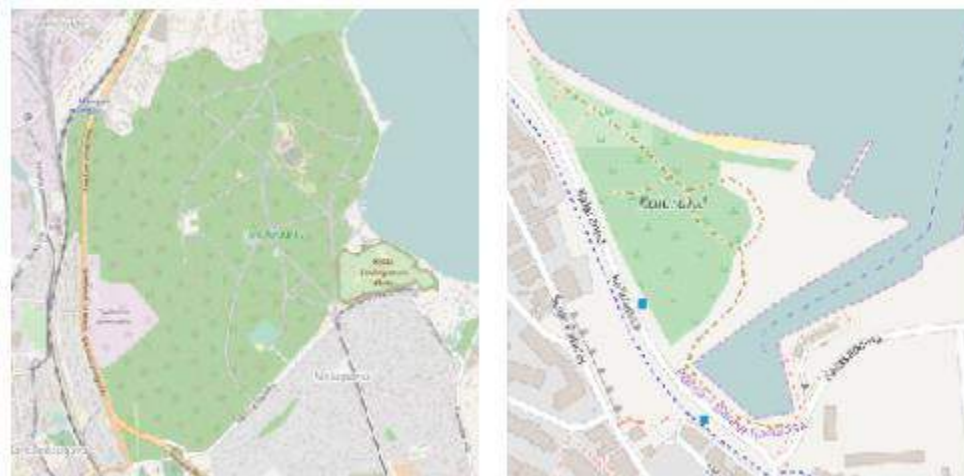


Figure 1 - Left: map of Mezapark; right: Map of Kalaranna (Open Street Map, 2017) from the Old Town by the Lake Kisezers. The park area was included in the city area in 1904.

Forest areas, which constitute 80% of the park area, were shaped between 1920 and 1940, cultural and sports infrastructure was built in 1950-1965 and 2008-2011 (Grupa93, 2013; Rigas Mezi, 2017). Currently, Mezapark houses the zoo, Song and Dance Festival open air theatre, BMX track, obstacle park for children and adults, playgrounds for children, a beach, a small boat harbour and multiple cafes.

The park is a municipal property area and is managed by the governmental institution Rigas Mezi (Riga Forests). In 2010 Rigas Mezi commissioned the plan of the area to the planning office Grupa93. Due to legislation changes the plan had two public displays, in 2012 and 2013. It was approved in 2013 with minor modifications. Initially, key elements of the plan were (1) division into four functional areas — for passive recreation, active recreation, waterfront activities and cultural activities, (2) traffic organisation — separation of motor transport, pedestrians, cyclists, skaters and skiers, allocation of parking lots, (3) allocation of public utilities, including an amusement park, (4) a solid public waterfront promenade (Grupa93, 2013). In the debate about the plan there were three points the citizens protested against: (1) the construction of an amusement park, (2) forest transformation for allocation of public amenities, (3) the construction of a solid public waterfront, suitable for motor vehicle traffic.

Kalaranna (fig. 1, 2) is a ~7ha brownfield area located between the Northern edge of the Old Town and the sea. In the Soviet time the area was a shipyard for the Union of Fishermen and was not accessible to the public. After 1991 the area was privatised, industrial buildings deteriorated and demolished, and the

area became physically accessible to the public (Pro Kapital Eesti, 2016). Currently, the area houses a small yacht harbour, a fish market and an informal pop-up beach.

The area is a private property and belongs to a developer Pro Kapital Eesti, which bought the land in 2001, demolished the fence around the area and the industrial buildings. In 2003 Pro Kapital Eesti commissioned the plan of the area to an architecture office Nord Projekt. Due to public protests the plan had four public displays, in 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2015. It was approved in 2015 with major modifications. Initially, key elements of the plan were (1) a residential quarter with an underground parking accessible from the seaside, (2) an extended yacht harbour, (3) a solid public waterfront promenade (personal communication with a planner from Nord Projekt responsible for the project). In the discussion about the plan there were three main conflict points: (1) the design of the apartment blocks; (2) the access to the seaside; (3) the elimination of the pop-up sandy beach with a swimming place.

Plan for Mezapark and plan for Kalaranna have a number of similarities and differences. Both plans redesign a strategic space in the city. The size, history and function of the space are different. Both plans deal with waterfront design and accessibility issues. In case Mezapark the de facto private space was designated for public use, and in case Kalaranna the de facto public space was threatened to become inaccessible. Both were subjected to a substantial public critique, which led to changes in plans. In case Mezapark these changes were minor, but in case Kalaranna - major. Participatory process, however, was similar, and caused dissatisfaction among all stakeholders.

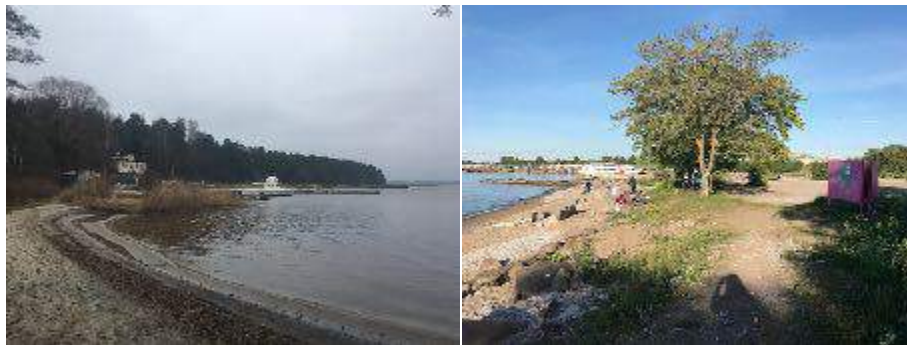


Figure 2 - Left: Mezapark waterfront; right: Kalaranna waterfront (authors)

## 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 OUTCOME

The citizens managed to achieve certain changes in the plans according to their preferences. In Mezapark the idea about the construction of an amusement park was rejected and the design of the waterfront was subjected to a competition. The waterfront was a contradictory issue, as there was no unified opinion about it among the citizen groups. Some residents wanted it to be solid, accessible for motor transport, while the others were advocating a soft, natural, vulnerable to water fluctuations. The competition allows for another round of debate for the waterfront design. "If we had a promenade, [Pavu Street residents] could use it [to access their properties]. They wouldn't need to go through the park. Cafe suppliers could, also... avoid entering the park", argues a developer representative, Riga. "Greece is an excellent example where due to solid waterfronts the link to the water doesn't exist... How many places there are in Riga where is it possible to walk with the kids along the natural water edge?... We won't be able to get a natural waterfront after building an artificial one!", says a community representative, Riga. Despite these accomplishments some residents refer to Mezapark plan as "a lost case", as two of three conflict issues, the forest transformation and the waterfront redevelopment, remained in the plan. Furthermore, the future design of the waterfront remains unclear. The developer, in turn, regrets, that the amusement park construction was rejected.

In Kalaranna the expansion of the harbour and the construction of the waterfront road were dismissed. The citizens, also, secured a 20 m wide motor traffic free public area along the seaside and a beach with a swimming place, resulting in 40% of the private area being in public use and managed by the municipality. The design of the buildings on the site was subjected to a design competition. Participation resulted into

more or less consensual planning solutions. Both conflicting parties, the developer and the community, were satisfied with the outcomes, and the plan was ratified. The developer was satisfied with the opportunity to start developing the area. A developer representative admits: “We came to the decision that [the conditions of the detailed plan] are acceptable for us... Because... the public areas... will increase... the value of the area”. The community, in turn, assured the public waterfront and the beach with a swimming place it was fighting for. A community representative says: “We had a... long and painful cooperation... and we... reached quite a good outcome for the public sea-side...”

Civic participation is often blamed for its managed nature and the lack of public influence on actual decisions (see ex., McGovern, 2013; Connely, 2006). Indeed, according to Latvian and Estonian legislation the final decision is taken by municipality. Municipal decision can override any proposal from other stakeholders, such as developers or citizens, and can be argued only in the court. In both cases to a larger or lesser degree residents managed to persuade the municipality and other stakeholders to modify the plans according to their suggestions. Thus, the voice of the residents was heard and their opinions were incorporated in the final plans. Furthermore, participation is criticised for its redundancy, as an individual planner and a group of stakeholders can arrive to the same conclusions, thus, making a collective decision superfluous (Faehnle & Tyrvaïnen, 2013). However, in cases of Mezapark and Kalaranna, the changes in plans would be impossible without community input. Besides, the contributions from the citizens, arguably, improved the quality of plans, forcing the developer to preserve and strengthen local values.

## 4.2 PROCESS

Plan design and adoption process for Kalaranna and Mezapark was hampered by mutual bias and mistrust. Judging by the opinions, expressed in the interviews, developers, designers and, surprisingly, municipality represented a “pro development professional” group, while communities represents a “counterdevelopment “laymen” group. Developers and municipality were sceptical about the competences of the residents and their ability to provide meaningful contributions. Designers abstained from expressing direct judgements. Developers and municipality claimed, the citizens evaluate plans superficially and subjectively.

“The public... pays attention to visual details not... entering into real topics” says developer representative. A planning department representative supports the opinion: “Usually the opinions of the citizens are subjective”. Furthermore, both parties repeatedly emphasise, that “[citizen opinions] should be evaluated by professionals”.

The facts derived from planning documents proved these bias to be unreasonable. Firstly, both communities had professionals among their members, lawyers (both), architects (Kalaranna) and spatial planners (Mezapark). Secondly, citizen feedback about the plans was precise and constructive. The designer of Mezapark plan received and documented 21 comments on 55 A4 pages. Three of these comments were letters from resident communities, containing 13, 18 and 19 points each. Four of these comments were letters from private persons containing 4, 6, 10 and 48 points each. Comments were well structured and well-argued. The residents supported their arguments with a community wide survey about the values of Mezapark, with response rate of 10%. Moreover, some comments pointed out mistakes and inaccuracies in planning documents, which were, later, corrected by the designer.

For Kalaranna plan a similar document providing information about the resident comments was not available. However, judging by the interviews with community representatives, the residents studied the plan thoroughly, highlighting controversial points. Furthermore, the community hired a professional consultancy to evaluate the plan, which revealed the deficiencies of the plan, including the mismatches between the plan and higher level planning documents (Lindmae, 2014).

The review of co-planning cases shows, the quality of citizen input is a common concern (Doorne, 1998; McGovern, 2013; Vayona, 2011). However, the experience from Kalaranna and Mezapark proves their relevancy of these concerns for the local context, as in both cases the citizens provided qualitative contributions. Besides, there is a positive trend in the quality of public input, as municipality representatives admit, that “[citizens] know more about... urban planning... and... [the share] of constructive criticism... is getting higher”.

Another recurring argument from developers and municipalities was the resistance of the community to any development, to change, and the tendency towards “no, I don’t like it” attitude. “[The community]... wish was just to prolong the process and to maintain the status quo”, says a developer representative. A planning department representative supports the opinion: “The residents don’t want any development”. However, community representatives clearly stated in the interviews, the residents resist proposed design solutions, rather than the development in general. The statement is supported by community actions. Mezapark community based on self-initiated resident survey produced a balanced development plan for the neighbourhood. Kalaranna residents, in turn, established a beach with self-made street furniture. A community representative from Tallinn emphasises: “What concerns [community name] fight... it has been about... the use of sea-side... the access to the sea-side... it has never been against the development”. These examples showcase the resistance towards top-down planning, rather than to change, and the demand for bottom-up approach.

The communities expressed mistrust in developers and designers, and, at the same time, were sceptical about the ability of municipalities to protect their interests. The citizens were struggling rigorously for precise wordings in the building regulations, which exclude any misinterpretation. They feared, that any uncertainty would be interpreted in favour of developer and referred to these uncertainties as developers “tricks”, which conceal developers true intentions. “In professional language [the designer] can put it in a way, that no one pays attention... and it gets through”, says a community representative from Riga. A community representative from Tallinn supports the opinion: “[The developer and the city] haven’t agreed that... this [area] is in public use. Legal... agreements behind it... the contracts... everything was missing”.

The mismatches in the plans and plan complexity only contributed to the residents concerns. In case of Mezapark the designer prepared infographics summarising main features of the plan. Original documents, building regulations, maps, street sections, cover text, etc., were available at municipal website. However, some residents claimed, the infographics provided limited information and, thus, were (intentionally?) misleading. “The construction of an amusement park is not reflected in the infographics, thus residents get a corrupted impression of the essence of the plan”, says a community representative, Riga. In case Kalaranna the residents, on the contrary, blamed the developer and designer for the absence of infographics as the original plans were unreadable. “Detailed plan is like absurdly complex... in public display the drawing of the plan was... I don’t know... 10 meters long /laughs/... And they expect that on computer screen you will understand everything!” admits a community representative, Tallinn.

Developers and designers, in turn, were disappointed by community mistrust. Developer representative points out, “the quality of the land owners who want to establish a new detail plan... has increased substantially compared to... 10-15 years ago”, and, currently, the developers are interested in a large picture, because “the profit comes if the property is good and if the surroundings are good, if the public spaces are good, if the accessibility is good...”. The designers support the argument, stating, that, indeed, there were “a few cases where... let say, there was something in the project, which no one paid attention to... and when the project was realised... it didn’t meet the expectations... But it happened unintentionally”. Developers and designers unanimously agree, it was difficult to overcome the mistrust and to prove, the plans are designed according to the planning legislation and there is no hidden agenda.

Examining the public display process, becomes obvious clear, that “there was a discussion, but there was no dialogue” (designer representative, Riga). Conflicting parties took defensive positions and, thus, were unwilling to accept opponents concerns and arguments. Inness & Booher (1999) confirm, the inability to understand the position of the opponent is a common disease of many co-planning initiatives. Therefore for the co-planning projects to be successful it is important to start with building mutual respect and trust.

### 4.3 PLANNING SYSTEM

Although the initial interview setup did not include questions about the planning system, many respondents commented on it. Arguably, these were the deficiencies of the planning system, that exacerbated the conflicts. As a community representative puts it: “The planning system should be, also, changed!”



### 4.3.1 ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

A crucial issue which is rarely discussed, is when to involve citizens in planning process and what questions to ask. In both cases residents were invited to participate in the end of the process to comment on final design solutions. For Mezapark there was, also, a working group, which discussed design solutions during the design process. However, the working group had a limited public access. In fact, the only option citizens were left with, was either to approve, or criticise final solutions, without the opportunity to participate in the development of solutions. “The only way that you can participate is through protests, and this is fundamentally wrong”, says a community representative. “The question is how seriously people take it, how many and how often participate... many times [public displays] happen when... in some sense it's too late already”, admits an expert.

Other stakeholders and experts point out, the citizens have been involved in the beginning of planning process, preferably, in setting the agenda for the plan and doing the preliminary research. A developer representative admits: “It would be good to find a way to involve different parties already in the beginning”. A planning department representative supports the opinion, saying: “We encourage planners and land owners... to start with... the involvement of community before it's legally necessary...”.

A common argument in favour of community engagement states, that participation increases public support of plans, thus, leading to successful adoption and implementation (see ex. Irvin & Stansbury, 2004; McGovern, 2013). The examples of Kalaranna and Mezapark illustrate, if the community is involved in the final phases of plan design and if engagement is limited to approval or rejections of final solutions, then participation is likely to lead to conflicts.

### 4.3.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Citizens involved into the discussion of plans were limited to local communities. Mezapark residents were represented by Mezapark development community and the residents of Pavu Street. Members of the community and Pavu Street residents live mainly in detached houses in the neighbourhoods bordering the planned area.

In the discussion of Kalaranna plan initially local residents were engaged as individuals. Since 2012 the case was overtaken by an official local resident community Telliskivi Selts, which managed to engage approximately 4000 local residents (counted by signatures to protect the sea-side).

Despite the significance of both areas for entire cities, city wide public was not involved. In case Mezapark the designer and the developer both point out that the absence of alternative resident groups was a significant drawback of a participatory process. According to them, resident preferences differ depending on their housing location and conditions.

*“...There are two resident groups. Those residents, who live in detached houses in Mezapark neighbourhood, which was historically planned as a garden city... who established the Mezapark development fellowship. The second group are those, who live in apartment blocks at Ostas Street. This group hasn't established any community... And the opinions of these two groups are quite different... This group [who lives in detached houses] regards... the park as a continuation of their private property. They want it calm and quiet, without people... Without development, without events, without anything. And the other group, who lives in apartment blocks, sharing a few square meters with children, for them [Mezapark] is very important. For the sport infrastructure is important, places for walking are important. They want playgrounds for children, sport infrastructure for children. The opportunity to visit events... The place where they could enjoy nature... For many Riga residents [infrastructure is important]. In Riga there are little places, with the opportunity to have a walk in the forest, with paths, lighting, catering and recreational places” (developer representative, Riga) As a designer representative points out “the challenge is to communicate not only with the group, which is directly affected [by the plan] and which is against, but communicate with the beneficiaries, with the silent mass, which is much larger, who sees the benefit”.*

Low participation rates and strategies for involving passive groups is a topical question in the current research on participation practices (see ex., Brown & Kyttä, 2014; Thiel & Frohlich, 2017). Donders et al. (2014) support the arguments of municipality officers, emphasising, that the residents, who are usually engaged, are not representative of the community. Therefore, as Nienhuis & van Dijk (2011) argue, it is necessary to introduce strategies, aiming at involving the passive citizens to balance the opinions of active ones. In cases of Mezapark and Kalaranna, despite the fact, that most stakeholders mentioned the need for engaging “the silent majority”, no activities, beyond those, required by the legislation, were conducted to encourage them to participate.

#### 4.3.3 ROLE OF MUNICIPALITY

Municipality officers recurrently argued, that the active minority, who participates in public displays and discussions, often follows their vested interests. “I often encounter the cases, where [the residents] think about their own benefits, rather than about public interest”, says a planning department representative from Riga. A planning department representative from Tallinn supports the opinion: “If we go deeply into the arguments very often it is not in the interest of the wider audience, but in the interest of someone in the community”. Municipalities, in turn, represent public interests. “A municipality is an institution which represents the society, pro-society”, says a planning department representative from Riga. A planning department representative from Tallinn supports the opinion: “A [municipality] represents the public interest more often than these community groups...”.

Although municipal officers are, partially, right, their arguments cannot be considered sound. The residents cannot be blamed for pursuing their agenda as the task of residents is the advocacy of their “selfish” interests. The task of municipality, in turn, is to balance various “selfish” interests, the interests of various resident groups, of land owners, of developers, of entrepreneurs, etc., to find the best possible solution, which would satisfy all parties. Furthermore, the task of municipality is to ensure, that these various interests are represented during the discussion. The more interests are present, the closer the common opinion is to “public interest”. “Public interest consists of various interests... at the end of the day the city have to decide... what stays on the table... But it... depends on what do you want to get... do you want to get more cars or do you want to get more pedestrians?... I’m talking about... the end result philosophically... Who sets the aim? The big aim?... The City?” says an expert from Tallinn.

The stakeholders blamed the municipalities for taking passive positions. Residents unanimously criticised municipality for showing no initiative in mediating the conflicts. “[The municipality] could have helped us with in the planning process... let’s meet... let’s... find out a solution... do something extra, than what is required by the planning law. But they didn’t show any initiative”, says a community representative, Tallinn. Furthermore, residents repeatedly expressed the concern, that the municipality is not exercising its “legal rights”, “legal power” to steer the development of the city towards equilibrium, where the interests of the stakeholders are balanced, and towards sustainable environment. “The task of the municipality to design a sustainable city, where the interests of [residents and developers] are aligned... Developers and residents need good environment. The developer can request to build a nuclear plant... And the city should say, why there can’t be a nuclear plant next to the kindergarten”, says a community representative, Riga. The developers, in turn, urged the city to define the priorities and take the decisions fast, as the circumstances for development change rapidly together with economic situation. “The City, in my opinion, should have taken clearer decisions faster... than they took”, says a developer representative. The criticism of the municipality is common for local context, whereas in the English literature on participatory practices it is, currently, rare. Speaking of the role of the planner, Forester (1987) emphasised, that the planners often have to manage conflicting situations between various parties, therefore negotiation and mediation skills are essential. Shipley & Utz (2012) support the argument, stating that the task of the planner (or the administrator) to balance different interests and to ensure the fairness of process and outcomes for all stakeholders. Thus, planners are in a difficult position, as their task is to navigate through conflicting interests and, furthermore, to address political agenda of elected representativeness. Local municipalities are just entering the field of communicative planning and, thus, have little experience managing such complex situations. It is natural, that currently municipal response is late or showing less initiative than expected. Hopefully, the situation will improve in the future, as municipalities gain more experience, learn and embrace their role and legal power.

#### 4.3.4 ROLE OF RESEARCH

Although, not mentioned directly, the residents and the municipality touched upon the role of research in planning. Talking about resident engagement, the respondents from Tallinn repeatedly expressed the desire to map the values of the residents prior to developing plans. “We would like to map... what are the values that people who live in Tallinn see in Tallinn. And if we start by mapping these... values... the masterplan... would develop these values further or reinforce them”, says a planning department representative, Tallinn. Indeed, supporters of civic engagement idea emphasise, that citizens are the end users of the space, thus, it is important to acknowledge their values, preferences and space usage patterns. In other words, it is essential to gather experiential information which complements the knowledge base for planning, and, thus leads to more balanced and sustainable solutions (Faehnle & Tyrvaiven, 2013; Brown & Kytta, 2014). Furthermore, the respondents emphasise the importance of asking meaningful questions to the citizens. “It depends on the planning document type and on the area, on the [decision type]... and what kind of information for this certain planning document it is possible to get from the residents”, says planning department representative, Riga. As participation is a resource consuming activity, prior to engaging residents, it is essential to acknowledge, what information is necessary for the plan, what information the citizens are able to provide, what is the best way to get this information, and how this information is going to be integrated into the plan. In other words, it is necessary to design an efficient, clear, yet flexible, engagement strategy.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

Despite certain deficiencies, the cases Mezapark and Kalaranna sketch a positive participatory trend in planning. The concerns about the inability of citizens to provide meaningful input proved to be unreasonable. Citizens proved their competence by providing well-argued critique of plans and by presenting their own, alternative, visions of the areas in focus. Developers, in turn, developed the capacity to make trade-offs to meet civic demands. Municipalities, however, fulfilled their tasks partially. On the one hand, they were inclined to prioritise public interests over private interests, which is a positive trend. On the other, their performance as conflict mediators was rather poor. Furthermore, the participatory strategy failed to meet current demands for community empowerment and inclusive sustainable city with well-balanced public-private interests.

There are the following deficiencies in the planning strategy. Late involvement, in the final stage of planning process is likely to lead to conflicts, as the only way for the public to participate is by challenging planning solutions. Thus, other stakeholders get a misleading impression of public resistance to change and development. Though, in reality, the public resists top-down planning solutions, which were developed without their participation and which often ignore public values. Fortunately, the interviewees mentioned the need for public engagement in the beginning of the planning process. The respondents emphasised the importance of acknowledging public values before the planning process, to reinforce and develop these values further. Furthermore, there is a clear demand for more inclusive planning process, for co-developing planning solutions together, instead of forcing top-down solutions.

Partial representativeness, limited to directly affected parties allows municipality officials and designers to speculate, that the citizens are following selfish interests instead of representing the public opinion. The argument is unsound, as every party, including community groups and developers, are advocating their vested interests. The more parties are engaged, the more balanced is the voice of the residents, and the closer it is to the public interest. Certainly, it is hardly feasible, nor necessary, to involve all resident groups to public discussion of each and every detailed plan, but in case of detailed plans for city significance areas, the opinions of both directly and indirectly affected parties have to be acknowledged.

Passive position of municipality to a certain extent contributed to an inefficient negotiation process between the conflicting parties. Conflicting parties did not empathise with the opinion of the opposition, holding to their initial biased positions. Thus, a discussion without dialogue emerged. In this case an active intervention of the municipality was necessary, serving as a mediator in the discussion, and encouraging the conflicting parties to develop a shared understanding of the issue and find consensual solutions. The municipality clearly needs to develop a toolkit to deal with conflicts in planning. Probably the competences of municipal planning officers have to be extended beyond planning, to negotiation and mediation.

To sum up current participatory approach is lacking an essential step — participation strategy design. Firstly, it should be acknowledged, which parties are directly and indirectly affected by a plan, what information they can provide, what information is essential for the plan and how it can be integrated into the plan. Then, participation strategy has to be designed to collect this information. Based on this information, planning solutions have to be developed and discussed. Thus, participation shifts from the political to a research field, being inquiry driven.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

- Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A Ladder Of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216–224. doi:10.1080/01944366908977225
- Brown, G., & Kytta, M. (2014). Key issues and research priorities for public participation GIS (PPGIS): A synthesis based on empirical research. *Applied Geography*. doi:10.1016/j.apgeog.2013.11.004
- Connelly, S. (2006). Looking inside public involvement: How is it made so ineffective and can we change this? *Community Development Journal*, 41(1), 13–24. doi:10.1093/cdj/bsi046
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions. *Qualitative Health Research*. doi:10.1111/1467-9299.00177
- Christensen, K. S. (2015). Both Process and Outcome Are Essential to Planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 35(2), 188–198. doi:10.1177/0739456X14566277
- Davidoff, P. (1965). Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* (Vol. 31). doi:10.1080/01944366508978187
- Donders, M., Hartmann, T., & Kokx, A. (2014). E-Participation in Urban Planning: Getting and Keeping Citizens Involved. *International Journal of E-Planning Research*, 3(2), 54–69. doi:10.4018/ijepr.2014040104
- Faehnle, M., & Tyrvaenen, L. (2013). A framework for evaluating and designing collaborative planning. *Land Use Policy*, 34, 332–341. doi:10.1016/j.landusepol.2013.04.006
- Forester, J. (1987). Planning In the Face of Conflict: Negotiation and Mediation Strategies in local Land Use Regulation. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 53(3), 303–314. doi:10.1080/01944368708976450
- Friedmann, J. (1973). The transactive style of planning. In *Retracking America: a theory of transactive planning* (p. ?). Garden City, NY: Anchor Press.
- Grupa 93. (2013). Kultūras atpūtas parka “Mežaparks” lokālplānojums. Rīga.
- Healey, P. (1996). The communicative turn in planning theory and its implications for spatial strategy formations. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 23(2), 217–234. doi:10.1068/b230217
- Hoch, C. J. (2007). Pragmatic Communicative Action Theory. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 26(3), 272–283. doi:10.1177/0739456X06295029
- Hoyle, B. (2000). Confrontation, consultation, cooperation? Community groups and urban change in Canadian port-city. *Canadian Geographer*, 44(3), 228.
- Huxley, M., & Yiftachel, O. (2000). New Paradigm or Old Myopia? Unsettling the Communicative Turn in Planning Theory. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 19(4), 333–342. doi:10.1177/0739456X0001900402
- Innes, J. E. (1998). Information in Communicative Planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 64(1), 52–63. doi:10.1080/01944369808975956
- Innes, J. E., & Booher, D. E. (1999). Consensus Building as Role Playing and Bricolage. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 65(1), 9–26. doi:10.1080/01944369908976031
- Irvin, R., & Stansbury, J. (2004). Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is It Worth the Effort? *Public Administration Review*, 64(1), 55–65. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6210.2004.00346.x
- Lindmae, M. (2014). Urban waterfront regeneration and public participation. Confrontation or Cooperation? The case of Kalarand, Tallinn. *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*.
- McGovern, S. J. (2013). Ambivalence over Participatory Planning within a Progressive Regime. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 33(3), 310–324. doi:10.1177/0739456X13481246
- Ministru Kabinets. Noteikumi par pasvaldību teritorijas attīstības planosanas dokumentiem No. 628 (2014). Latvia.

Nienhuis, I., van Dijk, T., & de Roo, G. (2011). Let's Collaborate! But Who's Really Collaborating? Individual Interests as a Leitmotiv for Urban Renewal and Regeneration Strategies. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 12(1), 95–109. doi:10.1080/14649357.2011.546671

Paadam, K. (2009). The Baltic countries – Introduction. In: Holt-Jensen, A.; Pollock, E. (Ed.). *Urban Sustainability and Governance: New Challenges in Nordic-Baltic Housing Policies (171–177)*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.

PMLP. (2016). Latvijas iedzīvotāju skaits pašvaldībās. Rīga. Pro Kapital Eesti. (2016). Kalaranna 1 registered property. Public one-stage architectural competition. Terms of reference. Tallinn.

Rigas Mezi. (2017). Kultūras un atpūtas parka “Mežaparks” vēsturiskie attīstības laikposmi. Retrieved March 1, 2017, from <http://www.rigasmezi.lv/lv/mezaparks/vesture/?doc=7091>

Riigikogu. Planning Act (2015). Estonia. Saeima. Teritorijas attīstības planosanas likums (2011). Latvia.

Sager, T. (2012). Legitimizing Communicative Planning. In *Reviving Critical Planning Theory: Dealing with Pressure, Neo-Liberalism, and Responsibility in Communicative Planning* (pp. 3–33). Routledge. doi:10.4324/9780203104187

Shiple, R., & Utz, S. (2012). Making it Count: A Review of the Value and Techniques for Public Consultation. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 27(1), 22–42. doi:10.1177/0885412211413133

Thiel, S.-K., & Frohlich, P. (2017). Gamification as Motivation to Engage in Location-Based Public Participation. In G. Gartner & H. Huang (Eds.), *Progress in Location-Based Services 2016* (pp. 399–421). Springer International Publishing AG. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-47289-8\_20

Vayona, A. (2011). Investigating the preferences of individuals in redeveloping waterfronts: The case of the port of Thessaloniki - Greece. *Cities*, 28(5), 424–432. doi:10.1016/j.cities.2011.05.007

## ID 1486 | FROM KNOWLEDGE OF THE TERRITORY TO THE SPATIAL PLANNING CULTURE

Paula Raquel Ferreira<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>CICS.NOVA/UNL - Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas da Universidade Nova de Lisboa  
[paularaquel9@gmail.com](mailto:paularaquel9@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT:** Consolidating the paradigm of territorial governance (with civil society increasingly and more actively participating in spatial planning) with the assumptions of sustainable governance comes up against the lack of robust knowledge of the territory and a civic spatial planning culture, both from civil society as well as political and technical decision-makers. In this context, it is proposed as a starting question how it is possible to develop a greater awareness on the territory and a robust civic spatial planning culture for both in these new “actors” and the political and technical decision-makers so they see it as a common good and a scarce resource, ensuring its sustainable development. Underlying this question is another of no less importance: what is the role of school education, more specifically the Geography discipline of secondary school, in the processes of collective learning about the territory and spatial planning culture? After the theoretical study of the concept of territory, spatial planning and territorial planning culture, these are confronted with a representative sample of civil society through questionnaires applied to: - Secondary school students (who have not yet intervened in the reconfiguration of the territory), with or without frequency in the Geography discipline (in order to verify to what extent the geography, of this level of education, provides a better knowledge of the aforementioned concepts); - Parents/guardians, representative of the adult population, who have already intervened, consciously or unconsciously, in territorial reconfiguration, but who do not have direct responsibilities in spatial planning.

**KEYWORDS:** territory, spatial planning e spatial planning culture

### 1 OPERATION

With the purpose of assessing the knowledge that the civil society has of the territory, spatial planning and spatial planning culture concepts, two questionnaires were conceived and were applied to two universes of