

# Slussen – stadsomvandling som berör

Texter från en seminarieriserie om  
kontroversiell stadsplanering och demokrati hösten 2017



Slussen - a critical case of urban renewal in  
Stockholm City

Reports from seminars on contested urban  
development and democracy, autumn 2017

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# Slussen – introduction to a critical case of urban renewal in Stockholm City

By Michele Micheletti and Rebecka Lennartsson

How cities plan urban change, decide it and then implement it in spacial planning is often a sensitive matter that engages many people in different societal capacities. Several cities in Sweden and elsewhere have experienced urban planning controversies. Research reveals that many local residents criticize planning processes and have negative experience with how politicians and city administrators handle them. Local residents and other engaged citizens accuse city officials of not listening to public concerns and to the expertise on urban planning that they offer in their capacities as architects, urban planners and so on. They complain about the influence of other interests (particularly economic ones) and question the legitimacy of political decisions in specific planning projects. Most involved actors agree that there is a need to find ways to make planning processes more transparent, legally certain, effective and publicly legitimate. There is concern that local representative democracy and urban planning are out of sync with each other.

Stockholmia – Research and Publishing together with Stockholm University's departments of political science and history, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, and the international research centre for regional development and planning Nordregio took on the task of creating a seminar series on the democratic challenges involved in urban planning. This series, which takes the renewal of the Slussen area in central Stockholm as its point of departure, seeks to explore publicly the complexities of urban planning and examine the different roles played by citizens, politicians, bureaucrats, consultants, the media and others in it.

To achieve this aim, the project includes three public events. For the first two seminars, we invited international and Swedish scholars on urban planning to discuss their understandings of such disputes with the general public. The final event focused on bringing protesters, politicians and other involved actors together to reflect on the conflictual atmosphere that has both characterized the Slussen renewal process as well as other urban planning. The events aim at strengthening and deepening general understanding of urban planning processes and identifying the challenges that they generate. It is our conviction that such conflicts and understanding of them deserve more public, political and scholarly attention.

By communicating research in this interactive and open fashion, the project contributes with cross-disciplinary expert knowledge on the actual workings of and challenges involved in complex urban planning processes. An important general project goal, funded in part through a research grant for communicating research from Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, is to increase public interest in urban planning by indicating how debate on particular renewal projects directly relates to the public discourse on the future of cities and local democracy. The project's main target groups are politicians, administrators, opinion-makers, the media and citizens who are concerned about and involved in urban planning.

The project's departure point for discourse, reflection and communication is understanding why the renewal of the Slussen area has become what an expert called Sweden's most criticized current renewal project (Wærn 2015, 20). Included in the project is also a film produced by the project, which explains the importance of the Slussen area historically and the general issues involved in its present renewal discussion. The framing of the project builds on scholarship that summarizes research on urban planning controversies, theorizes the interplay between citizens, politicians and city planning experts, and offers initial research findings on the Slussen renewal controversy. Stiftelsen Gunhild och Sigrid Rossanders donationsfond partly funded the mapping the Slussen Renewal Controversy. This mapping entailed the collection of public documents from Stockholm City in order to identify, record, and systematize in a timeline when, how, and why the city took action on the Slussen issue. This extensive documentation was summarized in an encompassing timeline. Both this timeline and the collected public documentation are now available for further research at Stockholmia – Research and Publishing. Some suggestions about further research on the topic are offered in a journal article (Micheletti 2017, in Swedish) on the Slussen controversy, "Urban planning challenges to local politics: Interplay between citizens, politicians and bureaucrats New view on Slussen" in *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift*.)

To reflect on the relevance of the Slussen renewal controversy for a wider understanding of the democratic challenges posed by urban planning in general, the project included invited scholars, politicians, journalists, administrators, involved citizens, and the interested public. Each seminar in the series was filmed. A short film of the Slussen controversy puts it in a historical context. The film (with English subtitles) and the seminars can be viewed via the Stockholmia webplatform [stockholmia.stockholm.se](http://stockholmia.stockholm.se).

The three events focus on thematic questions about why urban planning often becomes controversial, how these controversies can be handled in a democratically responsible manner, what characterizes the interplay between citizen, politicians and bureaucrats in planning controversy, and how the media communicates planning controversy to the public. These questions are crucial because misunderstandings and difficulties with transparency typically characterize controversial urban planning. An important goal of the seminar series has, therefore been to promote dialog and exchange of experience among different actors engaged in urban planning as well as individual reflection on one's own reactions to the Slussen renewal process and other such developments.

The two first seminars, "Slussen: international perspectives on urban planning", held on September 2017, and "Slussen: platser i folkets hjärtan nu och då" (Slussen: places in people's hearts today and in the past) held on October 24, 2017, involved well-known national and international urban planning scholars who put the Slussen controversy in a comparative perspective. The invited scholars discussed their research on other urban planning developments in Sweden and elsewhere. They also discussed questions asked at the seminar about how they analyze the Slussen controversy. In order to make their knowledge, talks, and discussions

more publicly available, the seminars were filmed, and six of the seven scholars who participated in the first two seminars have written summaries of their seminar talks and research. Their summaries follow the next section's brief introduction to the Slussen renewal controversy, which builds on the English translation of the subtitles for the film on Slussen produced by the project. Aiden Allen made the translation. Certain modifications have, however, been made for this introduction.



East from above, Slussen during work. Photo: Oscar Bladh, 1932. Stockholm City Museum.

## **Introduction to the Slussen renewal controversy**

The Slussen area lies at the heart of Stockholm, an urban focus where the Baltic Sea meets Lake Mälaren and where medieval Gamla Stan and the heights of Södermalm are united by the waters of Söderström, with views across Saltsjön and Riddarfjärden. Here urban life, history and the archipelago unite. The Metro, bus station and local railway, and a traffic system for cars, public transport, cyclists and pedestrians coexist here along with a 17th-century street plan and buildings, dockyard features from various dates, the famous profile of the Katarina lift, and until recently a famous traffic interchange from 1935.

The redevelopment of the Slussen area has been described as one of Sweden's most criticized

projects. People have been involved in protests of various kind. Politicians and the public administration have been criticized for ignoring the views of the citizens opposed of the city's planning on the matter. The critics and protesters have been accused of preventing a necessary urban redevelopment.

What is the history of the Slussen area? Since its beginning, Slussen has been strategically important for trade, seafaring, communications and defence against external threats. Writing in the early Middle Ages, the Icelandic author and historian Snorri Sturluson mentions a narrow strip of land connecting Södermalm with Gamla Stan in a saga about the Viking King Olaf. Now archaeologists are excavating the history of the area.

Throughout the ages Slussen has been a place of dispute. As Stockholm grew, and the nature of trade and communications developed, new demands for accessibility affected the area. New forms of transport have emerged, new locks and bridges have been built. In around 1900, the population and traffic in Stockholm increased enormously. Buses, cars, trams, horse vehicles and pedestrians filled the streets near Söderström. Opening and closing the bridge caused congestion –the so-called “Slussen misery”. Plans for new traffic solutions were devised as early as the late 19th century. Many of the ideas were drastic and even at the time, around 130 years ago, there were protests. After years of debate, the chosen design was a modern cloverleaf traffic interchange designed by Tage William-Olsson and Gösta Lundborg.



Opening in October 1935. Photo: Unknown. Stockholm City Museum.

The traffic solution was completed in 1935. The design reflected the architectural ideals of the welfare state and was praised by le Corbusier, the foremost architect of modernism, as “the first great work of the modern era.” Thousands of Stockholmers watched the inauguration. The cloverleaf design was seen as a monument to modernism.

But the redevelopment was criticised too, along with many other major 20th-century redevelopments in the Stockholm city centre such as the demolition of the Klara area in the 1950s - 1970s and the proposal to fell trees at the Kungsträdgården Park in 1971 to make way for a Metro entrance. People feel strongly about urban redevelopment, especially when places are connected with history, identity and belonging.

For many Stockholmers the Slussen area has long been an obvious part of everyday life – a place of memories and meetings, unique and ordinary at the same time. The Slussen area has been both loved and hated.

By the late 20th century, Slussen was run down. The cloverleaf construction was worn out, concrete was crumbling, and the foundations were insufficient.



Kolingsborg is torn down. Photo: Matthias Ek, 2015. Stockholm City Museum.

This increasingly poor state of affairs was also why the traffic interchange was never declared a notable heritage building. Yet the County Administrative Board saw it as an important part of the Central Stockholm Area of National Interest. Together with the Stockholm City Museum it also looked at whether Slussen could be reconstructed. However, reconstruction would cost at least as much as redevelopment, and would be less functional too.



A new lock was also needed to reduce the risk of flooding in the Mälaren valley.

Should Slussen be renovated, demolished or rebuilt? This was a delicate question. Competitions to decide Slussen's future were held in 1991, 2003–04 and 2008. The first architectural competition gave various redevelopment ideas.

City politicians decided to develop a reference alternative, adapting the cloverleaf construction. Then a plan would be designed. In 2004 the winning entry was "Strömmar", designed by Nyréns Architects and Tyréns, among others. In 2005 the City Council decided to start the formal planning process. Following consultation in 2007, a unanimous City Planning Committee decided to adopt the alternative called New Slussen. The cloverleaf interchange would be demolished.

In 2008 a new competition was announced, where five firms of architects were invited to present completed plans for New Slussen. In 2009 the project was awarded to the architects Foster + Partners and Berg. At the same time project decisions were criticised, and protesting grew.

The national Planning and Building Act requires discussion, exhibitions and consultation during the planning process. The City organized, among other things, a consultation in 2010 and an exhibition of the detailed development plan in 2011. The exhibition attracted nearly ten thousand visitors, and provoked strong reactions. Over a thousand critical statements were submitted. Most complaints were about the proposed new buildings, which would block the views over the water. People also appealed to courts on how the City had handled the planning process.

Organized opposition grew, and alternative plans appeared. Although opposition to New Slussen intensified, and the debate was followed in the press, the question never became central in any election campaign.

Nevertheless, the city planners changed some of the proposed plan. Terraces, stairs and a park below the Katarina lift were added. The water was made more accessible to the public, and the proposed buildings were modified.

Just before the City Council was to vote on the matter in 2011, the Social Democrats changed their mind. Instead of voting yes they decided to vote no to New Slussen. Nevertheless, the City Council approved New Slussen by a slim majority. The governing non-socialist coalition, which voted yes, said Slussen's poor condition called for a quick decision. They also referred to a new opinion poll, which said that the people of Stockholm supported the proposal. The opposition parties all voted no. They said the opinion poll was misleading and that opposition to New Slussen had in fact grown.

Many citizens critical of the decision decided to appeal it in court.

The bus terminal had a separate planning process. In 2012 the City Council voted yes to the plan. Some of the protesters decided to appeal the decision and won on a technicality. The decision was withdrawn.

The Slussen redevelopment began to involve more and more people. Criticism was aimed at the proposal itself. It was claimed that it would wipe away the history of the area, replacing a functioning traffic interchange with a badly designed plan, and that it misjudged the flow of water. Critics also said the planning process was closed and undemocratic.

In the 2014 election, Slussen failed again to become a major issue yet. A new coalition was elected that included the parties that had voted against New Slussen in the City Council in 2011. The coalition asked an independent expert group to review parts of the New Slussen planning process. The group found that planning decisions had been based on reasonable assessments.



Slussen during demolition. With a graffiti artwork. Photo: Mattias Ek. Stockholm City Museum.

Opponents to New Slussen were not happy, and appealed in court against how the expert group had been selected. They won. Yet every appeal against New Slussen was eventually rejected.

Although some parties in the new coalition had previously voted against New Slussen they decided after internal debate in September 2015 to go ahead with the existing decision. Following a new consultation, the plans for the bus terminal were approved in 2017. Today the Slussen redevelopment is in full swing. New Slussen is projected to be completed in 2025.

The aim of the renewal is to transform the area from a traffic interchange to an attractive meeting place for recreation and culture, shopping, strolling, restaurants and cafés, (see <http://>

vaxer.stockholm.se/projekt/slussen/). Many people have taken part in protests, and strong alternative plans for Slussen have been presented – including “Plan B”.

The renewal process has been criticized for being undemocratic and ignoring the will of the people. Protesters have been accused of failing to accept formally made decisions. Feelings still run strong about Slussen and the city’s way of deciding urban planning.

City planning and development is a loaded question that lies at the heart of local democracy. New Slussen and other projects pose important questions. How do citizens, politicians and the public administration interact? What role does the media play? Who has power over urban planning?

The process of major urban development must be transparent, legally correct, effective and legitimate. What does an optimal process look like? And what can we learn from the New Slussen conflicts? These questions are addressed in the seminar series.

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# Citizen participation in big renewal projects: Why so complicated?

By Margit Mayer

Since the 1990s many of the large urban development projects across Europe have been connected to transport hubs such as railway stations or ports. Along with abandoned industrial areas, such sites offer the most recycling potential for cities interested in planning development. Therefore, cities have started to regenerate their waterfronts, recover old manufacturing and warehousing zones, and develop new or extend existing transport infrastructures in these areas (cf. Bruinsma et al. 2008; Bertolini/Spit 1998). Research tells us that such integrated development projects (combining the renewal of transport hubs with major real estate development projects) always involve major public *and* private stakeholders. Moreover, they are typically undertaken primarily in the pursuit of generating economic development. They also entail massive land-use transformations. Additionally, they often avoid established practices of transparency and accountability and keep citizens at a distance in the decision-making, even if citizen input is provided through the opportunities of participating in the planning process, which in most countries is required by law. Their implementation is, thus, often marred by conflicts and controversies between the interests of (quasi-)private actors and those of common/public welfare (cf. Peters/Novy 2012).

A well-known case in point is Stuttgart 21 (S21), one of the largest and most ambitious urban infrastructure projects currently undertaken in Europe. It has sparked one of the biggest local protest movements, which reached a climax in fall 2010 when mass rallies with more than 100,000 people took place on a weekly basis. The rallies and protests seriously threatened the project's future for a time. Importantly, this contestation had quite an impact on Germany's planning culture. It triggered an ongoing debate about decision-making in large project planning and implementation on the role of citizen participation in government decision-making. In short, it created a public debate about the state of democracy in Germany.

Like many other transport and urban development projects undertaken in the last couple decades, Stuttgart 21 combines the renewal of a transport hub with a major real estate project: The plan was to redevelop the city's railway node by converting the historic central station from a railhead to an underground through station and to redevelop about 100 ha of centrally located railway land that would be freed up by the removal of the station above ground and its approach tracks. Inner city railway stations came to be seen as key property assets with enormous economic potential. Therefore, in the early 1990s the (privatized) German Railway company Deutsche Bahn (DB) commissioned plans to transform seven of Germany's large termini stations into underground through stations. DB wanted to achieve two goals in one stroke: to remove the bottle necks occurring at termini interchanges and to "free up" up valuable inner-city land for commercial development. Most of those planned projects, notably

those in Frankfurt and Munich, never took off because the cost-benefit calculations did not add up. However, Stuttgart 21 did take off because local leaders immediately seized on the potential to channel public and private capital into their jurisdictions. They embraced the idea of connecting the city centre to the high-speed rail route, and vigorously promoted both the upgrade of the city's transport infrastructure and the project's urban development component. They viewed this project as a game-changer in the city's efforts to enhance its competitiveness as a powerful economic location (Peters/Novy 2012: 140).

Not everyone shared the enthusiasm. Early on civic and professional organizations as well as the local Green Party raised concerns about the premises and interests underlying the enthusiasm with which the project was marketed. Nevertheless, the project moved ahead unimpeded. By 1997 the planning and design works were well underway, the formal zoning approval to a large extent completed, a master plan for the urban development part of the project adopted, and even the design of the underground station agreed upon. All of this implied the demolition of large parts of the historic central station, a landmark building designed by famed architect Paul Bonatz, to make room for a subterranean shell structure with a new urban square on its top.

When sluggish real estate sales prompted DB to defer the project, it took a complicated and lengthy bargaining process between state, regional and municipal officials to save S21. Only after the state of Baden-Württemberg agreed to co-finance the new high-speed line could a Memorandum of Understanding be signed in 2007 by federal, state, regional, and



Image 1. View of station area to be developed. Foto: Manfred Storck. Bahnprojekt-Stuttgart-Ulm.

municipal governments with DB. In 2010 the project's official ground-breaking was celebrated by the various stakeholders – after sweeping aside a petition of citizen groups to hold a referendum.<sup>1</sup> The participation measures required by the German law governing urban development did not kick in until the planning process was well underway, i.e. when the basic features of the project had already been decided. Moreover, the legal requirements about participation were designed primarily to facilitate information provision through one-way communication and limited consultation rather than citizen dialogue on a planning issue.

When preparatory construction work began in August 2010 with the demolition of the station's north wing, the razing of this historic structure provoked massive protest. Circa 20,000 demonstrators formed a human chain around the building and then marched on city hall. On September 30, 2010 as people attempted to stop construction workers from felling the first trees in Stuttgart's main park for the project, an outburst of police violence occurred, seriously injuring dozens of protesters including children and senior citizens. This incident provoked a nationwide outcry and catalysed three even larger rallies and demonstrations, involving up to 150,000 people (out of Stuttgart's 600,000 inhabitants), during little more than a week. The result was a temporary halt of construction.

The concerns that were raised by the protesters had basically remained the same over the years. They revolved around:

- the effectiveness and efficiency of the project: it was labeled the Billion-Euro hole that would block infrastructural investments elsewhere for decades to come and result, at best, in negligible transport improvements;
- the environmental costs and risks: 300 trees, some more than 100 years old, were to be felled in the park; ground water and mineral springs in the area would be affected;
- architecture, historic preservation and urban development: the historic station building has been cherished by many, and experts criticized the City's disregard for architectural history;
- the project's decision-making and citizens' participation in it: basic principles of democratic governance were repeatedly ignored, circumvented, or perverted; opportunities for citizen participation were largely tokenistic, the overall planning process was dominated by behind-the-scenes deal-making; DB's peculiar status, acting as a private but still state-owned and quasi-monopolistic railway operator, further distorted the planning and decision-making process.<sup>2</sup>

1 In 2007 an alliance (Aktionsbündnis gegen Stuttgart 21) launched a petition for a referendum, signed by 60,000 citizens, more than 3 times the number necessary. Citing legal grounds, the Stuttgart City Council rejected it.

2 As Germany's quasi-monopolistic railway operator, DB was able to dominate the bargaining process that facilitated the project. Its character as a private enterprise undermined the transparency and accountability of the process due to the "commercial-in-confidence" clauses that kept crucial information out of the public domain.



Image 2. The new underground station. Visualization by Aldinger & Wolf. Bahnprojekt-Stuttgart-Ulm.

Empirical research examining the motives and backgrounds of the protesters (e.g. Rucht et al. 2011) found that the most widespread protest concerns were over the project's cost-benefit ratio (i.e., the uneven distribution of costs and benefits it is expected to result in) and the process of decision-making (i.e. the lack of transparency in the planning process, the absence of citizen participation). In other words, the contestation was not just about S21 as such. It also involved a larger more fundamental dispute about what constitutes a city and how and for whom it should be developed and run.

The base of the protest was broad and diverse. Initially it was primarily civic and professional associations working on environmental and transport issues, but it broadened over time as a newly established citizen group (*Leben in Stuttgart*) became organized and allied with the environmental groups. Supported by the local Green Party (the only major party opposing the project, which in 2009 emerged as the surprise winner in the municipal elections), they mounted a multi-faceted campaign consisting of legal actions, petitions, community events, and alternative proposals that they argued would have greater benefits at a fraction of the costs of S21. Next, the Alliance (*Aktionsbündnis gegen S21*), which had launched the petition for the referendum in 2007, was joined by new groups, such as the *Parkschützer* (park protectors). It formed in late 2009 and was a media savvy alliance focusing on the protection of the park. It launched a web 2.0 platform that became an important networking and mobilizing tool for the protesters. Many other initiatives and several public figures also joined the protest cause.

The regular protests during the fall of 2010, after construction and demolition had begun, included citizens from all walks of life; many participants had little or no experience with or affinity towards street forms of collective action.<sup>3</sup> This diversity was also reflected in a variety of cultural forms of creative political expression, including the ad hoc transformation of the construction fence into a massive open air exhibit that turned the locking-out fence into a popular symbol of the protest's perseverance (see image 3).



Image 3. Demolition works and protest demonstration at the north wing of Stuttgart Central Station. Foto: Wikimedia Commons: Mussklprozz.

After “Black Thursday”, the name given to the violent demonstration on September 30, 2010, demolition works were put on hold. The state premier invited the contestants to a series of “mediation talks”, that is public hearings and debates, to resolve the tensions. The media and most observers agreed that this kind of a more substantive and inclusive form of citizen participation should have occurred much earlier. After five weeks of thorough deliberation the chief mediator, Heiner Geissler, ruled that the project should undergo a stress test and also issued several nonbinding recommendations. But generally he gave the approval to go ahead, arguing that the project was “too far advanced to be stopped.”

<sup>3</sup> Usually, growth in size and composition implies that contradictions will emerge with respect to the interests and positions of those involved. But in this case frictions did not emerge until an advanced stage of the struggle. The disagreements were over whether to use civil disobedience as part of the action repertoire and over whether (and how) to participate in the mediation talks. But the movement managed to present itself as unified to the public – until the mediation offer was on the table.



Following this, the movement lost momentum, the numbers at the rallies dwindled, and construction resumed. The following spring (2011) the Green Party won a landslide victory in the state election and formed a coalition government with the Social Democratic Party (SPD). This government held a state-wide referendum on S2I. Unsurprisingly the project supporters came out as clear winner, the rural population having voted almost completely for the project. The Green Party, as the state's governing party, bowed out of all protest activities. But other opponents have continued to fight the project.

So Baden-Württemberg and Stuttgart learned the hard way. In order to realize a major and potentially contested development project, it learned that it makes good sense to employ some meaningful citizen participation measures early on in the process. Baden-Württemberg became the first German *Land* to adopt regulations for planning large infrastructure projects in the form of a "Guideline for a New Planning Culture" (2014, see [www.beteiligungportal.baden-wuerttemberg.de](http://www.beteiligungportal.baden-wuerttemberg.de)).

Across Germany, a multitude of novel and innovative measures and procedures for expanding citizenship participation have been explored and applied in different urban development settings on all scales. Case studies and comparisons of these various experiences reveal that even with more inclusive planning, conflicts do not necessarily vanish (Mayer 2018a). The expansion of participatory programs has taken place within the context of the neo-liberalization of the urban, which has entailed a shift towards task- and project-driven initiatives such as developing a particular part of town, restructuring of transport infrastructures (public transport and train systems), or competing for mega-events like the Olympics, World Cups, International Building Exhibits, and Garden Shows. In these endeavours, mayors and their partners from the business sector set up special agencies to deliver target-driven initiatives that focus on such concrete objectives. This trend towards projects has significantly transformed municipal planning, thus moving informal and cooperative procedures into the foreground (Rinn 2016:138; Selle 2010). In these procedures, the municipality's representatives cooperate with actors from the private sector, developers, and investors, and since the "participatory turn" triggered by S2I also with citizen groups. As a consequence, in the context of planning and urban development processes we now have next to the mandated participation formats (e.g., information sharing and hearings), informal procedures (e.g., round-tables or local workshops) widely accepted as good practice. Important to note, however, is that these more inclusive procedures do not always succeed in resolving conflicts over the planned development. Nor do they always resolve conflicts over the inclusion and exclusion of interests and how interest representation is to take place within them.

Different case studies of participatory projects in urban development reveal the structural tensions built into the governance of citizen participation, even when they are characterized

as enlightened and innovative. An interesting case of such innovative participatory instruments has been the planning for re-use of a former large urban infrastructure project, the closed down city airport Berlin Tempelhof. After its closure in 2008, the airfield had been left unused for almost a year. Many suggestions and demands by citizens' groups about its use had gone unheeded until about 5 000 people attempted to occupy it in 2009. In response to this manifest public pressure and since there was not (yet) any market demand for the land, the city in 2010 dedicated the field for public use as a park. It also simultaneously initiated a panoply of participatory measures: randomized surveys, on-site visits, assemblies in adjacent neighbourhoods, and a series of participatory workshops for neighbours to discuss specific options for developing the park ranging from leisure activities to its design. Most innovatively, the city offered a participatory process to include citizens directly in developing the use of the former airport field: It invited tenders for interim uses. Out of 138 project applications, high-level politicians selected 25. They were contracted to set up diverse developments in urban agriculture as well as youth and political programs. This integration of interim or "pioneer" users into the planning process constituted a significant expansion of the city's participatory repertoire, even if the participation of these "co-designers" took place in parallel to and disconnected from other forms of participation in the planning and decision-making about the field (cf. Mackroth 2015).

But while the park and its pioneer uses enjoyed growing popularity, the Berlin Senate revived older plans to build housing on one third of the field that included the land for the interim use. Resistance against these plans intensified, and a referendum launched in 2014 by the group 100% Tempelhofer Feld (founded in 2011 to prevent any construction on the field) gained the support of 64 % of the Berlin voting population for securing the site as a public park. A recent analysis of the participatory strategies employed in the Tempelhof case found that while they were clearly employed to seek compliance, displace conflict, and provide an interim strategy against the loss of property value (a use that would help to market and brand the site), they also allowed the participants to stage and express their dissent (Hilbrandt 2016). Thus, the Tempelhof case illustrates how seasoned participants can use such forums to monitor planning, gather information, disseminate arguments among the different political actors and engaged citizens, and to unite disparate and fragmented camps against the city's plans. The participants even managed to reframe the planning debates and raise topics that had been excluded from the agenda, thus envisioning and staging alternative forms of development. The driving force behind such an outcome lies, however, less in the participatory process as such (as Hilbrandt claims, 2016: 13), but in the politicized activists who were people "experienced in political protest" (ibid. 13). Other researchers have also found that only where specific conditions are in place can "insurgent participants" make exceptional use of participatory formats. These conditions include individual resources such as time and capacity, a willingness to share their political experience, and the presence of strong counter-movements (cf. Polletta 2016: 488).

Another case study has followed the efforts of “seasoned activists” to influence established participatory formats in the large-scale city expansion of Hamburg Mitte Altona. In 2011 activists tried to influence the development of a new-build neighbourhood on a fallow, former industrial area by engaging with the participatory measures of the planning process. They brought their critiques and alternative suggestions (under the label “Altopia”) into the participatory process provided by the City. A comparative case study of this struggle (Rinn 2016) traces how the group demanded a stop of the planning process and sought to turn the established citizen forum (i.e., the arena created by the participatory process) into a grassroots-democratic assembly. Imposing a moratorium and restructuring the planning process appeared necessary to the activists, as many problematic decisions had already been taken. But it turned out that these demands were outside of the framework of this participatory forum. Together with a diverse group of further local interests (including small precarious businesses) the activists did succeed in appropriating the forum and turning it into a public platform for debate about a planning moratorium. While their actions received broad media attention, the government was not impressed by their large majority vote in the forum for the planning moratorium. The regular political institutions (the department for urban development, the Senate, the majority within the urban development committee, and the city council) were not moved by the positions articulated through this institution of citizen participation.

Thus, the “success” of this movement consisted merely in delegitimizing the participatory process that the city’s project planners had established. The activists managed to disrupt its main function of producing legitimation via citizen participation and simultaneously revealed the immanent limitations of such parallel participatory procedures. Since the *real* decisions about such development projects are not made in these participatory forums, they actually serve more to frustrate the demands and expectations of participating citizens. Implicitly, this practice also reveals that the claim by the “regular political institutions” to represent the citizens does not hold either.

Summing up then, it appears that citizen participation in urban development is so complicated because it embodies fundamental and immanent tensions:

- 1 For city officials and administrators, the task of planning is to produce results that are rational, economically feasible, legally solid, socially effective, sustainable, and legitimated by representative procedures. From this perspective, citizen participation in urban development is to take place *next to* or *parallel to* the actual planning practice. And this practice is enacted in the interaction of political-administrative actors, private planning firms, architects, and investors, which will frequently entail non-public, discrete negotiations. Investors and property owners have privileged access to political decision-making, which is justified with their legal property titles and investment projects or construction interests.

- 2 The political-administrative actors view themselves as responsible for and representing the common good. They consider themselves as competent, due to their professional and planning expertise. But at the same time they rely on the ever growing and ever changing knowledge created within urban civil society, which becomes available to them through participatory exercises.
- 3 Additionally, the participatory structures and procedures are useful to prevent other (costlier) forms of resolution, such as litigation or more disorderly forms. Participatory measures offer an alternative that allows for the transformation of potentially antagonistic conflict into cooperative constellations.

Thus, the invited citizens' expectation to co-plan grates against the self-image of the experts in the municipal departments, as their orientation to the technical, legal, and economic feasibility of projects tends to reduce participatory exercises to hearings and information sharing. The municipal actors know that they can no longer govern against urban civil society – neither against investors nor against powerful social groups. They are aware that formally planning falls within their administrative sovereignty, but from experience they also know that this position of power – especially with contested development projects – prevents them from doing urban development “from above” because too many instances of such top-down planning efforts, not just Stuttgart 21, have spectacularly failed in the past. City (planning) departments are thus under permanent pressure to defend their competence – against what in their view would be “illegitimate” or “irrational” interventions.

With the advancing neo-liberalization of cities (Mayer 2018b), municipalities themselves are increasingly only a minor partner in the special agencies created to design, steer and implement the development projects. They often sign away their own authority to these agencies, and/or appear quite paralyzed by the huge investments to be expected and the power of the other stakeholders. This is the case in Stuttgart 21, where DB even refused to share information with the city “because that would concern the core of their enterprise” (Selle 2010, 19, author's translation). The development agencies market the land, develop the projects, operate and manage the infrastructures, maintain the transport system, etc. ostensibly on behalf of the public. However, in fact they are guided by the logic of private enterprises since they have subordinated the agenda of the public sector to the logic of the private sector. So even where participatory measures and structures are in place, there continues to be a deficit in real democratic decision-making. Frequently participatory events are celebrated for their own sake, thus frustrating the citizens who do not feel that they are taken seriously and sense that their purpose lies more in generating legitimacy than in articulating the concerns and suggestions of those (detrimentally) affected.

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# Contested urban development, conflict, and the democratic life of urban places

By Enrico Gualini

When the development of an urban space becomes contested, we “discover” something of importance and of which we have often lost perception: that urban space is imbued with a multiplicity of meanings, memories, emotions and habits of the heart. We realise that what confers sense to an urban space as a socially and politically connoted place is a complex web of attachments and interpretations. This complex web of attachments and interpretations becomes apparent in what is perceived as challenged by the proposed developmental transformation as well as by what is perceived as a potential of this transformation – by what is sensed as threat and by what is sensed as hope. In the resulting tensions imbedded in this complex web of attachments and interpretations, unsuspected civic resources are mobilised, collective identities are formed, and new political subjectivities are rendered possible. In this respect, the contestation of urban developments (as illustrated by figures 1 and 2) appears as an incredible generator of social creativity and collective intelligence. Importantly, it may act as a catalyst for the renewal of democratic politics. Yet, policy, governance and planning practices are repeatedly overwhelmed by the emergence and the expressions of contestation, and outcomes fall dramatically short of conveying public creativity and expectations (as illustrated by figure 3). What can we learn from critical and interpretive approaches to the analysis of policy processes? What and how can we learn from the forms of contention and social mobilization that emerge from urban planning processes? Without any intention to propose generalizable recipes, this contribution presents some lines of reflection for addressing conflict as a generative potential for local democracy. That is, how can we learn to take protest seriously as an important part of urban planning?

## **What can planners and local politicians learn from planning conflicts?**

When we look at the nature and richness of citizens’ engagement in a contentious urban issue and compare it with the features of the typical policy-making and planning process, we often have the feeling of a mismatch, of a striking poverty in the relationship between engaged public opinion formation and policy outcomes. Policy and planning appear not to be willing or to be able to take stock of the social intelligence that is mobilized in contention. Not surprisingly, the feeling associated with this is that of a betrayal: a betrayal of democracy, and a betrayal of citizenship as an active contribution to the public.

Policy and planning, including the actors involved in them, then, appear as domains of practices which are “unable to learn.” Therefore, it is necessary to take a new look at urban development conflicts as important from a perspective of learning, as both learning events and

learning processes. This seems paradoxical, as so many urban conflicts seem to be characterized by the failure to learn – and should not be understood idealistically. In fact, the first lesson that can be often learnt from urban conflicts is that our democratic practices – as sophisticated and rooted they may be – are time and again failing to generate consensus and legitimacy for public policy. In sum, we have a lot to learn from them about “doing democracy.”

Conflicts are events that confront participants with a democratic break, with a suspension of the assumptions of the democratic legitimacy of development and planning procedures. On the one hand, aggregative-representative democracy and the political-administrative practices that form the basis of planning often fall short of adequately conveying citizens’ preferences, particularly when it comes to local issues. Such weaknesses in planning often become apparent in a much later stage in planning process, after the existence and possibility of consensus and legitimacy have been prematurely assumed. In such cases, planning actors often defend themselves against rising protest by claiming that the planning decisions are legitimate because they have followed formal planning-decision making procedures. As a result, protests may be even stronger fuelled by the feeling of a mismatch between formal democratic legitimacy and substantial, active democratic participation. On the other hand, the frequent and even institutionalized adoption of deliberative and participatory democratic practices in the planning process often does not prove capable of reaching a viable negotiated consensus among different views. The result may then be a sense of frustration and even of manipulation, as participation is perceived as not resulting into an active co-production of the outcomes but rather as a procedure in the hands of planning technocrats. A crucial reason for this is that even good-minded participatory and deliberative practices in the planning process are often premised on a narrow pre-definition of the subject matter. This means that democratic participation and deliberation can turn out to be little more than a consultation – as already Arnstein (1969) showed decades ago – if the problem-definition is narrowly predefined or framed, and if a true problematization of what is at issue is constrained. In such cases, participants perceive the non-identification with the problematization offered and the constraint perceived to contributing to a new, open problematization as a limit to their democratic empowerment and as an attempt at manipulation on the part of urban planners.

This is an important aspect of what theories of radical democracy mean when they refer to the concepts of “post-politics” and “post-democracy.” We should be careful not to deal superficially with these terms, of course, which have a complex theoretical background. Nevertheless, even in the context of these brief notes, they may have an important sensitizing power. “Post-politics” and “post-democracy” do not refer to an era “after/beyond politics” or to the “end of politics” and democracy. Rather, they refer to a form of “politics by other means” which finds expression in many of our democratic practices, and which challenges their democratic contents (cf. Metzger, Allmendinger and Oosterlijnk 2015). Urban scholars Wilson and Swyngedouw (2015: 6), for example, define “post-politics” and the “post-political” as “a procedural understanding of politics as problem-solving that assumes public interests, political subjects, and the procedures for their deployment as given or quasi-natural, and dis-

places social practices of their problematization.” More precisely, they refer to “a situation in which the political – understood as a space of contestation and agonistic engagement – is increasingly colonised by politics – understood as technocratic mechanisms and consensual procedures that operate within an unquestioned framework of representative democracy, free market economics, and cosmopolitan liberalism.” What appears striking in this understanding is the fact that participatory democratic practices are seen as subsumed and neutralized: “In post-politics, political contradictions are reduced to policy problems to be managed by experts and legitimated through participatory processes in which the scope of possible outcomes is narrowly defined in advance” (ibid.). It is in this line of critique of the hollowing-out of democracy that radical theorists talk of consensual democracy as the “staging” of “democratization” events, aimed at “depoliticizing conflicts in order to settle them” (Rancière 1995: 105), of the reduction of politics to a form of “agonism without antagonism” (Mouffe 2013: xv), and as participation as being reduced to “consensual forms of techno-managerial negotiation” (Wilson and Swyngedouw 2015: 3), to a “choreography of power” (Swyngedouw) which ultimately represents “the mere filling of spaces left empty by power” (Rancière 1995: 60).

This may sound too radical and even negative. However, the outcomes of contested planning processes often show that the reasons for disillusion towards politics reside in forms of disaffection and frustration which relate to these features. It is important therefore to learn what features of the policy and planning process may be at their origin, and how these features can develop in a more truly democratic direction.

A first problematic feature is the inadequacy of policy-making and planning processes in dealing with the multi-layered character and dynamics of political opinion formation. As political scientists such as Fischer have pointed out, the formation and expression of political opinion is a multidimensional and argumentative process (cf. Fischer 2003). It may involve viewpoints on a more practical level – in the form of arguments of technical validation and of situational validation – but also arguments of a more reflexive nature, such as those concerning societal choices, involving beliefs and even “deep” values with an idiosyncratic cultural or ideological background. A reflexive democracy should be in principle capable of addressing all these dimensions in defining societal problems and to balance them to achieve a legitimate consensus for collective choices. In reality, policy-making and planning often develop linearly out of a given definition of the problem, and assume consensus on this particular problematization as a starting point for a problem-solving, technically-minded (if not overtly technocratic) procedure. However, this contrasts with the fact that public opinion often develops the more an issue is contested during the course of policy development. And it often develops in reaction to the way it is being defined by policy-makers, at different, more “reflexive” levels, involving value-based arguments that potentially challenge this assumed consensus.

What is important to note in the first place is that this process has an intertemporal dimension, which often is not coherent or compatible with the linear understanding of formal policy-making and planning procedures typically used by local governments. In the second place, different



dimensions of political opinion formation may develop in parallel and without or with inadequate mediation on the part of urban planning procedures. As a result, the moment in which public opinion is formed and expresses differential positions on an issue may be incompatible or difficult to incorporate in a formal planning procedure. Despite all experience we may have with active democratic practices, here it is crucial to consider that there is no democratic procedure in place that may grant on its own the ordered development or the mediation of these different dimensions of political opinion formation.

The second feature is that when political opinion formation becomes a factor for contestation, this development has its own dynamics in relation to the capacity of the policy-making and planning system to respond. In this respect, the nature of protest and mobilization is relational and dependent on the interaction with political-institutional responses. When protest and social mobilization emerge, they may be initially attached to claims of a substantive kind and of a very different nature, which make them more or less effectively negotiable. If, however, the claims raised are not effectively met, then protest and mobilization – as social movement research shows – may change in nature and attitudes (cf. Gualini 2015a). They may become increasingly defined by claims for inclusion into the decision-process and, if they fail to achieve this, increasingly define themselves as claiming political recognition. In this process, the nature of protest and mobilization changes significantly. While movement participants tend to develop an identification with overarching issues that may even bridge their internal differences, the movement as a whole develops an increasingly agonistic, if not antagonistic attitude. It may then adopt a frame of reference that becomes incompatible with the frame of reference of policy-makers and planners. This development is dynamic and may lead to both a diffusion and network-like extension of the mobilization and to a polarization vis-à-vis politics, perceived as non-responsive and illegitimate. This development can be observed in striking cases of urban conflict, such as Stuttgart 21 (cf. Gualini 2015b). What is tragic – and can be seen as proof of a tragic “inability to learn” – is that, in such attempts at mediation are likely to be dramatically inadequate, as conditions for trust and cooperation are by far compromised and the planning process largely irreversible (for other examples, see: Gualini 2015c, 2016).

### **The democratic life of contested urban places**

Conflicts developing in such a direction can easily be seen as failures of democracy. However, from a radical democratic perspective, the contradiction that protest and mobilization express is essential to democracy. In this sense, urban conflicts that develop into radical expressions of agonism can be understood as truly “democratic moments” (Rancière 1999). They are events that mark a crisis of “post-politics” and a moment of insurgence of the “political” through a process of political subjectivation. This means that protest and mobilization around a contested project or plan may become important occasions for processes of collective identity formation and the emergence of political subjectivities. In this respect, democratic politics

re-emerges around contested issues and agonistic claims. This is why agonism is essential to democracy, and mobilization and conflict – despite the drama of collective struggles and the frequency of disillusion – are essential resources for democratization.

Even then, however, the question remains, of course, of how far a democratic society and its institutions are capable of dealing with social struggles as a progressive, constructive force and to avoid that they develop into factors for social disruption. If we believe in an agonistic democracy, in which struggles for hegemony are ever present and are played out overtly in the public domain, there is possibly no general recipe for this. However, it is important to take stock as much as possible of the creativity and imagination generated in these processes. In this respect, it is interesting to reflect on the importance of what the local, context-dependent and idiosyncratic reference to space and place may play in the future of planning and policy-making.

As noted before, involvement, mobilization and collective action around a contentious issue – such as a contested spatial plan – develop in the course of the process in ways which are relational and interactional. This means that not only relations with institutional counterparts are crucial but also relations within the movement are crucial. The emergence of a political subject is a collective phenomenon that is strongly dependent on the frames adopted and on the forms of “frame alignment” experienced by the participants. Not all forms of protest and mobilization are in principle necessarily antagonistic, i.e. system-challenging. However, in the course of their development, their agonistic potential may gain extension and intensity so that they become capable of overarching single or specific claims. This can happen, for example, when they develop a bridging-networking capacity of alignment among diverse claims and/or a convergence of different claims, and when they challenge the system’s capacity to single out and settle individually negotiable claims. In such a process, contested urban places may play an important role. They act as more than just the “stages” or the material stakes of urban conflicts. First, as they mobilize a variety of social claims to urban space, contested urban places constitute opportunities for the emergence of “democratic moments” as previously defined. Second, as they challenge conceptions of the uses of space, conceptions of the values of space, and procedures and timescales of the development of space involved in the urban development process, they contribute to developing new imaginaries of the city (cf. Tonkiss 2013). This involves mobilizing “a set of densely intertwined registers that constitute what we call ‘reality’” and rearticulating relationships between “the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary” (cf. Wilson and Swyngedouw 2015: 7). Thus, they express an engagement and a *jouissance* in claiming for the appropriation of space that has important potentials for challenging policies and plans. In this sense, contested places tend to become symbolically loaded and even overdetermined, and may become a focus of the mobilization of local agonistic identities. What can be called “place identities” are to be understood as “place frames” for collective action, as selective, but shared, experiences and understandings of collective interests that can stimulate collective organization and mobilization (cf. Martin 2003). In light of the symbolic over determination of urban space, which is often a result of agonistic practices, at least poten-

tially, “place frames can connect struggles over distant places”, overarching differences in interests and motivations, and become catalysers of network forms of collective mobilization (Uitermark, Nicholls and Loopmans 2012: 2549).

### **Provisional conclusions**

These brief notes aim at indicating some directions in what we can learn from what we often perceive as difficulties or even failures of local democracy. Difficulties and failures can be addressed as potentials. Conflicts around the development of urban places often express this ambiguous duality. This duality concerns how conflicts can be a source of frustration and sometimes deep disillusion but also, alternatively, as occasions for the generation of a wealth of social engagement and creativity. There may not be a generalizable recipe for policy-making and planning to deal with the emergent subtleties and with the (ant-)agonistic potential of democratic practices. Nevertheless, there are certainly a number of possible entry points in the pragmatics of policy-making and planning for turning learning failures into learning opportunities. An important condition for this is to keep the policy process open as a process of collective problematization and to avoid technocratic, paternalistic, or “post-political” presumptions of consensus. If we accept a radical idea of democracy as the ongoing playing-out of hegemonic struggles and, as a consequence, the irreducibility of agonism in a democracy and the role of conflict in generating “democratic moments” and if we accept that planning is also part and parcel of these hegemonic struggles, we need to think of the “intelligence of democracy” (and of democratic planning practices) as something not consisting of reducing or displacing conflicts but as taking stock of the social creativity generated in and through them.

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**Pictures:**



1. Poster of the 'Spreeufer für alle' campaign against the 'Mediaspree' development project in Berlin, 2007. Source: Initiative Mediaspree versenken! AG Spreeufer, <http://ms-versenken.org>



2. The 'wall of complaints' against Stuttgart 21 in front of Stuttgart central station building. Source: courtesy of Magdalena Konieczek / Jakob Köppel © 2012



3. A piece of the 'sanitized' Spree waterfront in the 'Mediaspree' project area in Berlin, Source: Enrico Gualini © 2015

# Always disappointing? Swedish citizen participation in comparative perspective

By Abdul Khakee

Despite the complexity that characterizes every public planning effort owing to the subject of planning as well as the context, public involvement is ultimately an issue of power. How much power can be delegated to the public and why?

The well-known arguments for public participation are that participation 1) increases the democratic legitimacy of plans and policies, 2) enables the input of local knowledge and 3) facilitates the implementation of planned decisions. Correspondingly the arguments against participation maintain that 1) planning process becomes more cumbersome, protracted and therefore ineffective, 2) local knowledge is often partisan and fuzzy, and 3) representative government ensures citizens' interests through the elected representatives.

Public participation in practice can extend all the way from “window-dressing” to people's control over local affairs. Arnstein (2006) distinguishes between eight forms of public participation.

At a low level, participation can be in the form of manipulation or therapy. For instance, this means that local planning authorities initiate study circles or appoint so-called advisory groups that have in fact no real role at all in planning process. At an intermediate level, Arnstein mentions various ways of informing or consulting people, which she succinctly describes as “tokenism”. These approaches to public participation are most commonly used in Sweden, and they are officially justified because the planning legislation sanctions them.

Organizing information meetings, exhibiting plans in public venues, and consulting people when the final version of a plan is displayed for public inspection or sent out to NGOs for comments are forms of participation well-known to the Swedish public.

However, despite these “token” measures for informing and consulting people, more often than not plans are subject to legal proceedings. The Slussen case well illustrates this development. Such legal proceedings delay the implementation of plans and make it costlier.

There are no ultimate forms of citizen participation. However, partnership between the public and planning authorities or various forms of delegation of decision-making to people involve considerable empowerment but such approaches are rarely used in urban development planning.

Against the backdrop of these comments I choose the title of my presentation as follows: *Always disappointing? Swedish citizens' participation in planning in comparative perspective.*

I shall answer this question: “Always disappointing?” with the help of four case studies followed by a few comments on neighbourhood planning in the UK and network planning in the Netherlands. In each case I indicate its background and public expectation and compare these with the reality of the planning case.



## **1. Evaluation of first round of structure planning (late 1980s – mid 1990s)**

### **Background/ Expectations**

The enactment of the 1987 Planning and Building Law was preceded by an extensive debate about citizens' participation in the planning of the new structure plans. The preparation of the new legislation was carried out at the same time as the national Environmental Code was made ready. The then Minister of Environment, Anna Lind, in her directive explicitly said that "citizens should participate at all stages of the planning process". Great expectations were raised about citizen participation when the legislation was being prepared (Khakee 2000).

### **Outcome**

Participation in structure planning came to be limited to information meetings and occasional study circles (especially in smaller municipalities). The public was invited for comments only when the final version of the plans was presented. The idea of reference groups from neighbourhoods was dropped at an early stage of planning. Less than 1% of the space was devoted to comments by the people (Khakee 1999; 2006).

## **2. Planning and Development of Hammarby sjöstad (2004-2015)**

### **Background/ Expectations**

South Hammarby was planned to house the Olympic village if Sweden succeeded in hosting the 2004 Olympic Games. Once the application for the Olympic Games was unsuccessful the emphasis shifted to create a showpiece of sustainable urban development by the waterfront. It is the most expensive housing project in Sweden, owing to high costs for the clearance of previously an industrial site. In the structure plan the emphasis was social inclusion, extensive consultations with citizens and development decisions firmly established with the people (Johansson & Khakee 2009).

### **Outcome**

In the development planning of Hammarby sjöstad the emphasis shifted from "inclusionary sustainability dialogue" to ambitious urban design with predominantly owner-occupied apartments for households willing to pay for a home by the waterfront with inner city feelings. Development planning became an issue for a small group of public planners, developers and their architects.

Since the developers' ambition was to build and sell the apartments there was little time available for public dialogue. Planners anyway regarded public views to have only "symbolic value" because the planning of Hammarby sjöstad required high quality professional knowledge (Khakee 2007).

### **3. e-participation in Göteborg, Malmö and beyond (2005-2008)**

#### **Background/Expectations**

Development of software has made mass participation in social and political activities easier. Network-empowered citizens can provide substantive input in agenda setting but also in selecting planning priorities. Internet has changed the ways in which not only activists but also non-activist citizens can communicate and exert influence (Åström, Granberg, Khakee 2011).

#### **Outcome**

##### *Göteborg*

A large urban renewal program in the central part of the central city area was started in 2005. Municipal Government suggested that traditional form of city planning to be broadened through an internet “Debate Forum.” About 90 000 people visited the exhibitions and many left their comments on the Forum. The Political parties had agreed to stay out of the forum. Therefore, no official decision-makers were present there, which led to public disillusionment with so-called internet participation (Granberg & Åström 2010).

##### *Malmö*

The municipality initiated an e-petitioning system in 2008. Already in the first year 200 e-petitions were made. However, the political and administrative decision-makers decided not to give any form of formal response, which the petitioners themselves had taken for granted and felt disappointed (Åström & Sedelius 2010).

#### ***Survey among planning officers***

The survey was carried out in Sweden’s 290 municipalities in 2006 with a 67% response rate. It showed that 94% of the planning officials supported e-participation. The same majority felt that e-participation should not shift sovereignty from elected representatives to deliberating citizens. Planners were of the opinion that planning is based on expert knowledge and e-participation should not in anyway, “challenge” the authority of this knowledge (Åström, Granberg & Khakee 2011).

### **4. Planning for climate change in Värmdö (2003-2014)**

#### **Background/ Expectations**

The Swedish Government has ambitious objectives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Local governments are expected to implement these goals through structure plans. Many municipalities, including Värmdö, have participated in national programs for strengthening their local planning capacity. One requirement is that municipalities prepare visions as a basis for developing strategies and policy measures. Visions were to be prepared through an inclusionary dialogue in the municipality.

Värmdö Municipality appointed a special future and climate commission that carried out extensive consultations with people, NGOs and representatives of various community interests in order to develop the vision of “Värmdö 2030” (Dovlén & Khakee 2017).

### Outcome

One of the major issues facing Värmdö is some 11000 holiday homes located outside the main urban centres in the municipality. Proximity to Stockholm has fuelled a trend whereby owners of such homes desire to convert them into permanent homes. Caught between the desire to have a larger population as well as to generate incomes from tourism and thereby improve the tax base, the municipal government left out one of the major concerns for the people namely the need for the containment of “holiday homes sprawl” in the vision (Dovlén & Khakee 2017).

## Neighbourhood Planning in UK

### Background

In early 2000 the British Government passed a bill to encourage neighbourhood groups to prepare statutory land-use plans – so-called “neighbourhood plans” within regulatory parameters. Local authorities are entitled to curtail debate if it strays outside defined land-use issues. So far 1900 neighbourhood plans have been prepared, of which 200 have passed referendum (Brownhill & Bradley 2017).

### Outcome

The British Government had expected that neighbourhood plans would accept nationally pronounced growth ideas. Instead of saying “yes” to these growth principles, neighbourhood plans have put forward different model of housing delivery supporting medium and small-scale builders and affordable housing as well as protecting green space and upholding local distinctiveness. These plans have also defended themselves against capital disinvestment and state neglect by mobilizing unpaid labour to maintain and develop community facilities.

Participation is open to all but neighbourhood planning is often dominated by specific “well-to-do” publics. Neighbourhood planning has gone further than any previous participatory initiative in the U.K, by awarding statutory recognition to neighbourhood groups and delegating to them decision-making power. It has led to changes in the relationship between neighbourhoods and planning authorities. The latter provides significant potential for developing progressive planning practice (Brownhill & Quintin 2017).

## **Policy networking in the Netherlands**

### **Background**

Since 1989 the Netherlands has developed a series of national environmental policy plans for which the government has sought the opinion and advice of environmental NGOs. These consultations have established a long-term process intended to foster continued improvement of the environmental plan. They have even created extensive networking at all levels of governance. Since early 2000, as a result of state retrenchment in public services, thousands of citizen initiatives in social care, renewable energy, sustainable food production, transport and other services have been carried out (Carley & Christie 2001).

### **Outcome**

The network-based participative system has implied that planning is led but not dominated by the government. Action networks together with citizens' services initiatives provide strong premises for interest-based communities, which challenge the growth-dependent narrative by asserting social, environmental and redistributive purposes of planning.

Outcomes of consultations with networks have been important not so much for their effect on the content of plans but for their effect on stakeholder groups, who feel their importance in "agenda-building." However, engagement in this practice is open only to those who are active in the networks; they happen to be persons with political, economic, social and cultural resources (de Roo 2003).

### **Conclusions**

What can we conclude from the four Swedish case studies and British and Dutch experiences? I put forward four major conclusions with a following question for the readers to reflect upon.

First, public participation in planning is essentially a question of power. *How much power can/should be delegated to people?*

Second, planning generally implies applying knowledge to actions. *What should be the proper mix of professional and local knowledge?*

Third, in representative democracies people should be content with the fact that their elected representatives take care of their concerns in planning. This is, at least, a very general feeling among planners and politicians. *Is planning of built environment a compelling case for citizen participation over and above parliamentary elections?*

Fourth, participation is often dominated by people with resources, thus reinforcing the general democratic deficit in planning practice. *What changes are necessary in order to make participation more inclusionary?*

Personally I am of the opinion that planning of the built environments is an extraordinary case for public participation over and above electing political representatives to decision-making assemblies. Built environments shape our lives, attitudes and behaviour for generations. As Sir Winston Churchill once remarked "We construct buildings. They in turn construct us".

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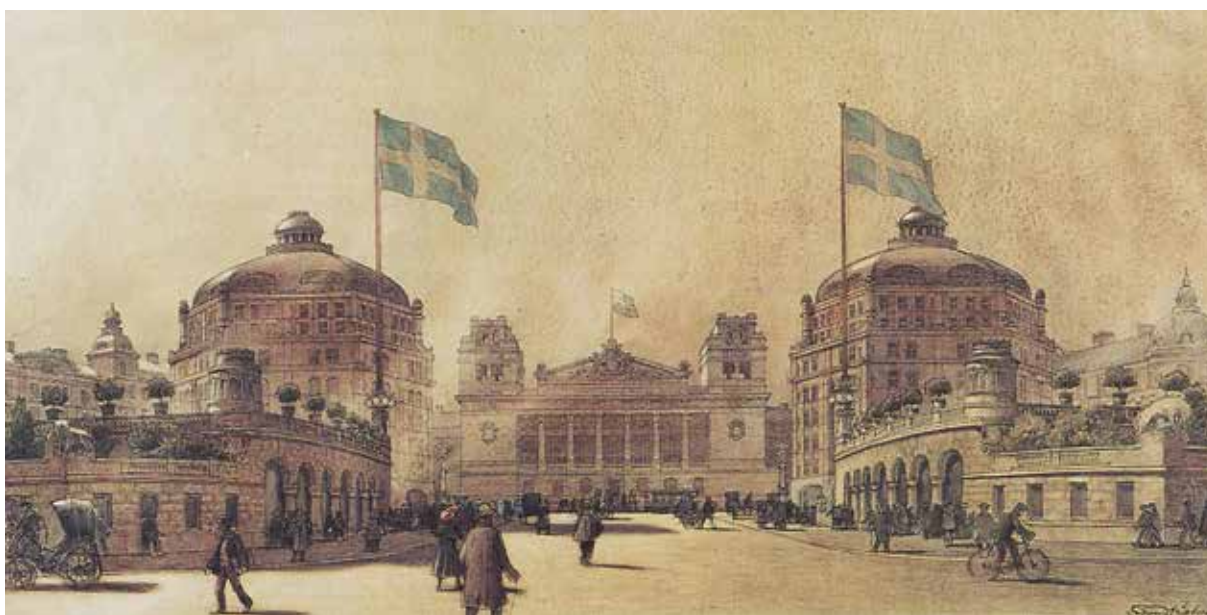
# En funkismöbel i Mälardrottningens gemak

Av Anders Sjöbrandt

Debatten om omvandlingen av Slussen började inte på 1930-talet utan den hade pågått länge – sedan slutet av 1800-talet. Det fanns en bred enighet om att det var nödvändigt att förändra Södermalmstorg. Här fanns en snårig bebyggelse och det blev svårt att ta sig igenom denna plats när befolkningen växte och genomfartstrafiken ökade. Slussen var stockholmstrafikens getingmidja.

I början av 1900-talet kom det många förslag till ombyggnad av Slussen. Dessa förslag hade fokus på arkitekturen. Man ville rensa bort de gamla alla husen och ersätta dessa med en monumental arkitektur. Arkitekterna kritiserades för att man inte tog hänsyn till karaktären hos de stadsdelar som berördes. De stora byggnaderna ansågs inte passa in i den gamla bebyggelsen på Södermalm och i Gamla stan.

Några år innan första världskrigets utbrott kom så Ferdinand Bobergs förslag. Det bemöttes positivt i början men efter hand kom det allt fler invändningar. Kritikerna riktade in sig på att Boberg anslöt sig till de tidigare förslagen, som innebar att Södra stadshuset (nuvarande Stadsmuseet) skulle rivas. Bobergs förslag fick också kritik för att det endast skulle vara en stor uppfartsväg från Gamla stan till Söder (till skillnad mot den gamla Slussen som hade två uppfartsvägar). Kritikerna ifrågasatte även lämpligheten ”att tillgripa så våldsamt monumentala åtgärder” som det här var fråga om.



Ferdinand Bobergs Slussen-förslag 1912.

Trots kritiken godkände stadsfullmäktige i maj 1914 Bobergs förslag. Men som vi alla vet genomfördes förslaget aldrig. Det berodde på att Överintendentsämbetet avstyrkte det hela med motiveringen att förslaget innebar en höjning av slussplan. (Överintendentsämbetet var ett statligt ämbetsverk som sysslade med administrationen av statens byggnader, det omvandlades senare till Kungliga Byggnadsstyrelsen).

Så bröt första världskriget ut och Slussenfrågan blev vilande. Något som inte blev vilande var de problem som orsakade trafikkaos. Fler förslag till ombyggnad av Slussen kom under 1920-talet och perspektivet ändrades nu från arkitektur till trafiklösning.

1920-talet präglades av en högkonjunktur som medförde att bilismen ökade kraftigt. Slussen blev igenproppad av bilar, bussar och spårvagnar. Slussen var också den enda passagen för sjöfarten mellan Mälaren och Saltsjön och de eviga broöppningarna var ett gissel för trafiken över Slussen. Trafikläget förbättrades i och med öppnandet av Hammarbyleden 1926. Men Slussen var fortfarande, ända fram till 1935 då Västerbron stod klar, den enda landförbindelsen mellan Södermalm och Gamla stan.

Antal fordon per dag över Slussbroarna ökade åtta gånger från år 1918 till år 1930 och det beräknades att uppemot 35 000 bilar dagligen passerade Slussen 1929. Stockholmarna menade skämtsamt att om man begav sig in i ”Slussen-eländet” med en ny och modern bil så kom man ut med en gammal och omodern. Slussen-eländet blev ett begrepp. Dock var det inte alla som upplevde Slussen negativt. I Svenska Turistföreningens årsskrift från 1929 beskrevs Slussen så här:

Genom att vilja tjäna de två elementen jord och vatten har nämligen Slussen blivit en försumlig tjänare åt bägge. Den är en alltmer hotande propp i stadstrafikens ådernät och på grund därav föga populär bland dem, som ha mycket bråttom. Desto mer populär är den bland flanörer, som älska dess myllrande och växlingsrika liv.

Stadsplanenämnden gav så Skönhetsrådet i uppdrag att komma med ett förslag. Rådet anlätade i sin tur, i slutet av 1920-talet, arkitekten Tage William-Olsson som tillsammans med Gösta Lundborg utarbetade flera förslag till ombyggnad av Slussen. Till slut presenterades ett mycket radikalt förslag. Genom att använda sig av ett så kallat klöverbladssystem fick man en fullständigt korsningsfri trafikföring. Trafiken kunde ledas och fördelas igenom Slussen både i olika riktningar och i olika nivåer. Bilar, bussar, spårvagnar, båtar, gående och cyklister kunde ta sig igenom Slussen smidigt och störningsfritt åt olika håll på en och samma gång.



Foto: C G Rosenberg, 1935. Stadsmuseet i Stockholm.

Efter decennier av utredande så invigdes den nya Slussen den 15 oktober 1935 i närvaro av bland andra konung Gustaf V och omkring 15 000 stockholmare. Det mycket originella klöverbladssystemets trafiklösning ansågs revolutionerande – här blev moderniteten gestaltad. Borgarrådet Yngve Larsson, Slussbyggnadskommitténs ordförande, kallade i sitt invigningstal platsen för ”i sanning helig mark för stockholmare”. Staden skänkte nu Mälardrottningen ”en funkismöbel, präglad i tidens stil och anda”. Larssons förhoppning var att denna funkismöbel som han även kallade en ”trafikmaskin” skulle ”helt införlivas med Stockholms stadsbild och folkliv”.

Även stadsfullmäktiges ordförande Knut Tengdahl höll tal. Han framhöll att staden nu ”fått en mera funktionsduglig uppordning av en av stadens besvärligaste trafikpunkter”. Enligt Tengdahl var det naturligtvis ”med ett vemod” många stockholmare fick se Slussnäset förvandlat till oigenkännlighet”, men han menade att ”däråt är nu ingenting att göra”. Han avslutade sitt tal med en lätt suck ”Vill man bli storstad, får man lov att skaffa sig de framkomstmöjligheter en sådan kräver”.

Slussen hyllades från många håll. I tidningsartiklar uttryckte allmänheten sitt gillande blandat med ett visst vemod och bland de ledande svenska arkitekturkritikerna var omdömena översvallande positiva. De använde sig i hyllningarna av ett funktionalistiskt språkbruk: ”den mjuka smidigheten”, ”den spänstiga elegansen” och i likhet med många andra funkishus var



Slussen en ”mycket transparent byggnad”. Slussens betongkonstruktion prisades: ”Det starkaste estetiska värdet ligger i den konstruktiva gestaltningen av den spännande betongstommen”, ”Slussens linjesymfoni är betongen, vars konstruktiva säregenhet här renodlats till typiskt nutida estetiska effekter”. Även Le Corbusier, som brukar beskrivas som modernismens främste förespråkare, hyllade Slussen: ”Det är ni, ni i Stockholm, som skapat den moderna tidens första stora verk: trafikknuten Slussen. Det tycks som allt borde följa i samma skala. Misströsta inte. Gå vidare, lägg fram förslag, kämpa...”

**DAGENS NYHETERS SÖDERNUMMER**  
 Fredagen den 18 oktober 1935

**I KURVOR OCH KORSNINGSFRIA PLAN**



NYA GLESHAMNENS FRÅN LUFTEN (Olygga Gunnar Raab, oktober 1934)

**30-SIDIGT SÖDERNUMMER  
 TILL SÖDERS NYFÖRÄR,  
 SLUSSEN OCH VÄSTERBRON**

Inga är här utvalda för dagen. Det nya Södernumret har som syfte att ge våra läsare en översikt över den senaste tiden i Söders utveckling och dess betydelse för hela staden. Detta Södernummer har också utvalda artiklar om Slussen och Västerbron, som blivit praxis för alla trafikknuter i våra stora städer.

Av det rikliga innehållet utvalda artiklar utgöra:

Södernumret efter 14 dagar, som utgår på Söder	4
Slussen i Södernumret	6
Slussen Natt och Dag	8-11
Dåligt	12
Det ständiga livet	13
Medlemskapet	14
Kung och kung vid Karl Johansstråket	15
Protesterna på Torg vid Slussen	16
Rådhusets nya byggnad	17
Nya Slussen kommer att vara i en mening	19
Slussen i Södernumret	20
Slussen Söder Söder och Söder	21
Lär och lär på Söder	22
Slussen Söder, som	23
Slussen Söder	24
Söder Söder	25

**SLUSSENS NÄRMASTE EFTERFÖLJARE.**



SÖDERS PLAN SÄKER BAKGRUND DE SAMMAN SÖDER OCH KURVOR OCH KORSNINGSFRIA PLAN (Olygga Gunnar Raab, oktober 1935)

Dagens Nyheter, 18 oktober, 1935.

Det fanns dock en del arkitekter som inte ville se detta stora betongbygge på en historisk känslig plats som Slussen. En kluven inställning hade Svenska Dagbladet som skrev på ledarsidan att ”den nya trafikmaskinen har byggts med hänsyn till den moderna motortrafikens behov. Det är trafiken som prioriterats på de estetiska intressenas bekostnad”. Det kan inte förnekas, menade SvD, att ett: ”klassiskt skönhetsvärde här har offrats för det praktiska livets behov”. Men man konstaterade samtidigt att det var positivt att ”Slussen-eländet är ur världen för långa tider framåt”.

Det finns platser i Stockholm som vi är extra stolta över. Det finns unika hus och miljöer som vi vill bevara för framtiden och som åtnjuter ett extra skydd mot förändringar. Längre betraktades Slussen som en sådan miljö. Men någonting hände under 1900-talet sista decennier. Från stadens sida avtog markant viljan att ta hand om och vårda Slussen. Ett förfall av denna unika miljö inleddes. Nu finns inte Slussen längre och bygget av den nya Slussen har påbörjats. Vi bör fundera över i vilken utsträckning vi skall tillåta rivning av andra unika hus och miljöer. Kan vi tänka oss en rivning av stadshuset, kungstornen eller slottet? Kanske är det lämpligt att fördjupa diskussionen om hur vi vårdar vår stadsmiljö?

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# Motståndets röster och stadens visioner

Av Moa Beskow

Efter att förslaget ”Nya Slussen” ställdes ut på Sjömanshemmet vid Slussen i Stockholm våren år 2010, började protester sjuda och ett motstånd tog snart form. Missnöjet som riktades mot stadens planer och Foster+Partners och Bergs vinnande arkitektförslag handlade bland annat om att de nya byggnaderna upplevdes som en brant ”vägg” av husfasader längs den södra sidan av Södermalm och att utsikterna från Slussen skulle försämrats. Under utställningsperioden blev frågan om Slussens framtid påtaglig och väckte debatt i media.

Grupper och nätverk bildades genom samtal mellan vänner och före detta kollegor och man planerade sammankomster och möten. Personliga kontakter, yrken och tidigare professioner har spelat en stor roll för gruppernas bildande och fortlevande. Den relativt höga medelåldern är en bidragande faktor. Eftersom många är pensionärer kan de lägga ner mycket tid på frågan om Slussen.

De grupper som bildades kan delas in i tre huvudkategorier. Den första arrangerar demonstrationer och aktioner vid Slussen och andra strategiska platser, delar ut flygblad och försöker få människor att på olika sätt engagera sig. Den andra arbetar genom att anordna hearings och debatter, skriva och publicera debattartiklar, lobba för politiker och sprida kritik och information mot Nya Slussen via olika nätverk. Den tredje kategorin är de som har ritat alternativa arkitektförslag på hur Slussen skulle kunna ha utformats i framtiden.

Trots platsen som symbol och som kulturhistoriskt viktig är de starkaste argumenten som har använts i kampen mot Nya Slussen kritiken mot själva trafiklösningen. Planerna i form av T-korsningar och en enda bred bro har granskats och kritiserats och man befarar att lösningen kommer att orsaka både köbildning och olyckor. Den gamla slusskonstruktionen används ofta som ett kontrasterande exempel på en utmärkt fungerande och väl planerad trafikapparat. Den demokratiska processen har också kritiserats och man menar från motståndets håll att staden genom sin kampanj försökt vilseleda medborgarna och sälja in Nya Slussen genom en förskönande estetik. Stadens kommunikationsplan har också omöjliggjort att använda stadens lokaler för att anordna till exempel debatter och att kritiskt granska projektet Nya Slussen.

De olika grupperna, individerna och nätverken har i sina olika konstellationer varit samstämda i sin kritik av det planerade förslaget för Slussen och i sin kamp om att försöka stoppa Nya Slussen. Däremot har det inte funnits någon enad kamp om vad man skulle vilja ha i stället.

Sammanfattningsvis har stadens planer och motståndets arbete existerat i parallella världar, där få konstruktiva möten ägt rum. Debatten har polariserats och dialogen till stor del uteblivit. Stadens arrangemang kring frågan har av motståndarna uppfattats som envägskommunikation. Motståndarna har vid upprepade tillfällen bjudit in politiker och tjänstemän för att tillsammans diskutera frågan, men stadens representanter har inte varit intresserade av att lyssna eller föra dialog.

Min slutsats är att politikens maktspel, prestige och sammanflätning med näringslivet har varit en faktor som stått i vägen för en öppen debatt kring själva sakfrågan. Jag tror dessutom att motståndarnas kunskaper och engagemang bättre hade kunnat tillvaratas. I stället för att tystas, förminsкас eller ignoreras, hade de kunnat betraktas som en konstruktiv kraft i planeringen av vårt gemensamma stadsrum. Det handlar kanske inte om att till varje pris få sin vilja igenom, men att åtminstone bli hörd, respekterad och att få känna sig delaktig.



Manifestation på Södermalmstorg, "Slussen 80 år". Arrangerat av föreningen Bevara Slussen den 15 oktober år 2015. Foto: Moa Beskow

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# Vi är alla på spaning efter den goda staden

Av Moa Tunström

## En bred stadsdiskussion

Vissa platser, och vissa planeringsprojekt, kommer att stå för något mer än sig själva. De blir en symbol för en stad, eller de blir en symbol för ett sätt att driva politik och planering. De blir en nod i en debattväv som ofta handlar om något mer än just den platsen i sig. Slussen har blivit en sån plats. Till den knyts berättelser, minnen, erfarenheter, drömmar om framtiden, stadsideal, tankar om vad staden ska vara för sorts plats och så vidare. När det gäller Stockholms innerstad gäller detsamma även Sergels torg. Det är inte Sergels torg som plats, som lokalt torg i en stadsdel, som vi diskuterar, utan det är det offentliga rummet i den postindustriella staden i Sverige, eller kanske till och med världen. Vad ska det vara till för, vem får vistas där? Vad symboliserar det?

Det finns en förhållandevis aktiv stadsdiskussion i Sverige idag. Att stadens utveckling kan ses som återspeglning av samhällets utveckling tycks vara uppenbart. Politiska strömningar materialiseras där i form av vägar, hus, grönområden och butiker. Den breda debatten handlar ofta om arkitektur och gestaltning, men den är också en diskussion om vilket sorts liv vi ska leva i staden. Där yttrar sig forskare, aktivister, politiker, skribenter med flera. Man diskuterar vad ”folk” vill ha, vad som är bäst för miljön, bostadssituationen eller den ekonomiska tillväxten, mest radikalt eller mest värnande om framtiden. Ska det byggas höga eller låga hus, ser vi tecken på gentrifiering idag, vad är god respektive dålig gestaltning och hur gynnas en hållbar stadsutveckling? Det här inlägget handlar om hur dagens stadsdiskussion ser ut och vad den kan ha för betydelse.

## Den urbana normen

Jane Jacobs bok *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Jacobs 1993 [1961]) tycks ständigt vara aktuell och återkommande lyftas fram som en slags handbok i bra stadsbyggande. Richard Floridas berättelse om kreativa städer har haft stort inflytande runtom i världen och Sverige (Andersson 2015). Butiker och restauranger, ja till och med hårvårdsprodukter, markeras med ”urban” idag. Ta en promenad i Stockholms innerstad och du passerar *Urban deli*, *Urban escape*, *Urban outfitters* med mera, det finns till och med ett hårschampo som heter *Urban care*. Kommunerna i Stockholmsregionen heter Solna stad, Sundbybergs stad och Lidingö stad för att markera att de är stad, eller att de hör till staden. Nya stadsdelar har byggts och döpts till Barkarbystaden, Hammarby sjöstad, Norra Djurgårdsstaden, Västra hamnen, Östra hamnen med mera. Det är på samma gång självklart och märkligt att nybyggnationen på Liljeholmskajen i Stockholm marknadsfördes med ”innerstaden växer”, liksom att Norra Djurgårdsstaden byggs för ”stadsbor som älskar naturen” (se bilder nedan). I planeringsvisioner handlar mycket om förtätning idag, liksom om att barriärer ska överbryggas och förorten göras till stad.



Liljeholmskajen under byggnation. Foto: Moa Tunström

Allt detta kan ses som uttryck för en rådande urban norm. Staden, det urbana och ”urbanism” är ideal som lyfts fram, som framgångsrecept och som en plats för framgång, hållbarhet, kreativitet och utveckling. Det är inte en självklarhet eller naturlag, utan en diskursiv konstruktion (se t ex Tunström 2009). Men stad är idag ett positivt och säljande begrepp och varor och platser markeras som urbana (= attraktiva, dynamiska, levande etc.). Några av de viktigaste – eller i alla fall några av de mest kraftfulla – bilderna av den goda, ideala staden är de som återfinns till exempel i mäklarannonser, kommunala visioner eller när byggföretag eller kommuner gör reklam för nya bostadsområden. De brukar ofta handla om en stad för flanören och konsumenten – om parker, liv och rörelse och restauranger, om att ”allt” finns nära och om mötet mellan stad och natur. Stadsbilder och stadsberättelser förhåller sig till en vidare samhällsdebatt och de är indikationer på synen på människan, på ekonomin, på naturen med mera.

## Diskursens makt

Språket är ett centralt verktyg i planeringen av staden (se t ex Tunström 2016). Genom att beteckna platser som offentliga, privata, kommersiella, parkmark etc. så föreskrivs funktioner, användning och möjliga framtider. Gränser dras upp, och fastställer maktrelationer. Vad vi lägger i begrepp som attraktiv, hållbar, urban eller förort är av stor betydelse. Kvartersstad,

blandstad och promenadstad är starka signalord (Stockholm stad 2010). De signalerar butiker i bottenvåningarna och flanerande längs med gator med trottoarer, in i och ut ur butiker, restauranger och kontor. Promenadstaden finns inte på gångvägarna i den trafikseparerade stadsdelen från miljonprogramsepoken, och blandstaden finns inte i stadsdelar med industriområden eller en etniskt blandad befolkning. Och är parken verkligen en riktig *park*, är den inte bara ett *grönområde* eller till och med en *barriär*? Är de nybyggda bostäderna en del av staden eller ”bara” ett *bostadsområde*? Begrepp som *vision* och *kulturmiljö* skapar framtidsbilder eller knyter an till historien och de platser vi talar om får mening medan de vi inte talar om osynliggörs. Och, ett viktigt tillägg: Det här ”vi-et” är naturligtvis oklart. Vilka är ”vi”? Alla deltar i skapandet av vår stad och i spaningen efter den goda staden, men de gör det inte på precis samma villkor. Vissa berättelser är starkare och mer inflytelserika än andra.



Stockholms gällande översiktsplan heter ”Promenadstaden”. Källa: [www.stockholm.se](http://www.stockholm.se)

### **Att inte säga förort**

Så staden diskuteras och debatteras idag. Men det vaktas också om den – om vad och var staden är och hur den ska beskrivas. I visioner för ny bebyggelse vaktas det ofta om idén om en ”klassisk” stadskärna eller innerstad, genom att platser görs till stad respektive icke-stad (se Tunström



2009 respektive 2010). Diskursen är ofta strukturerad genom polariseringar mellan bra och dåliga platser – som om det var möjligt att skilja mellan äkta och oäkta, sann och falsk stad. Det problematiska och motsägelsefulla skiljs från den riktiga staden, till exempel genom att lokaliseras i förorten. Diskursen om den goda staden är beroende av sin utsida, sin motbild – förorten. Mycket handlar om att inte säga förort.

Vaktandet kan också ses som en stark tilltro till att det är den traditionella staden ”vi” alla vill ha, att den berättar allas vår historia och att det är den täta blandstaden som visionerna och stadsplaneringen ska sträva mot. Det finns en stark fokusering på likhet, konsensus och det gemensamma som alltså tycks förutsätta att ”vi” alla kan enas. En avgränsad och ursprunglig stad görs till en norm, och det är viktigt hur platser kategoriseras.

Samtidigt är en integrerad och blandad stad alltså ett starkt ideal. Miljöer ska paradoxalt nog både vara mångfunktionella och tydliga, och samtidigt enkla att kategorisera som stad. Staden ska präglas av blandning och mångfald, den ska ha identitet och den ska vara integrerad. Men de betonas framför allt som fysiska normer – fysisk blandning, fysisk mångfald och så vidare. Begreppen är öppna och mångtydiga men tycks trots öppenheten ändå peka på en viss sorts integration, blandning eller mångfald. Stadsliv har i det närmaste blivit till en funktion som ska planeras in, liksom busshållplatser och lekparkar, snarare än det är ett begrepp för alla de olika sorters liv som är möjliga att leva i en stadsmiljö.



Reklamvepa i Norra Djurgårdsstaden. Foto: Moa Tunström

## **Men det finns ändå de som talar om (för)orten**

Men, trots den tydliga berättelsen om den goda staden finns det andra bilder. Det finns trots allt de som vill tala om förorten. De finns i grupper, föreningar och sociala rörelser som vill återta både ordet förort och platsen, eller platserna (se Tunström 2016). De ordnar evenemang, mötesplatser och protestlistor. De vill bevara sina grönområden eller debattera stadsutveckling med utgångspunkt i ytterstadens kvaliteter. De vill ge förortsborna röst i stadsdiskussionen. De pratar dessutom ibland om ”orten”. Förorten har blivit ett så stigmatiserat ord som placerar platserna så tydligt utanför staden. Orten sätter istället platsen i centrum, gör den till utgångspunkten istället för till det som ska göras om eller passeras på väg in till centrum.

De som talar om förorten har det gemensamt att de utmanar den starka bilden av förorten som den urbana normen är beroende av. Den som berättar att städernas utkanter, och stadsmiljöerna byggda under 1950–70-talet, är präglade av brister, problem och av en tristess som bara ny bebyggelse och nya invånare kan göra något åt. De vill utmana den och fylla den med positiva händelser, tala om att man trivs och känner hemkänsla och platsidentitet.

Flera saker som har utspelat sig i Husby i Stockholm är bra exempel på detta. Där fanns för några år sen ett förslag till ny strukturplan som innebar både förtätning, rutnätsstruktur och att man skulle ta bort trafiksepareringen. Man ville göra stad av förorten och öka tryggheten genom åtgärder i den fysiska miljön. Det ledde till protester och tidningsdebatt. ”Rör inte våra gångbroar” ropade man i Husby (Ritzén 2011) och i ett debattinlägg i Dagens Nyheter gick följande att läsa:

Vi menar att förorterna inte är någon misslyckad variant av innerstaden, utan att både miljonprogrammets bostadsområden och andra förorter har många goda egenskaper som bör respekteras och värnas. Förorternas öppna landskap, parkerna och avstånden mellan bilvägar och hus är något som många av oss förortsbor gillar. (Wirtén et al 2012)

Protesterna i Husby ifrågasatte till exempel om ökad trygghet automatiskt skulle komma genom stadsmässighet och trafikblandning, och ville lyfta fram att miljonprogramsepokens gångbroar och cykelvägar kan uppskattas av precis samma anledning – trygghet. Förslaget drogs tillbaka för att arbetas om, men av betydelse här är att vi återigen ser en slags språklig kamp kring vad den goda staden är.

## **Nya begrepp, fler berättelser**

Jag tror det behövs nya begrepp och fler alternativa berättelser om nutida stadslandskap och stadsliv. Det behövs fler kategorier än stad och icke-stad, eller stad och förort, liksom fler berättelser om stadsliv utanför stadskärnan, om mötesplatser som inte är torg och caféer och om grupper i samhället som inte tillhör majoriteten eller normen. Jag tror också att staden måste ses som ett ideologiskt begrepp och fenomen, som används för särskilda syften.

Precis som staden som plats är en plats för politik och konflikt och för aktiviteter som står

i motsättning till varandra, så är begreppet stad inte opolitiskt eller neutralt. Det är lätt att glömma bort bland visionerna och idealbilderna av den goda, framtida staden. Men stadsutveckling får inte bara bli till en fråga om trivsel och sökandet efter den enda rätta lösningen. Trivsel, gemenskap och mötesplatser är viktigt, men ännu viktigare är att betona en *rättvis tillgång till* sånt som bostäder, service, trivsel, hemkänsla och så vidare. Att skapa torg ”för alla” kan lika gärna leda till exkludering och konflikter, att vissa grupper inte känner sig välkomna eller trygga där, som till en god stad.

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## Författarpresentationer

**Abdul Khakee** is Professor Emeritus in Urban Planning and senior researcher at the Division of Urban and Regional Studies, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm. He researches the theory and practice of urban planning investigating planning evaluation, relationship between futures studies and strategic planning, planning ethics and public participation. He has been awarded the President's Medal by the Operation Research Society (UK) and is an honorary member of the Center of Urban & Regional Studies, Örebro University and of Umeå Center of Evaluation Research, Umeå University.

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**Anders Sjöbrandt** är doktorand i historia vid Historiska institutionen, Stockholms universitet och lärare i historiedidaktik på HSD, Stockholms universitet. Han kommande avhandling berör förändringsprocessen i Stockholm under 1950- och 60-talen. Hans undersökning analyserar värderingar, drivkrafter, visioner, retorik och motretorik bakom den stora cityregleringen och ringar in de samhälleliga aktörernas tanke- och föreställningsvärldar likväl som opinionsbildningen.

**Moa Beskow** har en masterexamen i etnologi från Stockholms universitet och arbetar på Stockholms läns museum med frågor som rör människans förhållande till kulturmiljö och stadsbyggnad sett ur historiska, samtida och framtida perspektiv. Hon har på uppdrag av Stockholmia dokumenterat motståndet mot Nya Slussen, ett arbete som pågick i huvudsak mellan år 2014 och 2015.

**Moa Tunström**, FD i kulturgeografi, är verksam vid Nordregio har bland annat forskat om konstruktioner av ideal och problem i svensk stadsbyggnadsdiskussion. Hon är kulturgeograf inriktad på stadsplanering och sociala aspekter av hållbarhet, och hon är intresserad av förorten (som vision, plats och begrepp) liksom av planeringsdiskurser och betydelsen av berättelser i stadsbyggandet.

Vid det andra seminariet deltog också **Göran Cars**, professor vid institutionen för samhällsplanering och miljö på KTH. Han har tyvärr inte haft möjlighet att bidra med en text till denna publikation. Cars föredrag behandlade konsten att genomföra ett stort stadsbyggnadsprojekt. Alla stadsbyggnadsprojekt har vinnare och förlorare. Samtidigt som ett nytt bostadsprojekt kan ses som angeläget av de flesta så finns det motståndare. ”Min utsikt förstörs”, ”var ska barnen leka” eller ”vad händer med skalbaggarna” är vanliga invändningar. Kommunerna måste bli bättre på att systematiskt fånga in olika röster. Ett politiskt ledarskap som orkar och vågar driva utvecklingsfrågor är nödvändigt. Sedan ett par år är Cars engagerad i Kiruna stadsflytt.