2007 Carlsberg Competition, Copenhagen

Carlsberg Breweries made a competition for new plans for the area of their original location close to the centre of Copenhagen. The developers had announced that they would rather have something like Christiania, the free town in Copenhagen - than a traditional masterplan.

Supertanker decided to design a processual and open-ended project with a central role for the informal urban movements and "truffle pigs" of Copenhagen. We argued that they would be part of an "food chain of urbanity" and called our proposal a "gameplay" rather than a plan.

On The Ground

This is the most important and sensitive act in order to gain "street credibility". Engaging the neighbours, citizens, users of the city, mapping social capital, stakeholders etc., setting up a local visible base for the Carlsberg Stewardship: a small office and a space for exhibitions, public meetings, workshops etc. This could well be connected to some other public activity like gardens, cafés . A Virtual hub is set up. – a website for active citizens with project ideas and a forum for reporting problems and solving conflicts.

After being local it is time to put the local agenda into a wider context through festivals, large public meetings and collaboration with local and international educational institutions (social sciences, geography, architecture etc.) to get some fresh and innovative input and use this in local workshops and public meetings.

Through the many diverse activities a local agenda emerges setting the future goals and some more concrete and immediate actions – triggers - related to areas or "atmospheres". These are finally exhibited and discussed to form a charter for the future of Carlsberg. The stewardship is given a democratic base and an agenda for their future work.

The process and uncertainty

Carlsberg has seen some of the most significant results when it comes to dealing with processes of uncertainty. Supporting art and science Carlsberg has been the home for more than 30 years to Niels Bohr, one of the creators of quantum mechanics. The core of this complicated theory is that of uncertainty and how science deals with that. The famous dialogue between Einstein and Bohr reflected this challenge: "God does not play dice," Einstein said and on one occasion Bohr answered, "Einstein, stop telling God what to do."

The later meeting between Bohr and Heisenberg (on Carlsberg) showed how real this uncertainty had become in the world of nuclear physics: the creation of the nuclear bomb. By allowing uncertainty into the process of the city it is possibly to unleash a much less harmful urban energy where the open-ended process allows for the users of the city to be part of a creative "chain reaction" (which is not defined by a deterministic masterplan).

The city soul and atmospheres

The soul of a city is a result of the ongoing process of urbanity where a multitude of people and their lifeforms interact. Over time different cities develop a city soul, which is made up of a whole range of smaller city souls in different neighbourhoods/areas contributing to (or actually undermining) the overall city soul. One neighbourhood has a hectic and anarchistic atmosphere whereas other neighbourhoods are calm and introvert.

The food chain of urbanity
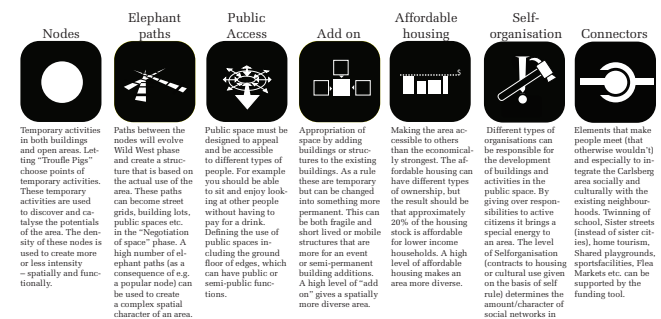
To harness the full potential of the city it is necessary to make the citizens the "co creators". Here the challenge is to be creative in the way of engaging especially those groups that usually are not part of such a process. Minorities, the informal cultural stakeholders, children, elderly etc. are usually the weakest but also the most important stakeholders because they form the first part of an urban food chain.

This food chain is the guarantee for a sustainable and attractive development of a new part of town. These groups use and appropriate space in ways that challenge the established and self evident ways we think and design urban space. The way to involve everybody therefore has to reflect the diversity of the city and first of all to allow this process to take time.
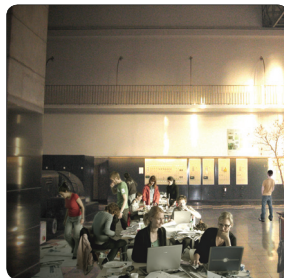
The gameplay and Stewardship

The term Stewardship is mostly used in dealing with nature: the logging and fishing industry has set up stewardship councils to create and maintain a sustainable set of standards to avoid e.g. over fishing or cutting down rainforest. Urbanity and public life can also be seen as an organic source of creativity, which can be destroyed by short-term thinking. Urban stewardship is about proactive and long term thinking which also acknowledge the fact that it is not about managing, but about nurturing the process.

Local
Dense

Traditional conflict creating elements: shadow, noise, smell etc. Areas can be pointed out as high density areas allowing high buildings or high plot ratio, unusual mix of activities, a dynamic nightlife, shops open all night long etc. High density creates an urban synergy typical of inner city areas.

knowledge

As an initial activity the stewardship sits down and talk to local people. Such interviews are both a show of respect to the local area and to gain an insight in local networks (social capital) potentials, problems etc. The use of new media like Internet and especially mobile phones is a way to connect to local kids and young people through schools, street actions etc.

Events

Large concerts or a new "Vesterbro Festival" for electronic music, role playing games with participants from the whole world and local kids, (maybe using the Carlsberg horses in a week of "Wild West" fantasy). Events should both be spectacular and diverse so citizens from the larger Copenhagen area have an occasion to come and experience an otherwise closed area.

Funding

A fund Carlsberg sets up to finance crucial but non-profit activities. This fund will be a percentage of the expected budget for the development of the area. The financing can both be given as "micro loans", direct financing or indirect financing like cheap rent. A high level of funding will make an area more accessible for e.g. start up businesses and less established/formal activities.

Triggers

Events and Activities arranged by the Stewardship meant to adjust the metabolism of the area. High metabolism especially by using short term rents gives a less formal area attracting more experimental activities – artists, improvised bars etc. Long term rents attracts more formal – conventional investors.

Leasing periods

The length of contracts for temporary activities can be used to adjust the metabolism of the area. In the beginning it can be used for involving neighbouring areas and creation of ideas for present needs. Later in the process the different temporary activities are used as a basis for discussing the future use of land. A high number of negotiations give a more unpredictable and creative process.

Negotioantions

Different types of dialogue that ensures the creation of new ideas and solving of conflicts. In the beginning it can be used for involving neighbouring areas and creation of ideas for present needs. Later in the process the different temporary activities are used as a basis for discussing the future use of land. A high number of negotiations give a more unpredictable and creative process.

Nodes

Temporary activities in both buildings and open areas. Letting "Truffle Pigs" choose points of temporary activities. These temporary activities are used to discover and catalyse the potentials of the area. The density of these nodes is used to create more or less intensity – spatially and functionally.

Elephant paths

Paths between the nodes will evolve. Wild West phase and create a structure that is based on the actual use of the area. These paths can become street grids, building lots, public spaces etc. in the "Negotiation of space" phase. A high number of elephant paths (as a consequence of e.g. a popular node) can be used to create a complex spatial character of an area.

Public Access

Public space must be designed to appeal and be accessible to different types of people. For example you should be able to sit and enjoy looking at other people without having to pay for a drink. Defining the use of public spaces including the ground floor of edges, which can have public or semi-public functions.

Add on

Appropriation of space by adding buildings or structures to the existing buildings. As a rule you should be able to sit and enjoy looking at other people but can be changed into something more permanent. This can be both fragile and short lived or mobile structures that are more for an event or semi-permanent building additions. A high level of "add on" gives a spatially more diverse area.

Affordable housing

Making the area accessible to others than the economically strongest. The affordable housing can have different types of ownership, but the result should be that approximately 20% of the housing stock is affordable for lower income households. A high level of affordable housing makes an area more diverse.

Self-organisation

Different types of organisations can be responsible for the development of buildings and activities in the public space. By giving over responsibilities to active citizens it brings a special energy to an area. The level of Selforganisation (contracts to housing or cultural use given on the basis of self rule) determines the amount/character of social networks in an area.

Connectors

Elements that make people meet (that otherwise wouldn't) and especially to integrate the Carlsberg area socially and culturally with the existing neighbourhoods. Twinning of school, Sister streets (instead of sister cities), home tourism. Shared playgrounds, sportsfacilities, Flea Markets etc. can be supported by the funding tool.

Phase 01:

On The Ground

This is the most important and sensitive act in order to gain "street credibility". Engaging the neighbours, citizens, users of the city, mapping social capital, stakeholders etc., setting up a local visible base for the Carlsberg Stewardship: a small office and a space for exhibitions, public meetings, workshops etc. This could well be connected to some other public activity like gardens, cafés . A Virtual hub is set up. – a website for active citizens with project ideas and a forum for reporting problems and solving conflicts.

After being local it is time to put the local agenda into a wider context through festivals, large public meetings and collaboration with local and international educational institutions (social sciences, geography, architecture etc.) to get some fresh and innovative input and use this in local workshops and public meetings.

Through the many diverse activities a local agenda emerges setting the future goals and some more concrete and immediate actions – triggers - related to areas or "atmospheres". These are finally exhibited and discussed to form a charter for the future of Carlsberg. The stewardship is given a democratic base and an agenda for their future work.

Phase 02:

Wild West

Making the Carlsberg area known to a larger public opening up the area by making events and starting triggers. After a festival an "Temporary urban activities" to inspire the use of temporary activities in Carlsberg it is time to let the "Truffle Pigs" loose. Some attractive buildings like the powerhouse will have more formal "project competitions" where a set of conditions are to be met and other areas or buildings are open to who are first (in a "land run" as we know it from the Wild West)

The temporary activities will be like the yeast in the fermentation process that transform the raw materials into the various types of beers and discover the potential of the Carlsberg. Which activities are attracting people and where people like to hang out (in the sun) or where people prefer to move through the area creating nodes and 'elephant paths'. Low cost activities the temporary activities will use existing structures or add cheap temporary structures. In this way the area will be challenged not only functionally but also spatially.

Like amusement parks invite their neighbours, so does the Carlsberg events. All Events in the Wild West phase has free admittance for neighbours

Phase 03:

Negotiation of space

The results of temporary activities will gradually form the base for discussions about the use of space. What activities functions well? Where do what function the best? Where to place public functions? How about public spaces? The evaluations will be done in different democratic arenas in order to maximise the number of people taking part.

Atmospheres and tools are revised according to the results of the evaluations. Rules are being more concrete and open to allow both openness and a level of control in the city building process. Eghant paths, nodes and 'add ons' are used to structure the street grid and building plots. The result is a number of Atmospheres each with a gameplay with a gameplan and tools.

Developers and their architects are given an initial chance to interpret the gameplay. These tests show how will the temporary activities are integrated, how local agendas are respected and how the area could look like in the future. The test results are exhibited and used for a round of public discussions adjusting the gameplay.

Friendly and intimate where the active citizens can make their dream about a home come true. People are asked to form building societies that live up to a set of rules. These rules can be social – cheap rents, or environmental - low resource consumption. The gardens or pocket parks are the local secret. Gameplay will be finished in 2014.

CBD Dynamic and unpredictable. A place that attracts international high class businesses offering a new driven town feeling where conflicts arise between activities, but high class are mixed with less formal and dynamic street life. Gameplay will be finished in 2011.

Vibrant and diverse. The glass house structure combines a high tech touch to the shopping mall structure. The dynamic of the trading place—the basic meeting place of urbanity. In this way it is the driver in the bazar atmosphere. Gameplay will be finished in 2010.

ART Relaxed and lively. Next to the new cultural institutions – performing and visual arts – one of the existing buildings is turned into a hot bed for the creative industries. Surrounding a sunny and lively public space schools, libraries and similar institutions make it an everyday meeting place for the area. Gameplay will be finished in 2012.

villa Cool and stylish combined with a large selection of leisure activities – especially sports. The urban setting with shopping bazaar, schools and culture makes it convenient for the busy family. The leisure activities becomes the local melting pot drawing especially kids from all of the neighbouring areas. Gameplay will be finished in 2008.