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DOI
10.17418/B.2016.9789491937279.5

The Appropriated City
Citizens taking control?

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Spatial Planning in a Complex Unpredictable World of Change

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The Appropriated City

Citizens taking control?

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INTRODUCTION

>> In 2008, a forgotten but iconic old building in the Katendrecht neighborhood of Rotterdam came to serve as the workplace for five social and cultural entrepreneurs, who were working on a photography project about residents in the area. During that time, the building proved to be a welcoming place for visitors and small events, and gradually, more and more activities and initiatives, plugged into what become known as Kaap Belvédère, attracted to the building, the location, its amenities and atmosphere. Four years later, Kaap Belvédère names itself the 'first house of intangible heritage in the Netherlands' and is widely appreciated by its neighbors, visitors from all over the world, its volunteers and the professionals involved. Kaap Belvédère was never planned like this, but looking back, it seems a very logical use of a building on a place and in a neighborhood like this. (Malherbe 2012). The same can be said for the In-Between Garden (TussenTuin) in Rotterdam West. The In-Between Garden, a temporary garden on a demolition site in the middle of a stony neighborhood of Rotterdam, the Old West, is an example of public space made by residents. What started out as a two-year temporary intervention in the area now has a prolonged effect. Through organizing the garden, residents built up networks among each other, with professionals, civil servants, politicians, artists, designers and researchers. It has used the social, cultural and organizational resources available in the neighborhood to make this possible. But what is more, it has reinforced the strength and possibilities of these resources by turning them into action, creating an active energy in the neighborhood, and making people - both professionals and residents – realize what can be accomplished if people put their shoulders behind something. (Van der Zwaard 2012). Singeldingen (Canal-Things) is an initiative that came from three local residents who created a meeting space on an unused patch of green along the Heemraadsingel, in the neighborhood of Delfshaven, Rotterdam. They started with organizing activities several years ago, and gradually Singeldingen became an accepted and appreciated element within the neighborhood. It started as a temporary kiosk, but this summer, a small grey box popped up along the road next to the canal. It contained electricity connection put there especially for Singeldingen. The initiators never started out thinking they would need official water and electricity connections, but for those who know about it, it felt very logical. It made sense (Hillen 2012).

Looking back, one gets the feeling that all three initiatives were a very logical thing to occur at that place and at that time. But things only look logical after the fact; after something has turned into a fact. This particular feature is inherent in the urban initiatives we explore in this chapter, but actually it is an inherent part of all urban interventions, regardless where or from whom the intervention is originating. Once things are realized they look logical; their stories add up. But everyone who has ever been involved in taking a civic

initiative – whether it is opposing a certain policy or plan (Verhoeven 2009), participating in a neighborhood regeneration process (Specht 2012) or creating a new public space – knows a lot of work is required. This work, the practice of realizing a civic initiative, is what interest us here. Inspired by actor-network theory (and especially the work of Bruno Latour, Annemarie Mol and John Law), we show that understanding these initiatives as interventions in a complex urban environment, requires us to take a careful look at the practice of these initiatives. Only by following how they come to be realized, how they are enacted, how they are translated from a mere intervention towards a new urban assemblage, will we start to appreciate the meaning of such interferences. In this chapter, we state that civic initiatives for interventions in the urban fabric can be regarded as a new, emerging, planning practice. Or to put it even more strongly: as rehearsal spaces for a new theory of planning. First, we elaborate why our current spatial planning and urban policy profession is in great need for a theoretical framing of civic initiatives, a necessity caused by the current drift of governmental withdrawal, stagnant markets and retrenchments, together with the inability of our current profession to look beyond its own disciplining planning routines. Second, we look in detail how our three initiatives emerged to the point they got accepted, what ruptures they induced in their environments and what encounters they underwent with the routines in spatial urban policy. From there on, in the third part of this chapter, we theorize further on first signs that we see of a new emerging practice that puts civic initiatives in the lead of urban regeneration, and we try to provide some preliminary ideas of what such a new planning practice might look like. Not only do we hope to offer fresh insights with regard to the academic discussion within planning, but also we hope to open up new avenues for planning practice.

CITIZENS AS URBAN INTERVENTIONISTS

Relational citizenship and planning

Let us start by stating that we regard spatial planning as an act of interference in space through physical interventions. As such, planning is not a purely professional practice, in the sense of professionals working on the realization and implementation of prefixed plans in a world that is seen as predictable and calculable. Neither is planning as such a practice that foremost concerns public policy-making, in which professional planners take a lead in shaping people's attention and understanding of situations. (Hillier 2002: 42). Instead, a vision that takes planning as an act of interference in space through physical interventions, opens up the possibility of considering all actors that take a pro-active role in such physical interventions as spatial planners, regardless whether these are professionals or not, public, business or civic or a mix of actors. (cf. Kreukels 1984, Boelens 2009 2010, Boonstra and Boelens 2011). In

this chapter, we will try to argue that these visions on planning are not opposed, especially not when one does not take the plan, neither the actors, but the physical intervention itself as the leading matter of concern.
This view on planning presupposes a relational conception of space, citizenship and planning, that sees spaces and places as produced through practices, relations and encounters between various emerging actor-networks that intersect. (Thrift 1999, Amin 2002, Murdoch 2006). As such, space and action form each other, both always under construction, always in process, the crossing of multiple trajectories making change 'taking place'. (Massey 2005). Citizens who aim at physical interventions in the urban fabric are just one of the many emerging, self-organizing actor-networks crossing scales and themes and places. Citizens' 'citizenship' is not something absolute (nor is their involvement in shaping space self-evident), but rather something that is shaped through activities, interactions and experiences of people and organizations. Networks of citizens, governmental and other actors and factors shape their interactions so that they result in productive forms of action around shared matters of concern (Wagenaar and Specht 2010, Specht 2012); in the cases of this chapter, foremost spatial matters of concern.
The need for such a view on planning, and a theoretical framing of spatial civic interventions becomes evident, when we take a closer look at two current and interrelated changes that are taking place within the domain of urban spatial policy. The first change concerns a major shift within the set of stakeholders involved in spatial urban policy these days. The second change concerns the current debate among planning professionals on planning frameworks that are able to deal with this new reality.

Shifts in urban policy

For several decades, Dutch spatial urban policy was set out along two lines: urban renewal on the one hand, dealing with existing and deteriorated neighborhoods, and on the other hand compact city policy, dealing with urban extensions and transformation of urban wastelands. Both lines were strongly governmental-led, delivering large scale urban transformation projects in which major public-private stakeholders like national government, municipalities and their respective planning and housing departments, housing corporations and large scale commercial developers were responsible for vision, planning and financing. (Schuiling 2007, Van Delden 2010). Recently however, this world has changed dramatically. The production of new housing stock in the Netherlands has dropped significantly, towards a far and unprecedented minimum since the 1970s. Urban restructuring is falling back, municipalities are left with unutilized plots of land, housing corporations take a back seat. Even demolition numbers have decreased. Many large scale urban transformation plans are put on hold, developers are avoiding risks, housing corporations are refocusing on their core tasks, local municipalities are out of money and retrench. (Manshanden et al. 2012, Joolingen et al. 2009). Many argue that this is because of the drop

of the financial markets, but it would be unjust to solely blame the financial crisis. When the private market and building sector first started collapsing and withdrawing from urban transformations in 2009, a trend of governmental withdrawal in both urban renewal and compact city policy had already been unfolding for years.
Governmental involvement in both urban renewal and urban transformations has shown its ups and downs over these decades. Urban renewal came under the attention of national government in the 1960s, transforming a once local practice of small scale interventions to improve individual buildings, into a practice of large scale demolition and substitution of the existing housing stock. During the course of the 1990s, the discussions concerning urban renewal broadened to policy domains such as social well-being and economic development, followed by a narrowing (during the 2000s) towards a small selection of most deteriorated neighborhoods. Incentives for urban renewal were given by national government through extensive funding, and projects and programs were executed in collaboration with local governments and housing corporations. The role of the residents in urban renewal was originally strong in the 1970s but decreased ever since. It was put back on the agenda during the 2000s, but most projects remained governmentally financed and institutionally driven, and initiatives from residents themselves until recently remained only a marginal issue of concern. (Schuiling 2007, Wallagh 2006). Over recent years, the financial means set out by national government for urban renewal have decreased significantly, and since nor the municipalities nor the housing corporations currently have the financial means to fill in this gap, it has become very doubtful whether and in what form urban renewal schemes will run in the near future.

The other strand of spatial urban policy, compact city policy, started in the 1980s, initiated by the four major cities and taken forward by national government with the aim to concentrate urbanization near existing urban centers and on inner-urban locations such as deprived former industrial areas. (Boelens and Wierenga 2010). It was organized as a market based approach with a large role for developers and designers, but with major incentives from national government through location-based subsidies for housing in areas chosen in deliberation between national and local governments. (Van Delden 2010). In 2010, in the midst of the financial crisis, this policy was declared as more or less finished, leaving only the most complex, inner city sites untouched. (Boeijenga 2010, Van der Krabben 2010, De Zeeuw 2010). Also with regard to these locations, it is very uncertain what actors will be willing to take forward these transformations.

Meanwhile, national government is setting out a clear line of reasoning with regard to urban policy. More and more it should become the domain of local government, citizens and entrepreneurs, as pronounced by sequential

national government coalition agreements (Min AZ 2007 2010), national spatial policy documents (Min VROM 2007, Min I&M 2011, Min BZK 2011) and studies by government advisory bodies (VROMRaad 2004, WRR 2005 2010 2012). Therefore, they aim at creating more opportunities, choice, control and responsibility among citizens, businesses and social institutions for urban spatial development. The responsibility for quality of the living environment lies with residents, local actors and municipalities, the ministry argues, and measures are suggested to encourage home ownership, more involvement in the neighborhood, more private commissions and an exploration for possible new funding models. (Min I&M 2011). In the Vision on Infrastructure and Spatial Development, it is even put more strongly in the proclamation that national government will no longer set out any spatial policies, except for some policy guidelines for assessing locations on their sustainability, and minor involvement of the urbanization of Amsterdam and Rotterdam (as the development of these 'mainports' is considered to be of national importance). Remaining issues on spatial urban policy are considered to be foremost a concern for local governments, citizens and local stakeholders such as entrepreneurs (MinI&M 2011).

Looking for new planning practices

The current shift in content of and stakeholders involved in spatial urban policy is thus both a result of the financial crisis and a decrease of financial means, and of an evolving trend of (national) governmental withdrawal due to shifts in political thought. This combination makes clear that this is not a question of simply waiting until the markets will pull on again, but that a fundamental change is occurring. That this change is acknowledged within the professional domain of urban spatial policy, and that there is a demand for new professional approaches that are able to deal with these changes, is illustrated by the amount of brainstorming sessions and debates that are currently organized among professionals working at developing companies, municipalities or housing corporations. Among the elements that are mentioned in such brainstorm session are: variable coalitions around specific propositions, combined with related forms of financing (Joolingen et al. 2009, Heijkers et al. 2012); plans that are more open to specific situations, localities and more fit with local demands, making productive use of difference (SKG 2012, Heijkers et al. 2012); plans focused on qualitative environment, and quality incentives in the existing urban areas, without subsidies and meeting demands (De Zeeuw 2010, Joolingen et al. 2009); plans for smaller units, that need smaller investment and bring smaller revenues (Joolingen et al. 2009); making more creative use of existing planning instruments, more flexible and demand-oriented, and more flexible instruments too (SKG 2012, Heijkers et al. 2012); focus on maintenance or 'maintenance for improvement', and governance with a focus on supporting and facilitating initiatives (SKG 2012, Heijkers et al. 2012).

These suggestions for new approaches of urban spatial policy, do however not yet address the real shift in stakeholders yet. Although governmental-led planning will presumably not belong to the past, in current times of public retrenchment and withdrawal, a stagnant market and the network and information society we live in, a more active role is expected from citizens. This is not just a matter of relocating urban policy from public to civic actors, but asks for a whole new conceptualization of spatial urban policy. Two publications on this matter are worth mentioning in more detail, as they undergo quite some popularity among Dutch policy makers at this moment: 'The Energetic Society' by Maarten Hajer (2011) and 'The Spontaneous City' by Urhahn Urban Design (2010). In 'The Energetic Society' Hajer describes an emerging society in which citizens and businesses seek to interact with each other and create a chain of creative competition, aimed at improving the quality of existing towns, rather than at a quantitative building task. A world of bottom-up initiatives, that take their direct environment as a starting point. In order to create links between citizens, and urban and regional planning, Hajer argues in favor of a lighter form of planning, with more room for citizen initiatives. Besides a radical incrementalism, organized around specific topics, the government is not in the lead, but should guarantee collective decision making, represent the public interest, and provide open data and the accessibility of information. However, he argues further, a governmental withdrawal without any strategic purpose can as well result in decline of spatial quality. Therefore, according to Hajer, governments need to set out frameworks and visions for future developments. Within these frameworks space can be given to individuals and businesses to shape and implement their ideas. (Hajer 2011). In 'The Spontaneous City', Gert Urhahn and his co-authors also argue in favor of an urban spatial policy in cooperation with residents and businesses; a flexible urban development that is built upon civic initiatives, on never ending change, growth and adaptation. In his view, professionals in urban planning work closely with all sorts of initiators and aim to build a bridge between individual needs and common interests, ideas from end users, their creative power and investments. Like Hajer, Urhahn argues that this means that urban designers should engage in shaping the spatial conditions and frames in which freedom for initiatives can be found. (Urhahn Urban Design 2010).

Moving beyond frameworks

Although these two works are largely shaping the current debate on a new approach to planning in the Netherlands, and valuable as they are in providing suggestions, inspiration and insights for planning practitioners, they do not entirely cover the challenge. Urhahn and Hajer see the same dynamics as we do, but remain within the traditional set up of an inclusionary design (Urhahn) or a governmental-led (Hajer) approach. To stimulate and facilitate civic initiatives they both suggest the development of a new kind of planning or governmental framework to fit initiatives in. And although that sounds nice and supportive,

it still seems to put the framework first. The question to ask then is what exactly the difference is between a framework setting out the contours of what is possible and allowed, and a prescriptive plan as we know from traditional planning practice? What exactly does 'freedom and space for initiatives' (Urhahn Urban Design 2010: 18, Hajer 2011: 38) mean when the contours in which this freedom can occur are defined beforehand? Notwithstanding that a (legal) framework is one of the elements that help initiatives to actualize or materialize, this is in our view definitely not the only or most important way of approaching the emerging practice of civic initiatives. Frameworks are as inclusive and pre-fixed as for instance communicative planning approaches are, as they can still differentiate between initiatives that fit the envisioned content, the selected area, and the procedures set out beforehand. When frameworks are set beforehand, the focus is still on a pre-fixed organized structure. Hajer pleads for more incremental experimentation, but does not yet define any consequences such an approach would have for planning practice, and his argumentation remains governmental.

Thus the tools and approaches they propose do not yet fundamentally change or challenge the behaviors in spatial planning; government and their frameworks are still in a dominant position. And things have change, we would argue, because under the radar a host of initiatives is popping up and emerging, appropriating the urban environment. What for a long time appeared to be fringe elements mere enlivening or even distracting from the actual development of the urban environment, are starting to appear as valuable strategies for urban development on their own. The potential of these newly emerging practices is not clear from the surface, and perhaps it is a bit too radical to regard small, local initiatives as the new bearer of urban development, but we do think that a new way of valuating them is necessary to truly benefit from their potential. In order to do this, we argue it is necessary to change our approach of these initiatives and no longer start from the framework or government, and see how these initiatives could be fitted in, but take these initiatives as valuable objects of learning themselves and see what kind of practices on a larger scale can be distilled from them. Or stated otherwise, we propose to see these initiatives as rehearsal spaces for a future planning practice, something we will come back to in more detail in the last paragraph.

What makes this an extra challenge, is that an approach that puts civic initiatives in the lead, does not fit easily with our ingrained ways of thinking and doing things in urban development. When various actor assemble around specific interventions of initiatives, this is not created by an institutionalized context that is deliberately created by a steering government by means of a framework, but instead is created by a specific context that crosses right through institutional frames, policy lines and the domains of professional actors. (Verhoeven 2009). Civic initiatives are relational, and they behave as self-organization, in the sense that they emerge through interactions between space and people, from unstructured beginnings with the aim of creating new

order on top of already existing situations. (cf. Prigogine and Stengers 1984). In the context of urban development, civic initiatives emerge autonomously from planning procedures, aimed at physical interferences more or less out of self-interest. (Boonstra and Boelens 2011). What our current spatial planning practice is in great need for, because of the above described shifts in stakeholders and the inability to think beyond frameworks, is a way of understanding what planning practice would look like when interventions are leading and the rest is focused on flowing along these interventions? It is not our aim to re-appropriate such initiatives into governmental frameworks. Instead, we think that not the framework, but the intervention itself should be regarded as leading.

THREE CIVIC INTERVENTIONS IN ROTTERDAM

>> To see what such an understanding of this idea of planning as an act of interference and local initiatives might bring, we closely follow the emergence and development of the three initiatives we briefly introduced in our introduction: Singeldingen, In-Between Garden and Kaap Belvédère. We have selected these cases because they were all collectively organized by citizens, not initiated by governmental authorities or any other professional planning institutions, and as they aim at physical interventions in the urban environment, they fit the definition of civic-led self-organization in urban development. Therefore, they provide insight in what that lies beyond the disciplining frameworks provided by the above mentioned 'new planning approaches'.
We describe how these civic initiatives developed using the concept of translation, a process of making connections between things that are not consistent per se, but that gain consistency along the way, translating themselves into something that is accepted and seen as logical and 'in place'. (Latour 1999). Using the concept of translation makes it possible to trace how an initial idea of interfering in the urban environment has moved through self-organization towards the actual materiality of a physical intervention. The process of translation consists of several phases in which the identity of the actors and the network, possibilities of interaction and movement are explored, negotiated and delineated (Callon 1986: 203).

In spatial planning, translation refers both to the collection of resources needed for the realization of a spatial intervention (Boelens 2009), as to the constant maintenance of the homogeneity and coherence within existing spatial assemblages. (Thrift 1996, Hillier 2007). Spatial planning itself can be seen as a process of network-building, in which entities of various kinds are assembled in ways that allow the network to undertake certain functions. It is a process in which actors with a certain interest and willingness to invest in

their local environment out of more or less self-interest, engage in organizing and networking meaningful spatial connections, and the means, such as land, finances, buildings, permits etc., to achieve their goals. (Boelens 2009 2010). As we argued in the previous paragraph, we see a practice emerging in which this process of translation comes less and less from professional actors that traditionally already own a significant set of means. Non-professional or civic actors do not traditionally 'possess' such means, and thus much more work is required in the organization of the network.
Translation can occur both as a collateral incident as two or more actors unintentionally encounter, for instance in space. (Law 2009a). But translation can also be regarded as a pro-active and performative process of network building, of creating links between actors and factors that were not linked before. (Law 2009b). This pro-active understanding does not just tell the stories of how things have turned out this way and how they work, but also on how things have been made better, according to the leading actors in the initiative. What is better, however, is not a pre-given truth or any fixed optimum, but is something that is normative, situated, contextual and thus constructed as entity within the network. What counts as 'better' is situated in a practice, and interferences for the better aim at shifting the object of treatment, in order to counter deviances that are felt or considered as incommodious to the translation of the network. What is effective always depends on the particular circumstances, defined by leading, intervening actors. (Law 2009b). Even though a eventual physical intervention might not have been entirely envisioned beforehand along a prefixed plan (as some collateral translation might occur as well), we do consider the actors involved in the development of the initiative as pro-active and normative interventionists, making hard work in assembling the necessary passage points, initially around the need for an interference, and later around the necessity of a specific interference, knotting actors and places together and producing new causalities along the way.

We have reserached our initiatives on three levels, that are not necessarily sequential or linear, but rather relate to the deepness of the embedding an initiative has in its surroundings. The first level is that of problematization and intervention, the first interference 'for the better'. The second that of interessement and enrollment in which the network is further strengthened, expanded and made thicker. The third level is that of mobilization and more or less stable assemblages in which the main focus is on the maintenance of the existing network. These steps, or moments that are presented as phases a network moves through, are however in practice not at all so sequential, and rather overlap. Translation therefore is not a linear process towards optimization, but rather different types of behavior that should all be simultaneously present within a process in order to succeed – and be a success for all actors involved.

Interferences 'for the better'

With this emphasize on interference in the urban environment through physical interventions, the urban environment is no longer a "single passive object in the middle, waiting to be seen from the point of view of seemingly endless series of perspectives. Instead objects come into being – and disappear – with the practices in which they are manipulated." (Mol 2002: 5). Or in our words: the urban environment does not remain untouched. As a start, a problem is delineated concerning a physicality, in our case the urban environment, as an important object. This problematization is often presented as a first move. The leading or initiating actor starts with a disassociation from the existing situation, making others (and one selves) see there is a problem that needs to be addressed by new ways of doing. The actor renders him- or herself indispensable in finding this new way of doing, and defines obligatory passage points that need to be taken into consideration in finding new kinds of behavior (Callon 1986). But whatever is said about this problem is only talk, and therefore the delineation of the problem needs to be followed quickly by foregrounding practicalities, materialities, the pro-active creation of events that not only aim at changing the understanding of the physicality, but also aim at changing the physicality itself. (Mol 2002: 12). What then matters is how the necessary coordination for this 'interference' can be made visible and how it is established. (Mol 2002: 55). Planning as interfering to make a difference, to re-do space. (Metzger 2011).

This can be illustrated nicely if we look at the start of Singeldingen. The first move towards Singeldingen was centered around the concern that the potentiality of the Heemraadpark was not fully deployed. Before the start of Singeldingen, the Heemraadpark was occupied by a shrewd paved playground bounded by high fences and vandal-proof seating, and the large grassed areas were mostly used as a disposal area for dogs. Three local residents shared the concern for the park, and also saw some potential. One resident recognized the strategic location of the park as a place for people to meet. The other wanted to be able to play in the park, and not just within the boundaries of the paved playground. She reasoned that with a couple of simple measures – such as the provision of a toilet and the possibility to get something to eat and drink – it would be possible for people to stay longer, and to do other things in the park as well. The third resident wanted to start a cafe and at the same time, to bring back some of the old character of the nineteenth century park along the canal. Three residents saw potential where others saw problems, or at best nothing of particular worth. To make others see the potential of these different, but shared dreams as well, and to make others see that something else, something better was possible in the park, the three residents did not only use words. They used a physical intervention. During what afterwards became the first season of Singeldingen in 2008, they placed a spring-roll cart converted into a kiosk in the park. Over a period of six weeks, Singeldingen tried various locations

and organized different activities in the park, for adults and children from the neighborhood. With this appropriation of space they were able to showcase the potentiality of the park, as well as their ability to translate this potentiality into action by activating and weaving together a local network. By literally occupying the spot, they turned this particular space into a valuable place. It is not so much that they discovered the worth of the place, but by weaving a network at this spot, it became valuable again, and over four years' time, a vibrant public meeting place developed. This makes Singeldingen the most clear example of our three cases where citizens interfere in the urban fabric and public space through a physical intervention from outside the planning machine.

In the other two cases there were closer links with professional actors (two housing corporations and the municipality) from the start, although the professional actors never imagined, nor anticipated the outcome of the initiative. In the case of The In-Between Garden the project came out of an open call of the housing association to do something with an empty plot of land. The houses which had stood there had been demolished, but the start of the development of a collective-private housing project on the spot was delayed for another two years. The housing corporation considered it for the better if there would be some in-between use on the plot. This first call however, drew out only five people, of which two were afraid of what might happen on the plot and just wanted fences, one person did not want anything and two people said they considered something with green and music for the better. Nothing much happened, until the latter two people published a small article about this idea in the neighborhood newspaper and a local landscape-architect came forward. Within weeks a plan was drawn and a group of six initiators formed itself. Building on the qualities and the social and cultural capital of the people in this group, as well as the sympathetic attitude of the local politicians and professionals towards planting greenery, they were able to convert this empty space into a high-quality green and music space. Where others saw a potential nuisance to the neighborhood, they saw the potential to create a much needed green public space, and intervened accordingly.
Kaap Belvédère, finally, was 'discovered' while two people were working on an art project concerning active citizen communities in the Southern part of Rotterdam, as part of a regeneration project for this part of the city, led by the municipality and the different housing corporations. The building was closed and fenced off, but appealed to them while looking through the window. Where others saw a building that needed to be demolished, they saw potential. Due to their close relationship with the owner, a housing corporation, they were able to obtain the keys and appropriate the building. What was meant as a temporary working space, however, turned out to be much more.

FIGURE 5.1
Kaap Belvedere
(Photo: Joop Reijngoud)

FIGURE 5.2
Tussentuin
(Photo: Annet Delfgaauw)

FIGURE 5.3
Singeldingen
(Photo: Manolya Isik and
Annette de Vries)

All three initiatives showcase the ability of people to look at the urban fabric with a different view. The initiators were able to problematize space, not so much by saying something was wrong, but by saying and showing that something else, something unexpected, and most importantly something better was possible. And although we at this point already addressed them by their name – Singeldingen, In-Between Garden, and Kaap Belvédère – at the time of these first interferences, there was not more than a hunch, a vision that things could be otherwise. To actually come into being, to form an identity, and to make a lasting impression in the public realm, they needed to move further from the initial problematization. This takes us to the second level of translation.

The translation continues: interessement and enrolment

Key aspect of translation is that causalities are produced through a series of intermediaries that are not 'logical' in the formal sense of the term, but that oblige those who are interested in a proposed problem to become interested in the specific situation, through almost imperceptible shifts. (Latour 1999). After the initial problematization, the hard work of network building and translation has only just started, as the leading actors need to start interest and enroll other actors into their network and initiative. (Callon 1986). In spatial planning, this process of network-building is "the translation of the objectives, limitations and opportunities of other actors so that these can start 'behaving' according to their own requirements, but in line with the wishes / characteristics of the dominant actor" (Boelens 2009: 190). Both interessements and enrolments can be pro-active, as intentional interventions or interferences, but things happen coincidently just the same. It is about knitting together events, and other networks that, again, are not linked by causality, but become organized around new and emerging meanings. Interessement and enrolment are closely linked to each other. Interessement means that the initiating actors look for allies, and try to tie them to the network. In doing this, they are in competition with other evolving associations and identities, and severe work is needed in order to 'interest' other actors to the emerging actor-network. (Callon 1986). This behavior is therefore predominantly about dealing with the outside, with others, aiming at a further expansion of the network, considering what needs to be taken into account, and what new propositions need to be found in order to move forward. (Latour 2004). By enrolment on the other hand, the specific role of the actors that become interested in the actor-network are negotiated, and a common identity is determined and set. (Callon 1986). This behavior has therefore a predominantly inward orientation, focused on a further contraction of the network to become thicker and more robust. Propositions are instituted or otherwise rejected, hierarchies are set, and both the inside and the outside of the collective are stabilized, and the content, boundaries and materiality of the particular space are defined. (Latour 2004). The more actors become interested and enrolled into the chains of translation, the more actual an object, plan or initiative becomes. Initiators start with almost nothing, just an idea, and while

working their way through they construct a context around their idea. (Latour 1996: 119 133). Lets illustrate this phase by looking in more detail at our three cases.

From the start the initiators of Kaap Belvédère used the building as a work- and meeting space. It became a natural meeting place for both the groups who were portrayed in the art project, for current and former residents of Katendrecht, and for professionals who were involved with the regeneration of Katendrecht specifically and Rotterdam South in general. During eighteen months of intense voluntary labor the building, which had stood empty and had already been on the nomination for demolishment since the early 1990s, got turned into a vibrant meeting place. The core team, consisting of five people, started to initiate all sorts of occasional events, which increased the identity of the building as a place where people could meet and share stories. During those first eighteen months, and without any funding, seven exhibitions, two happiness events, three reunions, twenty-four eat and meet events, thirty-five Sunday afternoon open house events, seventy-six life stories, twelve tours, two newsletters, five do-it-yourself weekends, eleven projects elsewhere in the city were organized, by 210 volunteers, attracting 5,500 visitors from the neighborhood and far beyond. Activities included the 'The people's kitchen' (at which an immigrant from one of the 157 nationalities living in Rotterdam prepared a 3-course dinner together with volunteers and told his life story to a crowd of 50 to 60 people) and other food oriented programs; photography exhibitions; and the House of Happiness, a project to inspire urban developers, residents and visitors with lectures, an exhibition, workshops, food and film. Slowly the initiators started to see the place as a space where all kinds of stories – of what they started to call 'immaterial heritage' – came together. What added to this, were the many stories that came from the building itself. The building had always been an important meeting place for all kinds of groups; it had served as a cafe and restaurant, but also later as a space for jazz performances during the Second World War, dancing, cinema, magic shows, wrestling, for performing Greek myths and also as a neighborhood museum before.

Gradually, storytelling became a storyline for the building itself, enabling many people to tell and share their stories and to meet. All this created a sense of importance, of value around the building. The temporary nature of the whole project, aided by the quality and attention with which the different activities were organized, made it possible for a lot of people to become interested and enrolled in the project. But both the core members, as well as the volunteers and the many visitors all wanted it to continue, convinced that this would be for the better. But this meant that many new things had to be done. For one the building was lopsided, and needed to be renovated substantially. Furthermore the two current owners Woonstad (the housing corporation) and the OBR (the municipal development agency) had to be convinced to preserve the building

and not – as was the wish of Woonstad – to demolish it and replace it with new apartments which would fit in the overall redevelopment of Katendrecht. And third it meant that the core group had to come up with a long-term business plan to form a new cultural initiative (in times in which culture is having a hard time in the Netherlands). In order to interest and enroll the housing corporation and the municipality, a business plan had to be written (containing the history of and the vision for the building, and financial and organizational paragraphs). A financial model was re-invented in with which private persons could invest in the project through cultural 'bonds' – made possible by a tax-rule for cultural real estate (for this they got free help from a financial company), a board of advice was formed (comprised of people placed high in the world of finance, housing, building and local politics), and many, many negotiations were held with the housing corporation about the conditions under which they were willing to sell the building (which they were reluctant to do, something which became clear when the housing corporation applied for a demolition license for the building while negotiating about selling at the same time). All this was necessary to translate the temporary urban intervention into a permanent presence. Nobody had foreseen this when they started with the Kaap, but the value they found in the building made them take things forward. It took a lot of effort, hard work and stubbornness to interest and enroll all the actors involved, but the process did create a particular identity over a period of eighteen months (which they tried to capture for the first time in their business plan[1], into a lasting physical and cultural presence on Katendrecht. (Malherbe 2012).

In the other two cases, also severe work was necessary to move from the first intervention towards a more lasting appropriation of space. As we saw before, the In-Between Garden started as a reaction on an invitation by the housing corporation, but that did not mean things were to move smooth. For although there is much sympathy for green interventions in the city currently, to make this happen in this particular area – which is mostly seen as a deprived area in need of help – was proving difficult. Even more so since the people involved where aiming for high quality. This caused quite some discussion with the professional actors involved, since they did not always share the same ideas about the quality requirements. With the housing corporation, there was discussion concerning the fence around the plot, in their view necessary because the plot was on the corner of a road which formed an important access to the neighborhood. But the initiators wanted this to be a nice fence, not the cheap regular fence the housing corporation proposed. With the local borough, there was discussion concerning the stage made of bamboo sticks. The initiators thought such a stage provide a bit of fun and variety in a neat and tidy, respectable-looking suburb, but in this neighborhood one has to overcome the skepticism and fear that it will turn into a mess, by investing in something beautiful and of good quality. And with the funding organisations who were asked to help pay for the music program, the 'Entertuinment' ('tuin' means

1 The businessplan itself shows the quality of the core team, the amazing history of the building as well as the quality of the work they are aiming for. It can be found at: http://www.kaapbelvedere.nl/downloads/plan.pdf

'garden' in Dutch) there was a discussion on the quality of the music: good music costs money, why should only amateur, starting musicians play in the Oude Westen, they wondered. (Van der Zwaard 2012).

But is wasn't only with the official actors that it took quite some effort to get them interested and enrolled. The same can be said of the local residents. The In-Between Garden was not accepted straight away. As Joke van der Zwaard explains: *"All sorts of people from the neighborhood and throughout the city came to those [Entertuinments, BB and MS], the amateur musicians often brought their families with them and the local children would ask when there was another event, but most of the people who lived directly around the garden didn't venture too far in and stayed watching from behind the window, sat on their balconies, or they looked over the hedge. The second year, more of them actually came in. Familiarity with a place apparently has to develop slowly."* (Van der Zwaard 2012). So while now the garden feels like it belongs to the neighborhood, at first people had to become acquainted with the garden. They had to be convinced that something different from what they expected was possible or necessary. Partly through negotiating, partly through determination and partly through convincing by doing, such as actively inviting people in through music made by local artists, were they able to convince and enroll the neighbors. But gradually, all kinds of actors became part of the In-Between Garden, as they embraced the vision, but even more so the space. People became attached to it. It became part of the neighborhood.

That the process of interessement and enrollment is not always a straight-forward route can also be illustrated by looking at the next phase of Singeldingen. From the moment the three initiators saw the potential of the space, they tried to make other people see the potential too and enabled them to turn this into action. More concretely the initiators were able to make residents, school directors, local entrepreneurs, local politicians (both on the level of the borough and the city), civil servants and all kinds of civic groups to subscribe too and take interest in this particular space by helping out in one way or another during the first season. With the commissioning of the building of the actual kiosk - sponsored by the Doen Foundation - Singeldingen was taking a next step in its development. But while the city supported the project on one hand, it also tried to fold it into their own policy mold on the other hand. Once it was certain that Singeldingen was going to have a semi-permanent structure in the park, it had to fit in with the bigger plans the OBR (the municipal development agency) had for the area. And while the test period performed by Singeldingen had clearly established a particular spot along the canal (near the playground and close to two in-routes to the canal from the adjacent neighborhoods), the OBR wanted it to be located close to the Heemraadplein. The argument for this was that they were already trying to establish this as the main meeting space for the neighborhood and had already invested heavily in this idea. Two different arguments which stood opposed to each other. It was only through political

intervention by a local alderman in support of the initiative, that the initial decision by the OBR was overruled and the preferred location by Singeldingen was granted. So only through a political intervention did the network (now consisting of all kinds of actors, a detailed plan, and a particular physical spot along the canal) not break at this point and were they able to grow further. While this process of keeping, in this particular case the OBR, interested and enrolled took quite some efforts. But the people from Singeldingen did value it when looking back. It forced them to strengthen their public argument and made them reflect hard on who they were or wanted to be. The resistance they met thus strengthened the project.

Becoming an assemblage

As the process of translation continues even further, the network becomes thicker, more established, more excepted, more embedded in its surroundings. The end result of translation, according to Callon, is a state of mobilization. The actor-network has evolved into a coherent whole, and only a small number of individuals speak in the name of all others in the network. Thus, a new type of order has emerged, in which certain entities within the network control the others. (Callon 1986). Or in other words: a thing has come into being, an identity has been formed, making a lasting impression on its environment. Let's look at Singeldingen to see what this means. Singeldingen has been around for four years now. It has grown both in qualities, in duration and in meaning. It has taken a foothold in both the physical as well as the mental space of the neighborhood. It has a particular identity, people miss it when it is not around. Let us now listen to what Latour has to say about coming across a technical object: "If one ever comes face to face with a technical object, this is never the beginning but the end of a long process of proliferating mediators, a process in which all relevant subprograms, nested one into another, meet in a 'simple' task." (Latour 1999: 192). If you would read Singeldingen where Latour writes technical object, you immediately get what he is pointing at. After four years, Singeldingen has proven its worth to the neighborhood. More and more people each year visit and actively support the project. It has turned the park into a public meeting place. Not only while the kiosk is opened, but also during the rest of the summer when its mere virtual presence draws people into the park. What was once a underused patch of grass is now part of peoples imagination and daily routines and during the year people picnic, meet, play soccer and just hang out here now. Singeldingen has filled the space with meaning to people, that goes beyond the actual kiosk being there. "The small group of pioneers, who began these activities by the canal, has grown in the meantime to a solid core of fifteen, who manage the project, staff it, or run one of the clubs. More than a hundred local people have helped out in some way with Singeldingen over the course of the season: taking photographs, building the terrace, baking cakes, coaching football, cooking for the neighbours, amongst other things. 'What is your Canal Thing?' is the question we pose to people in the

neighbourhood. Singeldingen provides a platform for local residents to make their own personal contribution to the neighbourhood, by doing their THING and sharing it with other residents." (Hillen 2012). In that way, it unearths the possibilities available in a neighborhood and shows people the dormant possibilities of a particular place.

The In-Between Garden has now been there for three years. A plot of approximately ten to thirty meters, consisting of eight individually kept gardens on the left hand side and a communal patch on the right. On this you can find two huge pick-nick tables, the timber stage developed and built by a local team under the guidance of a local interior designer, a small glasshouse and a beehive. And even though the plot is fenced, especially in summertime there are always people around, and the garden is accessible for anyone who wants to come in. During the summer months there is the 'Entertuinment': six weeks of music and entertainment for three days a week. By aligning the historical, social and cultural capital and banking on the sympathy currently there for temporary green projects, the In-Between Garden gathered the necessary momentum and actors to make these things happen. It created a productive context around itself for the garden to materialize in a short period of time. What started out as a temporary intervention has thus left behind more than one could have imagined beforehand. Not only have people shown or developed talents (or passions) which they didn't know they had before, but it has created the connections which enable these kinds of initiatives to emerge successfully. A fertile hummus layer of connections, capacities, visions and belief has been slowly developing; a breeding ground for new activities.

Around Kaap Belvédère a highly interested and enrolled network of local residents, inhabitants of Rotterdam and professionals gathered, because many of the people who came into contact with were able to invest in it personally – either through their memories of the building, their life-stories, through their cooking or carpeting skills, etc. Out of the mere temporary working space, a new identity was born through all these activities: "At the end of 2011 Kaap Belvédère presented its plan for the future: 'the first house for intangible heritage in the Netherlands'. Kaap Belvédère collects (personal) stories and histories of people, communities and the (changing) city and brings them to life in the imaginations of a broad public. The aim is to connect. Kaap Belvédère is continuously involved in bringing Rotterdammers together with each other and with the city and doing so in new ways. The house is an inspiring meeting place; a place where everyone and all groups can come together, to get to know each other and the city, to research, to discuss and to experience." (Malherbe 2012). Taking on this notion of Immaterial Heritage in itself was a smart move, because it enabled all kind of policymakers, but also likeminded institutions across the Netherlands to connect with them. Immaterial Heritage is officially acknowledge by the United Nations and this treaty is ratified by the Netherlands, but up till now,

nothing much has been down with it. By aligning themselves with this, without compromising on what they do (it is still the same, otherwise it would just be smart marketing; the thing with Kaap Belvédère is its ability to cater for many authentic experiences across the city). The characteristic building, build in the early twentieth century, once a cafe for the Rotterdam elite that would come on Sundays to enjoy the view over the River Meuse, is now one of the main cultural assets of Katendrecht again. What was a temporary network is now being transformed into a permanent assemblage which plays a very particular role in the urban environment.

So, a new identity has emerged, a space has been appropriated by new actors, adding on to the complexity of the urban environment. After emergence, one can also speak of an assemblage. An assemblage is like a network, a temporal configuration of relationships among various sites, things and people, a network of meshed lines and flows of force and power relations which construct the social. (Van Wezenmael 2010, DeLanda 2002). But with networks, the connotation is on the flows and fluxes, the movement and translation, while as the connotation of assemblages is more on the identity, the more or less stable form. They emerge from the interactions of their component parts, but they are not fixed structures or closed systems, but sites of continuous organization and disorganization – a city, a planning system or a plan are assemblages. (Van Wezemael 2010, Hillier 2007: 61-62). Exteriorly joined components remain a certain autonomy from the whole they compose, and they are neither mutually constituted nor fused into a seamless whole. Soon as an assemblage emerges, it starts providing resources for its components but starts to restrain them as well. They work as sorting machines in favor of their own emergence and maintenance. (Van Wezemael 2010). This is the moment where 'translation' moves from the process of collection of resources (Boelens 2009) to the process of maintenance of coherence and homogeneity (Hillier 2009). In this level of translation, the maintenance of the network as a collective becomes important, but also the constant evaluation whether the network is able to still follow through. (Latour 2004).

Singeldingen can illustrate the continuous work of maintenance of the assemblage. Even though Singeldingen has formed an identity, has become a more or less permanent entity within the neighborhood and the park, it does not run on its own. Far from it, since Singeldingen is at its core a platform by and for the neighborhood. Singeldingen is what people make out of it. A continuous process of thinking of new activities, new meanings that can be constructed around Singeldingen, of interesting and enrolling new actors is necessary, to bind the existing network together, in order not to lose meaning for Singeldingen and its physical presence. Singeldingen is in constant process of proving its necessity, its necessity of providing the infrastructure for people create their own meanings. The big question now is what will people make out

of it themselves ("What is your Singel-thing?"), but on the other hand how to organize and keep organized the basic infrastructure.

For Kaap Belvédère a new period has just begun. In July 2012 they finally, after a long and hard struggle, acquired the building. In September the foundations of the building were lifted, to counter the lopsided position of the building. If all goes well they will be opening up again in November to try and take up (or rather create) a position for themselves within the structural cultural and historical infrastructure of the city. It will be interesting to see whether and how they will be able to translate the ad-hoc energy, interessement and enrollment of the first phase into this new phase. Where the temporary nature of the first phase kept it 'simple' in a way, new demands are now being placed on the actors. The once temporary network now has to be transformed into a permanent assemblage which will play a different role in the urban infrastructure. In this regard the coming period can be seen as a prime example of what civic-led urban development entails and could mean for the city, but also makes clear what this requires from the traditional field of planning.
The In-Between Garden started as a temporal intervention and remained so. They were allowed to use the plot for two years, managed to stay one year longer, but next summer the building activities for the new apartment block will start, and the garden will be abolished.

RESUME: ENCOUNTERING WITH PLANNING ROUTINES

>> What we see happening is that through the network translation around an initiative to gain a context in which they can exist, these networks begin to interact with already existing, routine networks in the city. As such, we can distinguish two kinds of assemblages: first, the professional planning system within Rotterdam, comprised of formal planning institutions shaped by four decades of urban renewal and compact city policy and second, the community-based civic initiatives for physical interventions in the urban fabric of Rotterdam. Planning routines in Rotterdam, and the involved professional planning institutions, are no different than the assemblage sketched in the first paragraph, constituted of housing corporations, the municipality and national government, developers and urban designers around extensive neighborhood reconstructions and inner city projects. This assemblage that has been much longer in existence, has stronger ties between its component parts, and is thus perhaps more effective in maintaining its own existence, than the assemblages that were shaped and created by the initiatives we described. But, as said, they do meet, and as they meet, they shift, they scrape and they struggle.
The interaction between these assemblages takes place on all three levels of translation: on the first level in which the initiators interfere in the physicality constituted by the planning routines, on the second level by trying to interest

and enroll actors and elements from the planning routines into the network of the initiative, and on the third level by the struggle of acquiring a permanent presence in the physicality of the city.

First, the assemblages encounter because there is an overlap between them concerning the actors and factors involved in the processes of translation. Think for instance of the physical objects involved: the plot of the In-Between Garden or the building of Kaap Belvédère, that is used by the initiators, but officially the property of the housing corporation, and the park in which Singeldingen is located that is in ownership of the municipality. Overlap also concerns the people involved in the initiatives: sometimes professional actors are in support of the project because they are personally acquainted with the initiators or share their interest as being a resident in the same neighborhood (as was the alderman who supported Singeldingen), and sometimes as the civic initiators deploy their professional skills in favor of the initiative, as the landscape architect did for the In-Between Garden and the architect who designed the kiosk for Singeldingen. Also concerning Kaap Belvédère there is an overlap, as the municipality and housing corporation contracted the initiators at first for their art project. And there is also an overlap concerning the issues at hand in the initiatives. Looking backward, Kaap Belvédère did fit in the regeneration policy of Katendrecht that aimed, among others, at developing a cultural and culinary environment. The In-Between Garden fits within the municipal policy that aims at greening the city, developing more unpaved, green surface throughout Rotterdam. And Singeldingen also runs parallel with the municipal policy that aims at improving the connections between various parts of the city center by increasing the use and quality of public spaces, as it runs parallel with the regeneration policy in Rotterdam West as well.

Second, the assemblages encounter as the actors try to the interest and enroll actors and elements from the planning routines into the network of the initiative and vice versa as the professional actors try to model the initiative into a form that fits their routinely assemblage as well. Concerning the In-Between Garden, the encounters went smooth as the invitation for temporary use came from the housing corporation, and the professional actors involved were quite sympathetic towards urban gardening. However, aspects concerning the materialization (the fence and the bamboo stage) and the activities taking place were more controversial. Concerning Singeldingen, the municipality was supportive, but tried to hold on to their own plans as well concerning the location of the kiosk in the park, and a political intervention was necessary to overcome this controversy. But the municipality eventually also contributed significantly to Singeldingen as they arranged the permanent electricity connection for the kiosk, helping Singeldingen to become a more permanent element within the Heemraadpark. Concerning Kaap Belvédère, the temporary use of the building was allowed by the housing corporation, but becoming

permanent was more controversial, as this conflicted with the original plans for demolishment. The housing corporation in the end was won over only after the initiators proved to be 'professional' as well, by writing the business plan, inventing a financial model for maintenance and taking on the notion of Immaterial Heritage. Thus it becomes visible how the initiatives not only hold on to their own original ideas, but were also changed by the encounters they underwent with the assemblage of planning routines. Moreover, even though it would have been much easier to adjust the initiative to the existing routines and the frameworks provided by the professional actors, in these cases discussion takes place precisely about these frameworks, regulations, plans. Or in other words: between what the initiators regard 'for the better' shown by their interventions, and what the professional actors regard 'for the better' shown by their plans, policies, regulations and frameworks. During these encounters, mutual anchoring takes place: public actors try to anchor the initiative to public policy, the initiators anchor to legal frameworks etc.
But not only does the displacement, drift, invention and mediation of translation between the assemblages create new links between actors that did not exist before. It also to some degree modifies the original two. (Latour 1999: 179). There is no transportation without transformation. (Latour 1996). We have seen how the encounters between the assemblage of urban spatial policy routines reshape the initiatives.

But now, thirdly, the question arises: is the urban spatial policy assemblage also affected and reshaped by the encounters with the civic-interference assemblages? Are the professional actors also affected by what they did? For the In-Between Garden it can be said that the initiative started as temporal use which remained temporal, as the building plans for the new apartment block were not reconsidered, and will be proceeded next summer. As such, the In-Between Garden did not change anything in the already existing plans of the housing corporation. However, it did make the housing corporation and the persons in the initiative more acquainted with each other, creating trust that something worthwhile can come forward from civic initiatives. This shows in the positive attitude the housing corporation now holds towards new initiatives that pop up in the neighborhood. The In-Between Garden also created awareness for urban greening at the housing corporation, that is now setting up greening projects throughout other parts of the city as well. The initiative of Kaap Belvédère did change something significant in the plans of the housing corporation, as the building was not demolished but eventually bought by the initiators. But overall, the initiative is seen as a happy incident, accidently fitting nicely within the regeneration plans for Katendrecht, although not foreseen beforehand. Whether the encounters between the housing corporation and the Kaap Belvédère initiative did change anything in the routines and ways of working of the housing corporation and other professional actors involved in urban regeneration, remains a question. The same can be said about

Singeldingen. The initiative did change the plans for the location of a meeting place in the park, and the decision of the municipality to support Singeldingen with a permanent electricity connection is something that is certainty not routinely done. But the question remains what the professional actors have learned and whether their encounter with Singeldingen has caused them to reconsider any of their routines and practices. Solely based on these three initiatives, we unfortunately have to conclude that, although each initiative in itself did create an interesting new urban assemblage through self-organization, they on themselves did not cause any major changes in any of the planning routines practiced by the traditional urban policy assemblage and its actors. However, also in Rotterdam we see a re-shift in the activities of the municipality, housing corporations and developers, combined with extensive retrenchments and budget-cuts. Large scale redevelopments are not expected for the coming years. Rather does the municipality address the wish to improve the quality of the city in cooperation with residents, housing corporations and entrepreneurs as well. (Karakus and Bol 2010). This notion brings us to the final part of our chapter. Because, if these trends in spatial urban policy will continue, and more and more the initiative for urban renewal practices will come from civic actors, what exactly can be learned from the initiatives we discussed in this chapter?

A CITY UNDER APPROPRIATION: REHEARSAL SPACES FOR FUTURE GOVERNANCE

>> In themselves, these initiatives did not change much in the planning routines of urban spatial policy. They remained incidental, within their own niche, being small, specific and contextual. Therefore it is close to impossible to derive any general conclusions from these experiences concerning their content. But that has not been our purpose from the beginning. What we tried to do it this chapter by describing these three initiatives in the way we did, was to create a new way of understanding such initiatives in relation to planning practice. We did so because the current shifts in stakeholders, due to retrenchments, governmental withdrawal and financial crisis, force us to consider a new actor in the field of urban development, one that does not work within the same routines as professional planning authorities do, but that develop their practices along the way, as things go. To create this new way of understanding we approached these projects from within and as interventions. Through following these initiatives closely while they gathered more reality through processes of translation, we have tried to show what such a perspective could offer. In this final paragraph we want to reflect a bit more on the meaning of this perspective and give some indication of what this might mean for the development of future planning practices.

First let's try to be more precise about the meaning of these examples. We could do this by seeing them as social-spatial equivalents of the desire lines or desire paths we know from pubic space. Maarten 't Hart, a famous Dutch writer, describes this term beautifully in the book Desire Lines (Olifantenpaadjes) by Jan Dirk van den Burg: "Where it is possible, we branch out, we cut corners, try to shorten our route. As a consequence of this, you see everywhere places where foot- and cycle paths created by the municipality are supplemented by perpendicular routes, forks in the route, small-unpaved tracks. What is noticeable is that the desire for these foot and cycle paths, which people make with such surprising tenacity, is not taken into account by local government. They lay out cycle paths with enormous loops and curves in them and what invariably happens? The corner is cut off. And quickly following the establishment of a new cycle path, you see a new, forking route coming off it, a desire line." (Van den Burg 2011). What if we see the initiatives we described and analyzed here as social-spatial equivalents to this? What if these initiatives are the manifestations of deep-felt desires of people to (re)connect with each other in new and meaningful ways? Such a view on civic initiatives opens up a whole new set of possibilities for understanding them and valuing them. They should not only be seen as a reaction against the officially planned space, because this view would inevitably lead to measures disciplining people back into the frames the officially planned space offered, or to a reconstruction of these officially planned spaces by the official planning authorities. Instead we would take these initiatives as starting points, as indicators of desired developments within an area. We would like to see them as the rehearsal spaces for working together, cooperating and collaborating, and finding new ways of organizing our urban society, as rehearsal spaces for future governance. (cf. Sennett 2012).

Second, we want to emphasize that these rehearsal spaces, these urban interventions, are gaining momentum and recognition. From the initiatives we have described in this chapter, other initiatives have already spread, and all over the city new (not necessarily related) initiatives for urban interventions by citizens are emerging. The In-Between Garden was only temporal, but on more and more places within the city such (more or less) temporary gardens are popping up. Moreover, the initiators of the In-Between Garden are now also initiating other urban interventions, such as a cooperative library, in the same neighborhood. Kaap Belvédère finds itself on Katendrecht amidst other cultural establishments that have grown from civic initiatives, such as Theater Walhalla and the Literature Cafe. And also Singeldingen is now spreading across the city as a method: two people that were associated with the initial Singeldingen, are now starting their own 'Singeldingen' in a different borough. But not only the initiatives themselves gain momentum. Also the attention for such initiatives is growing. This can be exemplified by different collections of examples which have been released during the last couple of years. The already mentioned books by Hajer and Urhahn Urban Design are examples of these, but you also

have the collection of 'bottom-up initiatives in urban settings' made by seven architecture institutes in the Netherlands (AIR 2012), or a collection called the Enabling City – bringing together all kinds of interventions in the public domain (Camponeschi 2010). A final testament to the growing depth and breadth of this development can be found in a series called the Community Lover's Guide to the Universe. This series – in which five books have been published and another fifty-five are in the making – brings together all kinds of interventions of people who creatively form local communities across the globe. (Specht 2012). And it is not only in the domain of public space that we see such initiatives emerging. Whether it is energy (Van der Heijden 2011), health care (Nesta 2012), or welfare (Nesta 2012), we see people experimenting with new ways of creating, managing and valuing the things people in society need or want. For a long time such initiatives have remained under the radar. And still they are just local examples. But their meaning is much wider, as Ezoi Manzani, a social design innovator who is interested in bottom-up solutions to environmental challenges puts it nicely when he states: "Whilst these cases may be marginal in quantitative terms, in qualitative terms, they are extremely meaningful. In fact, they can be regarded as viable experiments in sustainable ways of living. Of course, they assume different significance in different societies and places, but their independent occurrences in such disconnected situations and locations raise the possibility that they, in fact, constitute a first set of spontaneously developed sustainable features. In other words, they are the building materials for developing sustainable alternatives to the unsustainable ideas of well-being, production and economy that dominate today" (Manzani 2011, p. 102). By collecting these examples, bringing them together in both books and real life, new connections and meanings are formed and the force of these combined initiatives grows. This will lead to new encounters with the planning assemblage as we now know it, changing both the initiatives and the planning assemblage along the way. While these encounters now are mostly ad-hoc it would be interesting to see if the planning assemblage would explicitly start to engage with these initiatives. What kind of practices could emerge from such encounters between various civic initiatives and other actors in urban spatial policy? What is it that can be learned from these rehearsal spaces for future governance?

What is particular about the strategies used by Kaap Belvédère, the In-Between Garden and Singeldingen is that becoming what they are – the outcome of the process of translation – is not done by talking, but through doing. By experimenting, trail-and-error and reflection an identity slowly emerged. And moreover, what Singeldingen, Kaap Belvédère and the In-Between Garden have become is the outcome of the many mutual interferences by the different actors enrolled. All initiators started with a normative vision on what would be 'for the better' according to their own perspective, but along the way, as more and more actors became interested and enrolled in the network, bringing in their own

visions on what would be 'even more for the better', the initiatives did transform into something that is perhaps not quite the same as the initiators though about in the beginning, but something that is even more in place than expected. With this in our mind, we think the key challenge for professional planning actors is not to define frameworks and then try to fit initiatives back into them (what Maarten Hajer (2011) seems to hint at). Nor should they look for a generalization or institutionalization of the practices developed in these cases (as John Law (2009b) warns us not to do). Instead, we think the true lesson for planners is in the following. As we said in the beginning, when planning is regarded as an act of interference through physical interventions in space, all actors that engage in such practices can be regarded as spatial planners, whether these people are educated as planners or not, and regardless whether they act from a public, business or civic or a mixed perspective.

First, all these actors start with the articulation of a vision 'for the better' and try to act according to that vision.

Second, the challenge is not only to remain within one's own path, but to try to mutually interfere in each other's initiatives and physical interventions in space. Seeing what happens in the 'otherness' and make productive use of that.

Third, various simultaneous present trajectories can be bundled into new coherences grouped around meaning. It is up to all planners to engage in adjusting mechanisms of flow towards futures that are regarded 'for the better' – however contextual 'for the better' might be.

Fourth, after new urban assemblages have emerged, other actors can build further on these assemblages by adding up with new interferences and emerging networks.

This is where we think co-evolution takes place: between various assemblages of lines of flows, actors and factors, assemblages that are distinctive but overlapping at the same time, mutually interfering in each other's physical interventions. But can we already speak of such an emerging co-evolutionary practice or are we still miles away? We think that first signs are indeed there, as the necessity for new planning approaches is felt more and more among public, business and civic actors. First experiences of such a practice can already be found in some small stories like the ones we spoke about in this chapter. And from there on, the challenge is to watch very closely how interventions are developing, and to all co-evolve and learn from there.

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