Participation in Post-Socialist Housing

by
Daniel Benjamin Abramson
Bachelor of Arts, Harvard University, 1985

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the dual degree of Master of Architecture and Master of City Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, May 1992

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Signature of Author

Daniel Benjamin Abramson
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
May 15, 1992

Certified by

Gary Hack
Professor, Urban Studies and Planning
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by

John Myer
Professor, Architecture
Chair, Master of Architecture Committee

Accepted by

Ralph Gakenheimer
Professor, Urban Studies and Planning
Chair, Master of City Planning Committee

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ABSTRACT

As the former Socialist countries of eastern Europe embrace democratic and free-market reforms, local governments and cooperative organizations find themselves increasingly responsible for the regulation of housing and urban construction. But severe budget cuts and drastic change threatens their ability to carry out these responsibilities, even as offers by private entrepreneurs increase the pressure to make land available.

This thesis considers the viability of participatory planning in Poland; it explores how design can assist broad-based community discussions about appropriate regulation and public investment for new housing and commercial development. The context is the Lublin Housing Cooperative (LSM) a community of 50,000 residents where large tracts of land lie vacant even as a shortage of housing and commercial services continues to worsen.

Based on extensive interaction with members of all levels of responsibility in the LSM community, and supported by spatial study models carried out over a year in studios at MIT, the exploration uses model and design references to illustrate a process of focusing collective attention on critical issues of importance to an entire community.
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Advocates of community architecture make varying claims favoring the involvement of residents in the planning and design process. The most modest proponents urge participation to ensure design responsiveness to the needs of a collective, much as designers cater to single clients. The most ambitious ones use participation to champion local environmental character and authenticity in the fight against global environmental homogenization, even to the extent of recovering humanity's ability to dwell.

The significance of community participation probably lies somewhere between these claims. In fact, practical necessity has driven professional designers and planners to include communities when making decisions, either in response to democratic-legal imperatives in the industrialized West, or in order to cope with the difficulties of mobilizing basic resources in the Third World. In both contexts, participatory methods have been used primarily in planning and design for housing or for public facilities in residential environments, specially for the poor, who have little power to demand designs on an individual basis and who feel the cost of design mistakes most acutely.

But from a broader perspective, this mode of planning has led to something deeper than effective service. Participatory methods have proven valuable when they foster a "social learning" process between professionals and collective clients in cases when no party can claim to have "the answer"
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to a problem. In these instances, knowledge is linked to action, social science is demystified, re-evaluation is built in to each achievement, and the community enjoys a mutual “democratic political education.”

The essential ingredient in all participatory action is the recognition of common interests within the community. This recognition emerges more clearly in the course of the process, but it is to some extent also a critical precondition. The more stratified the society overall, and the more immobile the particular community, the more likely common interests will exist within that community. When such a community is marginal as well, however, the search for a popular and feasible built expression of these interests is a hard challenge for design professionals. The task is exceedingly more difficult when community interests cannot readily be identified in the first place. In times of radical change, for example, how are professionals to engage the community at all?

The turbulent situation in eastern Europe today presents precisely this challenge to urban planners. So recently closed and obscure to Western eyes, conditions in the former Socialist countries nonetheless reflect many problems familiar to those experienced in participatory housing design elsewhere: general economic instability; poor distribution of goods; severe shortages; absence of capital concentrations for housing development; mass-scaled, over-standardized designs and construction methods; unresponsive housing management; poor spatial and administrative integration of housing, commerce and infrastructure; alienation of residents from the decision-making and production processes which determine the nature and quality of their environments.

But perhaps the overriding impulse to study the applicability of participatory planning in post-Socialist Europe is the change of course taken by the new governments themselves—democratic reform. Democratic and market-oriented planning procedures are now receiving a great deal of attention even as the new political and economic reforms erode the power of professional planners as a class. Some kind of effective “learning-by-doing” approach would seem useful in the current atmosphere of uncertainty and transition, whatever the particular problems and solutions may turn out to be. The need to acknowledge openly the full range of factors in the development process, to “democratize” whole communities, to re-orient professionals to operate in a development market — all suggest that inclusive methods of planning and design may be appropriate now in ways as-yet untested.

In order to focus an argument about the validity and appropriate form of participation in post-Socialist planning, the following pages describe the beginning of a participatory planning exercise in a Polish housing cooperative and explore the relevance of architectural and urban design to the furthering of that process. The particular problem at hand is the planning
for new housing and commerce in the midst of existing mass housing estates.

The cooperative may serve as a case example for Poland generally; likewise, Poland itself may be seen as an example of all of the former socialist Soviet Bloc countries in transition. Nevertheless, it is important to affirm that as the people and place of the project are specific, so are the solutions.

**Housing in Poland**

Although Poland has suffered a persistent housing shortage—one of the severest in Europe—since the Second World War, the recent political revolution there has cast the country’s housing problems in an entirely new light. Long-standing arguments over unit standards and the relative merits of various industrialized construction systems are now overlaid by a broader debate about property rights, the problem of political accountability and the legitimacy of the entire central decision-making process.

In Autumn 1990, Poland held its first local elections since 1950. Considering that these elections were held a full year before the first freely-elected national parliament was established, this reform indicates the nation’s deep commitment to governmental decentralization and experimentation; municipalities were to serve, in effect, as so many democratic “laboratories,” each struggling to adopt an appropriate set of regulations and procedures to replace the blanket of standards and plans that the government in Warsaw had laid down so uniformly over the previous forty years. Now, newborn local governments must fund services that for decades had been provided by national authorities, and they bear the burden of defending the public good even as the national legislature continues to debate basic property rights and tax law.

In the midst of this political reconstitution, the World Bank, the European Development Bank, USAID and other market-oriented sources of development aid have encouraged Poland to adopt equally sweeping economic reforms, including a program to diversify and commodify housing production, management and ownership. The program amounts to no less than the creation “from scratch” of a private multifamily housing development function within the emerging Polish business and professional community.

It is not at all clear, however, which interests this function will represent and what kinds of entities are likely to carry it out. While a large number of internationally-sponsored workshops in banking, investment, business administration, and local government have already focused attention on the procedures of operating in a market democracy, few resources
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have been made available to help Polish communities discuss how to resolve conflicts of interest and explore the full range of roles which existing institutions might play under the altered circumstances. Such discussions are particularly urgent given the likely impact of the recent reforms. Although market-oriented studies have given some consideration to the problem of providing affordable housing to lower-income households, they have focused far more intensely on privatization of existing housing and construction of new housing for "families which can afford to pay more up front." 8

The restructuring of public-private relations and the de-emphasis of social equity implied in the market-oriented approach is likely to present severe challenges to the current Polish planning and design professions. Polish designers face a great leap of faith in adapting their environmental values to a market-driven system and to procedures of Western democratic planning. Under Socialist central planning, architects and planners operated in a balance of principles between functional egalitarianism and aesthetic elitism. As professionals, they wielded unprecedented powers to shape the environment as long as the environment contributed to the "democratizing of space" (rather abstractly defined). 9 Though the product had to be democratic, the process was paternalistic in the extreme. Through systemic contradictions, corruption and abuse, and inadequate and inefficient expenditure, the results tended to fall short of the stated ideal. 10

In the wake of Solidarity's anti-totalitarian revolution, advisors from western Europe and North America are applauding the elimination of the powers which bolstered Polish professionals in their task and are urging the adoption of a market- and rights-based system to replace the command economy. Implied in these recommendations is the reversal of the established product-process balance; now, an open market-oriented planning process may lead to a stratified, exclusionary environment.

The concerns of the Polish planning profession to preserve public access to housing, services, parkland, and culturally-valued landscapes are all likely to remain valid. These same professionals, however, will probably have to consider new ways of defending these interests in the face of economic hardship, market competition, and expanded individual rights. They have already begun to use guidelines in place of detailed drawings, succinct presentations targeted to lay audiences, and flexibility in developing design alternatives. They may yet need additional tools geared towards identifying and then envisioning in built form the common interests of the community.

2 Alexander, Christopher, The Timeless Way of Building, New York, Oxford University Press, 1979, is thoroughly within this tradition.


4 Hamdi, p.83.

5 In 1945, Poland had 1.5 million more households than units; since 1985, shortfall estimates have ranged from 1.4 million to 6 million units. Hussey, Pamela et al, "Transformation of the Housing Sector in Poland and Hungary," March 1990, USAID Office of Housing and Urban Programs, p. 24, and Hermanson, Judith A., "Cooperative Housing in Poland: Issues and Potential," November 28, 1990, Cooperative Housing Foundation, p. 22. In 1984, the average number of units per 1,000 population was lower in Poland (277) than in any other Communist-ruled European country. Ciechocinska, Maria, "The Social Image of Urban Housing--Dreams and Realities: The Case of Poland," Journal of Urban Affairs, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1990), p. 158.

6 Hermanson, Appendix III.


CHAPTER 1

FROM UTOPIA TO DYSTOPIA: THE CASE OF THE LUBLIN HOUSING COOPERATIVE

In January 1991, an international team of universities jointly initiated an exploration of issues in the revitalization of Polish housing. Represented on the team were the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Special Interest Group in Urban Settlements (SIGUS) in the School of Architecture and Planning, the Center for Environmental Development and Planning (CENDEP) at Oxford Polytechnic and the Faculty of Architecture at Warsaw Technical University. The discussions included a forum with speakers familiar with local, national and foreign experience, combined with workshop strategy sessions and an on-site investigation of an example of a large, post-war mass housing district.

Through the following Spring, students continued to work on studies of the design and institutional potential for development of the district. During the Summer some members of the group continued to gather information through studies of the region's housing production system and governmental and regulatory structure, as well as through an exercise in participatory planning methods in one of the district's neighborhoods.

For its case study, the group looked to the Lublin Housing Cooperative (Lubelska Spółdzielnia Mieszkaniorwa, or "LSM") in Lublin, a city of over 350,000 people in the agricultural region bordering the Ukraine and Belorus (Figure 1-1). Once an historic center of learning and a hub of trade for all eastern Europe, the region has long been underdeveloped.
Figure 1-1: Map of Lublin and LSM
and endowed with a poor housing stock relative to the rest of Poland. During the two decades following 1956, the government funded extensive housing construction there but in spite of this effort and a boom in the city's neighborhoods of single- and two-family houses, Lublin suffered a housing deficit of 33,000 units in 1990.3

As in the rest of Poland, the great majority of residents continue to live in the large estates of multi-story concrete-panelized apartment blocks. LSM itself is composed of seven distinct estates of this type built over twenty-five years. The cooperative district as a whole houses about 50,000 people and is only one of seven such districts ringing the horizon around the old center (Stare Miasto) of Lublin.

The Environment of LSM

As a case in Polish housing, LSM (Figure 1-2) is remarkable both for its typicality and its distinction.4 The district's interesting, hilly topography relieves much of the monotony of the buildings themselves which were produced according to a system in use throughout Poland. Some of its estates have received national (and even international) attention as models of well-planned residential environments. Those estates, largely built before 1970, are characterized by lush
Figure 1-2: Plan of LSM and landscape.
landscaping and an artfully sited mix of ground floor shops, row houses, four- and five-story walkups, and eleven-story tower blocks (Figure 1-3). Their inhabitants are generally distinguished professionals and officials, including many of the designers and planners responsible for the development of these same estates. Prospective residential and commercial tenants eagerly seek to find a space there, and correspondingly, the established residents possess a strong sense of identity and self-confidence.

By contrast, most of the newer estates — planned in the 1970's and built through the 1980's when government resources had already begun to dwindle — have many of the physical problems afflicting mass housing throughout Poland. Though located at the edge of a sweeping, green valley, the buildings are larger, less varied (either five or eleven stories—all slabs, no towers), and less carefully sited than those of the older estates. The open spaces, though wide, are overshadowed by the buildings and sparsely landscaped and furnished (Figure 1-4). Consequently, these newer estates have a lower status than the older ones; their residents are younger on average and include a larger number of youths, many of whom have turned to vandalism and vagrancy in these times of economic uncertainty (Figure 1-5).5

The most striking evidence of failure in the housing policy which created LSM is found not within the seven estates themselves but in a vast open parcel of land in their midst.
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(Figure 1-6). This parcel was designated for a large commercial and civic center to serve the entire cooperative, but it remains vacant despite detailed plans for its development (Figure 1-7 and Figure 1-8). A similar parcel, set aside for an athletic facility, also remains undeveloped. Much of this vacant land is used for allotment gardens, though tenure rights have never been secure on these plots.
The Lublin Housing Cooperative

Figure 1-6: LSM Land Use
Figure 1-7: Existing Master Plan for LSM Center (courtesy Lublin District Architect)
Figure 1-8: Perspective rendering of LSM Center according to master plan (courtesy of Lublin District Architect)
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The vacant center, too, is typical of the large complexes of housing estates built under central control in Poland: inter-neighborhood services tended to receive lowest budgeting priority and were often never provided at all, even though the designs of whole districts included them as essential features. Prevailing standards of density and site layout, as well as the highly industrialized system of construction, required expansive areas of open land for development, thus aggravating each failure to build to the planned capacity.

In LSM, the massive, monotonous buildings and poor layout of the newer estates may in large part be the result of efforts to cut the infrastructure cost of servicing them. The strain on the cooperative's resources has also taken its toll on maintenance of even the best estates which now suffer from crumbling construction and poor insulation, neglected landscaping, and a shortage of parking spaces (the cooperative originally planned for 30 cars per 1000 residents; the current need for parking is ten times that number). 6

Classroom space in schools is also in short supply; in the newer estates, schools operate in three shifts each day to accommodate the children.

As throughout Poland and the former Eastern Bloc, retail trade has been stunted, but the problem is particularly bad in settlements like LSM which were built outside the historic centers of cities and whose inhabitants have to rely completely on sparse post-war facilities for day-to-day shopping.

Finally, and most critical of all, most apartments in all of the estates of LSM are too small. 7 Many families are overcrowded. Many of the older residents need to find roommates to pay the rent as their children move to more desirable housing, leaving the cooperative worried that its units will not be marketable under the new system. The average size of existing apartments is between forty-four and fifty square meters. A room is typically fourteen square meters in the older buildings and only twelve square meters in the newer ones. Almost no units have more than four rooms. The waiting list for larger apartments includes more than 1,000 families — many of whom have been waiting as long as twenty years, during which time inflation has rendered their accumulated down payments almost worthless.

For those who are relatively fortunate to live in LSM, new laws have allowed them to buy their units and rent out a room, though recently the amount of down payment has risen from ten percent to forty percent of the cost. The coop fee is the same for renters and owners and covers the cost of roads, services, green areas maintenance — all of which has rapidly become more expensive (previously, the fee was heavily subsidized). Also reflecting a drop in subsidy, rents have increased 500 percent while salaries have typically increased only twenty percent to forty percent.
Conflict and Change

Although the cooperative administration continues to build units, the transformation of politics and the economy has seriously threatened the cooperative's capacity to act as developer. In addition to cutting subsidies, the national government has also turned control of vacant lands over to the municipalities, and LSM has had to enter into a legal tangle with the city over title to its center. In the meantime, residents in one of the more prestigious neighborhoods have pushed to secede altogether from the larger cooperative. The movement was narrowly defeated in a referendum, but the argument continues over whether to preserve the integrity of LSM and pool resources to develop the center, or to allow individual estates to manage themselves on the basis of their own property values.

Apart from these specific legal challenges from above and below, there is another kind of threat to the administration of LSM whose source is less easily identified but certainly more pervasive: the burgeoning market. This is certainly not the “free and open” competition of laissez-faire doctrine (through in fact the newly elected city council of Lublin has embraced the doctrine on many local issues); rather, there is a general feeling that nomenklatura or “gray” marketeers from earlier times are now especially able to capitalize on the new lack of commercial restrictions. In the secessionist debate, for example, there is a natural tension between those estates which can take advantage of existing high-quality environments (translated now into high property values) and those estates which still need further investment before they can be viable in the market system.

This state of affairs (real and perceived) can weaken honest cooperative administrators in complex ways. On the one hand, residents suspect their motives simply by virtue of their position; permission to develop upper-market housing on cooperative land is often seen as following from some secret deal benefiting the officials, the builders and the future residents at the expense of the cooperative as a whole. While this problem may be considered part of “the old system,” many informal networks from before the reforms seem to be artificially aggravating the short supply of land and other resources. On the other hand, while municipal and cooperative planners they may be used to sacrificing environmental ideals to corruption or bureaucratic inertia, they are inexperienced in defending their values and making shrewd bargains in the face of hard-driving, institutionalized speculation.

Housing development in the green valleys around LSM is an example of the way in which these different pressures come to bear on the community. According to the original
ideal of towers-in-the-park, the apartment slabs of LSM and its neighboring cooperatives provided attractive living environments only when they were surrounded by vast open tracts of greenery (Figure 1-11). LSM is one of the few cooperatives that has maintained this ideal even in part.\textsuperscript{12} Generally, the valley edges are given over to allotment gardens (which, some argue, are more important to residents), or to new housing (Figure 1-12). The housing which encroaches on the public park from the cooperative to the south of LSM, for example is quite expensive and blatantly defies the essential egalitarian intentions of the whole environment. Legally, its siting appears incongruous because the central parcels officially designated for new development remain vacant. The permitting process seems to have been driven either by eccentricities in the establishment of clear title, or by the will of a corrupt official.

\textbf{Current Plans—“The Battle of the Land”}

In sum, the physical and social environment of LSM bears many of the marks of crisis which characterize a large proportion of Poland's housing, even though the cooperative's inhabitants continue to benefit from its striking topography, access to public transportation, proximity to the universities,
and distance from polluting industries. The ability to account for liabilities and assets is critical given the changed circumstances of political and economic reform. In the context of a new land market, some of LSM's burdens appear likely to become boons.

The newer estates, for example, though poorly planned and landscaped, may hold suitable space for infill housing, and their proximity to open parkland is likely to enhance their value. The vacant but fully-serviced central parcels; formerly a financial drain on the cooperative, may prove to be extremely valuable land for new housing or commercial construction. The administration of the cooperative now faces an imminent decision on whether to sell this land to a retail developer. The cooperative would prefer to lease in the current inflationary economy but cannot say under what terms and cannot negotiate without a plan.

Some of the LSM administrators and planners seem not to have grasped the concept of land "value" as arrived at through bargaining. Their response under pressure is to call for solidarity in this "battle of the land." The Council as a whole, however, seems willing to adapt to the changed political and economic climate, and they have arranged to conduct a new study of the district and to develop a new master plan.

This plan, they say, is to be flexible in terms of location of uses and form of buildings. They are willing to abandon the "all-or-nothing" fully detailed and predetermined master plan and instead rely on performance standards or generalized regulations to control environmental design and quality. They recognize the need to accommodate incremental development by a variety of entities, either through lease or sale (though their commitment to subdivision is vague). Their greatest constraint now is the need to obtain clear title to the center, which they have divided into three areas (Figure 1-13), in order of ease of confirming their ownership. Their goals for each area are:

Area A: 20-30% commercial; 70-80% housing
Area B: 50-60% commercial; 40-50% housing
Area C: 100% commercial

While their primary interest is to develop these areas to serve the surrounding neighborhoods, the cooperative administrators believe the entire southwest part of Lublin and its suburbs would patronize commercial services there.

A growing number of Polish towns are beginning to adopt new plans for their vacant lands. Many of them resemble American plot layouts and zoning plans, with use and height restrictions, setbacks and Floor-Area Ratios applied likewise. LSM, however, may be the first "private" Polish housing cooperative to adopt such a plan to deal with profit-oriented proposals for its central open space.

In their contacts with the visitors from the U.S. and Britain, the LSM planners have expressed a desire to have the outsiders make such a plan for them. In fact, they do not have
Figure 1-11: Areas A, B and C of LSM Center
The Lublin Housing Cooperative

The money to pay Polish professionals to do so. Few professionals (including themselves) have experience with this type of plan. The question remains: can outsiders carry out this task? And even if they gathered enough accurate information to produce a reasonable plan, who would be able to implement it — to enforce its regulations and use it in negotiations with developers?

Given the social volatility of any new development among the neighborhoods of LSM, and given potential threats to the administration's credibility among many residents, it seems that narrow technical advice, though essential, may not be enough for creating a viable plan. Rather, the process of planning would have to include some kind of politically enabling feature—not only to arrive at the document itself, but also to imbue its creators with the knowledge to use it.

1 For detailed account, see SIGUS/The Development and Transition Series, "The January Workshop Report, Kazimierz, Poland," from the seminar The Case in Poland: January 14-26, 1991, New Housing, Housing Rehabilitation and Political Reconstruction.


3 Macaig, Adam, Vice President, City of Lublin (translated for Reinhard Goethert, Principal Research Associate, Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Lublin Town and its Housing Situation, a report in preparation for application for World Bank funds, August 30, 1990, p.1.


5 Interview with Sylwester Strzalkowski and other residents of LSM Osiedle Maria Konopnicka, March 25, 1992.

6 Discussion with Mieczyslaw Krzeszowiec, President of LSM Executive Council, and other members of Council, March 23, 1992.

7 Many of the following statistics were gathered by Anne Beamish, in an interview with Mr. Mieczyslaw Krzeszowiec, President of LSM, Dr. Romuald Dylewski, Planner and LSM Councilor, and Dr. Tadeusz Chmielewski, Planner and LSM resident, March 26, 1992.

8 In a typical example, after a merchant operating in one of the LSM estates opened a 24-hour liquor store, residents complained about the increased crime and vandalism that resulted and asked for a restriction on his hours of sale (a common type of municipal ordinance in the West); a
city councilor disagreed, arguing that business should not be restricted. Discussions with Konopnicka Estate residents, Lublin City Architect and Councilor Ewa Kipta and Dr. Romuald Dylewski, March 26-27, 1992.

9 One estate in LSM with an especially high proportion of single-family houses has locally been dubbed “Robber Village.”


12 Discussion with Tadeusz Chmielewski and members of LSM Executive Council, March 23, 1992.

13 Krzeszowiec, Mieczeslaw, President of the LSM Executive Council, March 23, 1992.

14 It is not clear whether these goals are based on need, given the likely phasing of development, or on existing use restrictions for these areas.

15 Interview with Czeslaw Bialecki, President of Metropolis/Dom i Miasto urban designers, November 7, 1992.
Evolution of an Approach

CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION OF AN APPROACH

Think of designs as having a capacity to help focus and organize people's attention and participation—by breaking the problem down into "digestible" pieces.

How do you know when they are focused and they understand?

By their ability to make decisions.

John Forester has defined the practice of urban planning as the "selective organizing of attention." He chose this modest-sounding description in order to contrast the ideal concept of planning as a rational, scientific, problem-solving enterprise with the chaotic, unpredictable and political realities of the job. In fact, the dichotomy he identified is remarkably apt in discussing the housing future of post-Socialist Poland.

Planners in the West have gradually come to terms with the apparent impossibility of shaping the space of cities through force of autocratic power, mass reform movements, or sheer professional expertise. The age of community participation in decision-making is well under way and the era of sweeping urban design projects seems to have passed.

Planners in Western cities today often can act only by drawing the attention of a myriad special interests to a relatively small issue or project, and by ensuring that this attention is politically favorable to the planner's particular goal.

The explicitness of the political dimension in Western planning theory and methods is anathema to traditional Socialist central planning—ironically, after the outspoken political consciousness of the early Socialist movement. Indeed, a glance at the rhetoric of Polish housing designers immediately after the war reveals some prophetic contradictions in the planning theory of the time.
Democracy and Design in Polish Housing

In 1949, Polish architects Helena and Szymon Syrkus described the planning of a new residential cooperative on the scale of 5,000-10,000 residents—a kind of prototype for settlements the size of one of LSM's seven estates. Declaring that the revolutionary liberation had "secured for the working class the power of decision in all vital questions—consequently in housing too," the designers mentioned efforts to involve local residents in planning, but with the proviso that they "become acquainted with the ideas which underlie our town planning and architectural shaping:"

We strive in our work to create the richest possible scale of spatial values for the benefit of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood during their daily walks in the districts. The democratisation of life should be accompanied by democratisation of space which means not only offering free access to it to the masses but as well the 'equality of rights and duties' of every strip of land.

Democracy referred to living standards rather than decision-making processes; freedom to define one's home was confined to the arrangement of beds within the flat. Throughout, the quality and especially the richness and variety of the environment depended upon the skill of the designer in manipulating industrialized building systems. Since land for development was consolidated into large parcels, and individual ownership of urban plots was abolished, there was no alternative. As is evident in the development of LSM, however, when resources dwindled for the innovative use of these large systems, the result could be an environment more monotonous than the idealistic designers had ever imagined.

A deeper legacy of the idealistic period of Socialist housing may be a firm faith in the power of expert rational-aesthetic planning—despite its failures. With the overthrow of the one-party regime, Poland accepted a public life of volatile—but-open politics. In many ways, the Polish planning profession seems not to have shared this acceptance. Furthermore, much of the public itself seems wary about establishing institutions that are seen as fundamentally divisive—including free markets and litigation and public hearing procedures. In the view of advisors from the West, therefore, Polish attitudes toward conflict resolution would seem to benefit from a demonstration of more positive models than the communities might already have seen or experienced. The stakes are high, however; failure to show positive results might disillusion them further.
The Argument for Participatory Approaches to Housing in Poland

In order to resolve conflicts of the kind facing LSM, Polish communities need to arm themselves with more than a repertoire of new techniques in planning, land value assessment, real estate finance, public review, property management and housing construction. They seek also to know where their interests lie. Without an open process of collective exploration and negotiation, local democratic institutions as well as free market enterprises may simply stagnate or fail to serve a large proportion of the population.

An inclusive process would be particularly appropriate in large cooperative housing communities. Currently, Polish housing cooperatives have the greatest potential overall development capacity. As development by private entrepreneurs expands, however, cooperatives are likely to find themselves at a special advantage in providing affordable housing in particular.\(^9\) Cooperative communities now need to gauge how to position themselves for the long term as well to make the best use of their assets under current conditions. It is not at all clear how the residents of LSM might gain from the continued support of cooperative membership, and under which circumstances they would fare adequately without it. Given that the answers to these questions may vary from resident to resident, the LSM administration will need to include as many residents as possible in the discussion, not only to achieve consensus but also to generate ideas.

The task would require more than an understanding of participatory processes as they are usually applied in Western democratic government. International advisors recommend design review, planning commissions, and public hearings as “consensus identification mechanisms”\(^{10}\) but these institutions are generally too passive from the lay public's perspective to engage the community as a positive force. On the other hand, other models of community participation in planning may have a new-found relevance in Poland: those drawn from experience with members of some of the most disadvantaged communities in the West and in the developing world — situations in which local governments have no practical alternative but to engage residents in the planning and design of their environments.

Participatory Experience—Limitations, Qualifications and Redefinitions

What have community-oriented designers learned from their experience? To begin with, Socialism itself has in many
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countries become a kind of failed participatory exercise. In Cuba, the microbrigade system may have involved residents in production of their own homes, but despite its claims, its uniform and generic technological approach to housing does not seem to have allowed much use of indigenous knowledge, nor much real feeling of local initiative. As in eastern Europe, introducing prefabrication technology, and remaking the individual into a "collective person" may have overridden true efforts at local self-determination.

In capitalist countries, participation has too frequently devolved into pro forma municipal ritual or outright manipulation of local communities. Even with the best of intentions, advocacy planners have coopted community groups through the use of expert language, which, when learned, becomes its own barrier to further participation. On the other side, often the "community" turns out to be just as divided and undemocratic as the official political bodies.

Efforts by architects to combine new aesthetics with participation by users has also generally failed to provide viable models for improving the environments of the disenfranchised. Either the effort is seen as irrelevant or it fails adequately to "change the rules of the [social] game."

Following on these hard lessons, some designers have revised their definitions of appropriate participation. Randolph Hester notes that failures of participatory design have led to a sparing use of it, especially in large bureaucratized projects. He now prefers to call the process "Mediated Environmental Justice," and insists that all groups interested in a project must participate if it is to be successful. Likewise, when Michel Conan urges that "inhabitants get as close as possible to the actual decision making processes," he emphasizes "social bargaining" rather than built form-making.

If the social aspect of participation is more important than the architectural one, what should be the role of the designer? Richard Hatch has claimed that "the true significance of participation lies in its effects on the participants, not on architecture," and that "the paramount purpose of participation is not good buildings, but good citizens in a good society."

But is it possible to measure one without the other? Without a resulting partnership, capable of making built improvements in the life of the community, participants cannot really say that they have succeeded together.

The human consequences of any environment are the measure of its quality, and not the form itself. But not the process either. . . . A local playground, produced by a genuine participatory process, but muddy and shabby in its final form, is a failure just as much as a handsome design imposed on the community—and it might be a greater failure.

It is true that, when invited to share the task of discovering/creating consensus in the development community,
design professionals often find their hard-gained skills inadequate. Their ability to analyze the potential for change in the environment, and to envision the forms such change might take, is handicapped by conventions of presentation and communication oriented only to their own expert circle; not only do these conventions work to exclude useful lay input, they also tend not to acknowledge the possibility of future change in the proposed intervention or its context. At times of radical transition and uncertainty, designers often throw up their hands, in effect saying, “Call me when you've got the money.” Unfortunately, when transition and uncertainty are endemic, they do this at the peril of the environment (not to mention the communities) they are professionally bound to ameliorate or protect. Alternatively, designers who successfully intervene in fluid situations can make critical and lasting, even defining improvements in the lives of whole communities.

**Accessibility**

The success of design interventions in marginal, unstable or transitional conditions depends on more than the insight of the designer or the participation of the community; the mode of communication between expert and lay parties is essential. In shaping the future development of the Lublin Housing Cooperative, designs must develop iteratively not only in the expert's mind or group of colleagues, but also in discussion with people of many different interests and abilities; models and drawings must be as accessible as possible. They must reflect previous discussions by distinguishing clearly between those aspects of the intervention which are likely to have a broad-based appeal to the community, and those which remain in the interest of particular groups, thus aiding further efforts to identify and clarify common goals.

**Indeterminacy**

Given the uncertain conditions of development in LSM, a very detailed and determined design runs a high risk of being irrelevant to what is actually built. On the other hand, mere vague indications for future improvements will fail to establish a common focus for attention and resources. The design must include both a concrete proposal to which all interested parties can address their known concerns, and also a degree of looseness commensurate with the range of development possibilities still open. The “base proposal” should have all the detail and force of the professional's vision; the remaining forms, however, should be expressed as options — each one
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accompanied by an explicit description of the conditions necessary to realize it — in enough detail to clarify their differences and indicate their likely impact on the environment.

Identity

Finally, an integral part of the method involves an approach to social space. Not only must the design proposals allow room for discussion, and the form of the intervention strike a balance between commitment and openness; the project site itself must be within the jurisdiction of a variety of domains of concern, from the individual resident, through the neighborhood, to the city. The planner must, in effect, focus attention on the “edges” of the community's social “ecology.”

In these spatial borderlands (eg. where neighborhood meets regional park, residences meet commerce), opportunities are strongest for making interventions which define the interests of many potential partners at once.

To planners, developers and designers used to stable development situations, the condition described above would seem counter-intuitive; after all, the fewer the parties involved, the more smoothly the project proceeds. Most residents, neighborhoods and cities are clearly defined in space and politics; project proponents find it worthwhile to try to steer clear of entities which need not have an interest in the business at hand. In Poland, however, this kind of institutional navigation is impossible to manage because no party knows where its interests lie and therefore naturally protects itself by assuming it has an interest in every proposal of any import.

Organizations and even individuals are frequently without identities — and are struggling to find or make them. There are both legal and spatial dimensions to this struggle which are impossible to avoid in design. In fact, the special kind of limbo that exists in Poland now offers designers a rare opportunity to assist in the very definition of the communities they engage.

*When the whole society is changing around you, the buildings and landscape itself are the only features you can count on and work with.*

34
The Participatory Planning Demonstration with LSM

The MIT SIGUS team visited Lublin three times over the course of 1991-1992 and much of the argument outlined above emerged only during or after each of these visits. Nevertheless, the basic reasoning took hold after the first visit in January 1991 and prompted the group to attempt a demonstration of participatory methods the following summer.

In the meantime, students had been working at MIT on purely spatial studies of LSM’s development potential in the form of large site models (Figures 2-1 and 2-2). The following Spring, a second studio group also produced models—this time focusing more closely on the vacant center of the cooperative (Figures 2-3 and 2-4). Although they hoped to share these studies with LSM members in some way, the groups were well aware of the rarefied nature of their work, and questioned its relevance to actual conditions and possibilities in LSM. The models clearly had the power to suggest the site’s potential for a larger, unified identity (for example, the link between park and church; the theme of parks in valleys; the use of a market square for the center) but they were mute regarding the feasibility and appropriateness of their suggestions and did not lend themselves to that level of criticism.
Participation in Post-Socialist Housing

Facing their own lack of knowledge about LSM, the group agreed to spend the time in Lublin on a way of working which would depend least on the visitors’ own expertise and make the most of residents’ local knowledge—a social, interactive and inclusive process of modeling the environment; a method of focusing discussion on development and regulatory strategy as well as program and form.

Engaging the Residents of LSM

For its method, the Participatory Planning Demonstration drew on "Planning for Real," a procedure and kit of tools for planning neighborhood improvement developed in the United Kingdom by Tony Gibson of the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation. The kit consists of simple, inexpensive paper materials for assembling a model of a neighborhood site and buildings at a scale which allows the identification of individual units; cards with options for physical improvement written on them; and sample tables for ordering these options according to the immediacy of their need, the type and availability of resources to realize them, and the people responsible for their realization.
The cards are designed to be pinned loosely on the model, identifying where specific kinds of improvements can be made and also to the charts, where they can be moved from one category or priority to another. The card-and-table system is, in fact, infinitely adaptable; almost any issue involving the making of choices and priorities can be represented in it.

The essential feature of *Planning for Real* is its provision of a neutral, visual medium of communication accessible to all members of a community -- specialists and general public alike. People of differing domains of expertise can see equally clearly their biases and the consequences of their preferences. Yet, because the expression of these preferences is cards on a chart, the personalities and egos of the proponents are less likely to obstruct constructive disagreement than if the decisions had to be made through verbal debate alone.

Furthermore, in order to avoid the tendency of experts to dominate discussion at the expense of less eloquently-phrased (but nonetheless constructive) ideas, the protocol at meetings included the rule that experts/officials not initiate discussion or make proposals, but only make themselves available to answer the questions of the general public -- putting them "on tap, not on top," as it were.

In principle, therefore, the result of *Planning for Real* is that discussions over the allocation of resources begin slowly but then quickly bring all participants up to the same level of
Participation in Post-Socialist Housing

discourse and then proceed with little misunderstanding. The effort necessary to bring large groups together in such meetings is justified by the savings in time and energy later attempting to resolve conflicts that would have been avoided by such a process in the beginning.

The Planning for Real demonstration at LSM proceeded much as expected. After making some initial contacts among residents of different estates, the SIGUS group decided to work with a neighborhood—the Maria Konopnicka Estate—which had particularly sparse common amenities and monotonous buildings but also enough open space to envision improvements easily.

Residents participated in the making of the model and the formulating of options; helped to publicize the exercise throughout the neighborhood; gathered in groups with municipal experts to apply the options to the model, discuss the priorities among them and determine their constraints (Figures 2-5, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8, and 2-9). Finally, they demonstrated the process to cooperative officials and residents of other estates.

The use of Planning for Real served admirably to organize the attention of residents on the most critical issues facing their immediate neighborhood environment. It also appeared to bring them together around common interests that they had not recognized before. As such activities, go, however, it was very quick and did not receive the kind of

Figure 2-6: Planning for Real model at LSM

Figure 2-7: Option cards on Planning for Real model
continuous support that usually results in “real workable partnerships.” Furthermore, the demonstration of Summer 1991 showed little capacity to help the cooperative as a whole work out a plan for development in its center.

From the start the SIGUS group knew that the method could not draw together the entire cooperative of 50,000 members. It was appropriate as a way of arriving at neighborhood improvement and infill plans but not a "little downtown" to serve shoppers and employ workers even from beyond the bounds of LSM. The planning group did attempt to draw residents’ attention to the central vacant areas adjacent to their estate, but found that their horizon of interest did not extend that far and probably would not do so until they had accomplished something closer to home.

But a far more serious obstacle to the continuing success of the method was the lack of involvement by the cooperative administrators. The group of visiting students and faculty did not really appreciate the significance of their absence until the next on-site workshop in March 1992.

**Engaging the Leadership of LSM**

During their attempts to initiate a participatory process with the LSM community, the MIT visiting group took some positions which provoked discouraging, if informative, responses from the cooperative leaders. To begin with, the visitors had decided not to combine a display of the students’ studio models with the demonstration of participatory methods; they feared that the studio work, being very polished and product-oriented, might “contaminate” an open-ended and inclusive process by leading discussion and intimidating the less articulate participants.

In applying a method of participation which had been developed largely in the context of low-income housing, the visitors assumed that there was a large gap in social background and professional expertise between LSM residents and the officials who administered the cooperative. On the contrary, as all of the officials were residents themselves, they tended to reflect the social makeup of the community. And given the desirability of membership in that particular cooperative, LSM’s social profile is probably biased towards the more educated and affluent end anyway.
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Regarding expertise, while the planners and designers among the resident-officials certainly carried a degree of professional prestige, the current radical transformation of Polish law and economy had already begun to render their skills and knowledge obsolete. They were lacking most of the information necessary to operate in a market economy and their self-confidence was badly shaken.

The effects of this misjudgment were two-fold. The visitors from MIT consistently underestimated the capacity of the LSM Executive Council to represent fairly the residents overall; and from the point of view of the Executive Council, the MIT group had a credibility problem which was resolved only when the students displayed their studio work—well after the initiation of the participatory exercise. For the administrators, the studio work represented evidence of commitment by MIT to the future of LSM. They accepted the students’ models for their inspirational value, and easily tolerated their failures to depict actual conditions accurately.

The administrators’ reaction to the participatory “game” was far less amiable, even though the game was a more open and flexible method of raising ideas for physical intervention in the existing environment. From the beginning, they found its simplicity insulting to their expertise. Of course, this response might be expected in any process which threatens the monopoly on knowledge of a professional class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INPUTS</th>
<th>Options NOW</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Options SOON</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Options LATER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More information</td>
<td>Responsibility for parking spaces</td>
<td>Cooperative administration</td>
<td>Improved landscaping</td>
<td>Cooperative administration</td>
<td>Share parking with other estates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone else</td>
<td>Bank branch</td>
<td>Local PKO headquarters</td>
<td>Acoustic barriers</td>
<td>Bridge club</td>
<td>Balcony rebuilding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With some money</td>
<td>Benches for mothers</td>
<td>Cooperative administration</td>
<td>Subgrade parking to replace existing surface parking</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>Large sport complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional advice</td>
<td>Improved security</td>
<td>Police (1) Police Station (2) Police Borough Council</td>
<td>Outdoor market</td>
<td>Police (1)</td>
<td>New garages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ourselves</td>
<td>Bridge club</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>Rebuilding of shop pavilions</td>
<td>Coop administration (2)</td>
<td>Dance studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ourselves with money and advice</td>
<td>1) Bike paths</td>
<td>Coop administration (1)</td>
<td>Basketball courts</td>
<td>Speed limit</td>
<td>2) Police</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.8: Chart of available resources

Figure 2.9: Chart of neighborhood priorities
In the case of LSM, however, the feelings of the administrators were especially strong due to the urgency of the problem that faced them. They had probably felt that their knowledge was insufficient for their task, but, in the absence of a wide array of influential people with different interests participating in the game with them, they suspected that the exercise would only expose their helplessness without offering any real solutions.

It became clear that while a collaborative, non-elitist method of design discussion might still have some special utility in the planning of LSM's future center, the credibility of the process would require parallel technical research. In any case, even a "low-tech" community design exercise would eventually need to draw on information about demographics, markets and infrastructure capacity, and this information is sorely lacking. But having been reassured by the search for that information, community leaders could more comfortably target the question: What kind of place should this be?

The leaders of LSM might be more willing to engage in a participatory process if they could see in advance that it would lead to the satisfactory resolution of hard choices. Somehow, consideration of the site would have to channel their excitement over the inspirational models into a substantive discussion about a regulatory plan for the center.

**Structuring the Site**

All design begins with a choice of scale and a frame of space. In effect, even before proposing any built definitions, designers must define the space they intend to consider. This act of definition is political and economic as well as professional. Professionally, the designer may disagree with the problem-site as provided by the client, but in a capitalist system, he has little power to change it. This constraint was in fact the fundamental target of the socialist architects' mid-century revolt.

In freeing the site from the constraints of the market, however, Socialist societies (with a capital S) found themselves bound by the tyranny of professional expertise ("teleological redistribution," in the words of Ivan Szelenyi) which became a political and economic force in its own right.34 A third alternative would be to structure the site not with lots for the speculative developer, nor with the fiat of the professional designer or bureaucrat; rather, the site would be structured simply to allow people to discuss it.

The argument earlier in this chapter, then, seems to remain valid: a successful participatory approach to the site would produce a plan defined enough to provide *identity*, *indeterminate* enough to allow for choice and change, and
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accessible enough to accept the kind of input which no professional—no matter how well-trained—can anticipate.

Since the professional planner in this situation must be shorn of his expert’s mystique, the approach follows an inductive rather than a deductive logic. Teachers of rhetoric point out that when a speaker has the confidence of his audience, it behooves him to present the general conclusion first, and follow with specifics after. To those “who might view a change with apprehension,” however, he would better engage their interest by discussing the evidence first, and then the conclusion.

A similar relation characterizes participatory design, in which case the conclusion is rarely known to begin with anyway. In discussing the site, the “building blocks” of the neighborhood are first on the agenda: What kind of housing and other uses should be accommodated there? Should as many households as possible own some ground? What are the implications for density, parking and open space? And for phasing, and size of the developing entity?

The “cement” of the neighborhood follows after: How do the open spaces add up to an access network, for vehicles and pedestrians? How can this space provide the neighborhood with legibility and an identity? What are the implications for public expenditure and regulation? Finally, the discussion moves to links between the new neighborhood and the surrounding district.

At this point, expert opinion is likely to be most critical, in the sense that professionals generally have a broader “horizon of interest” than residents, and may provide suggestions which will bring the whole process into another round of design. It is the primary responsibility of the professional to point out to lay participants the implications of small decisions for the larger scheme, and what alternatives exist. So while the initial site organization represents little more than a framework for discussion, it will inevitably change and become more detailed as smaller-scale issues are resolved.

One difficulty in this way of working is determining a “deadline” for each major decision. Without some sense in advance of when certain issues will be resolved, participants are likely to become frustrated and confused. The procedure in this case will depend on which critical issues the group identifies at the outset. One can imagine the professional’s role to be a mediator or "master of ceremonies" who sets a schedule for the discussions.

Tools for Exploration

The following exploration uses a set of tools which might aid the kind of process outlined above. A model depicts the scenario in such a way that various members of the
community (or partners in development) might readily grasp the range of alternative forms and development strategies which are supported in the design. Images of other environments elsewhere in Poland and beyond Polish borders then illustrate some of the choices available to the community; finally, diagrams further clarify the choices and link them to developmental and regulatory implications raised in the exploration.

However, these pages will demonstrate something less than a simulation of the process in action. Without the spontaneous participation of a variety of interests, the model cannot show the kind of diversity and clash of forms which would probably result. Rather, it is an attempt to condense many domains of decision-making into one step of the process, so that connections between them can more easily be shown. For example, the model assumes a more defined street and lot layout than would be necessary to begin with, but this layout is also more generic and flexible than a community itself might devise, given the specific knowledge of its interests that the group would bring to the table.

3 "Make no big plans"—we’ve turned 180 degrees from the day of Daniel Burnham, according to Gary Hack, Lecture at MIT, April 22, 1992.
5 Syrkus, p. 55.
6 Syrkus, p. 56.
7 Syrkus, p. 58.
8 Syrkus, p. 62.
Participation in Post-Socialist Housing


15Hamdi, pp.85-86.


17Hester, p.294.


19Hatch, pp. 8 and 9.

20Hamdi, p.75.


22The term was used in this context by Tony Gibson, when discussing the limitations of the Planning For Real process in LSM (see below).

23Reinhard Goethert.

24Design by Team #1, John Myer Studio, MIT, Spring 1991.


26For a complete description, see “SIGUS Reports: Summary of the Participatory Planning Exercise, Lublin, Poland,” of the Poland Housing Initiatives Preparatory Field Work in Lublin, Poland, Summer 1991.


29Photograph by Maciej Szymczak.

30Photograph by Jean-Pierre Parnas

31Photograph by Jean-Pierre Parnas

32Correspondence with Nabeel Hamdi, Oxford Polytechnic, [date].

33Photograph by Christina Wasch.


35In the absence of actual community or administrative input, I have made a proposal of my own to be the basis of the scenario. For the purpose of the thesis, this proposal is intended only as credible illustration of the method, not as a commitment on my part to what should be built in this place.
Who Participates?

Imagine that the Lublin Housing Cooperative has finally secured legal control over Area A (shown on the preceding pages and in Figure 3-1) and can no longer afford to delay its search for developers for this land. A team of designers agrees on the desirability of strengthening and preserving a network of walkable open spaces between the church and the park; of leaving valleys free of buildings where possible, especially on north-facing slopes; of avoiding new construction in the shadows of existing buildings; of providing pedestrian links between neighborhoods and the center; and of encouraging use of public transport rather than automobiles. On smaller-scale issues they generally disagree but are willing to reserve judgment until a broader-based discussion is under way. In any case, none of them has any idea how feasible their schemes are in terms of density, phasing, construction techniques, financing, and ownership and management issues.

The discussion group includes the LSM Executive Council, representatives from each of the seven elected Estate Councils and from the waiting list of prospective residents, a specially-elected task force from the estate adjacent to the
Figure 3-1: Plan of LSM center showing area of discussion
Development site, municipal architects and the cooperative’s architects, and the city engineer. The cooperative should probably invite prospective builders and financers in order to garner more information in return for giving the entrepreneurs some influence on the plan. This would be a particularly reasonable step given the small size of Lublin’s building and banking industry.

Initial Site Layout

Although the participants may generally be willing at first to give a temporary, generic treatment to “big moves” on the site—for the purposes of focusing on smaller, more "graspable" elements of the neighborhood—residents of the neighboring estate may want to establish some programmatic features at the outset. They are likely to point out that they currently use the land for parking, allotment gardens and a tree-shaded path to reach the bus stop (shown in preceding bird’s-eye view and in Figure 3-2). Although they understand that their tenure for the allotment gardens and parking officially expires with any new development of the land, they may resist plans to destroy these amenities nonetheless.

The cooperative may have to agree at the outset to build additional parking and allow the residents to replant their
Figure 3-3: Plan of initial site layout for model (park in tone)
gardens on the slopes of the valley on the other side of the estate. Alternatively (or additionally) the group could agree that the new site plan would incorporate a landscaped pedestrian path to the main street; and that this path would run partially through a park in a hollow north of the existing housing. This proposal would also satisfy the criteria that valleys and shadowed areas be planted, not built, and that residents be encouraged to use public transport.

Having made this initial concession to the surrounding environment, the group would have to address the pattern of development in legal and financial terms. If the size of potential development entities is unknown, the site layout would have to provide a maximum number of lots which could be built out individually or in groups (Figure 3-4). For even greater flexibility, the area between the lots could be designated simply as public rights-of-way, which could become green strips, pedestrian paths, arcades, courtyards, parking, access roads or through streets—depending on the uses and land values which ultimately develop there (Figures 3-5, 3-6, and 3-7).
Figure 3-8: Illustrative working model
Building a Model

Having laid out the site as flexibly as possible, the group would build a model at about 1:200 scale (Figure 3.8)—just large enough to easily distinguish a curb from a simple change in paving; steps from a ramp; a person standing up from a person sitting down; one building floor from another—so that participants can identify the details which make public spaces of all dimensions and make decisions based on their merits, rather than on preconceived notions.\(^1\) In the case of this exploration for the LSM center, the model represents an area only 120 meters wide and 160 meters long, or approximately 2 hectares (5 acres).

It is important that the model depict a range of public and private spaces, and access and use possibilities—in this case, an area stretching from the main street at the center of the cooperative, back to the parking lot of the first building in the neighboring estate. The model also includes the new amenities for that estate, including the path, the park, and an upper deck over the existing parking lot.

To begin the discussion, the model-building must address the foundation of the new neighborhood—the aspect with which all participants are most likely to identify, and which most directly responds to the most pressing need. In the case of Area A of the LSM center, the cooperative seeks to devote 80\% of the space to housing.\(^2\) So housing units are the first consideration.

Most new housing development in Lublin is taking the form of detached single-family houses, rowhouses or low walk-up variations thereof. The builders of such housing seem to be relatively wealthy. They act either as individual owner-contractors building, as members of a cooperative which collectively acquires land and then allows its members to build attached units individually, or, in a very few cases, as speculative builder-developers.

For the purposes of the study, the model depicts a lot-by-lot build-out of commercial/apartment buildings along the main street and rowhousing at near to the highest density possible for this type. Lots are 6m by 30m—a standard configuration for those other areas of LSM which are already developed with rowhouses. This is close to the minimum width and length necessary to accommodate this type of housing, with space for two cars and a viable produce garden on the lot. To take advantage of the southeast-facing slope of the site, the housing is not developed on lots back-to-back but is all oriented to the sun, with access ways on both sides of each lot (Figure 3.9). In order to reduce the expense of public access, the row of houses nearest the new parking deck are reached
Figure 3-9: Site Section
only by a 3m pedestrian path. Also, the access way between the commercial buildings and the first row of housing can be a low-standard service road or mews.

Showing this basic scenario, the model can inform a more detailed discussion about density, access and the configuration of buildings and open space. Designers in the group can supplement the model with local and foreign references to make the image more vivid and to suggest alternative designs. The group as a whole can try them out on the model. Naturally, questions of infrastructure expense will drive the group to consider double-loaded lots rather than single-loaded ones. Similarly, the discussion will also be led to question the lot sizes and dimensions, street widths, building heights, collective versus individual housing forms—all of the assumptions initially taken in this illustrative exploration.

Using References

In conjunction with model-building, the discussion will also benefit from the use of references illustrating the ways particular issues appear in other environments. There are many forms the references can take, from photographs or drawings, to actual field trips. The object is to make as real as possible to a diverse group the variety of solutions to an urban design problem, and to present the solutions in such a way that they can use them in making decisions.

The following sections present some issues as examples of how discussion over model-building and references can help to clarify choices available to the community. They have to do with:

- parking and access as a use of open space
- density
- mix of uses
- public spaces

These issues follow from concerns which residents and officials at LSM have already voiced about environmental quality. They are also central to questions of how public cooperative resources are to be used and of how the public will regulate the use of private resources. Nevertheless, there are of course many other critical issues in laying out a new community and these serve only to illustrate the possible route of the discussion.
Figure 3-10: Street and lot section
Parking and traffic were the only two issues which both residents and administrators of LSM placed among the most pressing local environmental problems. Residents complain that parking along the narrow roads within the estates is dangerous. Car theft is rampant and many residents pay high fees to park in special watched lots. The administration is considering charging high rents for parking spaces, but believes the spaces would have to be covered to do so. Currently, most parking is accommodated in large lots or garages.

By way of contrast, the discussion model shows a very privatized layout with space to accommodate two cars in each lot (Figure 3-10). Much of the public space is access, layered with planting and different pavement types that can accommodate the mixing of cars and pedestrians. Apartments above the shops have parking spaces and access which are separate from the commercial streetfront and which share a mews-like access way with a row of houses behind. As shown, no residents would need to park outside the area of the model.

However, only by referring to environments elsewhere, and by varying the model accordingly, would a group be able to evaluate the design.
To an American eye, rush hour in LSM is hardly noticeable, but the strikingly hierarchical and “tree”-like structure of access in LSM makes the vehicular access problem difficult indeed to solve. Although many roads do loop around, drivers generally have little choice in determining their route from one point to another and what traffic there is tends to be concentrated. Where the parking is most needed—at the ends of the “branches”—the roads are narrowest and not suitable for on-street parking. One of the choices facing LSM, therefore, is whether to allow for concentration or dispersal of cars in the new center.

Two extremes exist within LSM itself. When successful, the communal-style estates have dealt with the problem by reserving large tracts of land exclusively for parking. In the case of an estate which has privatized much of its land, the individual homeowners must accommodate parking on their own lots.
Access, Parking and Open Space—References

Concentrated Open Space and Parking

Here, the designers made the strongest possible dichotomy between open pedestrian areas and parking. This neighborhood, the most admired of the LSM estates, is oriented entirely towards the sun, with a long, snaking wall of apartments facing a finger-like arrangement of lower apartment buildings, between which are a series of carefully landscaped walkways and play areas, overlooked by balconies. The back side of the estate, however, is given over entirely to garages, parking lots and service roads.

Dispersed Open Space and Parking

The streets of rowhouses in Piastowskie Estate are diametrically opposed to the environment of Slowackie Estate. As much of the neighborhood is privatized as possible, leaving each narrow house to devote most of its frontage to the driveway. The homeowners compensate by decorating their garage doors in colorful ways and by orienting their living towards lush private gardens in the rear.
Access, Parking and Open Space—References

Security of Access

Outside of LSM, there are environments built before the War which represent another ideal of urban housing still widely held in Poland. Examples of these arrangements of housing and access can clarify even further the choices available to the planners of LSM.

The postwar cooperative housing typology, represents an extreme of separation between dwelling unit, access and parking; other collective forms have achieved more of a balance between the control over access associated with individual home ownership and the savings in ground space which comes with collective housing.

Figure 3-16: Zoliborz, Warsaw

Figure 3-18: Zoliborz, Warsaw
Access, Parking and Open Space—References

Concentrated Open Space and Parking

Although spurned by the Socialist architects for its neo-craftsman style, the courtyard type in these walk-up settlements nevertheless provides a collective and inexpensive response to the need for surveillance, a sense of territory, and (perhaps most useful for LSM) a way to use the same common space for parking, formal definition of the community, pedestrian access and recreation.

Dispersed Open Space and Parking

For many Polish city dwellers, this neighborhood represents the ideal urban residential environment. Each house fronts on the street, but rather than being open, the lots are enclosed by a wall through which garage gates and foot entrances lead to the house and garden inside. The houses are not larger than most rowhouses built in Lublin today (approx. 200m²), but they have a larger footprint. The street network is dense but not useful for other than access. This is an ideal, but an expensive one.
Access, Parking and Open Space—References

Cars and People Sharing Space

Another approach to solving the parking and traffic problem which plagues LSM may be to consider ways of making cars less obtrusive and dangerous generally, rather than to build larger and more isolated parking facilities. One example of this approach was shown above, in the courtyard reference. The difference is further clarified here.

Parking at the Front or Parking at the Back?

While under Socialism, all space was considered “public,” private property will now drive most development, and some recurrence of the public-private duality is inevitable. Parking usually defines the orientation of the main entrance of the house. In most single-family housing, this entrance can be quite private; in multifamily housing, parking often conflicts with the collective access. As seen above in the courtyard references from Zoliborz, however, parking can coexist with the public or collective face of housing.
Access, Parking and Open Space—References

Green parking: in LSM and in Zoliborz

Even in the case of the nicest parking areas in LSM, the cars are separated from pedestrian life. This arrangement uses a lot of space, does little to encourage careful driving and invites auto thefts. The discussion of alternatives would benefit by references to streets in which parking coexists with planting, walking and going in and out of houses.

Likewise, these two streets of rowhouses in England show very different ways of combining parking with access to and among the houses. Both are collective approaches but one is very public and formal; the other very private. Safety is provided in one by a movable barrier; in the other, more subtly, by bollards, planting and a change in paving.
Access, Parking and Open Space—Variations on Rowhouse Patterns in the Model

The lot is deep enough that with the front of the main house flush with the lot line on one street, another building could be built flush with the back of the lot, leaving a garden between. The ground floor of the back building could be a garage and access way; the upper floor(s) could be rented as a flat. The street at the front would be wide enough to be planted with trees and accommodate on-street parking and other uses, like a Dutch Woonerf (Figure 3-11). The rear street might resemble an English mews.

Alternatively, the house could sit towards the back of the lot, partially over the garage, leaving a large garden to the south. If the house contained more than one unit, entrances to the upper units could be from one side, while the ground-floor unit could be entered from the other.

Finally, if more parking were needed and the house contained more units, the front portion of the lot could hold two parking spaces and the street line would, in effect, be pulled back to the front of the house or to a patio or garden in front.
Access, Parking and Open Space—Variations on Rowhouse Patterns in the Model

Implications for Development

Inevitably, discussion about the use of open space for access and parking will lead to broader questions about the development of the LSM center. For example: is the cost of providing two access ways to each lot offset by the future benefit of being able to subdivide the lot further? Should the lot be sized with that in mind?

How does the pattern help or hinder the development of home offices or workshops (an especially dynamic part of the Polish economy today)? The variation on the top left would be particularly amenable to this type of commerce; the backlot building could be the place of business and the rear “mews” street could easily become a second shopping street, as it also serves the commercial building along the main street at the top of the slope. Would the revenues so generated justify this extra street space?

Likewise, the discussion will have to consider the appropriate regulation of these uses. Should the plan allow for future subdivision? If each lot can accommodate at most two cars plus one on-street, does that determine how many units can be built on the lot?

That last question raises the issue of density, which might be the next focus of discussion.
Figure 3-24: Illustrative model with multistory apartment building
Unit Size and Density

Although density has been an important focus of housing standards around the world, it is a very problematic measure of design quality. Within certain ranges, the same densities can exist in radically different environments. Even the social and psychological impact of density is relative and varies widely with culture. When combined with equally rigid standards for sunlight, unit size and construction techniques, however, the built result tends to be extremely monotonous. Polish planners are now trying to free themselves from the rigidity of Poland’s established density standards, but in this time of economic reform, they are likely to find themselves bound by density requirements of a new kind: those dictated by market feasibility.

How can density levels be used in a participatory process? They must be considered as a kind of expert’s “test” of the feasibility of an idea. We have seen how a certain configuration of buildings on a model can support various uses of open space. Within this configuration, however, a range of densities can occur. This range of densities can be identified numerically, but made more experiential by linking the numbers to physical changes in the model (compare Figure 3-8 to Figure 3-24) and compared with the densities of existing estates.
### Unit Size and Density—Variations on Rowhouse Patterns in the Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario for each lot</th>
<th>Unit Size $m^2$ (ft$^2$)</th>
<th>No. of Units on model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Density</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each lot has one ground-access unit</td>
<td>215 (2,300)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium Density</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each lot has one ground-access unit</td>
<td>130 (1,400)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus one flat</td>
<td>70 (750)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum Density</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each lot has one ground-access unit</td>
<td>65 (700)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus a first flat</td>
<td>65 (700)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus a second flat</td>
<td>65 (700)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Design For Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rowhouse Scenario with Mix of Other Uses</th>
<th>Unit Size $m^2$ (ft$^2$)</th>
<th>No. of Units on model</th>
<th>Total Living Area: $m^2$ (ft$^2$)</th>
<th>Net Density: units per ha (acre)</th>
<th>Neighbrhd Density: units per ha (acre)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Density</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each rowhouse lot has one ground-access unit</td>
<td>215 (2,300)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5,375 (57,500)</td>
<td>57.5 (22.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily apartment building</td>
<td>60 (650)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1,380 (14,950)</td>
<td>319.4 (127.8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats above shops</td>
<td>70 (750)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2,380 (25,500)</td>
<td>126.4 (50.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,135 (97,950)</td>
<td>41 (16.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium Density</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each lot has one ground-access unit</td>
<td>130 (1,400)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3,250 (35,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One flat</td>
<td>70 (750)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1,750 (18,750)</td>
<td>115 (43.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rowhouse Subtotal:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily apartment building</td>
<td>60 (650)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1,380 (14,950)</td>
<td>319.4 (127.8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats above shops</td>
<td>70 (750)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2,380 (25,500)</td>
<td>126.4 (50.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8,760 (94,200)</td>
<td>53.5 (21.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum Density</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each lot has one ground-access unit</td>
<td>65 (700)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4,875 (52,500)</td>
<td>172.4 (68.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two flats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily apartment building</td>
<td>60 (650)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1,380 (14,950)</td>
<td>319.4 (127.8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats above shops</td>
<td>70 (750)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2,380 (25,500)</td>
<td>126.4 (50.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8,635 (92,950)</td>
<td>66 (26.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit Size and Density—Existing and Proposed

Density figures mean little unless they are linked to a familiar environment. In the case of planning for Area A of the LSM center, local participants will want to know not only how many households the plan will support, but how that number compares to the number of families living in a nearby neighborhood.

The adjacent estate, Maria Konopnicka, has 1,750 households. If the entire neighborhood is calculated to include all roads, parking, landscaping and allotment gardens, (a total of 25 hectares), then the density is 70 units/hectare—hardly more than the 66 units/hectare achieved on the model at its densest interpretation. However, if all of the common ground and allotment gardens are subtracted, the calculation yields a net density for the Konopnicka Estate of 1,115 units/hectare, while the model for the center has a density of only 172! Even if the allotment gardens are retained in the net density calculation for Konopnicka Estate (by the logic that they are essentially analogous to the gardens on the private rowhouse lots), the existing estate has a density of 430 units/hectare—still far higher than the scheme in the model.

In simplest terms this means that the lowrise scheme is far more efficient in its use of land than is the existing highrise estate. But the community would not make a judgment automatically to abandon one way of building in favor of the other. There remain significant differences between them which call for subjective value judgments. In the lowrise scheme, for example, only one third of the rowhouse inhabitants might have access to a garden; is this preferable to the lot of every Konopnicka resident who at least can enjoy at will the open ground beneath her highrise apartment?

Of more concern to the administration, in a time of public budget cuts, is the burden of maintaining common amenities, including green space like that of the Konopnicka Estate. One of the goals of participatory action in current Polish housing development is to identify the collective’s essential interest, and to promote it through targeted investment. In that sense, the comparison of a proposal’s net and neighborhood densities serves as an index of how precisely targeted that investment is. A small ratio indicates that a minimum of common land remains to be used and managed by the collective.

Of course, these numbers say nothing about the uses—wise or foolish—to which the land is put. Again, in the case of Area A, a significant proportion of non-residential land will not be purely public either; unlike the surrounding estates, the LSM center is to be mainly commercial, and even the crude yardstick of density is of little use in anticipating an appropriate mix of residences and business.
Figure 3-25: Commercial main street
Mix of Uses

Although the cooperative administration wishes 70%-80% of Area A of the LSM center to be housing, it is not at all clear that this proportion is feasible. There are still questions about what type of commerce or services should occupy the remaining 20%. What proportion of that business will serve the new neighborhood? Or the existing neighborhoods? Or the surrounding districts? Perhaps the housing will require cross-subsidy from commercial rents, and that 20% commercial is not sufficient to do this.

How large will the business entity be? The larger the commercial project, the more difficult it will be to plan the whole center according to a positive participatory process. The community is likely to find itself reacting to the project proponent, rather than actively leading in decisions. However, if the general "fabric" of small-scale business opportunities of the center is determined in advance, at least the cooperative will have a set of established goals and guidelines by which to measure large idiosyncratic project proposals.
Mix of Uses

Assuming that commercial development, like housing, will occur incrementally by small builders or investors, this model draws on current references typical throughout Poland. The model projects two types of commercial space: district-oriented and neighborhood-oriented.

District Commercial Development

Lots 16 meters deep and varying 18 to 28 meters wide line the main street which runs through LSM’s center. (Figure 3-25). The buildings are from four to five stories high, have shops or cafes on the ground floor, offices on the floor above that, and apartments on the top two or three floors. The apartments have separate entrances on the (south) side and are generally oriented in that direction, overlooking the residential neighborhood with terraces which step back so as not to dominate the lower rowhouses below.

Parking for the shops is provided in front. Behind, the shops are serviced by a street parallel to the main street. At that level—as much as 3 meters below the shopfront thresholds—lot owners would have a choice of providing extra subgrade parking, or of using it as storage.

The total floor area of the main street shops and offices is 2,580m².

Figure 3-26: Ostraleka, Poland

Figure 3-27: Ostraleka, Poland
Mix of Uses

Neighborhood Commercial and Services

The mixing of commercial and services with residences in the neighborhood is distinct from the kind of development that occurs along the main street. In the model, a separate pedestrian way runs from the nearby existing estate through the new park and neighborhood up perpendicularly to the main street (Figure 3-31). The neighborhood shops line this path. They also have housing or offices above them, but on a scale which is more compatible with the surrounding rowhouses.

Although the district shopping and services could easily serve the neighboring residences as well, the path itself was laid down early in the process (see “The Site” above). Once established, it may draw enough passersby from the new and old neighborhoods to justify shops and social services. If the pressure for shopping is strong enough, it may also become a part of the district center—in the form of a pedestrian bazaar, for example.

To begin with, however, the mix of uses along this path is a much more local point of focus than the activities along the main street; in this sense, it may be a more effective subject for group discussion than the character of the main street itself.
Figure 3-30: Pedestrian path and public place
Local Public Places

Having started to anticipate the probable form of private residential and commercial development, and its immediate public support, the discussion can focus on parts of the environment which have a more social significance. These are the public places which provide community identity. They can support housing or business, and they may be part of a more regional network of activities, but they require special attention because they represent the target for continuing collective investment.

In the model, this investment takes the form of the path leading across the site from the neighboring highrise estate to the main shopping street (Figure 3-31). The path breaks the regular grid of streets and lots, forming a series of small plazas and terraces of varying widths as it moves up the slope from the park in the valley. A ramp mediates the change in level. It runs alternately inside and outside a covered arcade along the fronts of the buildings which face the path from the northwest.

These buildings may be built to accommodate specific functions or they may be leased as lots for private development. In any case, they can be considered as part of the public space, and may be the one point at which the community attempts to exercise specific design control.
Local Public Places

The Extent of the Collective Intervention

Communities can enhance the coherence and legibility of public space through many kinds of regulation or investment without having to finance the construction and management of the whole area. Beyond controlling the shape of the space through the initial laying out of lot lines and public rights-of-way, a plan can include detailed designs for the landscaping of the space, or specifications for the design of adjacent buildings. A good design will allow the public to intervene both selectively and effectively.

If a group is to decide through participatory action what interventions it will make through a plan, it may be tempted to allow itself more control than is possible or affordable. However, if the group includes all parties likely to have an interest in the development—including those who would profit by its commercial component but gain little from its social amenities—there will be a certain rigor built into the process. Such a process seems particularly appropriate in Poland, where there is a dearth of the economic stability and technical experience necessary to obtain rigor from expert sources.

Figure 3-32: Sandomierz, Poland

Figure 3-34: Zamosc, Poland
Local Public Places

Spatial Mediation

One way of approaching public interventions selectively is to focus on the edges of public and private space. A community design group can think of a public square, plaza, arcade or park as an extension of its doorstep. Where there is a change in grade, for example, an edge is created naturally along the foundations of private buildings which can be exploited by the collective. Terraces, steps, ramps, berms can provide unity to an otherwise heterogeneous collection of buildings, without interfering in incremental development. Indeed, such interventions can serve as an enabling “platform” for private construction.

Alternatively, the edges of the buildings themselves could become part of the collective realm. Arcades provide shelter and visual coherence for the public in exchange for additional private space possible above the street level. This level of intervention, however, requires a high degree of coordination between the community and individual builders and is not supportive of incremental growth.

Finally, special objects like fountains, benches or trees, strategically placed, can generate collective activities at a minimum cost to the public.
Participation in Post-Socialist Housing

1 Tony Gibson established the same scale in modeling existing neighborhoods so that people can identify their own apartments.

2 See Chapter 1, above.

3 Interview with Kazimierz Kirejczyk, architect and lecturer, Politechnika Warszawska, January 19, 1992.

4 Davis, Sam, ed., The Form of Housing, New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold.

5 Interview with Romuald Dylewski, Director, Institute of Physical Planning and Municipal Economy, Lublin, July 26, 1991.
CONCLUSIONS

The issues in the previous illustrative model and reference sections were chosen because they seem to touch at the heart of the problems that residents and leaders of the Lublin Housing Cooperative themselves identified. As the chief of the Konopnicka Estate resident council remarked, "we face a fundamental conflict between the interests of existing residents, who want to preserve or improve the quality of their environment, and the interests of prospective tenants, who simply want a place to live."\(^1\)

The technique of model and references is to allow residents to question their concept of environmental "quality," and to see alternatives to their habitual ideals. In the case of LSM, these ideals pivot around the issues of access, density, mix of services with housing, and the ability to provide some memorable, identifying feature in the public realm. The presentations of these issues on the preceding pages, however, were not intended to be comprehensive packages of design and planning knowledge. Nor were they selected because they represent the length and breadth of issues that are likely to appear in a plan for LSM.

How then might the process lead to a plan for the LSM center? There are two possible ways:

(1) The discussions would be essentially an "in-house" affair to clarify in the cooperative planners' minds their community's own environmental values; the planners would be more able then to write a set of rules to address a variety of
Participation in Post-Socialist Housing

private development proposals and attach it to a plan—as specific as they like—showing those physical features of the landscape which they want to preserve or create. The plan then becomes a basis from which to negotiate with project proponents.

(2) Alternatively, the discussions themselves might include the project proponents, and the method itself becomes the framework for negotiation. Given the high stakes, the procedure will have to be particularly clear and the participants will have to feel full confidence in the process if it is to succeed. The benefits of using the method for direct negotiation rather than advance planning, however, are that the project can get underway more quickly, a truer range of interests are represented in the discussion from the beginning, and, therefore, more information is disseminated through the community.

The issue of information is truly at the center of the participatory process, particularly in post-Socialist Europe. Participatory planning is often seen as a high-minded frill. It is a very time-consuming way of making decisions and sharing information. In post-Socialist society, however, information, monopolized by the state for so long, is still at a premium. Rapid changes in the economic and legal structure aggravate the shortage of information to the point that "conventional wisdom" no longer exists as a basis for action. Under these circumstances, there may in fact be no way to plan except by involving as many members of the community as possible.

The disaggregation of information in eastern Europe today is part of a larger trend of localization in the wake of Communist Party collapse. Piotr Dutkiewicz has spoken of a new "Local Poland" emerging from the transition from Communism to Democracy. In this view, the centrality-locality dualism may replace in significance that of capitalism-socialism or authoritarianism-democracy. If this is true, community participation in planning may have a special validity as a channel for the expression of local interests.

It is difficult to generalize beyond the bounds of this particular problem. The method explored here is very locally-driven and case-specific in its results.

How much community participation, and in this respect, how much professional and governmental intervention—who participates with whom, who relinquishes control to whom and how much, and in what specific field of decision making—is something that can only be decided case by case and as an essential prelude to planning and designing.

On the other hand, as a point of departure, participatory planning through design is remarkably universal. Design in many ways resembles a universal language. No other way of working, for example, is as likely to provide an ignorant foreigner with as much information. Likewise, no other way is
as likely to force the foreigner to yield to local knowledge. But as in this case the future itself is likely to be a very foreign country, the “foreigner” may as well be an expertly trained architect from Lublin as a student from the U.S.A.


2Dutkiewicz, Piotr, "Central vs. Local Interests: Problems of Democratic Transition in Poland," seminar talk at MIT, April 24, 1991.

3Hamdi p. 86.
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Interviews, Discussions and Correspondences


Strzalkowski, Sylwester, and other residents of LSM Osiedle Maria Konopnicka. March 25, 1992.
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The faculty and students of Oxford Polytechnic

And countless residents of LSM

And Cindy