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ECO-DISTRICTS AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES
– INSTITUTIONALIZATION THROUGH EXPERIMENTATION

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INTRODUCTION

Judging from the number of communities and cities striving or claiming to be sustainable and how often eco-development is invoked as the means for urban regeneration, it appears that sustainable and eco-development have become “*the leading paradigm within urban development*” (Whitehead 2003). But what is it that is driving these urban transformations? Clearly, there are many probable answers to this complex question and in what follows we will focus on one particular catalyst of change – urban design competitions. Considered as field changing events (Lampel & Meyer 2008, Anand and Jones 2008), urban design competitions are understudied mechanisms for bringing about field level changes. This paper examines how urban design competitions can bring about changes within two types of fields – professional fields and local geographical fields. The context for our study is urban regeneration in two cities in France and Denmark, both of which have been suffering from industrial decline and have invested in establishing “eco-districts”. Based on these two case studies we explore how the different parties involved in these urban development projects have developed innovative design templates and practices that can instantiate field level changes.

Urban design competitions exhibit many of the characteristic features of field changing events identified by Lampel and Meyer – they draw actors from diverse

professional, organizational, and geographical backgrounds, are temporary organizations that allow for interaction and collective sense-making and they have a certain ceremonialism to them (2008:1027). They provide the participants with an opportunity for developing new and innovative approaches to a particular design issue. Recent work within institutional theory on field configuring events consider them both as the products and drivers of field evolution and, hence, a mechanism for institutional change (Lampel & Meyer 2008:1027-1028). Although there is a growing body of literature dedicated to analyzing field-configuring dynamics (Glynn 2008) and the institutional entrepreneurship involved (McInerney 2008), relatively little attention has been given to how experimentation in connection design competitions can challenge existing beliefs and practices.

Drawing on institutional theory (Wooten & Hoffman 2008, Glynn 2008, Lawrence and Suddaby 2008), design theory (Hatchuel et al. 2010, Michlewski 2008) and the sociology of associations (Callon 1986, Latour 2005), we explore how experimental approaches to urban design competitions can create disruptive, but creative interactional spaces that allow for the development of design and construction practices that, in turn, can have a significant impact on not only the cities but also the field of urban development; practices that can help ‘substantiate’ what the rationalized myths (Meyer & Rowan 1977) of sustainable and eco-development might entail. This study contributes to the growing body of research on how fields develop and change (see the special issue of *Journal of Management Studies* edited by Lampel & Meyer 2008). However, rather than solely emphasizing the role and work of the individual institutional entrepreneur (McInerney 2008), emphasis is given to the associations, assemblages or entanglement of events, actors, material artifacts that can lead to field changes (Garud 2008). In our analysis we highlight the characteristics of urban design competitions as field configuring events (FCE) and we identify the mechanisms used in these FCEs to drive organizations to interact differently and develop innovative responses

to urban challenges that, in turn, can change the field level dynamics in the urban development field and in the two cities.

In what follows, we seek to unpack what FCEs entail by considering each part of the acronym in more detail, but doing so in reverse. Thus, we take our point of departure in a characterization of the *events* – urban design competitions – normally associated with the field of urban development, which many would presumably characterize as a rather mature field. However, design competitions are considered as a vehicle for experimentation and, hence, innovation. Then, following a brief description of our methodology, we attend to the empirical details of the ways in which these events have *configured* the fields. Although this is largely exploratory, we identify how a series of mechanisms associated with experimenting with a well-known ‘standard’ – design competitions – has led to changes in existing beliefs and practices. Following this account of our empirical findings we discuss what effect competitions can have on shaping the *field*. We also discuss the wider implications of our findings, and point to the limitations of our studies.

COMPETITIONS – EVENTS THAT CAN SPUR INNOVATION

Field configuring events have been considered important mechanisms for constituting new technologies, industries, and markets (Lampel and Meyer 2008). Continuing in this vein, we consider how FCEs can help foster technological and organizational innovations associated with architectural and engineering design practices that, in turn, can shape the ways in which eco-districts and sustainable cities are conceived and developed.

The event: urban design competitions

Urban design competitions are like film, theater, television and music awards one of the more established award ceremonies associated with the “creative industries” (Caves 2000). Dating

back to the building of Acropolis (Lehrer 2011), they have, however, an extremely long history compared to the other award ceremonies. As a field of cultural and social production (Lipstadt 2010), urban design is, comparatively speaking, a rather mature field.

Urban design competitions are, as the name indicates, about designing the spatial lay-out of an urban area, i.e. designating land-use for housing, transport, cultural facilities, recreational use, etc. Hence, urban design competitions differ from architectural competitions in terms of scale and scope: Rather than attending to the design and construction of singular buildings, urban design competitions focus on place-making on a grander territorial and longer temporal scale. They literally cover more ground and the time frame for most urban development projects is usually much longer than that of building construction. Following from this, the design processes involve attending to many more things – concerns and activities – than what’s normally associated with designing a building. Moreover, given the long-termism of urban design, one could also say that the competition bids are also more speculative. They are about projecting something into the future that is not yet fixed and, therefore, likely to morph as the design and implementation processes proceed.

As competitions they are contests of whom or what idea is the best, and it is a battlefield in which different teams seek to realize their ambitions and develop interesting solutions to the design problem at hand. It is also a tournament subject to public scrutiny and an event that bears semblance to a carnival *“where exceptions to the rule is the rule and excess is the norm....Competitions are occasions where youthful talents triumph not only over their seniors but also over conventional ideas and traditional solutions. This makes the competition a ‘world upside down’”* (Lipstadt 2010:49). It is from this ‘world upside down’ that the creative and innovative solutions emerge. In keeping with Appadurai’s notion of “tournaments of value” (1986), urban design and architectural competitions are about creating aesthetic and user value in urban settings, and convincing the juries that this is, indeed, the case.

Urban design competitions involve a number of stages or phases, some of which are more open to public scrutiny than others. They involve, like in many other rituals, a script codification stage and a performance stage (Anand & Jones 2008:1038). The script codification stage is associated with the creation of the competition program/brief, in which the sponsor describes the overarching design ambition and sets the terms of the competition, e.g. it defines the terms of eligibility and selection. This is usually solely the sponsor's prerogative, and not something that can be changed during the competition. The brief is supposed to guide the contestants in developing their bids and help reduce the sponsor's risk of receiving proposals that are too far 'off the mark'.

The performance stage consists of at least three sub-stages; each with their particular ritualistic aspects. First, there is the competition process itself, the duration of which is set in the competition rules and during which the competing teams work to develop their entries. Usually subject to tough time constraints, this is a period of intense collaboration within the teams and in the more conventional competitions there is no collaboration across the teams. Also, there is little or no communication between the sponsor and the contestants. Second, there is a selection process, in which a jury picks the winning design(s). Jury composition is variable, but generally they are comprised of a number of architects and the sponsor or body organizing the competition. Their task is to select the proposal that 'fits' best with the competition's objective, i.e. best meets the sponsor's design ambitions as described in the brief. Usually the jurors' task is described as a rational decision-making process involving a description, ranking and sorting of the various proposals (Rönn 2010), but in practice the selection criteria are more likely to be fluid rather than fixed; subject to change as the jurors see and learn more about the proposals, and in which case the winning proposal is likely to be the one that is more convincing than the others (Kreiner 2010). Jury deliberations are not public, but they usually justify their choice in a jury report.

Following this phase, there may or may not be an implementation phase in which the winning design is realized (in a number of stages). The duration of this phase is directly related to the design ambition, the amount of public participation/hearings, and the financial grounding of the development project.

Urban design competitions come in many forms and they vary in terms of their concrete procedures and format, e.g. whether they are open, limited or invited competitions, idea/concept or project/implementation competitions, or whether the winner, indeed, does take all. Regardless of form and format, competitions usually command quite a bit of media and public attention. This allows for two things. People are given the opportunity to air their different opinions, which may influence the contestants and/or jurors. Moreover, the competition can function as marketing devices for not only the sponsors but also the competing teams (Lehrer 2011).

Urban design competitions: experimentation fostering creativity and innovation

In keeping with the parlance of the symposium, competitions have the bearings of a standard – they are rule-based events with relatively fixed formats that shape the contestants' behavior. They are, however, also thought of as experiments (Lipstadt 2010) and as “development laboratories” (Danielsen 2010), both of which are sites associated with promoting innovation. They not only stimulate creativity amongst the contestants, they also provide a variety of solutions to the *same* ‘problem’, thus giving whoever set up the competition many possible solutions from which to choose. Given that there can only be one winner, then there will be a number of ‘redundant’ solutions. Whether or not it is possible to transfer these (or the winning) design solutions from one site to another depends upon how persuasive and convincing the solutions are to others, including how appropriate these solutions are deemed in other settings. The interesting question then becomes what is it that makes one solution –

and the practices that it implicates – more appealing and convincing than others, and hence more likely to spread and trigger changes in the field? Some cast the answers to this question as a matter of efficiency, legitimacy, or both, whilst others emphasize the technological, cultural, and political “fit” between the diffusing and existing practices (Ansari, Fiss, and Zajac 2010), or the ability to build associations (Akrich et al. 2002). In what follows we argue that innovation is an effect of the process of translation in which competition participants – sponsors and contestants – build associations by enrolling and mobilizing others in an appreciation and support of their ideas (Callon 1986, Akrich et al. 2002).

The teams involved in urban design competitions are often interdisciplinary ones, usually involving architects, engineers, and other professional groups, e.g. landscape architects, ethnographers, economists and sociologists. Competition participation calls upon the use of various forms of ‘craftsmanship,’ based on various forms of codified knowledge as well as creative and combinatorial skills that have not yet been codified. The experimentation involved in urban design competition is closely linked to participants’ work process and their “design attitude” (Michlewski 2008). Generically speaking, the former involves on-site observations and investigations, brainstorming to generate ideas, using various forms of visualizations to develop their ideas/models, and subsequent iterations of these processes so as to stabilize their ideas/plans/design. Design attitude refers to the contestants’ abilities to explore, synthesize, pull things together and consolidate multidimensional meanings (Michlewski 2008: 377-379) as well as their abilities to draw and visualize their ideas in other ways so as to bring them to life and give them form (Yoo et al. 2006:217). In general, the participants’ design attitude entails the mobilization of analytical skills and aesthetic sensibilities in exploring possible solutions. Regarding the professional architects, Michlewski notes that: “designers take great pride in breaking rules, subverting accepted norms and refusing to align with something that has already been tested and tried”

(2008:386). Within the profession there is a strong emphasis on search, creativity and on pushing the boundaries of the known solution spaces.

Clearly, this is a broad sweeping characterization which may not fit entirely with what the contestant actually do when working on competitions, because given the time and economic constraints associated with most competitions, there are likely to be limits as to how experimental and innovative the participants will/can be. More likely than not, they will have to strike a balance between the known and unknown in making their design proposals – between what has worked well for them on previous occasions and ideas that they haven't yet pursued; between relying on existing skills and insights and developing new ones; balancing between what March (1991) has labeled exploitation and exploration. As in many other games, there is also evidence of competitions leading to a certain amount of 'gaming' or strategic behavior in the sense that participants seek to minimize their risks by second-guessing what the jurors (including the sponsors) want, and design their solution accordingly (Banerjee & Loukaitou-Sideris 1990).

Moreover, the extent to which the "design attitude" is invoked is also a matter of how the contestants' identity and values influence the ways in which they choose to read or interpret the competition brief. This can obviously be done in any number of ways. As Kreiner (2010) points out the way in which it is read has implications for the work that follows: If it is read as an instruction, then "*the challenge is to honor the brief without sacrificing other design criteria too much. When read as indications the challenge is to collect additional information about the client and/or jury to be able to interpret the brief richly and adequately. When read as illustrations the challenge is to make the brief a resource and a foundation for the creative exploration of design options*" (Kreiner 2010:116). In the latter instance, the contestants will be more likely to challenge the (implicit or explicit) premises of the design brief, i.e. break the rules and create something unexpected. Whether or not this will lead to their winning the

competition is, however, an empirical question. Regardless of what strategies that the contestants choose to pursue, competitions offer room for experimenting with existing ideas, routines, and practices, e.g. either by combining them in new ways, and/or developing new ideas that encompass not previously considered.

What happens to these ideas once they are visualized and documented? The winning ideas are often implemented – they materialize in situ – and if this gets sufficient (media) attention, then it might induce “urban policy tourism” (González & González 2011), i.e. where policy makers visit the site to learn how things were done. But what about the other ideas? Some are shelved, but others circulate. Public exhibitions; newspaper articles, photos, and other forms of media coverage; web-sites and reference lists are important means by which design knowledge can be shared. As inscriptions they circulate and ‘act at a distance’ (Latour 1987), making the ideas visible to others and allowing field constituents to interact and inspire each other, thus, working to shape beliefs/practices in the field. Whether the ideas, methods or materials can be adjusted, refined and translated so as to be applicable in other settings is an empirical question and one that we will pursue in what follows.

METHODS

Cities as a site

Although there are a few notable exceptions (Tolbert & Zucker 1983, Czarniawska, 2002, Kornberger, 2010, Glynn 2008), cities are not common objects of inquiry within organizational research; and sustainable cities even less so. This is somewhat surprising, given the overwhelming evidence from our daily lives of the importance of cities – more than 60% of the world’s population is expected to live in cities by 2030 (United Nations, 2006). Moreover, the twenty first century is expected to be one of renewed urbanism as cities seek to

address the challenges associated with industrial decline, adapt to climate change and other environmental problems, and are implicated in place-based competition for attention, labor, and investments. In light of these grand challenges and the organizational complexity of urban development, cities are a particular interesting research object and an excellent site in which to explore the effect of FCEs.

In the preceding section, emphasis was given to how urban design competitions can affect the field of urban design (notably the planning, architecture and engineering professions), but in keeping with Glynn (2008) and as it will become clear from particularly our French case study, cities or rather particular districts are also local geographic fields, in which substantial changes can occur, altering the fabric of the place. The district or neighborhood level provides insights into mechanisms of urban functioning (Emelianoff, 2008), where city-building entrepreneurs can enroll and mobilize other actors into accepting and supporting their development ideas. This translation of interests is contingent on the city-building entrepreneur's ability to build upon and develop existing interests and relations. However, rather than celebrating urban development as solely the entrepreneurs orchestration of divergent interests, we consider the development of eco-districts as a relational effect of a myriad of people and things, e.g. competition and contract rules, competition briefs, architectural drawings and models that together help align interests and (re)configure the city.

The case studies

Ensuring sustainable development is considered one of society's grand challenges (Reference Framework for Sustainable Cities, 2010) and calls for numerous institutional, technological, and organizational changes. The paper contrasts two approaches in developing sustainable cities or 'eco-districts' (i.e. parts of a city that are deemed sustainable): One in which sustainability was introduced by 'design' through the mandatory use of a sustainability

(planning) tool, and one in which the ambition of sustainable development was cast in more open terms and adjusted on an ad hoc basis from (sub) project to (sub) project without the use of a dedicated planning tool. The former is located in Denmark, and the latter is located in France. Characteristic for both places is that they are about the same size (approx. 25 hectares) and they are located in cities that have experienced huge changes and transitions: i.e. no longer thriving harbor and industrial cities, they have gone through a period of industrial decline, which has left parts of the cities as barren ‘wastelands’. In addition to socio-political, economic and institutional differences between France and Denmark that are important for the contextualization of the two cases, there is one other important difference – the French and Danish case differ in terms of completion. Inhabitants began moving into the French eco-district since 2009, whereas the Danish case is still pretty much on the drawing board – the development plan is (at the time of writing) in the process of being finalized.

Data collection and analysis

Our approach to understanding the emergence of eco-districts is a comparative one, i.e. contrasting two different approaches to creating sustainable cities. Our ambition has been to trace the (historical) development of the two eco-districts, and to this end we have collected data primarily through interviews and document analysis of archival material such as press accounts, project reports, and materials from the official project web-sites. We conducted 20 semi-structured interviews in France and 14 in Denmark. We interviewed architects, engineers, public authorities and developers in both settings. The duration of these interviews was typically two hours, and the questions asked focused on identifying who had been involved, what their roles were, how the development activities and design competitions were organized, and in the Danish case we also focused on the use and role of a “sustainability tool,” developed specifically for the purpose of improving urban development. All interviews

were taped and transcribed. Given the duration of the French project, we were forced into developing a retrospective longitudinal study, whereas in the Danish case we were able to follow the project in real-time. As a consequence, we were also able to augment our interview and archival data with notes from our observations of numerous public meetings regarding project development and evaluation. We conducted our fieldwork from 2009-2011 in France and from 2010-2011 in Denmark. This difference in timing is due to the fact that the Danish development project did not start until in 2010.

Following a grounded research approach (Strauss & Corbin 1990), the authors in each country read and re-read the transcripts to identify how and why things developed as they did. The data was sorted chronologically and thematically so as to identify: (a) the prime developmental agenda or vision; (b) how the activities were organized and by whom, including the nature of their relationships, e.g. contractual relations; (c) the challenges identified by the various actors; and (d) the different artifacts used to support the development of the eco-district projects. Our analysis has been iterative and comparative as to what are the distinctive features of the two quite different development processes, and following from this we have focused on the urban design competitions as the prime mechanism for change. However, as we looked more into how the competitions were organized we were able to discern a number of distinctive and innovative features associated with each competition that, in turn, have lead to the development of innovative solutions to the urban regeneration of the two cities in question. Hence, experimentation with what is generally considered an experiment – the competition – has provided tools and techniques that have changed the city fabric (in the French case) and professional practices (both cases).

FINDINGS

The two cities in our study – Dunkerque and X-købing¹ – are but two of a growing number of cities seeking to become sustainable (www.sustainablecities.org). Some take this as an indication of sustainable development coming into (urban) fashion as cities seek to reinvent themselves (Kornberger 2010). Be that as it may, the fact that our cities are growing at unprecedented rates, and many of them in environmentally and socially damaging ways, gives call for analyzing how attempts to develop sustainable cities or eco-districts take place. It is a matter of design, and as Langdon Winner argues (1995: 150-151, quoted in Moor & Karvonen 2008: 30-31): *“Speculation about design and alternatives in design can be especially fruitful because it pushes attention to the making or construction of technical artifacts back to the drawing board, back to a point before choices have hardened in cement or in other finished material or organizational structures”*. In our analysis of the development of eco-cities in these two cities we focus on how the urban design competitions both draw upon the ‘history of the place’ while at the same time changing the urban elements and their meaning.

The **French case – Grand Large**

The French case is located in the city of Dunkerque; a city that was devastated by the two World Wars, particularly the second one, and that has suffered economically from the loss of one of its main industries, i.e. the shipyard industry. Grand Large is a particular neighborhood or district, situated between the sea and the city center (Pinheiro-Croisel 2011). The development of this neighborhood is part of a more encompassing (and older) urban regeneration plan, The Neptune Development project that dates back to 1989. Furthermore, this must be seen in the context of the decentralization of political power within the field of urban planning that took place in the 1980ies. This process confided more power to the

¹ All the names in the Danish case are fictitious as the development project is on going and the parties involved have stipulated that they want to be treated anonymously in order to protect their various interests.

mayors of major cities, thus, allowing them to initiate and undertake large scale development projects (Prat 2008). The Neptune project is now considered as a prototype for public-private cooperation within the field of urban development (Prat 2008).

In 1990 Dunkerque's socialist mayor, Michel Delebarre, who had been elected the previous year, commissioned an international idea competition in collaboration with a private development company (Projénor) and the semi-public company, SEM, which had been established in the late 1950ies to manage the production of urban space in France.² The aim was to find a planner that could create an innovative development plan. The competition was unique compared to other competitions at the time, because the participants were not required to produce detailed architectural drawings, plans or models. Instead, they were invited to visit the site and to meet with local politicians and technicians, and then asked to submit a financially viable master plan for developing the area, which covered everything from design to implementation. The winner was the British Richard Rogers Partnership, selected for reputational reasons and for their innovative design, which with its urban and recreational flair signaled change and continuity while simultaneously emphasizing the city's industrial past (Picheral, website accessed July 14th 2011). According to Richard Rogers Partnership:

The aim of the masterplan was to revitalise the town's inner water basins by enclosing them with new mixed developments. A linking armature of routes, streets and public spaces welds the masterplan together, restoring this citadel island as an integral and dynamic part of the city, with the addition of a new university and library, as well as research facilities, residential units and office accommodation. The masterplan provides 23 building and landscape projects, three new bridges and significantly upgraded quaysides – transforming this previously isolated zone (RRP Masterplan Dunkirk, accessed July 14th 2011).

RRP and a team of local architects, landscape architects and artists were responsible for implementing the master plan, i.e. deal with land use issues, negotiate with potential investors, ensure that their plans were compatible with the master plan's medium

² The local authorities delegate responsibility to the SEM companies for proceeding with land acquisitions, land development and possibly managing operations.

and long-term goals, and set up the necessary contracts. As a result urban regeneration in Dunkerque became a “shared project” with its own gradually evolving shared project culture (Picheral, website last accessed July 14th 2011). Several major edifices – bridges across the harbor, landscaped public spaces, a marina, and new roads – were built during the first phase of the Neptune project (1991-2002).

The Grand Large district project marks the second phase of the Neptune project and the introduction of a – for France – unique project comprising S3D (Société de Développement de Dunkerque), AGUR (AGence d'URbanisme et de développement de la région Flandre-Dunkerque), CUD (Communauté Urbaine de Dunkerque), private developers, and public developers of social housing. The Urban Community of Dunkerque (CUD) had delegated the management of the project to S3D, who commissioned and financed an invited competition. Although financed by the S3D, the specifications for the competition were made by the CUD in accordance with Mayor Michel Delebarre’s “vision”. Inspired by the principles of Agenda 21, he wanted the district to be sustainable. The overarching aim, described in a policy brief, was to minimize environmental damage, ensure social and inter-generational diversity and a functional mix of activities, e.g. accommodations, sports areas, schools and shopping facilities, so as to ensure the district’s economic viability. The brief also contained more specific performance specifications, regarding the number and types of dwellings, their size and price, and the quality of public spaces. With regard to housing, the aim was to build environmentally sound dwellings, based on a financial structure, which would enable lower-income families to acquire them. I.e. the larger apartments were to be built in such a way, e.g. with internal staircases, so as to deter more wealthy people from moving into them. As noted by a CUD-project leader: *“Wealthy, elderly couples will presumably not want to buy these apartments and large families will be favored. Residents can make savings through [optimizing] the environmental performance of their homes”* (Interview). The idea of

neighborhood and proximity figured prominently in the brief; a viewpoint stressed by the Mayor Michel Delebarre as well: “*A couple with children should be able to find a nanny in the neighborhood*”.

Several internationally renowned architects participated in the competition. The evaluation of their entries was, however, quite unconventional – the entries were judged in the course of an afternoon, following the participants’ presentations of their respective entries. The jury consisted of CUD, the S3D, and several developers and was chaired by the mayor even though the CUD had no formal authority to do so. The jury selected a project, proposed by the French architect Nicolas Michelin, because of the project’s balance between architectural creativity and social innovation – his project offers a mix of family housing, individual and semi-individual combined with an innovative architecture that, nevertheless, is very coherent with Dunkerque’s overall architectural impression. Social housing and private residential buildings were designed with the same architectural and technical quality. The buildings had an innovative architectural quality to them – they’re built in a traditional Flemish style with crenels that has both an aesthetic quality and environmental quality. The shape helps minimize the loss of energy. In addition, they are complicated and, hence, not expensive, to build. (Pinheiro-Croisel 2011).

The construction process began in 2007 and expected completion time is 2020. There were no detailed documents as to how the district was to become sustainable and there was no cooperation with the (future) users. The ideas for how to realize this goal evolved over the course of the construction process. After two years of construction, the first wave of residents could move into their new high quality homes; homes that they either rent or own. One of the distinguishing features of Grand Large is that it is impossible to tell from the buildings’ appearances whether they are social housing or individually owned.³ The

³ The sales prices were fixed politically and the sales margin was known by the project owner.

buildings are designed to be energy efficient, integrating both green roof and solar panels into the overall design. In addition to this, the cities district heating system was re-developed and coupled with a heat-recovery system from the city's large steel plant, so that excess heat from the plant provides 60% of the heat needed in the district; thanks to which they won the Global Energy District Climate Award in 2009 (DAC-Sustainable Cities website, accessed July 14th 2011). Special attention was also given to water management, underground waste collection, ensuring the mobility and safety of pedestrians, and to ensuring that the district has a “green lung” – an urban park around which Grand Large is organized. Thanks to its relatively high population density, Grand Large is considered as an attractive alternative to peri-urbanization (Picheral, website accessed July 14th 2011).

There are three aspects or organizational innovations associated with the Grand Large Development project that have influenced the local geographical field and the field of urban design: (1) the way in which the Neptune project was organized; (2) the concomitant introduction of public-private partnerships in Grand Large; and (3) the strong emphasis on social innovation in developing the district. First, the way in which the development of the Neptune was organized runs counter to French tradition within urban planning. Usually, it is the public authorities who are responsible for the design and implementation of urban projects, and they alone bear all the associated risks. In contrast, the private public partnership put in place in Grand Large is a “hybrid model”, i.e. building on the French tradition of public involvement and the UK approach of being almost entirely developer based. See figure 1. Grand Large was the first place in France to have a privately run urban design competition.

Figure 1 – In about here

Second, the private public partnership set up in the Grand Large project ensured a distribution of responsibilities amongst the different actors. The partnership idea was introduced because of CUD's very strong political desire to reduce risks and lead times (Pineiro-Croisel 2011). However, the key to its success was the CUD's requirement of financial transparency. The openness that this entailed made it possible to draw up contracts in such a way that the usual conflicts amongst architects and developers could be defused, while simultaneously allowing the community (CUD) to maintain its political influence on project development. By delegating project management to SEM, the community was also able to spread some of the risks to other entities.⁴ This "opening up" of the role of each partner was at the time unheard of in France, but it is now a practice emulated in other development projects.

The third distinguishing aspect of the project is the emphasis given to social innovation. This had implications not only for the type of housing built in the district, e.g. 40% social housing, 10% low cost housing for first-time buyers, and the remaining 50% private dwellings of different sizes; their design; but also the ways in which they are operated. The CUD required public and private developers to provide buildings of the same technical and architectural quality. Even though the builders and developers had different budgets and profit goals, they were required to work together to produce the same quality buildings. Also, the developers cooperated with the social housing landlords to ensure that building maintenance was in accord with that of other buildings in the district. Several working groups (composed by elected officials, technicians, researchers) will meet from

⁴ In France a service operator is not involved in an urban project in the pre-conception phase. In the Grand Large project designers have used the knowledge of these operators and designed the neighborhood based on their advice. This has particularly been the case in connection with designing the supply of district heating (in collaboration with the steel mill, i.e. utilizing its surplus production of heat). This partnership has been repeated in other areas (e.g. power supply by renewable resources recovered from water, for example - heat pumps under the sea or groundwater).

October 2011 to evaluate and rethink the future of the neighborhood homes in Grand Large with the aim of proposing specific architectural changes.

Grand Large was and is an experiment because of the organizational and contractual innovations involved, the concurrent engineering and deliberate incomplete planning, the delegation of design capabilities to a new organizational entity, and exploratory partnerships between energy companies, funders, architects, and real estate companies. There are several developments following in the wake of these achievements that could have a field-configuring effect, if they are taken up by others in the field: For instance, the design model that the architect Michelin introduced in Grand Large has been such a success that he has "exported" it to Bordeaux where he is currently the project manager of several projects. The CUD has also re-used the project management model (a public-private partnership) in developing the necessary legal and financial structure for another project – the construction of a vast shopping complex in downtown Dunkerque. Based on these experiences, CUD is also currently developing a model for managerial control of innovation in other urban projects.

Although sustainability was not used as a label from the beginning of the Neptune project and only used generally in the Grand Large project, the co-evolution of practices has provided a rich and unexpected meaning to this notion. Twenty years after its launch, Dunkerque is now attracting considerable attention in France because eco-districts have become a national policy priority. There are now national programs and subsidies in place, aimed at encouraging their development. However, contrary to past urban public policies based on national vision, the eco-district French policy is purposefully open and relies on the theorization of pioneering experiments.

The Danish case

Compared to Grand Large, the Danish case in X-købing (a pseudonym) has – relatively speaking – only just gotten underway. Like Dunkerque, X-købing is located by the sea, has a large harbor area that once housed several heavy, polluting industries. Over the course of the last 15 years many of these industries have either ceased to exist or re-located their production facilities to other places, leaving the city with some large areas close to the sea that, unfortunately, are cut off from the city center by a railway line. The empty lots – the industrial wastelands – called for action; for developing a way to “tie the city together and bring the city to the sea”. Although X-købing had been trying to develop its commercial harbor facilities for a number of years, this had not sufficiently re-infused the harbor with activity. And there were other areas close to the city’s train station that were vacant lots, and like the harbor areas of little economic or aesthetic value. By initiating an urban renewal process, X-købing’s hope was to improve the quality of their city. The question was, how?

The answer: X-købing municipality joined forces with a commercial developer, Urban Renewal and Development (URD, a pseudonym), in a public-private partnership, Coastal Development (CD, also a pseudonym). The two partners jointly own the land that is to be developed on a 50-50 basis. For X-købing the obvious advantage is that it allows them to consolidate and speed up their development plans. As for URD, their interest lie in the demonstration effect of such – in a Danish context – a large-scale development project and the prospects of a fair economic return on their investments. CD’s goal over the next 20 years is to develop the land for other purposes so as to improve urban quality and provide the city with a vehicle for future growth. To get things underway CD commissioned – as in the French case – an urban design competition. From our interviews we can see that the way in which the competition was organized had a number of innovative and provocative features that warrant mentioning.

For one, the competition format differed from most Danish design competitions. According to CD, it was entirely new. It was a two-phased competition that combined the format of a conventional competition, where the teams work individually and do not communicate with one another, with that of a parallel or dialogue-based competition that entails a number of workshops where the teams openly present and discuss their ideas. Parallel competitions were something relatively new in DK at the time the CD competition took place. The purpose of the workshops is to enable the competing team to not only get a stronger feel for the citizens' concerns and priorities but also for the sponsor's design ambition, while at the same time being able to mutually inspire each other. Another, and for all teams surprising, implication of the competition format was that because it was a parallel competition there would be no winners in the conventional sense. Instead the sponsor reserved the right to be able to 'pick and choose' from the proposed solutions as they saw fit. This meant that the winning team would not – as is customary – be guaranteed a contract. This was not well-received, because as one team explained: by mixing the solutions, not only is it dubious whether the end result will be sustainable, but “*the genuine will disappear*” (Interview)).

Second, the remuneration and reward structure differed from most competitions. The fees for participating in the two phases were substantially higher than in most conventional competitions, thus, compensating the teams more for their efforts than in other competitions. Although the teams clearly appreciated this, they nevertheless claimed that the fees came nowhere near covering their costs. This was, however, something that they were willing to accept because of the prestigious nature of the project. As one architect said: “*In this project there is a chance that your ideas will be developed into something*” (Interview)). A third important factor was the emphasis given to interdisciplinarity and to the way that the teams organized their work. According to CD, the complexity of the development issue

called for involving people with many different competencies. So as to ensure that this, indeed, would be the case and that “the architects wouldn’t monopolize the task”, CD required the teams (as part of the prequalification process) to fully disclose how the fee would be divided amongst the team members. This allowed CD to check whether the teams’ espoused interdisciplinarity matched their financial dispositions. If they didn’t, then the teams were disqualified from participating in the competition. For the teams that did participate, this not only made the (formal) level of engagement and the division of labor visible, several mention that it also enhanced their level of inter-disciplinary collaboration.

Another distinctive feature was that the teams were required to use a specific sustainability planning tool that URD had developed.⁵ Each team had to use the tool to assess the sustainability of their respective suggestions and develop a “sustainability profile” for the entire project. From the detailed competition brief and the level of detail commanded by tool it was clear to all that the sponsor wanted more than “fluffy, utopian ideas”. The plans had to be realistic and “implementable”. The level of detail was taken as an indicator of CD’s but particularly URD’s design ambitions, and these were as one of the contestants mentioned: *“their ambitions were contagious. They really affected all the teams in a positive manner, but this is also because of who the sponsor is.”* (Interview) CD had an additional requirement that ties in with the issue of implementability – the teams’ proposals had to have a positive cash-flow from day one and throughout the entire development process. These two requirements were really quite unique – it was certainly not something that the teams were accustomed to from other competitions. They really made them bring things “down to earth”.

The CD-competition was a vision driven competition with the overall vision being to: create a unique, attractive and sustainable town district, strengthening the role of the

⁵ The tool seeks to operationalize the Brundtland Commission’s definition of sustainable development as constituted by environmental, social, economic development into a number of indicators. The tool consists of more than fifty indicators within a number of overarching domains, e.g. energy and water usage in buildings, citizen behavior, social diversity and economic costs.

city in the urban hierarchy of cities in DK (Jury report 2010). This vision was further specified into 6 vision points that CD wanted the proposals to address – they had to enhance the city’s cultural activities, support commercial development, improve traffic conditions, ensure a vibrant urban community and urban lifestyles, be based on citizen engagement, and last but not least ensure sustainable development economically, socially and environmentally. Fifty-four Danish, international and mixed teams submitted prequalification applications, and of the seven that made it through this process, five teams were selected to continue in phase 2. In phase 1 the teams were – much to many of the architects’ regrets – ‘only’ asked to provide text-based descriptions of how their plans for the city could live up to CD’s vision points and of the economic viability of their (respective) projects. Phase 1 ended with a workshop where the teams presented their tentative ideas/plans and received feedback from the sponsor and their experts and had limited interaction with the local stakeholders. Relative to the stakeholder engagement normally associated with parallel competitions, the one in this competition was rather limited and controlled; which was something all the teams criticized at an evaluation meeting held shortly after the competition. The teams’ final proposals had to include a strategic action plan, detailed descriptions of their suggestions/solutions, including sketches and other visualizations, and an economic feasibility study.

According to the jury, all the teams had produced clear proposals for the design concept and they had suggested strategies that could serve as guidelines for drawing up the final development plan (Jury Report 2010). The sustainability tool was also mobilized in the jurors’ final selection process. It was used to benchmark and rank the teams’ proposals; the results of which figured prominently in the jury’s justifications of what they liked and disliked in the various projects and the solutions they contained. Despite claims of not picking a winner, the size of the awards presented to the teams signals that one team was

more of a winner than the others – the winning team’s prize was 7000 euro greater than the prize given to four ‘runner ups’.

The sustainability tool had been designed with “the purpose of ensuring that the teams work systematically with sustainability and enabling them assess their ideas from a sustainability perspective. But what effect did the tool have? According to our interviews, it appears have had little direct effect on the teams’ design practices where primacy is given to developing the overarching design concept/idea/metaphor. As one team member explained: *“you have to have a design, you have to put a complete [picture]... make something coherent. So, it is not just about adding the parts. The tool is good to have, to identify solutions, and identify tasks and ambitions. So it's a typical programming or evaluation tool. That's how you can use it. You can't design with it. The tool helps us to develop ideas and solutions, but it doesn't give the solution as such.”* (Interview) However, the tool had other effects: Some said that it gave them a sense of direction, a sense of the sponsors’ priorities, and that it had had a unifying function, because the tool literally *”brought people with different competencies to the same table.”* (Interview)

The tool was, however, also subject to a great deal of critique, e.g. for being too generic and not sufficiently site specific (to be relevant), and for being too technically oriented with too narrow a definition of sustainability, e.g. one that excluded biodiversity. It was also criticized for quantifying things – or attempting to do so – that are not easily or meaningfully quantifiable. As one team member warned: *” simply adding the points, and then saying that the one [entry] that has the most points is the best, this could lead you to make some really wrong decisions.”* (Interview) Several of the persons interviewed argued that it was too detailed and complicated to work with at this stage in the development process. One person characterized it as an example of *“misunderstood tidiness”*. Several questioned *“the meaning of having to calculate something to such a level of detail, given that things are likely to change over the course of the next 15-20 years”*. Many felt that making many detailed calculations for things

that might not come to pass was a waste of their time; time that could otherwise have been spent on developing their ideas.

From the interviews we can see that the teams had two strategies in working with the sustainability tool: one taking the tool literally and a much more pragmatic approach. Whilst the former attends to all indicators, the latter is more strategic and selective. Following Kreiner (2010), you could say that they used the tool as a source of information that they could build upon. One of the teams described it in this fashion: *“My feeling is that we have had a bit more strategic way of using the tool...We had like a screening of the different parameters in the first place. We had a look at which parameters are going to be the most important for us to determine and we started out with a discussion related to the social part of it [the tool] How do you actually create something that is attractive and that could attract people from a wider area...”*

(Interview) The choice of strategy is, however, probably less about the tool and more a matter of the team identity and culture.

Just because the teams said that the tool had little direct effect on their design practices, does not mean that it didn't have other effects. Working with the tool appears to have been particularly inspirational for the engineering consultancies. It not only provided them with an opportunity for working together across departments in-house, but working with the tool also inspired them to further develop some of their own planning tools. In addition to improving their planning tools, some of the engineering companies have developed particular design solutions that they will introduce in other settings, e.g. parking space design to accommodate electric vehicles. The architectural companies appear to be generally less inclined to consider their experience with working with the tool as a 'product' that they would be able to use and/or sell in the future, but there was one participant that considered it as very worthwhile: *“I am absolutely a fan of it, because I mean it [the tool] opens up the process. It makes it possible for a much more detailed evaluation of different proposals than you*

normally have. It resulted in some untraditional ways of focusing more on process, more on other aspects than traditional architect competitions normally do... We're working with it [in other settings] as a sustainability impact assessment tool. So I mean, that might be one reason why we are thinking it was natural to look at it."(Interview) It is, of course, too early to tell if and how the ideas generated within this competition will spread, but if they do, then they could at least potentially have a field configuring effect.

Tales from two cities – A tentative comparison

Despite the similarities with regard to the two projects' size and scope – both are large urban development projects initiated by private and public partnerships seeking to ensure sustainable development. Laying the ground work for both of these projects has involved substantial elements of institutional entrepreneurialism, particularly in the French case. See table 1.

Table 1 – about here

There are also clear differences. Among the more straightforward, are the differences in terms of project duration, project completion, and in the local political orchestration of the parties involved in the urban development processes. There is also an obvious difference in terms of overall approach to the issue of sustainability: In the French case it appears to have been more open, ad hoc process, whereas in the Danish case it has hitherto taken a more systematic approach based on the use of a sustainability tool. In the French case, the eco-district is not a large and coherent project but the product of a series of small (urban) projects whose targets, actors and processes have changed over time. As a result, the planning of Grand Large happened less by 'design' than in the Danish case. Even though Grand Large

was created in accordance with an overarching “vision” of sustainable development (associated with Agenda 21), the notion of sustainable development was given meaning through a series of experiments, based on incomplete design templates that developed progressively from one experiment to another.

Following from this, the approach in X-købing could be characterized as more controlled. The sustainability tool’s level of detail and the reification of particular aspects pertaining to sustainable development enabled the sponsors – presumably unwittingly – to not only give particular content to the notion of sustainability but also to ‘act at distance’. With regard to the former, the tool – in structure and content – draws strongly on the dominant, eco-modernist discourse on sustainability, which is highly expert-based and casts sustainability as a matter of energy efficiency and resource management that has a tendency to preclude other concerns. This was not the case in Grand Large, where the ‘social dimension’ of sustainability figured much more prominently without precluding environmental concerns regarding energy efficiency, waste and water management, etc.

As for acting at a distance, the sustainability tool along with the competition format and ‘rules’ regarding financial disclosure ensured the sponsors’ presence in the teams’ mindsets; not as a conscious form of mind-control, but as an eidolon that can inspire or provoke some and discipline others. There are, of course, limits to extent to which this control-at-a-distance can be exercised, as exemplified by the teams that chose to ‘break the rules’ and not use the tool as prescribed. The sponsors, however, wanted the tool to discipline the teams so as to ensure that they would get “implementable solutions”. The tool was developed to be context-free, so that it could be used in other urban development projects, and as some of our interviews have indicated this meant that the teams had to put a lot of effort into contextualizing the tool. This may not necessarily be a bad thing, but it has to be seen in relation to the time frame of the competition as well as the development process –

many felt that they were ‘shooting sparrows with canons’ using such a detailed project assessment tool on a project likely to change substantially over the next 20 years. Although this may be stretching it a bit, it appears that the overall approach to urban development in Dunkerque and X-købing can be characterized, respectively, as context-rich and context-free (Moore & Karvonen 2008).

There is, however, one facet of these experiments that is similar – some of the actors are seeking to extend their ideas, methods, and other practices to other places, contributing – at least – potentially to field re-configuration.

DISCUSSION – URBAN DESIGN COMPETITIONS AS FIELD CONFIGURING EVENTS

In this study of experimental approaches to urban development we explore the dynamics of urban development in the context of urban design competitions. The analysis of the French case illustrates how Grand Large has come to be a pioneering experiment, orchestrated by the mayor, a charismatic institutional entrepreneur, and carried by open and context rich approach to sustainable development. Recently, with the French government’s move to make eco-districts a national priority, Grand Large has become a showcase for how things can be done. The analysis of the Danish case is illustrative of another pioneering approach; one that is grounded in developing a methodology – a sustainability tool - for urban planning.

Our initial analysis of these two urban development projects reveals that there are numerous innovations: Some of these innovations are managerial or organizational, e.g. the development of private-public partnerships in urban planning (both cases), the delegation of design capabilities to a new organizational entity (Dunkerque), and the development of a new competition format (X-købing). Others are socio-technical innovations such as the sustainability tool (X-købing), the deliberate incomplete planning in Dunkerque, and the

various construction and engineering ideas/solutions that were fostered in both cases. Although many of these things, with the exception of the sustainability tool and the DK-competition format, were developed with a particular place in mind, this does not necessarily mean that they will stay in place. Many of these innovations are being spread thanks to various actors and numerous artifacts. E.g. the French architect has exported the design model used in Grand Large to Bordeaux and, in a similar fashion, Danish engineering consultancies are now using a planning tool that has incorporated aspects of the sustainability in their consultancy services. The engineering consultancies have also refined some of the specific technologies and technological ideas developed for X-købing, and started marketing them internationally. Drawing on their experience with Grand Large, the CUD is developing a managerial control model that they can use in other innovative urban projects, and URD plans to use the sustainability tool in other development projects, perhaps turning it into a standard not just for greenfield but also brownfield development. Admittedly, this is hardly surprising – the various actors are just trying to capitalize on their investments, but they are also spreading particular ideas, methods, etc.

From the theoretical vantage point of the sociology of associations, these endeavors are supported by numerous artifacts that allow for their ideas to travel (Czarinańska & Sevón 1986). So, when references are made to Dunkerque's eco-city development as the 'Magical Triangle Model' or to 'the sustainability tool', what is normally left out are the associations of people, things, competing beliefs and design attitudes that have gone into making the model and the tool what they are. Moreover, they, too, have become artifacts that can allow ideas, methods, and technologies to travel. When URD puts the tool on their home-page "*so that people or municipalities could use it when discussing urban development with part of their municipalities or their city*" (Interview), it is as an invitation to others. Publicized as a "showcase" Grand Large becomes an artifact that circulates in the

popular media, policy briefs, and scientific papers, and demonstrates to others what eco-cities are. And as a result, Grand Large may well become a site for urban policy tourism.

Artifacts are, however, often more than a medium. They are performative – they do things. Take, for instance, the tool. Some teams were captured by it and it shaped their bids and their way of working. Ours is not to say whether this was good or bad, but simply to say that it happened. Others were not caught up by it. It is, however, not an innocent tool, because it gives meaning to sustainable development in a particular way – in the way in which the indicators are established – and it commensurates often complex concerns by translating them into numbers. Another example would be the drawings and visualizations that have been created in the course of Grand Large’s development and CD’s urban design competition. There are, of course, a multitude of drawings and visualizations ranging from very specific and technical drawings to 3D photo-visualizations where it is difficult to see whether it is a drawing or a photo. They are, albeit in very different ways, narratives of a future, i.e. projecting a future and giving something not yet existing ‘form’. Needless to say, such narratives can require particular skills from the reader(s), and they can be more or less convincing.

In sum, artifacts have to be factored in when considering field configuration. However, rather than considering humans and artifact as distinct carriers, to use Scott’s notion of how ideas spread, or consider them in terms of relational systems and symbolic systems (Glynn 2008), the argument suggested here is to see them as one, as an association, a complex interweaving of ‘allies’ that – together – ‘perform’. From this perspective field stability is an on-going accomplishment, hinged on the coordinated efforts of many actors and things. Field stability may, however, also be vulnerable in the sense that a field can be destabilized and changed if new ideas, issues, technologies, and/or different stakeholders are sufficiently successful in problematizing the existing and in enrolling and mobilizing others

so as to persuade them of the relevance, importance, superiority, etc. of making changes. Field configuring events are, then, about the making and breaking of associations – breaking the existing and making new ones; the durability of which will be subject to “trials of strength” amongst the actors in the field.

Following from this, how do urban development competitions perform as field configuring events? They do at least five things. One, they *focus attention* on a particular issue – in our case sustainability – and a particular place, and in doing so they speak to professionals as well as local communities. When sustainability is formulated as a goal – in general terms as in Dunkerque or in more specific terms as in X-købing – this provides the various actors within these fields with a common concern that is likely to be subject to many different interpretations. This generates some ambiguity, with which professionals and local actors will have to contend.

Second, they are *vehicles for experimentation*, where professionals, perhaps in collaboration with local stakeholders, seek to develop something that is desirable and/or remarkable. It is about being able to read the local, acknowledging the history and the feel of the place, infusing it with something that does not exist, and developing a narrative, e.g. through the use of visualizations, to convince others, notably the jury. The latter highlights a third role – competitions are also *vehicles for expression* that allow for enactments of style, which may be important for convincing not only a jury but also future customers. The criteria for what counts as a winning bid, i.e. one that fits with the brief, may be set from the outset of the competition, but even so it is unlikely that there will be commonly agreed criteria for how to measure the “fit”. In the case of X-købing, where the judges had to assess the bids vis-à-vis six vision points, there were no publically available documents specifying how to weigh these vision points against each other in the selection process – is social diversity more or less important than energy use, waste water treatment, etc.? It is not our impression that this lack

of selection criteria can be ascribed to strategic considerations on the part of the sponsors/jurors, but rather that these 6 vision points are indicative of 6 “matters of concern” (Latour) that can induce different and perhaps even contradictory forms of behavior/evaluation. There are no simple answers to the question of how to weigh such different concerns. Attending to them in connection with having to choose a winning bid is a “trial of strength” between the bids as to which one is the most persuasive. These “trials of strength” are usually hidden from view in the jury’s meetings and deliberations. The jury report is an ex post justification of their choices.

Four, they *facilitate communication and interaction* that is important precursor for experimentation. Even though our findings suggest that the interaction and learning across teams, often associated with parallel competitions (Danielsen 2010), was not that prevalent, this does not mean that it doesn’t happen. Certainly, it happens within the teams as they struggle to develop their ideas.

Five, the remuneration and *reward structure* associated with urban design competitions confer a certain visibility and status to the competition as well as to the participants. The reputational effects of this can lead to new competitions and new customers, thus, providing those that participate in urban design competitions with economic gains that can be used to justify participation. Moreover, all the activities that take place in the course of a competition – press releases, press meetings, workshops, and exhibitions – are all supportive in making urban design competitions important events.

Urban design competitions are about the “enactment of possibilities” (Garud 2008), and these five features are important for introducing new ideas to the field be it in professional fields or in local geographical field. The experimentation that competitions invoke have the potential to reconfigure a field, if the results of these experiments convinces others to adopt (and adapt) the results. In the case of Dunkerque and X-købing, the

institutionalization of these results appears to be occurring “horizontally” through informal contacts and partnerships forged prior, during and after the competitions as the ideas about how to develop an eco-district gradually spread through the professional field, and as the eco-districts literally take form, these physical manifestations change the local geographical field.

CONCLUSIONS

We have studied how urban design competitions can be thought of as field configuring events. They are both contests and experiments in which the participants strive to give particular visions form and enact a future. It is the up-take of these ideas that have the potential to reconfigure fields and, in turn, become standardized into new design templates. It is, however, too early to tell whether and how this reconfiguration will take place. As such, our analysis speaks to how it *can* take place. In our account we emphasize the role of the institutional entrepreneurs in changing the ground rules for urban development and urban design competitions in France and Denmark, respectively, and focus on the mechanisms at play in competitions (primarily in the Danish case), paying particular attention to the complex intertwining of actors and artifacts. In doing so, we draw on the sociology of associations as a complement to the institutional perspective, because this perspective offers an alternative to the more commonplace diffusion model associated with field changes, i.e. fields change as innovations spread either due to their own intrinsic properties or to some external force. The alternative suggested in the paper is that the fate of an innovation – be it an architectural design or an energy efficient technology – is in the hands of those who develop it and those who may or may not decide to use it.

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Figure 1. Comparative Models of Collaboration

Grand Large: A hybrid model				
	FRENCH MODEL	GRAND LARGE		ANGLO-SAXON MODEL
VISION	Initiative of the community	Initiative of the community	VISION	Initiative of the community
PROGRAMMING	Studies elaborated by the community	Studies elaborated by the community in partnership with a developer	CONCEPT (INVENTION OF THE OPERATION)	Produced by the operators They must respect the vision
ASSEMBLY (ROLE ASSIGNMENT)	Choice of public or private developes for the "portage"/carriage and the land mgmt	Choice of public development agency (project management support) in cooperatoon with a group of promoters	PROJECT: SPECIFIC PROGRAM	Elaborated by the private operators
URBAN DESIGN	The community (within the context of the public procurement code or the developer) launches a urban dev. Competition	The group of developer launch a deisgn competition chaired by the community. The community contracts with the architect who becomes a chief planner (bypassing the procurement code)	DESIGN	The community gives an informal opinion of the design but does not go to the jury assembled by the operator to choose a concept. The community has the right to give or refuse the authorization for construction
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN	Each lot is subject to a Consultation with the developer/architect.			
REALIZATION/ EXECUTION	Community or private operators	Group of promotors	REALIZATION/ EXECUTION	The private sector
MANAGEMENT	The community	The community	MANAGEMENT	The private sector

Source: Pinheiro-Croisel, 2011.

Table 1. A comparison of the competitions in the French and Danish cases

Feature	France (Grand Large)	Denmark
Objectives	To strengthen the ties between the city center and a nearby resort	To integrate former industrial areas into the city – bringing the sea into the city
Initiator	Public private partnership	Public private partnership
Vision points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An urban and social ambition - An environmental ambition - Creating a cultural hub - Creation of a leisure center - Creation of a pleasure zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culture as a driving force - Making X-købing an attractive commercial town - Using the infrastructural assets - Creative and high quality urban renewal - Citizen involvement - Sustainability: the overriding principle for the project
Competition form	International, invited competition	International, two staged, parallel competition
Competition brief	Specification of the mix of building forms, mix of occupants, and types of facilities	Specification of area allotted for housing (approx. 50%) and other purposes, e.g. commercial facilities, retail outlets and cultural venues
Size of the area	Approx. 25 Ha	Approx. 25 Ha
Total number of residences	Approx. 1000	Approx. 1500
Time frame	2005-2020	2009-2029
Sustainability	Ad hoc, project to project	By design, use of a sustainability assessment and ranking tool
Stakeholder involvement	Little	Some