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Assessing participatory urban planning instruments in Krakow, Poland

Ocena narzędzi planowania partycypacyjnego w Krakowie

Abstract

This study analyzes a few case studies showing bottom-up urban initiatives in Krakow, Poland to assess the sustainability of the dominating planning process and participatory planning instruments used. Study shows possible ways of improving the participatory planning instruments used in Krakow by utilising the principles of the process-based planning model.

Keywords: participatory planning, urban planning, bottom-up urban planning, urban policies, planning instruments

Streszczenie

Niniejsze badanie analizuje wybrane studia przypadku pokazujące inicjatywy obywatelskiego zaangażowania w planowanie zagospodarowania przestrzeni miejskiej w Krakowie i ma na celu ocenę, czy dominujący proces planowania przestrzennego i stosowane instrumenty planowania partycypacyjnego są zrównoważone. Badanie wskazuje możliwe sposoby poprawy instrumentów planowania partycypacyjnego na podstawie teorii planowania jako procesu (*process based planning model*).

Słowa kluczowe: partycypacja społeczna, planowanie przestrzenne, oddolne planowanie, polityka miejska, instrumenty planistyczne

1. INTRODUCTION

Castells (1983) describes common problems of urban governance encountered in systems constructed by citizens but then failing to interact with them; working as separate entities, urban authorities and citizens may dominate each other but they never interact in a meaningful structure: 'As a result, we are left with urban systems separated from personal experiences; with structures without actors, and actors without structures; with cities without citizens, and citizens without cities' (Castells, 1983: 4).

The theoretical discourse on sustainable urban development tries to find and develop more balanced and responsive models of spatial planning in which a social voice is incorporated into the process of city creation and the problems associated with the loss of tangible qualities are also addressed. According to Talen (2002), as planning is the only discipline devoted to urban form, it should focus on delivering the physical qualities of cities and seek to promote sustainable development. On the other hand, Feinstein (1999) and other researchers argue that it is not enough to provide just and equitable development and call for a type of planning that encompasses the participation of those who were not previously given access to power.

The challenge of providing more space for the voice of society, which has been addressed in various documents on sustainable planning and policies, requires an important effort from urban governments all around the world. However, when this overlaps with other socio-spatial problems, and/or with a lack of political will or insufficient funding, the issue may become more complex. Levels of social (measured for example with Human Development Index) and economic (measured with Gross Domestic Product) development, strong planning traditions, adequate public funding and a strong civic society all allow cities in developed countries to pursue a more sustainable development. As a result, both sustainable physical outcomes and inclusive planning processes, which respond to the demands voiced by society, can be achieved. But what if some of these qualities are lacking and either insufficient funding, weak planning instruments or legacies of the former political system become an obstacle on the way to sustainable city planning?

In Krakow, the second biggest city in Poland, citizens' initiatives including bottom-up urban movements that have developed over the last ten years, have become a strong voice against the prevailing market-led urban development model, which has been the main cause for producing unsustainable outcomes. Over thirty years after the transformation from state socialist to democratic states, these initiatives are raising important questions about the role of citizens in urban development, such as: Are the participatory planning processes, which shape our cities fair and inclusive? Do they ensure the physical qualities of urban form? Are current planning laws and instruments sufficiently capturing citizens' engagement? This paper attempts to answer these questions.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGIES

The objective of this article is to address the challenges and potentials of sustainable planning within the context of Krakow. Analysing existing participatory planning theory provides methodological tools to assess the formal planning instruments used by the Municipality of Krakow, their practical implications, and a critique they face from bottom-up urban initiatives.

The starting point of this work is an analysis of sustainable planning theory. According to sustainable urban development, planning should include both a spatial (physical) dimension and a participatory process. Using methodological tools for the process-based dimension of planning, the main problems facing urban development planning and constraining sustainable urban development in the case of Krakow were analysed, revealing that it was lacking in certain qualities. Both engagement in bottom-up urban movements and participation in city-led initiatives revealed a lack of civic approval for the current situation and showed potential for more sustainable and inclusive solutions. This work highlighted deficits in participatory planning instruments in the hands of local governments and preparedness for higher levels of participatory planning from society.

The work was therefore divided into two main parts: theoretical and case study. The theoretical part is based on books, articles, and institutional documents relevant for the topic. The case study part is mainly based on planning laws, documents, reports, and articles. Finally, the last part of this work contains information collected from the media, including social media and the web pages of the urban initiatives from detailed case studies. Email interviews with leaders of bottom-up urban movements and initiatives and local government bodies were conducted to support the argumentation.

2.1. SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING MODELS

With the development of sustainable planning theories, the notion of pursuing social equity and promoting the role of society in planning models and processes has gained greater recognition and understanding (Petrella, Hogan, 2012). However, even though researchers generally agree on the broad principle of sustainable development, there is still an on-going debate about the practical implementations of sustainable urban planning (Feinstein, 1999). Researchers must therefore try to answer a fundamental question – is the right process that guides the city planning toward a more sustainable outcome, or is it strong articulation of what the sustainable city is supposed to be? The next section therefore describes the objectives for physical and process-based planning.

2.1.1. PHYSICAL PLANNING MODEL

In her article Talen (2002) argues that spatial planning should be defined as a grounded, physical, tangible, place-bound discipline, but one that goes hand-in-hand with other institutional strategies, with questions like local governance and citizens participation being important components for promoting more sustainable cities (Newman, Jennings, 2008; Farr, 2008). She believes that when spatial planning is devoid of references to its physical location and when it tries to encompass other disciplines, the notion of sustainability in planning loses all meaning. Talen points out that planning is the only discipline that is devoted to urban pattern and form, whereas topics such as institutional practices and public participation are often handled as part of public policy. In the physical planning model, sustainability is often associated with the theory of New Urbanism, which is understood as a variety of quantitative parameters and urban qualities. 'The latest tendencies in urban planning call for urban design to include a variety of building types, mixed uses, the intermingling of housing aimed at different income groups, and providing major privileges to the "public realm". The basic unit of planning is the neighbourhood' (Feinstein, 1999: 18). This has led Andres Duany (Congress for the New Urbanism) to suggest that although it is important to be flexible and open to new ideas, it is also important, when faced with reality, to maintain principles that must be regarded as sacrosanct. It is therefore necessary to establish or conserve such physical qualities as urban density, compactness, accessibility to green spaces, walkability, connectivity, and heritage preservation when planning. Principles of establishing a polycentric network of public spaces guide neo-traditional planners to design a sustainable city.

Nonetheless, there is strong opposition to the physical, new urbanism and neo-traditional planning models. One of the leading problems with it, as mentioned by Harvey (1997; 2008), is that it repeats the same rhetoric that modernism once promoted. By shaping spatial order, it aims to provide the foundations for a new moral order but in doing this, the 'movement repeats at the fundamental level the same fallacy of the architectural and planning styles it criticises' (Harvey, 1997: 2).

2.1.2. PROCESS-BASED PLANNING MODEL

While many planners would agree with the basic outlines for what a sustainable place should look like, far more are interested in ensuring a sustainable process than a preconceived one. A communicative model does not provide solutions through ready-made recipes, but rather by establishing a dialogue with the subject. This model sees planning as a "continuous process of change" (Brown, 2006). Therefore, the good city is the one that evolves into more complex form with the main goal being the development of the "individual or the small group" (Lynch, 1981).

There are, however, two main streams of the communicative model: the neo-pragmatic and rationalistic models emerged from different philosophical traditions and converged when used to provide a guide for the action of planners (see Feinstein, 1999: 5). The role of the planner

within this communicative scenario is to occupy a position in the middle of the stakeholders and at the centre of discussion. Rather than assuming a leadership role, the planner's role is that of providing support with information, while at the same time being sensitive to points of convergence. 'Within communicative theory the planner's primary function is to listen to people's stories and assist in forging a consensus among different viewpoints. Rather than providing technocratic leadership, the planner is an experiential learner' (Feinstern, 1999: 6). The role of the planner should also be that of ensuring that whatever the position of the participants is within the social-economic hierarchy, no single group's interests should be allowed to dominate.

In summary, it could therefore be said that sustainable development can be reached through the vehicle of participatory planning, which mobilises a public that has previously been excluded from power. As a result, a built form, which balances the natural environment and urban space by producing a liveable, walkable, and inclusive city, is created.

2.2. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING CHARACTERISTICS

Among the different definitions of participatory planning available, Arnstein's provides a good understanding of the main objectives. She states that participation is 'the redistribution of power that enables the *have-not citizens*, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the *have-nots* join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out' (Arnstein, 1969: 216).

The following section summarises the theory relating to participatory planning characteristics and the parameters that define different levels of participation and power (Arnstein, 1969; Burns, 1994), spheres of decision-making (Hart, Jones, Manmohan, 1997; Winstanley, 1995) participants (Wilson, Wilde, 2003; Chanan, 2003) and – in the end – the characteristics that ensure the creation of inclusive participatory planning instruments. The objective is to help to assess the appropriateness of participation in planning within the context of the case study.

2.2.1. LEVELS

The most influential differentiation of participation was that introduced by Arnstein (1969). It is particularly important to recognise the different levels of participation, ranging from manipulation to therapy, which refer to positions that extend from non-participation to partnership. Arnstein's work was later enriched by the idea that sees the citizen as a consumer who can extend their choices by having more access to power (Burns, 1994). In this context, the range of meanings must be modified; it takes the form of a ladder of civil power with a more qualitative breakdown.

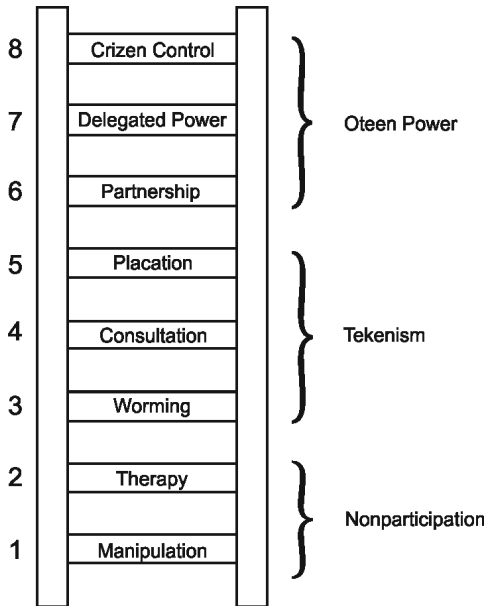


Fig. 1. Arnstein's ladder of participation, 1969 (Arnstein, 1969)

Table 1. A ladder of civil power (Burns, Hambleton, Hoggett, 1994)

CITIZEN
12. Independent control
11. Entrusted control
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
10. Delegated control
9. Partnership
8. Limited decentralized decision-making
7. Effective advisory boards
6. Genuine consultation
5. High quality information
CITIZEN NON-PARTICIPATION
4. Customer care
3. Poor information
2. Cynical consultation
1. Civil hype

2.2.2. SPHERES OF DECISION-MAKING

The stakeholder power matrix (Hart, Jones, Manmohan, 1997) was developed to provide responses to the above division of spheres on which decision-making is based. This matrix (fig. 2) is seen as less suggestive; the higher level is the ultimate goal of participation as there may, for example, be a high level of 'Arm's length' power, which represents strategic power, but is not followed by operational power and therefore its implementation and maintenance are not controlled. **Only comprehensive power gives both high strategic and operational power.**

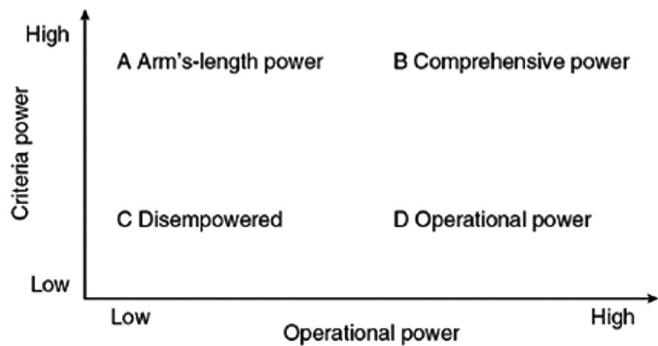


Fig. 2. A stakeholder's power matrix. Source: CAG consultants, based on (Hart, Jones, Manmohan, 1997; Winstanley, 1995)

2.2.3. PARTICIPANTS

To develop and assess participatory planning, we need to look at not only the level of involvement but also at the actions that people participate in and who participates in them, and, by implication, who does not participate. The third fundamental characteristic of participatory planning is therefore that of defining the participants (tab. 2). Since the division into 'power holders' and 'have-nots' (Arnstein, 1969), the debate concerning the stakeholders involved in participatory planning has become more complex, incorporating different ideas and theories.

Table 2. Participatory Planning Characteristics. By author, based on (Tasan-Kok, Vranken, 2011; Hart, Jones, Manmohan, 1997; Arnstein, 1969; Burns, Hambleton, Hoggett, 1994; Wilcox, 1994; Skinner, 1997)

Participatory planning characteristics	Methodological tools		
LEVEL	Arnstein's ladder (7 levels): Civil control Tokenism Non-participation	Burns's power ladder (12 levels): Civil control Participation Non-participation	Wilcox progressive model: Supporting individual initiatives Acting together Deciding together Consultation Information
STAGES AND SPHERES	Hart's matrix: Strategic power + operational power = Comprehensive power		Cities Alliance: Maintain Implement Design Plan Initiate
PARTICIPANTS	Participants by Tasan-Kok, Vranken: Private sector Public sector Semi-public sector Third sector Citizen Expert (academia)	Skinner: Potential long term partners Source of delivery Source of delivery Consultees Beneficiaries/Users	

2.2.4. PARTICIPATORY PROCESS CHARACTERISTICS

To manage a good participatory process and not a façade of fake understanding and as a result non-participation, requires resources, good planning but above all political will, which is seen as the most crucial of participation. Only with this attitude can local governments build their institutional capacity through collaborative planning, which captures creative, diverse and context-based planning goals and solutions, increasing the odds of plan implementation, finding ways to accommodate differences and prevent social exclusion, and enhancing public education.

While the effectiveness of top-down governance has been called into question, coordination, cooperation, participation and integration are the key principles of urban governance and should be interrelated in formal planning through cross cutting policy instruments (Tasan-Kok, Vranken, 2011). Many international institutions offer toolboxes and documents with explanations how to create effective participatory planning instruments. Some examples come from UN-Habitat. To achieve successful participatory planning and

effectively incorporating it into formal planning, local government, according to UN-Habitat guidelines, needs to:

- allocate resources to the task,
- provide the capacity building for staff,
- test and refine the instruments,
- institutionalise the participatory process in order to prevent partisanship and municipal election cycles,
- create participation manuals and checklists to coordinate action,
- document successfully practices and facilitate knowledge transfers (Petrella, Hogan, 2012: 154).

3. REVIEW OF PARTICIPATORY PLANNING INSTRUMENTS IN KRAKOW

‘Citizen participation was never part of the planning process during communism (...) national and regional goals were conceived by political elites which, as communist theory claimed, represented the interests of all citizens. The political goals were then translated into urban spatial projects by trained experts – architects, planners, and engineers – who claimed privileged understanding of their subject’ (Hirt, Stanilov, 2009).

Since the transformation (in 1989), Poland has made significant steps towards democratisation. This has been well reflected in new legislation which makes provisions for participation in planning and other law-making activities. Since new, democratic planning acts were established, participation in planning, which is guaranteed by national and local government laws, is seen as an obligation of every local government. The inclusion of public society in the decision-making process was ensured in 2007 by the Uchwała Nr XIX/249/07 Rady Miasta Krakowa z dnia 29 sierpnia 2007 roku. This document states the need to prepare rules and models for social consultation and includes a list of investments that require it. In 2008, Uchwała Nr XLI/502/08 Rady Miasta Krakowa z dnia 23 kwietnia 2008 roku regulated the financial responsibilities, aims, participants, processes, forms and levels of consultation and evaluation for the above-mentioned investment. Furthermore, Ustawa z dnia 9 października 2015 roku o rewitalizacji stated a need to consult the public regarding areas that were a subject of revitalization processes. Moreover, three years later, the extent of these laws was assessed as not sufficient, and Uchwała z dnia 14 marca 2014 roku Rady Miasta Krakowa o budżecie obywatelskim Nr XCVII/1465/14 allowed for greater public engagement in planning. This act was seen as an important step as it introduced an obligation for allowing for citizens’ legislative initiatives and a need for participatory budgets in every city with a minimum 0,5% of city budget allocated to it.

The importance of public participation in planning is in theory well established and was highlighted in the National Urban Policy 2023 (Krajowa Polityka Miejska 2023) document (Prepared by the Ministry of Development and Infrastructure in 2015). In the study conducted

by Damurski (2012) Polish urban planners and planning professionals were asked questions regarding their views on participatory planning processes. The study concluded that however participation is seen as necessary by the vast majority of planners, currently used planning instruments are, in their view, not sufficient. Therefore, although the laws are progressive and in line with those of the most “developed” democracies of Western Europe, they only imply the bare minimum of participation (Hirt, Stanilov, 2009). The report on participatory planning conducted by the IRMiR Institute (2019) shows that 71% of cities in Poland are limiting participatory planning to the legal minimum. As a result, the minimum requirement becomes the maximum that city authorities do to ensure participatory planning (Pistelok, Martela, 2019).

The next section analyses how urban planning in Krakow addresses participation. It examines three case studies of various types of civic engagement including social consultations of urban plans, Participatory Budget (called BO) and bottom-up initiatives. Three case studies include: the Zakrzówek Green area, Mogilska Avenue and Krupnicza Street and show a combination of participatory instruments and their implementation.

3.1. ZAKRZÓWEK GREEN SPACE

Zakrzówek is a place of unique environmental value, important for the local area as well as the wider city. This area, which is partially covered with forest and partially with wetlands and meadows, has a turquoise-coloured lake located in the middle of a series of white rocks and is the pride of many citizens (fig. 3). It is used for a variety of sports, leisure



Fig. 3. Zakrzówek is the name of a mostly green, predominantly protected area of over 200 ha; located 2.5 km to the south-west of the city centre (source: <https://www.bryla.pl/bryla/7,151281,20321823,27-ha-zieleni-nowy-park-w-krakowie.html>)

and occasional cultural events. The case of the Zakrzówek, local plans illustrate a complex picture of 'man vs. nature' conflict, of different visions of city growth but also citizens' call for more inclusivity and transparency in planning.

Master plans are one of the most important operational spatial planning tools used by the Municipality of Krakow. According to the national Planning Act of 2003, the creation of plans has to be announced in the public media. Plans must be exhibited for a minimum of 21 days. Participation in this form of consultation is an obligation for these plans. Public comments are allowed for up to 14 days after the end of the public viewing. However, as well as this basic participation, which is guaranteed by law, broader participation is recommended in line with the municipal standards defined for the process in question.

Until 2003, the old master plan defined the whole area as a public green space. However, some of its space was already in private hands; the municipality was responsible for buying this land and thereby securing its public use. Already in 1997, the area had been included in the Landscape Park project (called Bielańsko Tyniecki Park Krajobrazowy).

The new master plan 2003 addressed the cultural, environmental and landscape value of the green area and its importance within the spatial form (views, axis) of the city. At the same time, the master plan allocated the southern part of the area for other uses that were not for public greenland. Housing, service, and commercial uses were now allowed in the area. With the new city plan, it was possible to create the local urban plan. The participants, who were present at the social consultations for the first draft of the local plan, were shown the concept which allowed a low-density development. After a social consultation in 2006, which was subsequently confirmed by the local authorities (2007 was also a year of city council elections), this was believed to be the only possible scenario for the area. Soon after the elections, a major investor bought the land from various private owners. As a result, one-quarter of the Zakrzówek area fell into private hands and was under the control of a single company. This caught the attention of many citizens who were aware of common development practices carried out in the city and were concerned about the future of the green space.

When a new player entered the game, the municipality's vision was not respecting its previous statement. With the new investor's visions, the local plans were redesigned, allowing for more intervention. At the same time, Gerium (the developer) presented its vision of this space. The company offered to make improvements and to invest in facilities that would "enhance" the quality and security of the open area in return for urbanising its southern fringes. This idea (fig. 4), which the investor expressed with confidence, was publicly exhibited before the local plans were completed, triggered conflict. While the scheme was appreciated by some, others saw the new project as a threat to the area's unique environmental qualities as a public space.

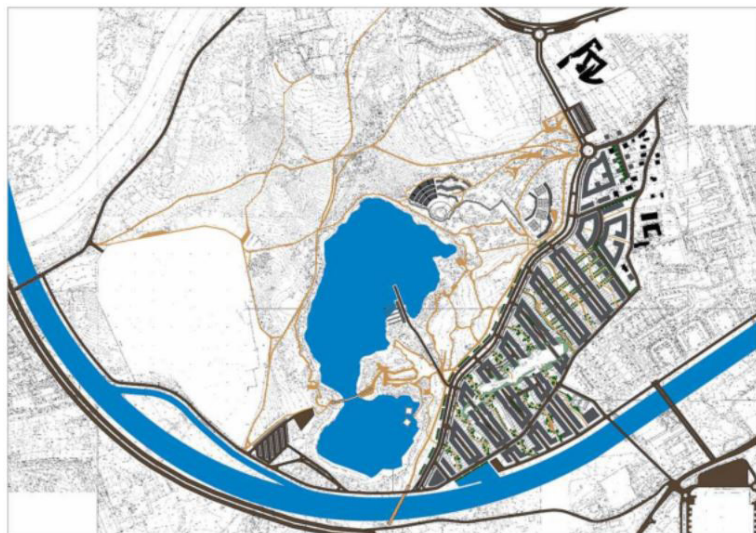


Fig. 4. Zakrzówek according to the developer's plan – an urbanisation of the south-eastern part and improvement of the open area which was presented before the local plans (source: <https://www.skyscrapercity.com/threads/krak%C3%B3w-zakrz%C3%B3wek-powstawanie-parku.516187/>)



Fig. 5. Zakrzówek Park's concept by the activists allows only for sports facilities and equipment (source: <https://www.slideshare.net/zwornik/spoeczna-strategia-rozwoju-zakrzwka-3299361>)

Later, in March 2008, the municipality published the new draft version of the local plans. In contrast to the previous plan, this new document – which envisaged housing for 10,000 inhabitants – was approved, as was a road running straight across the green space. Following the public presentation of the plan, there was an obligatory public hearing, which took place just a few days later. The hearing, which was organised by the municipality, brought together numerous citizens, academics, environmental experts, biologists, NGOs, planners, architects, local citizens and landowners and government authorities (incl. the Vice Mayor). At a meeting that was organised in a form that facilitated discussion, questions were presented to both the planners and to the audience involved in the consultation process. The representative of the NGO presented an alternative vision (fig. 5) of the development for the area; this was based on the preservation of the natural area (Stenogram, 2008: 28).

The participants raised a number of very interesting questions, resulting in a rich discussion. However, no conclusions were reached, and requests were made for further public discussions in the presence of the investor. The aim of the discussion was therefore to encourage the local citizens and different stakeholders to enter a caveat or to comment on the plan which, according to the official planning procedure, had to be considered.

As a result of the growing conflict, the Zielony Zakrzówek group formed and soon collected 12,000 signatures (by September 2008) before sending an open letter to the Mayor of Krakow. This letter was signed by over 30 Polish NGOs and several district representatives; it called for the designation of Zakrzówek as an area of outstanding environmental and scenic value which should not be urbanised.

In July 2009, the municipality voted against the plan, albeit with a recommendation for some corrections and clarifications to be made before a second vote. Meanwhile the civic organisations that had mobilised against the development were growing with the help of artists and other activists (fig. 6). By mobilising the citizens in peaceful demonstrations and attracting a lot of media attention, the opposition was able to put direct pressure on the local authorities. However, in 2010, the developer reduced the size of the housing development from 10,000 to 6,000 and later to 4,000 inhabitants, but the municipality again voted against the plan (the local government elections were in 2011). The plans for Zakrzówek were then suspended due to planning procedures and finally in 2012 a final version, allowing no development except for facilities to serve Zakrzówek Park was accepted.

After a few years, and many bottom-up initiatives later, the municipality decided to buy over 27ha from the private investor for 26 million PLN (around 6 million €) and announced the creation of Zakrzówek Park. This was immediately followed by an international design competition to propose a green area upgrading. Thirty-four entries were submitted, from which the best were selected in an online voting open to the broad public.

Finally, in 2017, the Department for Urban Greenery (called ZZM) tendered for a contractor for the development of design documentation for the development of Zakrzówek. Architects (*P.P. F-11*) were selected and handed its design over to ZZM two years later. Construction

activities for the “Park Zakrzówek” are estimated to cost around 5 million PLN (1,2 million €) and have been ongoing here since 2019. However, they are not free from controversial decisions, which cause immediate reactions from activists’ groups such as Green Zakrzówek (called Zielony Zakrzówek) and Krakow Aid Action (Akcja Ratunkowa dla Krakowa). These groups continuously monitor what is happening on the ground and mobilise their members to intervene in various ways from writing letters to public authorities to informing and campaigning for transparency in the decision-making process.



Fig. 6. Bottom-up initiatives to protect Zakrzówek included artist-led protests with a main theme of a local endangered butterfly species – Modraszek, fot. Tomasz Gotfryd (source: <https://gazetakrakowska.pl/spor-o-zakrzowek-modraszek-kolektyw-tanczy-urzednicy-planuja/> ar/413012)

3.2. MOGILSKA AVENUE

The Mogilska Avenue redevelopment, an important, four-lane road linking the historic centre to the eastern part of the city (fig. 7), is one of the biggest municipal investment projects of recent years (a total cost of 150 million PLN or around 35 million €). While architectural, landscape and urban design projects affecting a street or a public space are not usually the subject of public discussion, this investment was on the KIM list (City Investment Catalogue) for 2010. That means that, according to the municipal decision on participation mentioned previously, full social consultations had to be conducted as part of the planning process. The opportunity for participation in decision-making received a lot of interest from NGOs and civil society.

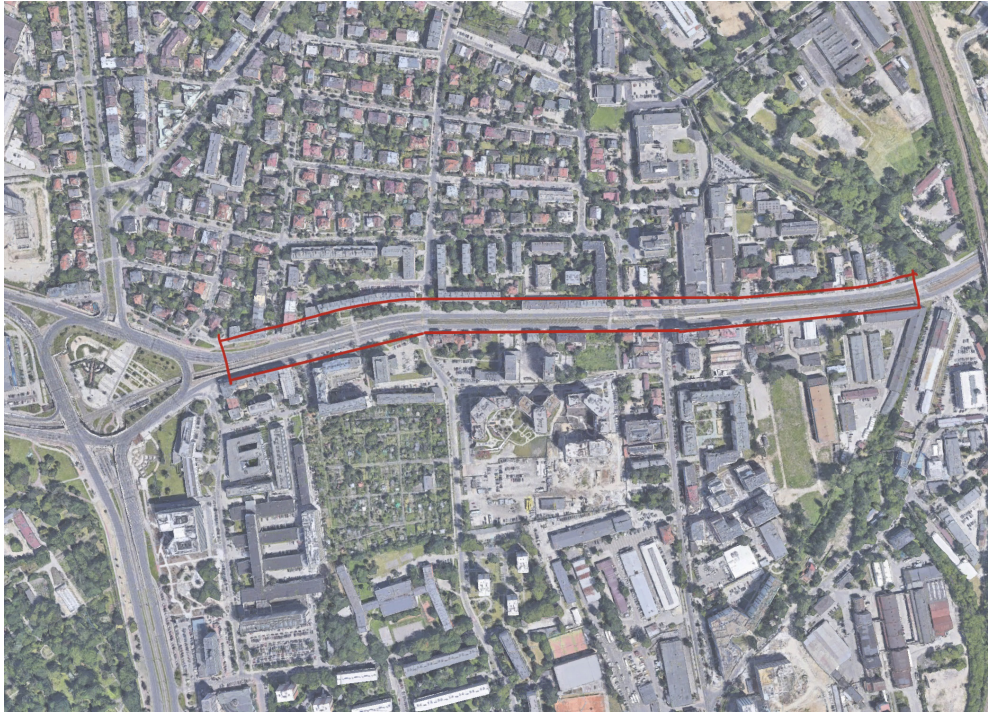


Fig. 7. Mogilska Avenue has four lanes and a tram in the middle. The redevelopment was a chance to reduce car lanes in favour of pedestrian and cyclist comfort (Google Earth, n.d.)

The process started in 2009 with the creation of a series of functional guidelines for the project to redevelop the avenue (which were mainly established by the Infrastructure Department). After completing these guidelines, the public tender for the ‘design and build’ contract was opened to private companies. Consultations conducted in May 2009 were carried out at a very early stage of the planning process and included technical data and figures which were used as guidelines for the project. However, the NGO (Przestrzeń – Ludzie – Miasto, hereafter referred to as simply NGO) which took the leading role in communications between local citizens and the Infrastructure Department (called ZIKiT), documented requests from citizens and conducted consultations and sent relevant information to the different participants. This NGO also pointed out that the conclusions from the meeting did not include the voice of many of the citizens’ groups who would be directly affected by the investment project. Following conversations between the Infrastructure Department and the NGO only a few changes to the initial project were implemented.

According to the tender, the chosen enterprise would be responsible for the whole process from design to implementation. “The best” (meaning the cheapest offer meeting the minimum requirements) offer was chosen in 2012. Apart from meeting the deadline of two

years, the winning bidder's responsibilities also included obtaining the necessary permits. While work on the plan for the new Mogilska Avenue continued behind closed doors, citizens started to wonder where their place was in the planning process. In 2012, multiple requests were sent to the Infrastructure Department by NGO to ask for more details. As a result, the final proposal did not meet the expectations of local citizens. Meanwhile, the NGO proposed an alternative vision which was sent to the local authorities in September 2012, together with a petition signed by around 900 local citizens and business owners (fig. 8).



Fig. 8. The two proposals for Mogilska Avenue: on the top – the city proposal where the only change compared to the status quo was a cycle lane. On the bottom – the community proposal made by NGO (PLM) with reduced car lanes in favour of pedestrian, cycle and green buffers (source: <https://www.facebook.com/AlejaMogilska/>)

Finally, social consultations were announced for the beginning of 2013. However, the official name of this process was changed in the local media; its published name changed from 'consultation' to 'information'. The second name better expressed the final shape of the eventual meeting. Although many citizens' organisations and groups as well as district government authorities made preparations for discussions, this was not the idea.

Infrastructure Department officials justified this change because of a lack of time due to the project being largely financed by EU funds and because a certain schedule was required. Not meeting that schedule would have resulted in a loss of funding. This became an important argument in discussions about the time available for public consultations. The result of the meeting was limited as the organiser mainly focused on informing people about the plans but the project received more attention from local citizens and media and

greater support from the district authorities. Moreover, with the cooperation of the district authorities, new social consultations were organised by the authorised body (the Social Dialogue unit) on 14th February 2013.

The invitation made via social media stated: ‘Thanks to the discussion facilitated by the Social Dialogue unit, you can be sure that this will not be just an informative meeting of the type that we were used to with the Infrastructure Department (ZIKiT)’¹. As a result of this mobilisation, in June 2013, the Infrastructure Department decided to include a number of proposals. Finally, although it was decided that certain aspects of the spatial form and function of the avenue would be included in the newly designed Master Plan for Krakow, the final result was still far from what community groups and the NGO had desired.

3.3. KRUPNICZA STREET

Krupnicza Street is centrally located, an important route leading from the second city ring to the inner historic core of Krakow (fig. 9). It connects the university campus with the city centre. The last ten years have seen a gradual transformation with many bars and small shops and cafeterias, but there are still unsolved problems with car traffic and cars parked on both sides of the pavement. The street has, however, an exceptionally strong identity with many local initiatives taking place there every year. Nonetheless, these activities must fit into what is essentially a car-dominated space.

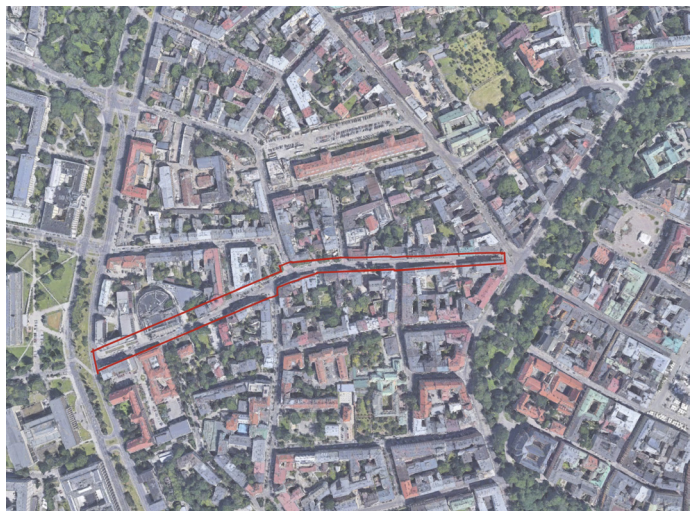


Fig. 9. Krupnicza Street is a typical two-lane road with narrow pavements on both sides occupied by parked cars (Google Earth, n.d.)

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/AlejaMogilska/> (dostęp: 10.02.2012).

Urban movements, whose main aim was to turn the street into a walkable, lively street, have a long history dating back to 2011. From lobbying local authorities to organising ‘no parking’ days, to proposals in the latest editions of the Participatory Budget, citizens showed a lot of dedication to transform their ideas into reality. Gathered under the ‘New Krupnicza’ and later ‘Green Krupnicza’ movement, citizens, users of the space and NGOs, created workshops, meetings, and public debates to discuss the future solutions for improving the situation.

A so-called social project came out, in 2013, as a result of this cooperation (fig. 10). Its message is very straight forward – no cars on Krupnicza. Instead, a green pedestrian zone, equipped with bike stands, trees and places to sit. Increasing activeness of this group and requests directed both to district as well as to city authorities resulted in a promise made by the Vice Mayor in 2013 to start a planning procedure. Since then, eight years have passed and the only change is a new road regulation that made part of the street a pedestrian only zone from 9 am to 6 pm.



Fig. 10. Social project of new street shape, made by Nowa Krupnicza group in 2013 (source: <https://www.facebook.com/NowaKrupnicza/photos/506582729393060>)

Since the establishment of the Participatory Budget in Krakow in 2014, Krupnicza Street was the one that received the most attention. Its transformation into a pedestrian-friendly woonerf was proposed three times (in 2017, 2018, 2021) and three times rejected. Despite high interest and a large number of votes, the municipality rejected it for various reasons including being too expensive or too long in execution. The latest edition in which the project was proposed (in 2021) was again met with disapproval from city council but this time

due to “ongoing design work on the Krupnicza street project”. According to Participatory Budget regulations, the projects cannot collide with ongoing city-led projects. The problem, however, was that the city didn’t mention that it works on the design.



Fig. 11. Krupnicza Street city proposal 2021 (source: <https://zsm.krakow.pl/aktualnosci/1156-ulicia-krupnicza-przekształci-sie-w-zielono-blekitna-arterie.html>)

The activist responsible for the Participatory Budget proposal in 2021 promised to appeal. ‘It is disrespectful how the municipality treats its citizens. At first, I received information that the planning will take two years and all of a sudden, the municipality announces that it will start project execution next year.’ said the activist. ‘How long should we believe these fairy tales?’ she adds (interview for the *Architektura & Business* monthly, August 2021). The Department for Urban Greenery (ZZM) presents appealing renders of green Krupnicza from 2021 and promises to start the project soon (fig. 11). At the same time the project has no allocated budget, nor can it be officially viewed (and reviewed) by citizens.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

According to the above case studies, participatory planning in Krakow mostly refers to what is called social consultation of urban plans. This can be further divided into: full consultations and limited consultations. Full consultations refer to social dialogue, information and promotion, whereas limited consultations only refer to information. According to ‘Arnstein’s ladder’, we can identify these instruments as 3rd and 4th level factors,

which would fit into the category of 'tokenism'. Citizens are informed of plan-making and they also act as consultants directly involved in plan making via surveys, hearings, workshops and/or charrettes. Along with 'Burns' ladder, these instruments fit into the 5th, 6th and, in some cases, 7th levels of power (out of 12), as manifestations of participation by citizens. Quality information is provided, a genuine consultation process is conducted, and effective advisory boards are created in some cases.

In the case of the Participatory Budget the ideas come directly from citizens and are only evaluated by the municipality to fit the formal and legal criteria. This can be seen as 10th or even 11th level of participation according to 'Burns' and a highest level of participation in 'Arnsteins' 8th or highest-level power ladder. If their proposals respect the formal requirements, citizens have 'Citizen Power' or 'Citizen Control'. On the surface it all presents a successful case where citizens can shape the city according to their needs and visions. But when looking closer at other key characteristics the case studies presented show also major flaws, which are undermining this high participation levels. Following sections present missing qualities and show possible ways of improving the participatory planning instruments used in Krakow by utilising the principles of the process-based planning model.

4.1. LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

According to the leader of a local NGO of *Aleja Mogilska*, there are currently no tools available capable of effectively including citizens in decision-making processes associated with the design of big urban projects such as major urban corridors, important streets and intersections or key social infrastructures or public buildings. 'All the suggestions that this movement has made follow the same legal procedure, which effectively consists of writing an official letter to the institution that oversees managing the project' says the NGO leader. This institution is making an arbitrary decision whether to take suggestions into consideration or not. Consequently, to secure their impact these letters had to be signed by many other bodies, experts and NGOs as well as get media attention. It took a major private effort to get the message through. To ensure a quality participation the process should be open to a wider partnership (in line with the suggestions of Arnstein and the leader of the Burns's initiative) or/and the decision-making power should be decentralised (along the lines explained by Burns). As a result, it would strengthen relations between local citizens and the districts and municipality.

The participatory planning instruments that support individual citizens' initiatives (in line with Wilcox's model) became accessible from 2014 when the first Participatory Budget was introduced. However, the example of Krupnicza shows that the new instrument didn't solve the problem. Although citizen-led project for a woonerf was proposed several times, it was possible to reject it with justifications that were unclear and controversial. While Participatory Budget works well when it comes to small, local initiatives, it fails in bigger scale and in more

complex city-wide projects. This might not only lead to growing frustration, but also distrust among the community when it comes to using this instrument for city-wide initiatives.

4.2. STAGES AND TYPES OF PLANS

The case of Zakrzówek showed that a participatory planning workshop, which could be organised from the very beginning and would involve various users of urban space throughout the process, could save a lot of energy (which might otherwise be wasted in conflicts). This could also produce different outputs and help to establish a common ground, which would contrast with the current situation in which various groups cling to fixed positions.

The initial stage of the planning process should be enriched with inputs from local government facilitators. These facilitators, supported by the necessary means and with tools to engage the participants in planning activities, should explain the project in an understandable way (using maps, diagrams and clear examples). This can help to direct the potential towards the creation of a common vision rather than towards conflict. Bottom-up initiatives could therefore be harnessed within the local plan at both the initial and design stages. As a result, the continuity of the process, involving all the stakeholders involved in it, could be ensured and it would be possible to establish the foundations for a long-term partnership (Skinner, 1997). In future, this type of partnership could be crucial for sustaining quality outputs, particularly when applied during the implementation and maintenance phases.

4.3. PARTICIPANTS

The case of Zakrzówek showed that avoiding the inclusion of some participants in discussions when the plan was being significantly changed resulted in conflict. Even though these participants were given a voice later in the process, their initial exclusion created fear and mistrust that affected the final output. This example shows the importance of defining all the participants during the preparation phase. The Zakrzówek plan encompasses various issues (for example: environmental, social and historical aspects) on a city-wide scale. The spectrum of participants should therefore be broader than when designing plans for public spaces or parks with only local importance.

The Mogilska example shows the important role that a facilitator or strong, dedicated leader could have when engaged from the very beginning and through to the end of the project. This facilitator ensured that the comments of the “have-nots” (as described by Arnstein) were heard, understood and included. Moreover, the facilitator translated the technical jargon and made a significant contribution to the process of motivating the participants.

The case of Mogilska and Krupnicza, as in the other cases, help us to understand the importance of communication. With a render of the project and a clear description of possible solutions supported by examples taken from other cities and discussions with various experts, the general public had the chance to become more actively included in the debate.

Most of the bottom-up urban movements that have been described in this paper have been organised through the use of the internet and, more specifically, social media. This has become one of the main communication tools for exchanging, collecting and sharing information. It is particularly important in dealing with rapidly emerging conflicts, since popular tools enable efficient and quick communication. The use of these tools also allows efficient work even with a small budget (this is important in the case of social inclusion). The instruments used should take into account the need for communication between and with participants and how they prefer to carry this out. Moreover, extra care should also be taken to accommodate those who do not use the internet, because it is important to provide information to all groups of citizens.

The Krupnicza case highlights the role of a “third sector” as a facilitator of communication and that representing the voice of local society is crucial. At the same time, NGO’s leaders complained about the lack of standards in communication and suggested that more care should be taken by the municipality to reach out to local society. One of the suggested ways to do this would be through the district government authorities, which, in the case studied, were perceived as not being engaged in this task.

5. SUMMARY

According to Campbell (1996), conflicts in urban space such as property, development and resource conflicts, represent three divergent interests that put constraints on sustainability (fig. 12). Tensions between social equity, the environment and economic growth and efficiency all take place within physical space. Social movements, activism and various smaller guerrilla actions have often been provoked by these underlying conflicts. However, a number of them have also been caused by simple dissatisfaction with the quality of urban life and the perceived need for change. In Krakow, these changes are inevitable. Planning the urban development of a city therefore means letting people decide about the life that they want to lead and who they want to be. Letting people improve the city therefore also implies them improving themselves.

The question of what kind of city we want cannot be divorced from the question of what kind of people we want to be, what kinds of social relations we seek, what relations to nature we cherish, what style of life we desire, what aesthetic values we hold. The right to the city is far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: It is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts’ desire (Harvey, 2008: 1).

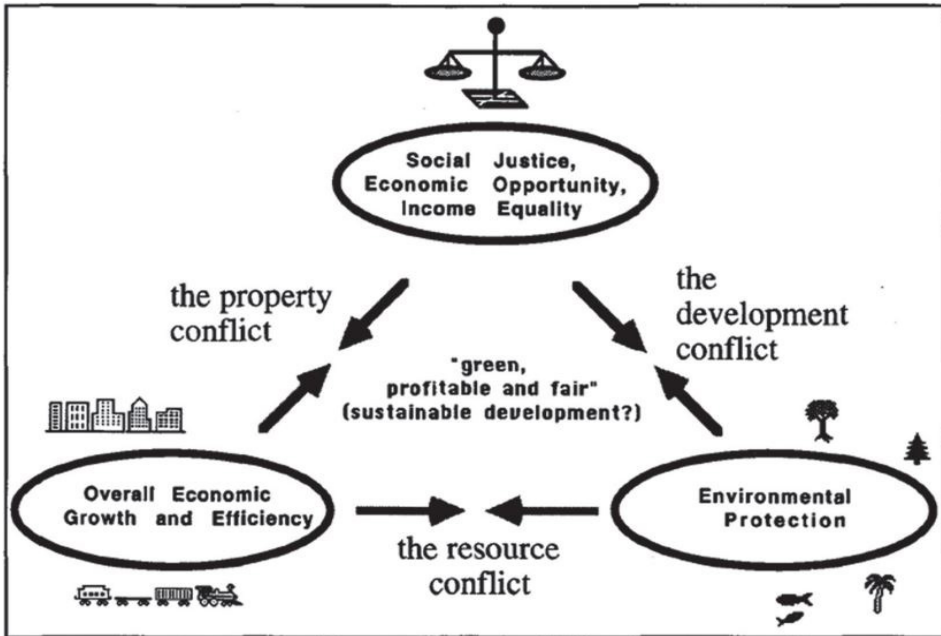


Fig. 12. Campbell's sustainable development equilibrium: environmental protection, social equity, economic growth (Campbell, 1996)

The current urban development undertaken in Krakow is not meeting the demands of local society and this is evident from numerous urban initiatives. These bottom-up urban movements show that citizens have the preparation and capacity to be included in all stages of planning and to enjoy a greater level of involvement than is currently available to them. Fortunately, with the mobilisation of the third sector there is growing awareness in society of the need for greater civic engagement and the situation in Krakow is consequently rapidly changing. Thanks to new communication tools and the networks that they have been used to create, messages now spread quickly and this is motivating participants to continue campaigning for change.

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