HOW THE PRIVATE SECTOR SHAPES THE CITY?

INTA43
PARIS, FRIDAY 24TH JANUARY 2020

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"The common good should be the supreme law”
- Cicero, The Law, Book III

“Individual ambition serves the common good." — Adam Smith
Amazon has chosen Arlington as their new home

The arrival of thousands well-paid Amazon employees will:

- change the demographics
- and increase rent and housing costs

Furthermore... Amazon wish to increase the allowable size of their HQ from 1.56 mio square feet to about 2.15 mio
PHILANTHROPY OR BRIBERY?

Amazon offers $20 million to Affordable Housing Investment Fund in exchange for being allowed to build a bigger headquarter complex in the county than zoning allows.

... and will build a long sought bike lane and a public plaza worth $14 mio.

$14 million is 1.36% of the 2.5 billion investment in the new HQ.
FINANCIAL INTERESTS DISRUPT DEMOCRATIC PLANNING

Private actors knowingly create urban problems and disrupt democratic planning processes

- e.g. increase rent and housing prices

Private actors get involved upstream in the development process / solution of problems they partially create

- e.g. invest in affordable housing
How do we balance public and individual interests?

How do we balance democratic and financial interests?

How do we balance short- and long-term interests?
A STRONG TRADITION OF DECENTRALIZED DECISION-MAKING AND PROMOTION PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In Denmark the 98 municipal councils are responsible for regulation at municipal- and local levels.

Local plans as a tool: Legally binding guidelines for property owners, may regulate eg.:

- Use of land and buildings
- Location and size of buildings
- Building density and design
- Design and use of undeveloped areas
- Landscape features
- Conservation of buildings

Public involvement
The Planning Act stipulates minimum rules on public participation.

Local planning ensures that the various interests can be expressed before the final local plan determines how an area is to be regulated.
REFLECTIONS

How can municipalities promote holistic planning in the development of new urban areas, ie. addressing political, social and residential interests in major urban development projects?

What tools and instruments can be used eg. in the form of user involvement, forms of tendering, financing, ownership, elaboration concepts, occupancy rates, housing types, area qualities, etc.?

Do we need a new mindset regarding public and private collaboration?