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Collective Housing and How It Effects Contemporary Planning – Learning From the Danish Bofælleskaber From a Complexity Perspective

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Abstract

In the light of current emergence and promotion of collective private commissioning for housing (co-housing) in the Netherlands, this paper explores the encounters such civic initiatives have with spatial planning practice. Co-housing is a challenge for conventional planning practices since it moves beyond the well-know concept of (governmental-led) participatory planning, and side-lines conventional public-private partnerships. Instead, planners are confronted with the capriciousness and diversity of civil actor-groups, and civic groups are challenged by a rigour planning system – both of them working within their own logic. In order to study how co-housing initiatives and practices of spatial planning interrelate and effect each other, three recent planning experiences in the establishment of 'Bofælleskaber' in Denmark are explored. The comparison between Denmark and the Netherlands is made because both countries have similar planning systems, while communal housing is such a strong(er) cultural element in Danish society. Defining the actor groups initiating co-housing schemes as 'self-organized' (the emergence of new structure out of fairly unstructured beginnings), (*Cilliers 1989*) and the process towards realisation of their projects as 'translation towards actor-networks' (*Callon 1986, Latour 2005*), brings together elements from both actor-network theory and complexity theory into one analytical framework. Using this analytical approach, the trajectories the initiatives took towards realization are studied, with an emphasize on how they engage in planning and what controversies and associations arise from these interactions. This framework not so much focusses on the mergence of perspectives into a coherent whole, but rather on the multiple trajectories that run through a process of establishing a co-housing initiative. (*cf. Massey 2005, Hillier 2007*). From these cases, lessons can be learned how planning systems can be made more adaptive to self-organization by community-based networks.

1. Dutch Housing: moving towards private commissioning

Since the 1990s already, the role of citizens as commissioner for the development of housing in the Netherlands is a subject of debate. Coming from a post-war tradition of large-scale reconstruction and urban lay outs, with its last episode the construction of the VINEX-neighborhoods in the 1990s, the Netherlands has been known and celebrated for its efficient, large-scale and institutionalized building sector. However, this practice is also criticized for the strong uniformity in the Dutch housing stock it caused, turning the Dutch citizen into a dependent consumer of houses, and reducing the once common practice of private commissioning into nothing more than a niche of the Dutch housing market. (SEV 2010). Subsequent interventions from national governments through resolutions (such as the Resolutions Duivesteijn in 1998 and 2000) and policy documents (such as the Memorandum Mensen, Wensen, Wonen in 2000), subsidies provided by regional and local governments, and the execution of numerous experiments with different forms of private commissioning (such as by the SEV – the Housing Experiments Steering Group) have attempted to bring the Dutch resident back on the stage of commissioning. Figures on commissioning, kept by the Central Statistical Office of the Netherlands (CBS) however show, that over the last thirteen years (1998-2011) there has not been any increase – on the contrary: rather a decrease of private commissioning (see figure 1). In 2006, the Housing Experiments Group (SEV) explained this lagging behind by some of the barriers they encountered while executing experiments with private commissioning: the Dutch building customs and (planning) regulations, leading to high (financial) risks and extensive planning processes. Their recommendations in order to further stimulate private commissioning were: 1) to designate land in the land use plan as intended for private commissioning, 2) to establish a pre-funding-scheme for private commissioners in order to reduce financial risks and 3) a 'knowledge campaign'. (SEV 2006).

Recent figures on commissioning – up to 2011 – however still show no significant increase. Although the financial crisis has led to quite a downfall of overall housing production (82.932 houses were realized in 2009, compared to 57.703 in 2011, a decrease of 30%), and a slow retreat of commercial developers, this has not been compensated or replaced by more private commissioning. That this might change in the near future, is argued in a final evaluation of the experiments executed by the SEV in 2010. Chances for private commissioning are seen in a more relaxed land- and housing market, a demand for more sustainable and social forms of living and a less task-setting, more facilitative government. The recommendations coming from this final evaluation are: 1) reconsider the distribution of risks – both financially and institutionally, 2) less regulatory frameworks and 3) more reasoning from the perspective and interest of self-organized initiatives for collective private commissioning. This latter aspect was also recently advocated by Adri Duivesteijn in the leading debate TV-show 'Buitenhof' (dated 02/26/2012). Duivesteijn – once the initiator of the Resolutions Duivesteijn – is now alderman for Housing in Almere, where he is making private commissioning possible on a large-scale. During the TV-show, which main topic was the current stagnation of the Dutch housing market – he argued on the urge to bring 'housing' closer to people themselves again, to have people act collectively in taking responsibility for their maintenance of their living environments, or realizing their houses, not only as individuals but in small self-organized building groups. If people themselves are the initiator, he argues, it is surprising to see what quality is realized, according to the Almere experience. However, Duivesteijn argues, in the Netherlands,

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people still tend to think too much that government needs to take care of citizens. The citizen, on the contrary, has since long been able to act for himself, only being obstructed by a system in which the building sector has been monopolized by developers, housing associations and housing policies.

Figure 1: Newly build houses according to commissioning (source: CBS)

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Public	22,5	22,5	20,6	18,8	19,6	22,4	22,4	25,4	26,2	26,1	27,1	29,1	32,7	35,5
Commercial	63,2	62,3	62,0	67,1	65,4	63,3	64,7	63,5	62,4	63,4	62,2	60,7	56,2	53,3
Private	**14,3**	**15,2**	**17,3**	**14,1**	**15,0**	**14,3**	**13,0**	**11,2**	**11,4**	**10,4**	**10,7**	**10,2**	**11,1**	**11,2**

This last recommendations by the SEV and the remarks made by Adri Duivesteijn, triggered me to consider a specific branch of private commissioning – that of *collective* private commissioning ('collectief particulier opdrachtgeverschap') – in more detail in this paper. Collective private commissioning – or: co-housing in more international terms – concerns people who collectively commission, develop and maintain their living environments, sometimes paired with collective ownership of (parts of the) estate and communal living. (SEV 2010). This form of development is even more of a challenge within the Dutch context, because it does not only sideline the conventional building institutions and practices by the direct acquisition and development of plots by individual citizens, like regular private commissioning. The collective element of such projects, turns it into a spatial planning process as well: common facilities, common (or even public) spaces, several houses instead of one, make it necessary to asses which program is allowed and best on what location – both from the municipal planning perspective as from the initiating citizens perspective. Therefore, this form of collective private commissioning is not only a challenge for developers and housing corporations, but also to municipalities and its spatial planners. Moreover, the initiative no longer lies with the municipality providing plots, but with the self-organized building groups themselves – leading to a civic-public interaction that is very unusual within the Netherlands. In Dutch planning, civic-public interaction is foremost structured by participative planning procedures, that are predominantly governmental-led. In participatory planning procedures, citizens are merely invited to 'think along' the planning objectives set out. Collective private commissioning, or co-housing, on the contrary, refers to initiatives that originate in civil society itself. (Boonstra and Boelens 2011). As such, planners are confronted with the capriciousness and diversity of civil actor-groups, and civic groups are challenged by a rigour planning system – both of them working within their own logic.

It is in this light, and through this paper, that I want to explore the conditions that are needed to better facilitate such civic initiatives from a spatial planning perspective. In order to study how co-housing initiatives and practices of spatial planning interrelate and effect each other, in this paper I make an international comparison of the housing schemes and planning systems in the Netherlands and Denmark. These countries show many similarities in planning and housing, but differ on some

specific aspects that relate to the barriers that were observed in the Netherlands concerning collective private commissioning, as I will argue in the second paragraph. After discussing these contextual differences between Danish and Dutch planning and housing schemes, I theoretically frame initiatives for co-housing as self-organization in the third paragraph. Defining the actor groups initiating co-housing schemes as 'self-organized' (the emergence of new structure out of fairly unstructured beginnings) and the process towards realisation of their projects as 'translation towards actor-networks', brings together elements from both actor-network theory and complexity theory into one analytical framework, providing me a vocabulary the express the particularities in the establishment of a co-housing initiative in more detail. Using this analytical approach, in the fourth paragraph, I explore three cases of co-housing in the Copenhagen-area, in order to learn what trajectories the initiatives took towards realization, with an emphasize on how they engage in planning and what controversies and associations arise from these interactions. From these cases, lessons can be learned how planning systems can be made more adaptive to self-organization by community-based networks in general, thus redefining the contemporary relevance of planning in theoretical and practical terms, to a more discretionary practice of shared responsibilities.

2. A Dutch-Danish comparison

2.1 Some methodological notions on international comparisons

Before I take off in making an international comparison between the Netherlands and Denmark, some notes need to be made concerning the minefield one walks into when conducting international comparative research. International comparative research is often set up in order to borrow from policy and planning practices elsewhere for problems found in one's own planning environment, or to strive towards convergence of planning practices (for instance done in the context of European Union cohesion policies). (Booth 2011). This is considered to be a minefield because planning as a practice is the outcome of very specific local and national cultures; planning systems are deeply embedded in their socio-economic, political and cultural context, and there exist path-dependencies such as persistence of institutions and cultures. (Booth 2011, Nadin and Stead 2008). These path-dependencies should be taken in consideration when conducting comparative research. Following Mahoney (2000), Booth describes these path-dependencies as: historical sequences of contingent events that set institutional patterns or event chains in motion that have deterministic properties, causing an unwillingness to change. (Booth 2011). Overlooking the path-dependencies that shape planning practices, can cause serious difficulties when one tries to borrow and transfer or to converge practices over national (and thus institutional) boundaries. However, the reason I conduct this comparative research is not so much to converge practices or to borrow Danish concepts to translate these to the Dutch context, but rather to study the particularities of both Danish and Dutch practice, in order to understand and question the path-dependencies that exist and determine the Dutch interaction between how co-housing initiatives and practices of spatial planning. Therefore, taking in consideration the path-dependencies that exist within the Danish and

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the Dutch planning system, are not so much a problem to overcome, but rather the reason for doing a comparative research in the first place. To take this into full consideration, I use a mix of comparative research strategies (conform Booth 2011, following Tilly 1984). First, in the comparison of the national planning system and housing policies I use an individualising comparison, in order to grasp the particularities that exist within each system. In the later part of this paper, I analyse four recent planning experiences in the establishment of 'Bofælleskaber' in the Copenhagen-area and Sjælland, Denmark. The comparative strategy that I use in this part of my research is twofold. On one hand I use a 'finding variation' strategy: to 'establish a principle of variation in the character and intensity of a phenomenon by examining systematic differences among instances' (Tilly 1984, 82–3) and on the other hand I use a 'encompassing' strategy: to find 'different instances at various locations within the same system, on the way to explaining their characteristics as a function of their varying relations to the system as a whole' (Tilly 1984, 82–3). Or in other words: on one hand I look into the variations between and particularities of the cases, and on the other hand I look into recurring characteristics between the cases that can be traced back to what is called the 'planning system'.

2.2 Comparing the planning systems

Planning systems in general

An international comparison of planning system is easiest to start off from previous studies on the different planning families that exist within the European Union, such as those conducted by Newman and Thornley in 1996, and the European Commission in 1997. These planning families make clear that – on a global scale– the Danish planning systems and housing scheme is perhaps one of the most comparable to the Dutch. Using the planning families as a starting point can however also be tricky, because these planning families have been defined in order to facilitate the convergence of planning practices among European Union member states (CEC). And my aim is to grasp the particularities of each system. But, as the following comparison will show, the particularities of the systems are nuanced, and thus of even greater value to the study of path-dependencies concerning co-housing and planning.

As planning systems are expressions of fundamental values in a society, there are parallels between models of society (that shape the relationships between state, market and citizens) and the spatial planning system (the ensemble of territorial governance arrangements that seek to shape patterns of spatial development in particular places). (Nadin and Stead 2008). Dividing the European planning systems into four families (Nordic, Germanic, Napoleontic and Anglo-Saxon), Nadin and Stead find it hard to qualify the Dutch planning system as part of one specific family, since it has characteristics of all. The Danish planning system is qualified as part of the Nordic tradition. (Nadin and Stead 2008). Newman and Thornley, who base their study of national planning systems on legal families, classify the Dutch planning system as part of the Napoleontic family – characterized among others by a division of regulation between central and local governmental control, and the Danish as part of the Scandinavian family – characterized among others by a strong emphasize on local self-government.

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However, both planning systems do not work out that distinct. The Dutch system is one of the forms of the Napoleontic family that is a rather 'fused' system – in which the three – local, provincial and central – governmental layers are all involved in planning; fused between hierarchy, relative autonomy and co-government. The same workings between levels of government – a fuse between hierarchy, relative autonomy and co-government – is visible in the Danish planning system. (Newman and Thornley 1996). Both the Netherlands and Denmark are part of the 'continental legal systems' (Roman, Nordic, Germanic) – that seek to create a complete set of abstract rules and principles in advance of decision-making: making plans, regulate things in advance, drawing up rules and systematizing things. (Zweigert et al 1987).

According to the European Commission, both the planning systems in Denmark and the Netherlands belong to the Comprehensive Integrated family (other families are Land Use Regulation, Regional Economic and Urbanism). (CEC 1997). This stands for a spatial planning system that is conducted through a very systematic and formal hierarchy of plans, from national to local level, with its main focus on the coordination between public sector activities on various scales and spatial coordination in general, being plan-led, and strongly influenced and funded by national government. More specific similarities concern:

- A governmental system that can be classified as 'unitary', in which power resides with national government, although certain responsibilities may be delegated to government departments for specific territorial units of local government. Both planning systems are predominantly public sector driven, the public sector enacts land acquisition and land banking. (CEC 1997)

- Both planning systems use national instruments, strategic instruments, framework instruments and regulatory instruments. As national instruments, in both planning systems the national government provides perspectives, plans, sectoral and issue based guidance; in Denmark the national government also provides general policy guidance. Strategic instruments are in both planning systems used by regional groupings of local authorities, in the Netherlands by the provinces, and in Denmark by the regional administrations (provinces are absent in Denmark since a reform in 2007). Both framework and regulatory instruments are enacted by the municipality, the local planning level. Frameworks are set by Kommuneplan (DK) or Structuurplan (NL), and the regulatory instrument is the Lokal Plan (DK) or Bestemmingsplan (NL) . In both systems, only these last regulatory instruments set by local government are legally binding. (CEC 1997)

- Concerning discretion: the Netherlands provide just a little bit more discretion and flexibility in decision making in practice compared to the Danish system that is very committed and tolerates little formal discretion. However, in both planning systems the planning objectives and policies are relatively close to the development that actually takes place. (CEC 1997)

- In both planning systems permits for building are provided by the municipalities. In Denmark this is the 'byggetilladelse' (DK) or the 'bouwvergunning'(NL). Permits are needed in both planning systems for construction, building, change of use, sub-division and demolition, and applications must be in compliance with building plans and regulations. In Denmark there is

very limited flexibility to vary from the approved plan, in the Netherlands there is some departure allowed from the approved plan in specific circumstances.

Overall, the Danish and Dutch planning systems are comparable to a high degree. But by elaborating in more detail on the two systems, also some differences become explicit, making the comparison between the two countries interesting and relevant for my research. These differences concern civic involvement in plan procedures, and the development of legally binding plans.

Difference: civic involvement

The first difference concerns participation, the right to appeal to plans and public involvement. In both planning systems participation is legally embedded, but in slightly different ways. In Denmark there is more public involvement in advance of the approval of plans, but no possibilities to appeal to a plan after approval for other than procedural or legal grounds – compared to the Dutch system in which there is public involvement in advance of plan approval occurs is not legally embedded (though it does occur often through participatory planning processes), but there are more possibilities to appeal to once approves plans on content based issues. In Denmark, the lack of opportunity to appeal is argued because the extensive early consultation is generally thought adequate. Concerning the permits needed, in Denmark no consultation takes place. In the Netherlands a notification is mandatory, and interested parties have the right to object to the provision of permits[1].

Difference: the legally binding local plan

A second difference concerns the development of the only legally binding plan within the planning system – in the Netherlands the Bestemmingsplan and in Denmark the Lokal Plan. In the Netherlands, the Planning Act obliges all municipalities to develop and regularly update the Bestemmingsplan for its whole territory, and make sure that – through the Bestemmingsplan and its legally binding status – all developments within the municipality are in line with the Structuurplan (the strategic vision) made by the municipality. The Bestemmingsplan is developed by the municipality itself, and functions as a way to steer land acquisitions by developers, that come after the Bestemmingsplan is approved by the municipal council. In Denmark, the Lokal Plan has a similar

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[1] The differences in civic involvement in more detail. 1) Before proposals are confirmed. DK (Kommuneplaner): the public are informed of the major issues and are encouraged to submit ideas and proposals. The 'pre-consultation' stage must last a minimum of eight weeks. NL (bestemmingsplan): public may be informed but this is not mandatory. 2) After publication of planning authority's firm proposals. DK: consultation for eight weeks with the public, opportunity is to object. Further consultation is undertaken if the plan is modified significantly. NL: consultation for four weeks on draft plan and opportunities to object. 3) The use of hearings and inquiries. DK: non. NL: objectors may request a hearing to explain their objection in person to the municipality. 4) Opportunity for challenge after the plan is formally adopted / approved. DK: challenge is possible on legal or procedural grounds only. NL: after the municipality has adopted the plan it is submitted to provincial executive and displayed for four weeks during which limited objections can be made. After approval it is displayed for a further four weeks when appeals to the Council of State are possible on matters originally subject to objection. NL: at the time of submission to province for approval, new objections may only be made to changes.

legally binding status, which becomes instated after approval from the municipal council. However, in Denmark it is by no means a legal obligation to provide such plans for all the municipal territory. Lokal Plans are only developed at the time a large or important development is proposed, or when the municipality wants to promote a certain area. Moreover, the Lokal Plan is often developed in close negotiations with the intended land-acquisitioners or developers, before the approval of the plan by the municipal council. (Newman and Thornley 1996).

New laws

The comparison of the two systems in CEC was made in 1997, based on spatial planning acts that have since then been changed in both countries. In Denmark the legal framework of the 1992 Planning Act has been replaced by a new planning act in 2008. In the Netherlands, the 1965 planning act has also been replaced in 2008 by a new planning act. In Denmark, the Ministry for the Environment revised and updated the Planning Act as a consequence of the reform of local government structures in Denmark, which was fully implemented by 1 January 2007, transforming most planning responsibilities to the new municipalities, and mandating the new administrative regions to prepare a regional perspective for future spatial development with the new municipalities. (Ministry of the Environment, 2007). In the Netherlands, the Parliament approved for a new law on spatial planning in 2008. The objective of this new law was to reform the Dutch planning system into a more decentrally organized system, distributing more responsibilities to the provinces and municipalities. According to this new law, national government only pinpoints general guidelines, and provinces and municipalities each make their own strategic visions for their respective territories, they themselves being responsible for a good synergy between these visions. (Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, 2008). Although these new laws might have provoked new working methods and a different practice in the respective countries, fundamental changes to the above comparison are not at stake.

When I summarize the above comparison, I come to the conclusion that although there are many similarities between the Dutch and Danish planning system, some fundamental differences occur as well, that might be of influence in the interaction between co-housing initiatives and planning practice. First, the Danish planning systems allows more civic involvement before plans are approved, and lesser opportunities to appeal afterwards, on which one can assume that Danish planners overall are more experienced with open civic-public negotiations than the Dutch planners. And second, because of the Danish flexibility in land acquisitions and the development of the legally binding land use plans through negotiations with the intended acquisitioners and end-users, one can assume that the Danish planning system suffers less from regulatory frameworks that obstruct co-housing than the Dutch planning system.

2.3 Comparing the housing schemes

Housing schemes in general

In a short overview of the historical development of the housing sectors in both countries, again some parallels become explicit. Even though the growth of population in the second half of the Twentieth century, when the current housing sector was institutionally shaped, shows some divergence between the two countries (In Denmark from 1945-2011 37,5%, in the Netherlands in the same period 80,7% - Source: Danmark Statistik; CBS) – the institutions that were shaped in this period do not diverge that much. First, both countries have very explicit policies on housing set by national government. (CEC 1997). This interference from national government, under influence of respective social-democratic and conservative-liberal governments, manifests itself mainly in a strong expansion of non-profit housing the second half of the Twentieth century, and a complex system of tax-reliefs to encourage home-ownership and economic growth (Boelhouwer and Van der Heijden 1993, Nielsen 2010). Second, and related, the countries have a very similar composition of the housing stock (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Composition of the total housing stock in ownership (2011) (Source: ABF Research and Statistics Denmark)

Ownership form	Denmark	The Netherlands
Private ownership	60%	60%
Social rent	20%	31%
Private rent / other	12%	9%
Andelsbolig (see page 12)	8%	-

Overall, also the housing sectors and related policies of the Netherlands and Denmark show a high degree of similarity. But of course, by elaborating on the similarities of the two systems, also the differences become more explicit, making the comparison between the two countries interesting and relevant for this research. These differences concern individual commissioning, and forms of collectiveness.

Difference: Individual commissioning

A first remarkable difference between the Dutch and the Danish housing sector is the way in which houses are developed. In contrast to the Dutch housing construction, in which from 2007-2009 70% of the newly built housing stock is the result of multi-dwelling programs, in Denmark only 7% of the newly housing stock is *not* individually commissioned – 93% of the newly built houses are developed as individual projects. Moreover, of the 7% multi-dwelling programs, 49% is 2-4 dwellings, 22% is 5-9 dwellings, 14% 10-19 dwellings, 2% 20-29 dwellings, and 13% 30+ dwellings in one project (McKinzey&Company 2010). With a total housing production of 87.899 new dwellings in the same period, this leaves around 80.000 new dwellings developed individually, against around 800 dwellings developed as part of a 30+ dwelling program. (Danmark Statistik). So, one can conclude that overall, building projects are small in Denmark. This is a direct result of the small land allocations that are usual in Denmark. In order to develop highly diverse residential areas, local

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planning and tract housing[2] tendering procedures by municipalities are often regulated by tendering building plots individually, sometime even with a maximum limit to the number of building plots per buyer. Moreover, new buildings tend to have their own individual characteristics and it is rare for two projects to be exactly the same. The general conduct and tradition in the Danish construction industry is that projects are often designed with detailed specifications. Danish clients typically leave planning and design to advisors (engineers and architects) while construction companies are brought in late in the process to execute the plan, which leads to a highly fragmented building sector. (McKinzey&Company 2010). As the percentage of new dwellings constructed in the period 2005-2007 in owner occupied is 85% (Danmark Statistik), it can be assumed that in Denmark, the development of new owner-occupied dwellings is almost entirely done in private commissioning.

Difference: Forms of collectiveness

A second remarkable difference between the Dutch and the Danish housing sector is the collective character. This may sound remarkable in the light of the amount of small projects being developed, but the frequent occurrence of collective forms of ownership or collective maintenance of living environments does not necessarily overlap or conflict with the culture of small projects. In general, Danish society has strong collective features. In a research published in 2002 on power within Danish society by the university of Århus, it was argued that the strong presences of 'associations' within Danish everyday life forms a significant base for civic power, of importance for the development of networks and mutual trust among citizens. And although issues of individualization, professionalization and European unison are considered to be threats to this associational culture, the conductors of the research wondered whether perhaps the associational aspects of Danish everyday life where so common to Danes, that the awareness of the particularity of this collectiveness are beyond noticing. (Mikkelsen 2002: 13).

As part of the same research project, Andersen (2002: 207) found that in 2000, 93,6 % of all Danes is in one way or another associated to at least one 'forening' (association, or 'vereniging' in Dutch) and that the average Dane is involved in 3,7 different 'foreninger'. These 'foreninger' can concern any aspect of civic life. Andersen distinguishes four types of foreninger: 'gruppeinteresser' (organized around a shared responsibility), 'sagsorienterede forening' (organized around a political or societal goal), 'aktivitetsbestemte forening' (organized around a certain activity) and 'kooperative forening' (organized around cooperative ownership). (Andersen 2002: 207). As these 'foreninger' occur in every aspect of Danish everyday life, they are also present in the domain of housing and spatial issues. As 'gruppeinteresser' concerning spatial and housing issues, Andersen mentions bolig-, lejer-, grundejerforeninger (home, rental or landowners associations). What these foreninger have in common is that individuals living in an certain building or environment, associate with one another in order to maintain certain shared facilities. For instance in rental housing, residents are associated in lejerforeninger, small self-governed units where local tenants have a high degree of self-management. (Bengsston and Ruonavaara 2010, Jensen 1995). Or in a grundejerforening, people

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[2] Housing developed with multiple identical homes and few design variations. (McKinzey&Company 2010).

privately own plots on which their house is located, but collectively take care of their shared environment (a road, a garden etc.).

As example of a 'kooperative forening' concerning housing, the 'andelsbolig' cannot remain unmentioned. Roots of associative home ownership are considered be found in the rural cooperative tradition, taken towards the Danish cities in the early twentieth century, when rapid urbanization took place as a result of industrialization, and new houses where urgently needed. Workers established building societies (byggeforeninger) and build terraced houses for themselves and their families. When the workers would have paid off the buildings, they turned into cooperative housing associations that owned the buildings collectively. (Bruun 2011: 67). Especially during the second half of the Twentieth century, this form of ownership has been promoted by legal measures and tax reliefs. Today, it forms a well-known and common form of housing in Denmark, amounting for 8% of the total housing stock in 2011 (Danmarks Statistik) and in the inner city of Copenhagen up to one-third of all housing. (Bruun 2011, Kristensen 2007). This form of associative of home ownership is some in-between form of private ownership and rent. The apartment building is owned by the association, and in order to obtain an apartment one has to become member of the association, by buying a 'share' – which is the apartment – and by paying a membership fee on a monthly base. If one moves, the 'share' is sold back to the association, that is responsible for the maintenance of the building and is democratically governed through a board and regular meetings.

A third aspect of collective forms that characterize the Danish housing sector that is of interest to mention here are the 'bofælleskaber'. These are communities of people sharing residence (in one building or in separate entities) with a high degree of shared facilities, such as a shared kitchen, common rooms, gardens etc. Often, these communities are organized around an intentional life style, such as eco-communities, but they can be pragmatic as well, such as senior- bofælleskaber. Two forms of 'bofælleskaber' can be distinguished: the 'collectives' (communities with a common economy) and 'co-housing' (that pay a fixed amount for common expenses but not sharing an economy). (Marckmann 2009). Real statistics on this form of housing are lacking, but estimations illustrate that this form of living is not such a uncommon thing in Denmark. In the late 1970s, around 3% of the Danish population lived in 'bofælleskaber'. (Skardhamar 2010). Today, estimations are that there are at least between 50-150 'bofælleskaber' in Denmark, housing around 1% of the Danish population (estimations based on memberships of 'bofælleskaber'-organizations such as www.bofælleskaber.dk and LØS for ecocommunities). But, as 'bofælleskaber' are not administrated as such, there is no organization for senior 'bofælleskaber' (for elderly) and membership of an organization is not obligatory, these estimations can be rather low. (www.bofælleskaber.dk; www.losnet.dk; Marckmann 2009)

When summarizing the above comparison, I come to the conclusion that again similarities between the Dutch and Danish schemes exist in general terms, but some fundamental differences occur as well, that might be of influence in the interaction between co-housing initiatives and planning practice. First, the private commissioning in the development of houses is not just a niche like in the Netherlands, but in Denmark this is the common practice. Therefore, one can assume that the institutions that are believed to obstruct the private commissioning in the Netherlands –developers and housing corporations – play a lesser role in the Danish housing sector. This accounts not so much for the housing corporations respecting the size of the Danish social housing sector, but it does account for the developers. The McKinzey&Company study of 2010 indeed does problematize the

absence of professional and efficient developers-building sector in Denmark because of the amount of private commissioning. But overall, it can be assumed that in the Danish practice of developing houses, both professionals as citizens are much more accustomed to the idea of private commissioning in general. (McKinzey&Company 2010). Second, the Danish housing sector and habits show many more forms of collectiveness than the Dutch housing sector. These forms of collectiveness concern common maintenance of living environments, cooperative ownership and common social lives in communities. These forms of collectiveness do not necessarily overlap, but the extend to which these forms of collectiveness penetrate society, makes it possible to assume that Danes in general are quite accustomed to collective living environments. Therefore, I assume that in Denmark, co-housing is much less of a niche than in the Dutch housing sector.

2.3 Resumé

I started off this comparison from the hypothesis that Denmark and the Netherlands have very comparable planning systems and housing sectors. Indeed, from an international perspective, Denmark can be considered to be one of the most comparable countries for the Netherlands with respect to planning system and housing schemes. The comparison however, becomes more relevant because of the differences.

As major obstructions for private commissioning in the Netherlands, and more specifically collective private commissioning, I mentioned several aspects in the first paragraph. First, I mentioned the Dutch building customs that retain the monopoly of the development of new housing with developers and housing corporations, making it difficult for private individuals or groups to enter the stage of commissioning. Second, I mentioned the lack of financial and institutional frameworks to support co-housing initiatives. And third I mentioned the regulatory frameworks in planning practice that make it difficult for self-organized initiatives to find a match between their own objectives and the ways of spatial planning. It seems, as I learned from the international comparison between Denmark and the Netherlands, that some of the institutional aspects that obstruct the Dutch situation are quite different in the Danish situation. This makes it possible to assume that collective private commissioning is a far more common thing in Denmark. There are simply more path-dependencies that can be followed in the Danish situation when one takes the initiative for developing a co-housing project, or a self-organized building group than in the Dutch situation. These path-dependencies are: forms of collective living that are more common in Denmark than in the Netherlands, the common practice of private commissioning in Denmark, the flexibility and negotiated character of the legally binding Lokal Planer, and the habituation of civic-public deliberations over plans.

But this is only speculative so far. Does collective private commissioning indeed take place on a more frequent base in Denmark than it does in the Netherlands? And if so, do the Danish initiatives encounter significantly less barriers in the realization of their initiative than their Dutch counterparts? The first question is difficult to answer, because it demands good statistical data and a well defined demarcation of what co-housing or collective private commissioning exactly comprises. Does one only look at the 50-150 bofælleskaber that are listed as members of the various overarching organizations, such as LØS and www.bofælleskaber.dk? Or does one include the senior-

bofælleskaber as well? Does one look only at the newly established initiatives, or does one include the older ones – some dating back from the 1960-1970s – as well? And does one or does one not include the Andelsboligforeningen – making up such a significant part of the Danish housing sector, but most often established in already existent estates, and not newly built as such. With all these different demarcations in mind, I come to the estimation starting at 1% of the Danish population that can be considered as collective private commissioner (which is probably not a whole lot different from the Dutch situation), up to 10% (which is significant). And then I have not even taken into account that real statistics are lacking on collective private commissioning in both the Netherlands and in Denmark – leaving me really only guessing whether these percentages are realistic estimations or far, far below the actual Danish situation.

Therefore, this is a question I willingly leave for the more statistical scientists – be it economic or demographic researchers – and instead limit myself to the second, more planning-related question. Do the Danish initiatives for co-housing and collective private commissioning encounter significantly less barriers in the realization of their initiatives than their Dutch counterparts, because of the many path-dependencies that already exist within Danish planning and housing schemes? This is the question I will deliberate on in the following sections of this paper. In order to answer this question, I will take a closer look into four recently established co-housing examples in the Copenhagen-area. But before that, I will first introduce a theoretical framework that gives me the vocabulary and analytical tools to frame such initiatives as self-organization.

3. Framing co-housing as self-organization

3.1 Self-organization of actor-networks

In the introduction of this paper, I already framed collective private commissioning, or co-housing, as initiatives that originate in civil society, autonomous community-based networks of citizens. They get organized outside government control and develop their living environments out of their own interest, in self-governance and with their own means – a definition earlier developed as self-organization in urban development. (Boonstra and Boelens 2011). This definition however, deserves some further theoretical elaboration, which I will give below.

Self-organization

Developed in the physical sciences, self-organization is generally defined as the appearance of structure or patterns where before no structure or pattern existed: a process of autonomous development and the spontaneous emergence of order out of chaos, whereby a system can develop a complex structure from fairly unstructured beginnings, or the spontaneous emergence of global coherence. Key feature of self-organization is that the intention for emergence of new order comes from (elements within) the system itself: spontaneous, autonomous, out of local interactions,

without external agents imposing anything. (Heylighen 2001, Teisman et al. 2009, Cilliers 1998). However, a system never stands entirely on itself, it has both a history and an environment, and movements of and inside the system can never be explained to a single origin. (Cilliers 1998). As Cilliers puts it: a system "*can develop a distributed form of internal structure that is neither a passive reflection of the outside, nor a result of active, pre-programmes internal factors, but the result of a complex interaction between the environment, the present state of the system and the history of the system.*" (Cilliers 1998: 89). As systems emerge, it is important to note that in complexity theory it is generally understood that emergence is not heading for a certain form of optimization, equilibrium and order, but rather towards higher forms of complexity. The newly emerged order from self-organization is not so much a solution to the chaos or the unstructured beginnings that existed before, but rather an addition of extra complexity. The emergence of new structure happens because or despite of already existing structure, and thus is increasing multiplicity. (Prigogine and Stengers 1984).

Currently, complexity theory and the notion of self-organization are entering the domains planning and governance as well. When applied to governance structures, self-organization is understood as the internal dynamics of an existing governance systems developing organized structure, but also as the steering limits of one singular actor due to the autonomy of other actors and their ability to behave and organize in a self-chosen way. (Klijn and Snellen 2009, Boons et al. 2009). Understanding co-housing as a form of self-organization makes two things explicit. First, in puts the emphasize on the internal drivers of the initiative: the idea to establish a co-housing project does not come from one actor summoning others to start co-housing, but is a complex constitution of various actors sharing the same internal drivers and ideas. The incentive for movements comes from (elements of) the system, the actors and intended end users themselves. The drivers come from within the group itself, and are based on self-interest and self-motivation. Second, it puts emphasize on the emergence of the system, and on the emergence of new order, understanding co-housing as a process that starts with a person having an idea but no co-initiators, resources, location, etc. towards a realised co-housing project in which a number of people live their everyday life – the newly emerged order. Despite the internal drivers of those involved in the co-housing group, the importance of an environment (both physical as institutional) should not be forgotten. As the system emerges further, elements of this environment are constantly dealt with and boundaries of the system can shift: elements in the environment can become either included or excluded from the system during the process. Moreover, the eventually newly emerged order – the realized co-housing project – is not replacing any pre-existing chaos, but as a realized project is rather adds another layer to the existing planning and housing schemes.

Actor-network theory

However, though such abstract interpretation of a co-housing project make explicit the difference between internal drivers, the environment and emergence of new order, they do not explain the behaviour of actors and their interests and motivation to act to the conditions that surround them, or to decide to change something. In order to understand the behaviour of actors in less abstract terms, I make use of the strong resonances that exist between complexity theory and actor-network theory. (Hillier 2007). This relates to a baroque interpretation of complexity, in which the discovery

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of more detail, interconnectivities, heterogeneity and specificity are leading in the study of a system. (Law 2004). Systems can be understood as networks – networks that are not defined by theorists standing outside the system, but networks (and its boundaries) that are performed, operated or constructed by the actors that make up the network (or system). Moreover, individuals act in multiple networks simultaneously, who are themselves in turbulent, unstable motion, connected entities moving in folds and infinitely varied patterns. (Hillier 2007: 47). What is interesting in using actor-network theory as an addition to co-housing projects as self-organization, is the non-distinction it makes between human and nonhuman entities. (Latour 2005). Actor-network theory not only focusses on the behaviour of human actors involved in the process of network-making, but adds a material thinking. Space is seen as part of the sum of relations, connections, embodiments and practice that make up networks. Things relate because of (in)voluntary encounters in space (Thrift 2006: 139). Moreover, networks can also be constituted around places and things, and places and things play a crucial role in the maintenance of the networks. Thus actor-network theory enables to consider the importance of the spatial objects in the process of establishing a co-housing project, such as location, architecture, plans etc.

Translation

Moreover, what complexity theory abstractly terms as 'emergence', has a more developed equivalent in actor-network theory, which is 'translation'. Translation is the movement of an actor in the construction of his network. The process of translation consists of several phases in which the "*identity of the actors, the possibility of interaction and the margins of manoeuvre are negotiated and delineated*". (Callon 1986: 203). Translation is also characterized as the sociology of ordering, and how this ordering is done in practice. (Thrift 1996: 25). In spatial planning, translation is understood as organizing the resources to make certain spatial transformations possible. The process of network-building is "*the translation of the objectives, limitations and opportunities of other actors so that these can start 'behaving' according to their own requirements, but in line with the wishes / characteristics of the dominant actor*" (Boelens 2009: 190). This refers to both the group formation a co-housing project has to do, the collection of resources needed for the realization of the project, and the constant maintenance of the homogeneity and coherence within the system or network. All this can be characterized as a process of translation. (Thrift 1996, Hillier 2007).

The combination of self-organization, actor-network theory and translation, enables me to do three things that I consider to be important in studying co-housing projects and their interaction with existing planning and housing schemes. First, self-organization enables me to put the emphasize on the internal drivers a group has. Second, actor-network theory enables me to consider the importance of the spatial objects in the process of establishment, such as location, architecture, plans etc. Third, translation enables me to focus on the process of becoming, the way a network forms itself and develops towards realization. However, the mutual benefit of this combination goes deeper, as I will illustrate in the following paragraph.

3.2 Self-organizing behavior

In the literature on self-organization, different forms of self-organized behavior are described, more or less opposites that exist simultaneously within a self-organizing system. These are bifurcations versus equilibria, and dissipative versus autopoietic behaviour. (Heylighen 2001, Cillier 1998, Van Meerkerk et al. 2012). However, there is little literature on how these different types of behaviour interact with each other, or how these kinds of behavior can be used in analyzing the formation of networks or systems. In the literature on translation four sequential 'steps' are presented - Problematization, Interessement, Enrollment and Mobilization. (Callon 1986). These steps, or moments that are presented as phases a network moves through, are however in practice not at all so sequential, and in reality overlap. As I will argue, the four types of self-organized behaviour are equivalent to the four phases of translation. By combining the two in one analytical framework, I transform the four sequential steps of translation into four types of behaviour that are simultaneously present in the constitution of a system or network, and I transform the four types of self-organized behaviour into interrelated moments a systems moved through.

Bifurcations and Problematization

The problematization phase in the establishment of an actor-network is often presented as the first start-off. In this phase, the leading or initiating actor starts with a disassociation from the existing situation, making others (and one selves) see there is a problem that needs to be addressed by new ways of doing. The actor renders him- or herself indispensable in finding this new way of doing, and defines obligatory passage points that need to be taken into consideration in finding new kinds of behaviour. (Callon 1986). This phase corresponds with the type of self-organized behaviour that is named 'bifurcations'. According to complexity theorists, bifurcations are moments in time and place on which elements in a system suddenly 'decide' to break with existing path-dependencies and start behaving in a new, unforeseen and unexpected way. These bifurcations spontaneously set in motion and emergence of new order. (Heylighen 2001, Cillier 1998). Bifurcations are therefore both a starting point for new behaviour, like the problematization phase, but they are as much a reaction to that what is already in existence – that what was considered to be in equilibrium. The notion of bifurcation therefore adds the notions of iterative movement and the notion of 'event' to the definition of problematization) – the 'lightning strike' that misses to the rather passive description issued by Callon (1986). (Thrift 2000).

Dissipative behaviour and Interessement

The second phase presented by Callon is that of interessement. In this phase, the initiating actor starts looking for allies, and tries to tie them to the network. In doing this, he is in competition with other evolving associations and identities, and severe work is needed in order to 'interest' other actors to the emerging actor-network. (Callon 1986). This phase is therefore very much about dealing with the outside, with the others. It has to be considered what is taken into account, and what new propositions need to be found and accounted for. (Latour 2004). This phase therefore

corresponds with the type of self-organized behaviour that is indicated as 'dissipative'. Dissipative behaviour also concerns to external orientation of a system: increasing interactions between various systems, a sensitivity to external influences but also affecting the environment (so both way interaction) and wide(ning) boundary judgements. In this process, the production of new structures and processes takes place, in which variety and redundancy of ideas (plans, content) and actors is aimed for. This often happens at the expense (in terms of attention, time, energy, resources) of existing structures and processes leading to tensions between 'new' and 'existing'. (Van Meerkerk et al. 2012).

Autopoietic behaviour and Enrolment

The third phase presented by Callon is that of enrolment. In this phase, the specific role of the actors that become interested in the actor-network are negotiated, and a common identity is determined and set. (Callon 1986). This phase is characterized by an internal orientation: propositions are instituted or otherwise rejected, hierarchies are set, and both the inside and the outside of the collective are stabilized. (Latour 2004). This phase therefore corresponds with the type of self-organized behaviour that is indicated as 'autopoietic'. This type of behaviour also concerns an inward orientation, as it concerns the process of reproduction, confirmation and self-(re)creation, highlighting the essential of the system, stabilizing internal structure and intensifying boundaries. In this phase, the identity of the system is formed and set, and a variety and redundancy of plans and ideas is countered. (Van Meerkerk et al. 2012).

Equilibriums and Mobilization

The last phase of translation, according to Callon, is that of mobilization. In this phase, the actor-network has evolved into a coherent whole, and only a small number of individuals speak in the name of all others in the network. Thus, a new type of equilibrium, a new type of order has emerged, in which certain entities within the network control the others. (Callon 1986). In this phase, the maintenance of the network as a collective becomes important, but also the constant evaluation whether the network is able to still follow through. (Latour 2004). The terms equilibrium and emergence of order already make explicit the kinship to self-organization. Mobilization, or the new equilibrium can both be seen as the outcome of translation as the outcome of self-organization. But, following Prigogine and Stengers, this new order does not necessarily go at the expense of other – already existing order (this competition being a concern of dissipative behaviour), but rather exists on top of the already existent order – bringing things into an even higher order of complexity. (Prigogine and Stengers 1984).

Adding different types of self-organized behaviour to the process of translation enables me to emphasize the difference that can occur between the various actors involved in the process – in this case the initiative as a group, the individuals that acted as leading actors or initiators in the process, and the planning officials involved – because, as becomes clear in the cases, different processes of translation take place simultaneously. Translation therefore is not a linear process towards

optimization, but rather different types of behaviour that should all be simultaneously present within a process in order to succeed – and be a success for all actors involved. In the perspective of co-housing projects, these four types of behaviour relate to the following aspects. Bifurcation and problematization refers to the willingness or urgency of the involved actors to step out of the usual way of working, to disassociate from existing planning and housing schemes and try something new. Equilibrium and mobilization refers to the elements or schemes that are used in order to turn the initiative into something familiar, something obvious, something that does fit existing planning and housing schemes; the initiative becomes something identifiable, it gets a name that represents the initiative as a coherent whole. Dissipative behaviour and interessement refers to the encounters the initiative has with the outside environment – trying to be as broad, informed and open for new and different options and actors as possible, in order to choose – once in the selective modus of autopoietic behaviour and enrolment – in the best interest for the initiative, and excluding those thing unnecessary. In the autopoietic and enrolment modus, the initiative deals with the internal dynamics, including those elements from the outside that are necessary for the initiative to survive, and selected and choosing in the best interest.

3.3 Associations and Controversies

This brings me to the core question I put forward in this part of the paper, namely the interaction between an initiative for co-housing and the existing planning and housing schemes. What problems and barriers, and what changes and opportunities become visible between these two worlds? What encounters take place? Therefore, as a last step in setting out the theoretical framework for analysing co-housing initiatives, I introduce the notions of controversies and associations, notions that are also derived from actor-network theory. (Latour 2005). In actor-network theory, enquiries should always focus on tracing the associations that have made the system happen. In doing so, the researcher is re-assembling: mapping those actors and elements that have actually made something happen and bringing them together again. This mapping is done by studying the formation of networks by "*deploy controversies and trace associations*" (Latour 2005: 16), because the moments of controversy and association are usually surrounded by activity and thus well documented. Controversies roughly means when things break down, when people disagree, when innovations or new unexpected situations happen. Deploying controversies means to open, unfold, and arrange these controversies in order to make use of them. Associations roughly means when people and/or things join, when they line up, when things start functioning as a whole, when the network (that was visible at the controversy) become invisible or 'normal'. A system or network proofs its existence by its associations. For this reason, it is not possible to determine a system beforehand. Defining a system is only possible if actors, associations and influences become clear through the actions of actors, "*we have to follow the actors themselves*" (Latour 2005: 12, see also Callon & Latour 1981, Law 1986, Law 1992). When mapping the actions by the various actors involved, the associations and controversies between the self-organized group or co-housing initiative and existing housing and planning schemes become visible.

4. Case analyses

Using this analytical approach, the conditions that gave rise to the initiatives and the trajectories the initiatives took towards realization are studied, with an emphasize on how they engage in planning and what controversies and associations arise from these interactions. In this paper, I explore three present-day cases in Sjælland, Denmark. All of them are newly developed projects. Two are examples of ideological living, one has a more everyday-life cohabitation scheme. They are all different in the planning process they underwent. Below I give an overview of some of the key characteristics of each initiative.

	Lange Eng	*Fri og Fro*	*Hallinge Lille*
Location	Albertslund	Egebjerg, Odsherred	Valsømagle, Haraldsted
Size	54 houses	17 houses	18 houses
House ownership	Private	Private	Private Rental
Collective schemes	Bofælleskab Grundejerforeningen	Bofælleskab Andelsforeningen	Bofælleskab Grundejerforeningen
First meeting Moving in	2004 2008	2001 2005	1999 2007

4.1 Lange Eng

(Sources: Interview Albertslund Kommune 2011, Interview resident Lange Eng, www.langeeng.dk, Vaerdigrundlag for Bofællesskabtanken 2006)

Lange Eng is a co-housing initiative in the municipality of Albertslund, close to Copenhagen. It consists of 54 individual households. It is a bofælleskab organized in a grundejerforening, not based on any ideology but quite pragmatically organized around a shared everyday life, such as common dinners six nights a week, and a variety of social activities. The houses are in individual ownership. Lange Eng is one of the six other projects in the development of Herstedlund, which was developed simultaneously – but the only co-housing project. The whole of Herstedlund is organized in a forening as well, but the inhabitants of Lange Eng do not participate too actively in this neighborhood-community. Lange Eng was established in 2008, after two years of ideation and two years of building activities. The realization process consists of four phases: 1) ideation and shaping

the core values, starting with four friends sharing an idea and ending with finding the location in Albertslund, 2004-2005; 2) designing and planning: starting with finding the location and ending with the purchase of the ground, 2006; 3) building: starting with the ground purchase and ending with moving in and the bankruptcy of the developer, 2006-2008; 4) living in Lange Eng: ever since moving in in 2008.

Bifurcations and mobilization

The reason to start the initiative was that there were no houses available that fit the demands of the initiators. The developer involved was willing to experiment with a co-housing project this scale, and the municipality was also willing to work with such a new group of people. During the process, some justifications to the original idea had to be made, but none of the actors considered this problematic. When setbacks occurred as the developer went bankrupt, the community took over easily, even though this was new for all. The main controversy related to these bifurcations was the tens housing market and high demands for a nice and social living environment forced some people to start developing their own houses. The main association was that all actors involved were willing to experiment and try something new.

Dissipative behaviour and interessement

Contacts to find more allies were laid in the personal network of the initiators, other initiatives were visited, and consultant were hired. Various locations were considered, as are various forms of ownership, the architectural design is discussed, a bank is contacted for loans. During the process, people leave to initiative because they disagree with the location in Albertslund. After realisation of the project this kind of behaviour stops except for open house-days that are sometimes organized. Main controversy in the dissipative and interessement modus is that so many things have to be taken into consideration, that the network of allies is remains still fluent and elusive for some time. The main association is that between the people that become resident in Lange Eng, as this one becomes durable, while all other associations are temporary, and function more or less 'helpers' on the way of the process.

Autopoietic behaviour and enrolment

Core values are defined right from the beginning. Meetings are held on a frequent base. Soon, a plot of land is found that fit the demands of the initiators. Many people leave because of the choice for the location in Albertslund, but soon a new group forms around the initiators and the location and a forening is established. Choices are made on loans, ownership, design and the land is purchased. The meetings are still frequent once the community is established, but now organized around a common social life. The group is in end quite homogeneous in age, and socio-economic backgrounds. Main controversy in the autopoietic and enrolment modus is that some choices concerning the initiative shut out interested people, but attracts new people on the other hand. Main association is

that a match is found between the demands of the initiators and the local planning conditions. The forening is established after the decision for the location was made.

Equilibrium and mobilization

The four initiators are the leading actors and spokespersons for the group and remain so during the whole process. Use is made of the concepts bofælleskab, forening, grundejerforening. The development, planning and design process are considered to be quite regular by all actors involved; in the end Lange Eng is not seen as something new, but rather part of a long tradition – only the size of the project is considered to be rather unconventional, but as a logical thing because of the tens housing market when the project was initiated. Main controversy in the mobilization and equilibrium modus is that, after realization, Lange Eng does not have any interactions with the other housing estates in Herstedlund, as was hoped for in the planning of the area. Main association is that even though most actors in the beginning were willing to experiment, they eventually did follow all the path dependencies concerning planning and housing schemes, and a satisfactory match between the demands of the group, the plan, and housing scheme was found.

4.2 Fri og Fro

(Sources: Elm and Dilling-Hansen 2003, Martinussen 2010, Interview resident Fri og Fro 2011, Interview Odsherred Kommune 2011, www.losnet.dk, www.friogfro.dk)

Fri og Fro is an eco village in the municipality of Odsherred, north west Sjælland. It consists of 17 individual households. The core values of the community are based on sustainability, both socially, economically and environmentally. The individual houses are all self built, using natural and re-used materials. The idea of Fri og Fro is inspired by the Danish eco Village Friland, which was the subject of a TV show in 2001-2002. It is a bofælleskab organized in an andelsforeningen, which owns the land, but the individual houses are not part of that forening. In 2005 the people of Fri og Fro moved to the area, after three years of ideation and planning, but the building of the individual houses, the common facilities and landscaping is still taking place in 2011. The realization process consists of three phases: 1) ideation and drawing out the first ideas for an eco village, starting with initiating and ending with finding the location in Trundholm (now part of the municipality of Odsherred), 2001-2003; 2) designing and planning: starting with finding the location in Trundholm and ending with moving to the area, 2003-2004; 3) building and living, a phase that is still current.

Bifurcations and mobilization

The initiators were inspired by the TV show about Friland and wanted to take such an initiative themselves too. What they tried to do new is to apply the legal form of andelsboligforening to the eco village concept. Also unconventional was that the Lokal Plan was written by the initiators themselves, both new for them, as for the municipality. The willow-based sewage system they applied was unconventional. Adjustments to the planning of the area were a shift from the 60 houses the area was 'planned for' to 17 houses by Fri og Fro, the adjustments of rural and urban

zoning, and the allowance of temporary houses. People in the group were all inexperienced with building ones own houses, especially with the natural and re-used materials. Architecturally the eco village is very distinctive. Main controversy related to bifurcations and mobilization is the whole 'doing-everything-by-themselves': the ideation, planning, designing, building is considered to be something very unconventional by the actors involved. Main association is between the municipality that was very willing to step out of conventional ways of working in order to get the land developed, and the initiators that were well prepared and educated for the do-it-yourself process.

Dissipative behaviour and interessement

From the beginning, a website to inform and attract people is made and maintained during the whole development process. Many municipalities are contacted in order to find a location. A legal advisor, constructors and a bank are consulted during the process, and a contractor is hired to make the area ready to be built. The relation between the initiative and the local community in the existing village is considered important and several events are created to establish good relationships between these two worlds, that gradually become more intertwined, and conflicts on nuisances are solved informally. Some people leave the initiative along the way, but soon new people join, some couples divorce during the demanding building process and several houses are for sale in 2011. The materials for the houses are mostly local and natural or re-used, so some group members go around the area in order to 'pick up' left over materials from building sites and the like. Fri og Fro has many visitors and organizes frequent tours. The goals for sustainability are generally felt to have been too broad and are not considered to 'bind' the group together, as the building process on the individual houses has been demanding, the focus of the group has been less on living together as was intended. Moreover, there are disagreements on the prices for the houses that are put to sale and whether this is an individual matter or a concern for the community. In the end, an andelsboligforening is not established because the houses are considered to be too different. Main controversy related to the dissipative and interessement modus is that the focus of Fri og Fro has been more on the individual building processes than on living together as a community, there are disagreements on the prices for the houses that are for sale – said to be fixed prices for economic sustainability, but now felt too be a more individual matter by some members, the core values on sustainability are considered to be not focused and defined enough to bind the community into a coherent whole, no andelsboligforening. Main associations are the temporary associations between consultants and contractors during the development process, and a more durable association between Fri og Fro and the local residents of Egebjerg: due to the constant outwards orientation of Fri og Fro the two communities have grown quite intertwined.

Autopoietic behaviour and enrolment

At the very start of the idea, the initiating couple sets out the core values and ideas for the eco village. Very soon the location in Trundholm is picked because it fits the demands of the initiators, and the municipality is willing to cooperate because having a community like Fri og Fro settle in Egebjerg means the local school and supermarket can survive. The core values and design and planning for the eco village are discussed among members during frequent meetings in Copenhagen.

It is felt that living in a group makes a sustainable life easier to realize. The members of the group agree on the fixed prices for the houses in order to prevent speculation. A collective loan is made in order to purchase the land as an andelsforening. Since the people moved to the area, common meetings, occasional parties and working weekends are held, but these are voluntary and not all members join. Main controversy related to the autopoietic and enrolment modus is that the core values on sustainability are not felt to be strong and focused enough to bind the community, the agreement on fixed prices is now dividing the community, focus has been on individual work, not on common activities. Main association is that between the interest of Fri og Fro and the municipality, and with the local community in maintaining the amenities.

Equilibrium and mobilization

The initiating couple is spokesperson for the whole group during the development process. A byggeforeningen is established during the planning process, an andelsforening is established to purchase the plot, and an forening is established to maintain the sewage system. In adjusting the Lokal Plan, conventional planning procedures can be used. Landownership as an andelsforening is unconventional, but in practice not so distinct from other forms of private ownership, since it is quite common that publicly accessible land or nature conservation areas are privately owned. Main controversy related to the equilibria and mobilization is that small adjustments to the land use zoning are made, and the specificity of the Lokal Plan due to the demands of the eco village makes it a very unconventional plan. The decision not to apply the concept of andelsboligforening because this legal form does eventually not fit with the architectural lay out of the eco village is a controversy as well. Main associations are between the demands of the community and the Lokal Plan, that are merged into one legally binding document, and several forms of forening are used in order to realize the project.

4.3 Hallinge Lille

(Sources: Elm and Dilling-Hansen 2003, www.hallingelille.dk)

Hallinge Lille is a co-housing project in the municipality of Ringsted, mid Sjælland. It consists of 18 individual households. The core values of the community are on sustainability and permaculture. The houses and buildings are individually designed, using natural and re-used materials. It is a bofælleskab organized in a grundejerforening. The first people move to the plot in 2002, to live in the already existent farm in the area, but the whole community gets established in 2005. The development of Hallinge Lille is characterized by a long and problematic planning process. The realization process consists of four phases: 1) ideation and drawing out the first ideas for a whole village, starting with initiating and ending with finding a location in Skjoldnæsholm, 1998-1999; 2) designing and planning (1): starting with the location in Skjoldnæsholm and ending with a different location in Ringsted 1999-2001; 3) designing and planning (2), working on the location in Ringsted and ending with an adjustment of the demands of the community to the existing land use plan; 4) building and living, from 2005 onwards.

Bifurcations and mobilization

The idea for a community as Hallinge Lille was a long cherished dream of the eventual founder of the community – a place where one could live 'from cradle to grave', with facilities for both children and elderly. She was motivated to have this dream due to personal circumstances in her family, and started realizing her dream after following a course on 'taking life in ones own hands'. A new community for 100 dwellings in the open, rural land is however an unconventional thing in Danish planning, so the planning process showed to be problematic – until the county decides to open a pilot on developing adjacent to small villages in the rural areas. Main controversy related to bifurcations and mobilization is a lack of places – both in urban as in rural areas – where one can live in a small social community but with all sorts of facilities for children and elderly motivated the founder to develop herself. Main association is that it proved difficult to find a location to settle, but the county pilot opened the final possibility.

Dissipative behaviour and interessement

By putting up notes, the initiator finds the first interested people that join the initiative. Various municipalities and landowners are contacted for locations. However, the first and second locations found are both subject to a local planning conflict between residents and county, and long negotiations are held between the initiative and local residents, but eventually the landowner refuses to sell. This setback makes that the group of initiators starts to fall apart. New locations are taken into consideration, but the eventually found location is again subject to disagreement on the plan, and again negotiations are held between the initiative, local residents and the municipality of Ringsted. Landscape architects and architects design the buildings and area. During the whole process, various consultants on legal, organizational and financial matters are contracted. Now Hallinge Lille is established, a website is maintained, and there are various possibility to visit the community, and villagers are invited to join festivities in the community. Main controversy related to the dissipative and interessement modus is the divergence between the initial ideas and the local planning conditions, which makes negotiations and reframing of the initial idea necessary, but almost leading to disintegration of the whole initiative. Main association is between the demands of the initiative and the local planning conditions, but at the costs of the first.

Autopoietic behaviour and enrolment

First meetings are quickly followed by the establishment of a forening, and a strategy and statutes are made. The outlines of the initiative are: a location in mid Sjælland, approximately 50 hectares, 100 dwellings and various facilities. Twice, a location is found but not developed because of local planning disputes and disagreements with landowners. Several meetings are held among the initiators to agree on the goals of the initiative, permaculture and a eco-spiritual community is the main binding idea. The initial ideas are scaled down in order to make a fit with local planning

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schemes more feasible. After the first setbacks, the general meeting decides in 2001 to give it one other try. A new site is found in Ringsted, the farm and land are bought, but again concessions have to be made to the demands of the initiative and local planning conditions. Architecturally, in size and use of colour, the houses are made to fit to the architecture of the local village. Paths running through the area make sure the existing village remains connected to the forests. Main controversy related to the autopoietic and enrolment modus is that the group or community ends up being considerably smaller (18) than originally intended (100) and hardly any of the intended facilities are realised in order to fit the initiative in local planning conditions. Main association is that the founder, group and initiative is determined enough to continue to make efforts to realise – at least parts of – the original idea. The ideas on permaculture, consensus democracy, and eco-spiritual community appear to be strong binding elements for the group.

Equilibrium and mobilization

Soon after the first people come together, a forening is established. During the process, various plans – municipal, regional and national – appear to be dominant over the initiative. An adjustment of zoning is needed, and thus consultation with local residents, eventually the municipal council disagrees with adjustment of the zoning boundaries and the initiative has to be realized within the boundaries of the existing land use plan. When the houses are built, a grundejerforening is established. Main controversy related to equilibria and mobilization is the dominance of existing land use plans prevents new order to emerge. Main association is between various concepts of forening and bofælleskab and the ideas of the initial founder.

5. Conclusions

Reviewing these cases with this analytical framework makes several things apparent that are interesting to mention, before diving deeper into the conclusions that relate to the research question. In each phase, almost all types of behaviour are visible. These are not only performed by the leading actors, but by all involved in the process. Actors and interests move in and out the initiative and the process, and persuaded end goals can be different for each. Both the project, the location, the actors involved act in multiple networks simultaneously, who are themselves in turbulent and unstable motion. (Hillier 2007). Interlocking interests in one phase, can continue in another phase, but might as well unlock or change during the process. This framework makes apparent that co-housing is not so much on merging perspectives into a coherent, agreed whole, but rather on the multiple trajectories that run through a process of establishing a co-housing initiative (cf. Massey 2005). Of course the initiative self-organizes towards realization, and this can be seen as a coherent whole. However, actors involved other than the initiators and intended end-users, can have different end goals than the realization of a co-housing project per se. Therefore, not the merge into a coherent whole is what is important, but rather the emergence to a higher form of complexity, that is the existing situation *and* the realized co-housing project. Focus is not on

changing a situation, but rather on adding something new, something extra to the already existing situation. A higher form of complexity that is satisfactory for all involved.

5.1 Case encounters

The main research question for this second half of the paper concerned the encounters between Danish co-housing initiatives and the existing planning and housing schemes. In order to investigate this question, I identified different types of self-organized behavior, four kinds of attitudes between a co-housing initiative and existing planning and housing schemes. Bifurcations are jumps away from the usual path-dependencies in the housing schemes and planning system, and the decision to take matters in ones own hand and to develop something new on ones own behalf. New equilibria stand for becoming part of the usual scheme of things, a new thing but part of a coherent whole. Path-dependencies are deployed for ones own sake – elements of the existing housing and planning schemes are used in order to establish 'the new'. Dissipative and autopoietic behaviour are reactions of the evolving network to the internal dynamics and the external environment. Internal means who is and who becomes part of the system or group. External means who is kept outside but still needs to be considered or encountered. As these types of behavior all show different attitudes between the initiative and planning and housing schemes, each type of behavior concerns different associations and controversies between the initiative and the planning and housing schemes. Reviewing these associations and controversies makes clear what the exact encounters between co-housing, housing schemes and planning are.

Associations between the co-housing initiative and planning and housing schemes appear to have been strongly colored by various actors who are willing to experiment, open to try something new. In Lange Eng this concerned the initiators, the municipality and the developer, in Fri og Fro the initiators and the municipality, and in Hallinge Lille the initiators and the county. Surprisingly, in all cases, the eventual divergence from the usual ways of working has not been as big as might have been expected. In Lange Eng, conventional planning procedures were followed, and a satisfactory match between the demands of the group, the plan, and housing scheme was soon found. In Fri og Fro, the content of the Lokal Plan is unconventional, but since the municipality was open to the ideas of the community (out of self interest!) and the initiators were well educated in what was expected from them, the demands of the initiators and planning schemes of the municipality did satisfactorily merge into the legal document of the Lokal Plan, and eventually all obligatory planning procedures were followed as usual. In Hallinge Lille eventually there was hardly any divergence from the usual planning procedures. Local conditions obstructed the original ideas of the initiators, which in the end were adjusted to fit the local planning conditions after all. Concerning the collective housing schemes that exist in Denmark, all three initiatives used various forms of forening during the process. In Lange Eng the forening was established after the decision for the location was made, and eventually it turned into a grundejerforening. In Fri og Fro the byggeforening was established soon as the location was found, and an andelsforening was established to purchase the plot. In Hallinge Lille the forening was founded even before a location was selected, and eventually the group got organised in an grundejerforening. All three projects are bofælleskaber.

Other associations that occur during the development of the co-housing initiatives that have been important for the realization, concern three aspects. First, the temporary associations between the initiative and various consultants and constructors. The initiators of the cases appoint that the more these external actors are acquainted with co-housing initiatives, the better and fruitful these temporary associations are. Second, the association between the various members of the co-housing initiative is important. In all initiatives this is organized around sharing a certain life style, pointed down in the statutes of the forening. In Lange Eng and Hallinge Lille, this proved to be strong binding elements for the community. In Fri og Fro, the work on the individual houses proved to be more dominant than the communal aspects of the initiative. The third association concerns the relation between the co-housing projects and its surroundings. In Lange Eng, no significant association appears to exist between the residents of Lange Eng and their neighbors. When Lange Eng was built, the whole area of Herstedlund was developed, so no negotiations with local residents had to take place, and the social activities within Lange Eng itself appear to be sufficient for the residents but closed to outsiders. In Fri og Fro, deliberations and activities between local residents and residents of Fri og Fro take place from the very start of the project, and gradually, the two communities become socially intertwined, because both communities use the same amenities in the village. In Hallinge Lille deliberations between the local residents and the initiators take place, but these are not on all aspects positive. As the project is realized, social activities do take place in which both local residents and the residents of Hallinge Lille participate.

Controversies between the co-housing initiative and planning and housing schemes apply firstly to the lack of available houses that meet the demand of the individuals, making them eventual decide to develop for themselves. This was especially the case in Lange Eng, where the initiators were confronted with a tense housing market, and Hallinge Lille, where the initiators whished for a rural community with facilities for both children and elderly. The initiators of Fri og Fro were mostly driven away from the conventional housing market by ecological and self-building aspirations. Secondly, concerning the local planning schemes, in Lange Eng no controversies happened. In Fri og Fro, small adjustments to the land use zoning were necessary, and the specificity of the demands of the eco village makes the Lokal Plan into a very unconventional document. In Hallinge Lille a controversy occurred between the original ideas of the initiator in order to fit the local planning conditions. Negotiations with local residents and the municipality and a reframing of the initial idea proved necessary, almost leading to disintegration of the whole initiative. The group or community ends up being considerably smaller (18) than originally intended (100) and hardly any of the intended facilities are realised in order to fit the initiative in local planning conditions. The dominance of existing land use plans prevents new order to emerge. Thirdly, concerning collective housing schemes, the only controversy happened in Fri og Fro, was that the initial idea to become an andelsboligforening was abandoned, because the architecture of the project proved to be incompatible with this legal form of ownership. Fourthly, architectonically, all three projects turn out to be rather distinctive from their surroundings. Lange Eng is a considerably larger structure than the other projects in the surroundings. Fri og Fro is completely different with the houses built out of straw, clay, and re-used materials. In Hallinge Lille, the architecture of the houses is adjusted to the surroundings in use of colour and building heights, but still the houses built on ecological principles look very distinct.

Other controversies that occur during the development of the co-housing initiatives that have been threatening the realization, mostly concern the choices that have to be made concerning location,

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ownership and financing of the initiative. As long as these choices remain open, the network of allies remains fluent and elusive. Soon as choices on these aspects are made, people leave the initiative but others join. In Lange Eng this concerned the location in Albertslund. In Fri og Fro this concerned the choice of having fixed housing prices. In Hallinge Lille it concerned the lack of location. Core values defined in the beginning do not always turn out strong enough to keep the community together, or vibrant. In Fri og Fro, the project has individualised because the building process of the individual houses has proven to be too demanding for some, and moreover, the discussion on the housing prices for those houses on sale, has been dividing the community. In Hallinge Lille, the community is seriously threatened by the setbacks in the planning process, and ends up considerably smaller than originally intended.

5.2 Learning from the Danes?

Having said all this, it is now time to move to the final conclusion of this paper, concerning the Dutch-Danish comparison. In the first part of this paper, I mentioned various aspects that are presumed to be obstructing the emergence of collective private commissioning in the Netherlands. Among these obstructions are Dutch building customs that are accustomed to large scale development by professional developers and housing corporations, and regulatory planning frameworks that are governmental-led and leave little room for the civic-public negotiations that are part of collective private commissioning. In order to understand how the Dutch planning system can become more adaptive to self-organization by co-housing initiatives, in the second part of the paper I argued it might be beneficial to take a closer look into the Danish planning and co-housing practice. Danish and Dutch planning systems and housing schemes have many similarities, but differ on some crucial aspects concerning the obstruction for co-housing in the Netherlands. I mentioned four major differences: first, the Danish custom of consensus-based civic-public negotiations before plans are approved; second, the Danish custom of negotiations between municipalities and (future) landowners before the legal plan is defined; third, the Danish custom of small projects, small plots, making private commissioning a common practice and the building sector fragmented; and fourth, the many forms of collectiveness in taking responsibility for maintenance, ownership and everyday life, make the Danes much accustomed to collective living environments. For these reasons, I assumed that in the Danish situation, co-housing initiatives suffer far less barriers – or at least different ones – than their Dutch counterparts.

So let's see. In the third and fourth part of this paper I used an analytical framework for self-organization to study three co-housing initiatives recently developed in Sjælland, Denmark, and their encounters with the planning and housing schemes. This leaves me with the question whether the binding and conflicting elements that the Danish initiatives face, are the same, or different ones than the Dutch initiatives. First, concerning public-civic negotiations. The cases show that the Danish custom to have extensive deliberations between citizens and municipality before plans are approved, do not concern the co-housing initiative itself, but rather a desired consensus between the new co-housing initiative and already existent local community. Whether these deliberations are obstructive to an initiative or not, depends much more on local planning conditions than on systemic elements. For Lange Eng, no negotiations were necessary since there was not local community yet when Lange Eng was developed. In Fri og Fro, the initiative took much consideration in getting to be

wanted by the local community itself. In the Hallinge Lille case, the negotiations between the initiative and local residents remained problematic for all locations they applied for, but these disputes were rather the result of disagreeing residents and planning authorities than between the residents and the initiative itself. Second, concerning the negotiated legal plan. In the cases, it shows that the negotiated legal plan was enabling for both the initiative and the municipalities in finding a fit between the various demands and the eventual legal plan. There was no beforehand allocation of the plots to become home to a co-housing initiative. Rather did the initiatives suit the general planning intentions of the municipality (for Fri og Fro and Lange Eng the resourceful people it would bring to the municipality), giving the municipality the arguments to prefer these initiatives over others. The negotiated legal plan also enabled the initiative to have their specific (ecological or other) demands legally framed and secured. Third, concerning the practice of private commissioning. In the cases, indeed no problematic encounters took place between the initiative and contractors based on individual commissioning. Rather, the more difficult encounter between Lange Eng and its contractor was due to the large scale of the project (52 houses in one architectural structure) than to the non-professional commissioning. And for both Fri og Fro and Hallinge Lille, the challenges to get loans, contractors and legal advise had more to do with the communal and ecological character of the initiative than with the private commissioning. Fourth, concerning the collective forms of living. All three cases have taken benefit from the collective schemes Danish law provides. These were supportive on various aspects: they helped in finding loans and purchasing the ground, they helped to define common goals and rules-of-living for the people in the initiative and to define these in self-written statutes, and they helped in appointing spokespersons for the initiative that could deal with all negotiations and deliberations with planning officials.

These examples show indeed, that in the Danish system, a co-housing initiatives suffers less barriers in relation to the existing planning system and housing schemes. This does not mean however, that the Danish co-housing initiatives are without turbulence or challenges. Their starting point has been provoked by a tens housing market or general lack of houses that meet the demands of certain individuals. Finding allies, resources, a location to settle, are all hurdles all initiatives face. Some general lessons can therefore be learned from the cases I studied in this paper. First, it is important to find like minded people and people and parties that are willing to try something new, and not focus too much or too long in convincing or deliberating with those that regard the initiative as something threatening. Second, it is important to acknowledge that the networks around an initiative can remain fluent and elusive for a long time, and it is perhaps more fruitful to accept the temporality of some associations than to focus too soon and too strict on membership and commitment. Moreover, it is important for the initiators to stay close to their initial goals, and to find a location, framework, plan that fits their idea – if no allies are there yet, they will come eventually when most choices are made. All actors involved in the initiative are subject to different and multiple trajectories, and acceptance and acknowledgement of these differences can make deliberations more easy-going and changes less disappointing.

For the Dutch system specifically, some recommendations can be made on how planning can become more adaptive to self-organization by community-based networks in general – without wanting to merge the two planning systems or the bluntly copy Danish practice to the Netherlands. But learning from the Danish cases, I would like to make the following recommendations. First: try not to change too much in the planning system, since local planning conditions seem to be more relevant chances or obstructions to a co-housing initiative than the planning system in general.

However, the negotiated legal plan is for sure a form of adaptiveness that could be beneficial for the Dutch planning practice as well. Second: the building sector based on large scale development in the Netherlands is the opposite of the Danish small scale and fragmented building sector. As the latter is critiqued for its lack of economic efficiency, it might be a challenge to think of ways in which the building sector in the Netherlands can become more small scaled and thus more open to private commissioning, without losing its economic efficiency (perhaps through the application of ICT in order to efficiently connect demand and supply in materials, concepts, contractors etc.) And third, it might be worth exploring how forms of collectiveness can become more promoted and legally supported in the Netherlands, in order to help initiatives to get organized, become and remain robust and to gain the resources they need in the realization of their dreams.

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