

The planning of an Urban Food Scape through the lenses of Multi-Level Perspective on transition and Social Practice Theory: lessons of Almere Oosterwold (NL)

Jan Eelco Jansma¹ and Arnold van der Valk²

¹Jan Eelco Jansma, AERES university of Applied Sciences in Almere, Wageningen University and Research, The Netherlands. (janeelco.jansma@wur.nl)

²Arnold van der Valk, Wageningen University and Research, department of land use planning, The Netherlands. (Arnold.vandervalk@wur.nl)

Urban planning has no clear answer to how to anchor food productivity within the urban and peri-urban food (land) scape, despite the rise of urban interest in local food systems over the last decade. Oosterwold, potentially opens a new chapter in the planning of urban food (land)scapes. From 2015 onwards, Oosterwold is hoped to ensue as new city quarter of 15,000 homes at 4,300 ha land east of the Dutch city of Almere (200,000 residents). Local authorities have set ambition to transform the current open agricultural landscape to a genuine green, self-sustaining and small scale urban landscape. Urban agriculture plays a pivotal role as an integral and productive part of the future infra structure of this area. This research attempts to unravel the mechanisms which shape or block the development of urban agriculture in the food scape in Oosterwold. It uses two lenses: (1) the Multi-Level Perspective on transition (MLP) and (2) Social Practice Theory (SPT). Both approaches look at changes and stability in socio-technical systems, each from a different perspective. Where MLP is more about niches and landscapes that form and change so-called regimes, i.e. sets of rules, institutions, and procedures we share; SPT explains the pathway of changes in our daily routines, the so-called practices. Both lenses share similarities; it is argued that a closer look at the critical points of intersection between practices and regimes could lead to a better understanding of how changes occur or disappear. For example, a potential critical point in the development of urban agriculture is land ownership, due to high cost to purchase land and uncertain prospects for urban farming. A possible route for planning is the enablement of new types of ownership of land. The use of the MLP and SPT approach to analyse the germination of an urban food scape possibly opens a window to flexible yet robust strategies to anchor food productivity in the (peri-) urban food scape.

References

De Roo G, Rauws, W S, (2012) 'Positioning planning in the world of order, chaos and complexity: On perspectives behaviour and interventions in a non-linear environment', in Complexity Theories of Cities Have Come of Age. Eds J Portugali, M Meyer, E Stolk, E Tan (Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg) pp 207-220

Geels F W, (2011) 'The multi-level perspective on sustainability transitions: responses to seven criticisms', Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions, 1 (1): 24-40

Hargreaves T, Longhurst N, Seyfang G, (2013), 'Up, down, round and round: connecting regimes and practices in innovations for sustainability', Environment and Planning A 45: 402-420

Ilieva, RT, (2016). 'Urban Food Planning: Seeds of transition in the Global North', (New York, Routledge)

Pothukuchi K, Kaufman J L, (2000), 'The Food System', Journal of the American Planning Association, 66: 113-124
Shove E, Pantzar M, Watson M, (2012) The Dynamics of Social Practice: Everyday Life and How it Changes (SAGE Publications Ltd, London)

Wiskerke J S C, (2015) 'Urban food systems', in Cities and Agriculture: Developing Resilient Urban Food Systems, eds H. De Zeeuw, P. Drechsel (Routledge, London) pp 1-25

Keywords: planning, urban food scape, urban agriculture
