

THE ROLE OF MUNICIPAL SPATIAL PLANNERS IN COMMUNITY-LED PLANNING

MSC THESIS IN SPATIAL PLANNING

Research report for MSc Thesis in Spatial Planning:

**The role of municipal spatial planners in community-led planning.
A case study research in the social housing communities of Iewan and
Eikpunt within the residential project Plant je Vlag**

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Table 1 Abbreviations and Dutch terms translation

Abbreviations	Translation table		Explanation
	Dutch	Plain English	
VROM	Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer	Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment	Former ministry in the Netherlands which was merged with other ministries in October of 2014
-	Plant je Vlag	Plant your flag	A residential development project in the municipality of Nijmegen
VINEX	Vierde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening Extra	Fourth Memorandum for Spatial Planning	A strict zoning policy which designates the form of urban development in an area
-	Particulier opdrachtgeverschap	Private commissioning	It allows the cooperation of plot owners, small contractors, buyers and small investors in any form and combination for developing residential projects.
WABO	Wet algemene bepalingen omgevingsrecht	General Directives of the Environmental Law Act	The environmental building permit in the Netherlands. It is mandatory for all the buildings in the country. In general, it determines the proper position and operation of a building in relation to the environment.
-	Bouwbesluit	Building Permission	It is a set of technical building regulations for all the building in the Netherlands. It expresses the necessary standards for a safe and a decent living environment.
-	Woongemeenschap	Living community	The name of an area designated for community building.
ISV	Investeringsbudget Stedelijke Vernieuwing	Urban renewal Investment program	A municipal budget for urban renewal projects in the Netherlands.
WoningbouwVg	Woningbouw vereniging Gelderland	Housing association of Gelderland	A housing association that was interviewed for the needs of this research.

Abstract

The changing land use planning context of the Netherlands challenges the traditional role of municipal spatial planners. This master thesis is rooted in the need to understand the role of municipal spatial planners in community planning initiatives. To achieve the objective two community-led planning developments were studied in the municipality of Nijmegen. The theoretical concepts of self-organization and meta-governance were used as means of analysis of the case studies. The concept of self-organization is used to look into the organizational structure of communities whereas the concept of meta-governance explores the interventionist role of municipal spatial planners. The outcome of the thesis is a description of the role of the municipal spatial planner in the new planning context and recommendations for municipalities who want to develop community initiatives.

Key words: Community, Netherlands, plan, meta-governance, self-organization, spatial

Summary

The role of municipal spatial planners is subjected to a constant change. Public criticism, as well as social, environmental and economic conditions are responsible for the changing role of the municipal spatial planner. The change in the role of the municipal spatial planner takes place all over the western world and more is specifically apparent in the prominent land-use planning system of the Netherlands.

In our dynamic world, which is subjected to a constant change, the traditional role of the Dutch municipal spatial planner cannot be unaffected. A new planning context is formed in the Netherlands. The traditional role of the municipal spatial planner as an executive of the national government is limited. The government decisions are an outcome of many actors and not a privilege of public elected representatives. Consequently, the role of the municipal spatial planner is not shaped exclusively by the national government but also by a vast amount of actors' origin from the society and market. Actors, such as community initiatives, construction companies, architects, housing associations and public-private partnerships exploit the land according to their interests. All these stakeholders have the capacity to self-organize and together with the municipal governments develop commonly accepted projects such as social houses, residential areas, management of urban and natural environment or leisure activities in a neighborhood. Community-led planning represents the current dynamic context in which a spatial plan is conceived by many stakeholders and not exclusively by the government. Although it may seem that the government (and its representatives) is retreating, it retains a pivotal role in this new dynamic planning context.

The role of municipal spatial planners is re-arranged. Municipal spatial planners may use more sophisticated means for controlling the community-led planning. Meta-governance strategies are useful means for municipal spatial planners to retain control over community-led planning. However, there are no certain guidelines or prescriptions for the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led initiatives, as different local conditions are applied and identified in different community-led projects. In addition, community-led planning is a relative new concept in the Dutch spatial planning discipline. Hence, the role of the municipal spatial planner remained uncharted within the concept of community-led planning.

Thus, in relation to the changing role of the spatial planners in the state of the Netherlands, the objective of this master thesis is to explore the role of municipal spatial planners in community-led planning using the theoretical lens of self-organization and meta-governance.

To achieve this objective this master thesis develops a case study research design in two community-led developments, Iewan Strowijk and Eikpunt Woongemeenschap. Both social housing projects reside in the municipality of Nijmegen. They were built within the residential development project of Plant je Vlag. 18 semi-structured-interviews were conducted with the involved actors in the two community-led planning projects, in an effort to reveal the role of municipal spatial planners in community-led planning.

The theoretical concepts of self-organization and meta-governance were used as building-blocks for the interview questions. Self-organization explores the way the two communities were developed. It looks on the issues that triggered the development of the two communities, the relations of trust between the involved actors, the subjects of discussion between planners and other actors. Furthermore, self-organization looks at the key players for the development of the two communities and the capacity of all the involved actors to adapt in a dynamic and always in a process of becoming spatial plan.

The meta-governance concept narrows down to the role of the municipal spatial planner as an exclusive representative of the government. Meta-governance looks at the potential interventionist role of municipal spatial planners over community-led projects by the use of different strategies such as monitoring, storytelling, supporting actions, play rules and fear.

The outcome of the research depicts the dynamic spatial planning governance of the Netherlands and clarifies the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning. The municipal spatial planner needs to have a dynamic role that allows him/her to test the intention and the commitment of different actors. S/he needs to promote networking and cooperation between the stakeholders. S/he needs to combine the interest and expectations of all the involved actors in a way that these interests are not full filled to the detriment of the public life and space. In addition the municipalities should create interactive environments which allow the dynamic contact with their citizens as well as the networking between them. Clear guidelines and an unbuilt environment facilitate the development of community led-planning projects and offer more flexibility to the municipal spatial planner.

Samenvatting

De rol van lokale ruimtelijke planners is voortdurend onderhevig aan verandering. Maatschappelijke kritiek, maar ook veranderende sociale, economische en ecologische omstandigheden zijn hiervoor verantwoordelijk. De veranderingen in de rol van lokale ruimtelijke planners vinden plaats in de hele westerse wereld en is ook duidelijk zichtbaar in de Nederlandse ruimtelijke ordening, die internationaal in hoog aanzien staat.

In deze dynamische wereld kan de traditionele rol van de Nederlandse lokale planner niet onveranderd blijven. Er ontwikkelt zich een nieuwe planningcontext in Nederland. De traditionele rol van de lokale planner als uitvoerder van landelijk beleid wordt beperkt. Overheidsbeslissingen worden meer het resultaat van vele actoren in plaats van alleen het privilege van gekozen vertegenwoordigers. Als gevolg daarvan wordt de rol van de lokale planner niet alleen bepaald door de landelijke overheid, maar ook door een groot aantal actoren in de samenleving en de markt. Actoren als lokale gemeenschappen, bouwers, architecten, woningcorporaties en publiek-private partijen geven elk op hun eigen manier vorm aan de ruimte. Al deze stakeholders hebben de mogelijkheid tot zelforganisatie, en samen met de lokale overheid ontwikkelen ze algemeen aanvaarde projecten op het gebied van sociale huisvesting, de ontwikkeling van nieuwe buurten, onderhoud van de stedelijke en natuurlijke omgeving of ontspanning in buurten. Gemeenschappelijke planning is een uiting van deze dynamische context, waarin ruimtelijke plannen voortkomen uit meerdere stakeholders en niet alleen vanuit de overheid. Hoewel de indruk kan ontstaan dat de overheid (en haar vertegenwoordigers) zich terugtrekt, blijft ze een centrale rol spelen in deze nieuwe planningcontext.

De rol van lokale planners wordt herschikt. Lokale ruimtelijke planners kunnen gebruikmaken van nieuwe, meer subtiële instrumenten. Meta-governance strategieën kunnen bruikbaar zijn voor planners om controle te houden op gemeenschappelijke plannen. Er zijn echter geen vaste richtlijnen of voorschriften voor de rol van de ruimtelijke planner bij gemeenschappelijke initiatieven, omdat elk project verschillende omstandigheden en condities kent. Daardoor is het ook minder duidelijk wat de rol van lokale planners bij gemeenschappelijke planning precies is.

In samenhang met de veranderende rol van ruimtelijke planning in Nederland is het doel van deze masterscriptie om de rol te onderzoeken van lokale ruimtelijke planners, gebruikmakend van de theoretische invalshoeken van zelforganisatie en meta-governance. Om dit doel te bereiken is een case study onderzoeksmodel ontwikkeld voor twee gemeenschappelijke ruimtelijke projecten: Iewan Strowijk en Eikpunt Woongemeenschap. Beide sociale huisvestingsprojecten zijn onderdeel van de ruimtelijke ontwikkeling Plant je Vlag in Nijmegen. 18 semi-gestructureerde interviews zijn gehouden met actoren in beide projecten, om zo meer inzicht te krijgen in de rol van lokale planners bij gemeenschappelijke projecten.

De theoretische concepten ‘zelforganisatie’ en ‘meta-governance’ zijn gebruikt als bouwstenen voor de interviewvragen. Zelforganisatie onderzoekt de wijze waarop de twee gemeenschappen zich ontwikkelden. Het kijkt naar de triggers die leidden tot de vorming van de gemeenschappelijke projecten, de vertrouwensrelaties tussen de actoren en de discussiepunten tussen planners en overige actoren. Daarnaast heeft zelforganisatie betrekking op de sleutelspelers bij de ontwikkeling van beide projecten en de capaciteit van alle betrokken actoren om zich aan te passen aan een dynamisch en zich voortdurend ontwikkelend ruimtelijk plan.

Het concept meta-governance beperkt de rol van de lokale planner tot die van overheidsvertegenwoordiger. Meta-governance bekijkt de potentiële interventionistische rol van lokale planners in gemeenschappelijke projecten door het gebruik van strategieën als monitoring, storytelling, ondersteuning, het opstellen van spelregels en het inzetten van fear tactics.

Het resultaat van het onderzoek toont de dynamische planningspraktijk in Nederland en brengt helderheid in de rol van de lokale ruimtelijke planner in gemeenschappelijke projecten. De lokale ruimtelijke planner dient een dynamische rol te hebben, die hem/haar in staat stelt om de intenties en het commitment van de verschillende actoren te onderzoeken. Hij/zij dient netwerkvorming en samenwerking tussen de stakeholders te bevorderen. Hij/zijn dient de belangen en wensen van alle betrokken actoren te combineren op een manier die geen schade doet aan de omgeving en het publieke belang. Aanvullend daarop zouden gemeenten moeten zorgen voor een interactieve omgeving, die zorgt voor zowel een dynamisch contact met burgers als netwerkvorming tussen burgers. Duidelijke richtlijnen en een nog onbebouwde omgeving vergemakkelijken de ontwikkeling van gemeenschappelijke projecten en bieden een grotere flexibiliteit aan de lokale ruimtelijke planner.

1. Introduction

The role of the spatial planner is to organize the development and use of land for the benefit of the public environment and welfare. A spatial planner acts as a representative to the government and guides the orderly development of space (Faludi & van der Valk, 2013). He uses his skills and knowledge to shape and manage the physical organization of cities and their consisting parts, such as residential, commercial, industrial and suburban areas, parks, transportation, distribution networks and other infrastructure (Kaiser *et al.*, 1995).

Spatial planning has its roots in land use planning and space management. Over the last years spatial planning has undergone many changes and transitions in the western world. First, the criticism done by Jacobs (1961) against the authoritarian role of spatial planners to influence lives of people through technical interventions changed the top-down form of planning to a more bottom-up approach. Second, criticism from Flyvbjerg (1996) against the profession of spatial planners as absolute regulators of cities and living areas challenges even more their role. For Flyvbjerg (1998) planners serve perfectly the interests and policies of the government without taking into account the real needs of people. They use bureaucracy, their institutionalized power and predetermined topics to narrow down the freedom of people in decision making (Boelens, 2011; Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). Accordingly Boonstra (2015) states that bottom-up planning is often a form of window dressing for top-down planning.

In addition, changes in the form and performance of government are reflected in spatial planning (Teisman & Klijn, 2008; Dam, 2016). Sociocultural capital and development goes hand in hand with spatial planning and vice-versa (Allmendinger, 2017). In a globalized world the government becomes governance, meaning that the performance of government ceases to be the privilege of a few elected representatives of the state and becomes the right to many actors, such as market, citizens and communities (Taylor, 2007; Qu & Hasselaar, 2011). This change does not leave spatial planning unaffected, as government and planning are having strong bonds (Allmendinger, 2017). Within this social and historical context, the traditional role of the government in shaping space is challenged and the role of the spatial planner seeks its new identity.

Spatial planners cease to be the exclusive initiators and implementers of a blueprint; their central role in the organization of space is restricted. The organization of space is increasingly becoming an outcome of cooperation and struggle between different actors and spatial planners (Healey, 2006). Actors, such as investors, contractors, urbanists, citizens and resident associations play key roles in shaping and managing urban environments (Van Buuren & Loorbach, 2009). The spatial plan is structured by many actors and is not limited to the role of the spatial planner (Rhodes, 1996).

The Netherlands is a country with a long history and tradition in spatial planning. It is considered to be a true planners' paradise (de Roo & Boelens, 2016). As a country of the western world, the Netherlands has been a leader in innovative changes for spatial planning. The high population density, a relative absence of spatial restrictions because of the flatness of the country, and the need for intense water management are conditions that shaped the Dutch planning practice (Faludi & van der Valk, 2013). The land use planning history of the Netherlands illustrates both top-down and bottom-up forms of planning.

The Netherlands had a top-down, hierarchical, centralized government planning system; which influenced the design and management of space. The land use planning and regulatory framework of

the Netherlands was structured in three levels, national, provincial and municipal (Van der Valk, 2002). Each level had the liberty to structure its own vision for spatial plans. The spatial planning system in the Netherlands was top-down, as the power for organizing space stems from the national government. The visions from provinces and municipalities responded to the vision made at the national level (Van der Valk, 2002). The spatial planning system was also hierarchical, as the power of the national government outweighed the power of regions and municipalities in decision making. Lastly, the spatial planning system was centralized, as guidelines and information for an urban plan were shaped by a group of experts (spatial planners) in the three levels of government.

Spatial planners had a distinct role in organizing public space. Their role for managing and shaping public environment was institutionalized by the three levels of government. The three levels of government allowed the adaptation of the specific needs and visions of local areas to the National plans. This could also be seen as a bottom-up procedure which tended to integrate the visions of planners from the three different levels. The role of citizens used to be limited, but this situation is changing.

A series of events over the last few years challenges the traditional role of spatial planners as the sole directors of the public environment in the Netherlands. The initial event was the closure of the department of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM) in October of 2010 and the absorption of it by other departments, mainly that of Infrastructure and Environment. This event signaled the undermining of the central and specialized role of spatial planners (Boelens, 2011). Another pivotal event was a report published by the government (VROM, 2007) to foster the intention that citizens should take more responsibility for their welfare and their environment. In addition, Dutch government intends to strengthen citizen participation in spatial planning by abolishing unnecessary rules and regulations wherever possible (Rendón, 2011; Koster, 2014; Niedersachsen *et al.*, 2015). In doing so, the government expands the shaping of plans beyond the control of spatial planners. In the same line, the new Environmental Law (Omgevingswet), which is coming into effect in 2021, aims to further increase the involvement of other actors and especially citizens in spatial planning by simplifying and reducing the number of existing regulations. The institutionalized role of the spatial planner shifts from fixed regulations to broader directives for spatial quality standards that can be interpreted in a flexible way.

These events are precursors; and harbingers to mark the entry into a new era for spatial planning; the era of active citizenship (Qu & Hasselaar, 2011; Boonstra, 2015; Dam, 2016; Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2016). The government planning, either top-down or bottom-up is transitioning to a new form of planning: the community-led planning (Van Meerkerk *et al.*, 2013).

The transition from top-down and bottom-up government-led spatial planning to community-led planning is visible in urban renewal and residential cases, where the plans and the blueprints are conceived not only by government spatial planners but by many actors, such as water companies, citizen-associations and construction companies (Van Buuren & Loorbach, 2009; Qu & Hasselaar, 2011; Metz, 2016). Examples like the residential project of Eva Lanxmeer community in Culemborg (Vernay *et al.*, 2010a; Vernay *et al.*, 2010b), the Chassé Park in Breda (Van Onna, 2007) and Vondel parc in Utrecht (Vondelparc, 2017) prove that a new planning context is emerging in The Netherlands. These community residential projects bring a new way of spatial planning to the forefront. Residents together with other actors and spatial planners implement jointly the entire development or management of community areas.

The creation of private organizations such as Platform31, which aims to bring together different actors for the benefit of the public environment and welfare, is another proof of this transition in spatial planning (Koster, 2014). Furthermore, conferences such as *New Europe City Makers* and *Stadmakers* (City makers) are focused on structuring new relations for the management of the urban space away from the hierarchy of national planning guidelines and the control of planners (De Zwijger, 2016; Stadmakerscongres, 2017). In addition, public municipal projects such as Right to Challenge, Buurtbudgetten (Neighborhood budgets), Buurtinitiatieven (Neighborhood initiatives), Medebeheer (Co-management) and Zelfbeheer (Self-management) invite citizens to take responsibility for the development and management of their environment (Engbersen, 2017). These projects grant money and tend to facilitate the management of the environment by many actors. They are also considered as transition and pilot arenas in which alternative forms of spatial planning are tested by the government (Van Buuren & Loorbach, 2009). In these testing grounds, municipal spatial planners become facilitators or essential participants of the planning process and not the main controllers of it, their traditional role as was explained looks outdated. The municipal spatial planner seeks its new identity in a dynamic, emancipated and complex planning context.

1.1. Problem description

In a changing planning context, the role of the spatial planner is exposed and is unclear, as planning is determined by many actors. The relations between the Dutch government and other actors in this new planning context have gained the attention of several scholars (Healey, 2006; Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Dam, 2016; Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). The focus of attention is the conflict between two views. On the one hand, community-led initiatives tend to order and manage the land use planning based on the self-organization approach. Self-organization is an outside-in planning approach, which expresses the idea that the spatial plan should be structured jointly from the start by different actors and the government (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Dam, 2016). On the other hand, it is stressed that self-organization does not take place in a vacuum, unaffected by the same government that had such a dominant role during the previous years (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). As Börzel and Risse (2010) point out, the government is needed for creating a developmental organizational environment in which many actors can be involved. However, for Nederhand *et al.* (2016), the government might be retreating, but is still able to control vital resources and means. This control allows government to use more complex strategies to influence governance and consequently the dynamic self-organized spatial planning.

This new situation can become ambiguous, hence sometimes it creates controversies between the involved actors and municipal spatial planners. The former blame the latter for abuse of power, window dressing and inclusionary processes that are not truly representative for equal participation in decision making (Boelens, 2011; Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). Examples of this type of conflict can be found in the residential development of Nieuw-Crooswijk in Rotterdam (Edwards & Schaap, 2006), as well in residential projects in Gouda, Spijkenisse, and The Hague as described by Hasselaar (2011). These projects did not meet fully the expectations of all the involved actors and especially of residents. Contrarily, according to the Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu (2016) the government tends to develop community-led projects in a flexible and innovative way but usually in a pilot context. All in all there is a call in academics and land use planning researchers to further investigate the relations between government and communities; how they developed, the influence of one actor over the others, and the impact of the local environment in decision making (Boonstra, 2015; Nederhand *et al.*, 2016; Maurice, 2017). In this context the role of the spatial planner (as

representative of the government) on community-led planning remains unclear and raises the question;

“What is the role of municipal spatial planners in community-led planning?”

1.2. Objective

Thus, in relation to the changing role of the spatial planners in the Netherlands, the objective of this master thesis is to explore the role of municipal spatial planners in community-led planning using the theoretical lens of self-organization and meta-governance.

The concepts of self-organization and meta-governance are explained in Chapter 2. They are the theoretical lens of this research and target to answer the main research question. The main research question breaks down in sub-research questions which are presented at the end of Chapter 2.

1.3. Outline of the report

Chapter 1 presents the transitioning and challenging role of the spatial planner in the context of Netherlands. It depicts the study objective of this research and the reasons to study it.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical lens to study the role of the spatial planner. Also, it presents sub-research questions which target to reveal the role of the current spatial planner.

Chapter 3 presents all the used scientific methods for extracting the necessary data to answer the sub-research questions. In addition it presents the two case studies where the research took place.

Chapter 4 presents the results based on the theoretical framework and the methodology of the two previous chapters.

Chapter 5 answers the sub-research questions and reflects on the contribution of the selected theoretical framework in the research; strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 6 answers the main research question and proposes recommendations for future research, as well as for the current role of municipal spatial planner in the Netherlands.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical lenses of this master thesis. The existing theoretical background is a simplification of a proposed theoretical framework by Nederhand *et al.* (2016). Nederhand *et al.* (2016) propose the concepts of self-organization and meta-governance to study the relations between government and other actors such as communities and shop owners, in their common effort to establish new forms of order and management. In the same line with Nederhand *et al.* (2016), and following their call:

“to explore, within a single country, the link between self-organization and the weak and/or strong governance tradition in different policy sectors” (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016, p. 1080)

This master thesis uses the concepts of self-organization and meta-governance to explore the role of the spatial planner and empirically un-reveal it in relation to the other actors. In doing this, the case studies are considered as self-organized communities and the influential or intrusive role of the spatial planner will be examined by the concept of meta-governance. The following chapter is divided in three parts. The first part presents the concept of self-organization and the second part the concept of meta-governance. The last part presents the operationalization of the concepts (use of theory) for answering the main research question.

2.1. Self-organization

In a general context, self-organization is a main concept of complexity theory. In complexity theory the organization of the world is a set of interactions between parts in an open system. Self-organization expresses the capacity of a system to organize itself and adapt to changes of the environment (Goerner, 1994). Self-organization can be seen everywhere; in the dance of a school of fish, in the predictable behavior of motorists in traffic jams, in spontaneous actions after disasters, in the construction of lightning, in the veins of forehead and the wave in the football stadium (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002). In management studies self-organization is seen as a pattern of spontaneous cooperation between employees or teams (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002). In public administration, the self-organization focuses on the capacity of non-state actors to adjust in an institutional setting without interference by the government (Pierre & Peters, 2000). In the context of spatial planning self-organization is defined:

“as initiatives for spatial interventions that originate in civil society itself, via autonomous community-based networks of citizens, outside government control.” (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011, p. 100)

In urban development, self-organization can be understood as the emergence of initiatives for spatial interventions from intrinsically driven, community-based networks of citizens and entrepreneurs (Boonstra, 2015).

The concept of self-organization has already been used to study different spatial planning phenomena. For example, Boelens (2011) used the term of self-organization to describe an alternative approach for the urban renewal of the Mainport Rotterdam. Portugali (2012) used the concept of self-organization to express the dynamic complexity of cities. He tried to monitor this complexity by coding the relations between different parts of the city in an effort to find out certain pattern formations. Cools *et al.* (2013) used the concept of self-organization to understand the dynamic relations of traffic congestion and how to manage it within cities. Van Meerkerk *et al.* (2013) used the concept of self-organization to study the relations of shop owners, businessmen and other stakeholders in managing

and planning their shopping district. Zhang *et al.* (2015) used the concept of self-organization for exploring the competitive and cooperative relations between the Chinese government and other actors in urban development projects, after the liberating reforms of the last years. Dam (2016) used the concept of self-organization to study the autonomous and independent initiatives of people to squat public space, focusing on the relations and bonds between squatters and the physical and social environment. Out of all these scientific works, this master thesis aligns with the concept of self-organization as it is presented by Nederhand *et al.* (2016). Nederhand *et al.* (2016) use certain factors to describe the form of a self-organization process for the emergence of new welfare services shaped by relations between citizens and other actors i.e. market and state.

In the next paragraphs these factors are presented and explained. For Nederhand *et al.* (2016) these factors sufficiently explain the content and the emergent process of self-organization, and as such they give a realistic depiction of the dynamic environment, in which the government (in this master thesis the spatial planner) is called to act. In this master thesis the features of self-organization are used to unfold the dynamic development of community-led planning.

A. Presence of a trigger

The first factor is the presence of a trigger. A trigger event is required to generate interaction and stimulate self-organization. Self-organization is seen as an outcome of a random or unexpected event. Bootsma and Lechner (2002) perceive the trigger of an event as a reaction to any form of disturbance in a system. For example the closure of a military facility that contributed to the local economy, or the economic slowdown of a commercial district that initiates reactions in local communities (Van Meerkerk *et al.*, 2013). Self-organization stimulates the exploration of new forms of organization following an unexpected or a spontaneous event. A spontaneous event challenges the existing order. New interactions between actors start to emerge. These interactions trigger the rise of a new form of organization. For Nederhand *et al.* (2016) it is considered very important to understand what triggers a self-organization process. The presence of a trigger focuses on the starting events and reasons that instigate the planning process. Presence of a trigger is the factor to explore the motives, the concerns and the reasons of the involved actors. It shows *how a self-organization process is triggered* as a reaction or as a new start.

B. Trustworthy relationships

The second factor examines trustworthy relationships between the involved actors. Trustworthy relationships are important for self-organization. Trust allows actors to communicate openly between them and expose their ideas and aspirations. Trust sets the foundations for the further development of a self-organization process. The importance of trustworthy relationships is considered a main feature that leads to more legitimate and effective outputs (Van Meerkerk *et al.*, 2013). Trust depends on the social capital. A strong social capital is a large stockpile of networks, contacts and a shared history of collective action and collaboration between actors (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016).

In terms of spatial planning the attachment of a common meaning to a specific place is the outcome of a strong social capital. A strong social capital strengthens the relations between the involved actors. Strong social relations create trust between actors by bonding through common values, actions, views and meanings (Dam, 2016). Strong and trustworthy social relations coordinate the movement of heterogeneous actors towards a same direction. For Manzo and Perkins (2006) it is crucial to focus on the organization of trustworthy social relationships for a better understanding of the actions of all the

involved actors in community planning. By looking at the social relations between the actors it can be understood how trust is developed between stakeholders in a self-organized process.

C. Focus and Locus of interaction

The third factor is focus and locus of interaction. This factor is a unification of two factors (focus and locus of interaction) as defined by Nederhand *et al.* (2016). They consider focus and locus of interaction as two different factors, since their research studies government and self-organization in a wider scope. However, the current research has a clear orientation in studying the role of the spatial planner, as thus it treats these factors as one. The reason of this unification is that self-organization in spatial planning is manifested physically into space. So the focus and locus of interaction are concepts which are very close to each other.

Interaction is necessary for the interplay of ideas, information and experiences between the involved actors. A shared goal may be formed after the exposure of all the ideas on the table. A certain number of involved actors is important for a sparkling interaction in a self-organized process (Ostrom, 2005). Participants within small groups tend to adjust their behaviour more easily in order to gain focus on a shared goal. Focus of interaction represents the spontaneous dissemination of knowledge, ideas, working methods, contacts and division of responsibilities between the actors (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002). This interaction creates a common code of communication between stakeholders. A common code of communication sets the pillars to a certain focal point. The interaction allows a better understanding among stakeholders. The interaction creates uniformity in the language of communication between the involved actors. This uniformity leads to more stable forms of self-organization. In this way the actions of the involved actors are synchronized to the same direction. A clear focus is the outcome of a collective emergent behavior between the involved actors (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002; Nederhand *et al.*, 2016).

The locus of interaction highlights the place where the information and knowledge exists and interacts between the stakeholders. Feedback mechanisms allow sharing of the information and the proper understanding of it. In this way every actor is aware of the intentions of others, and consequently the adjustment of different ideas can take place. This leads to the formation of a new order. The locus of interaction could be a physical place such as an assembly room or a municipal hall, or it could be a virtual one such as information and communication networks (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). Comprehensive decision making requires transparency between the stakeholders and an honest sharing of existing knowledge and information (Ostrom, 2005).

Focus and locus of interaction examines the synchronization of the information to a certain goal and the place where this information is. Understanding the concerns and the point of agreement points between stakeholders allows becoming aware of how self-organization focuses on certain goals and places.

D. Boundary spanning

The fourth factor to describe self-organization is boundary spanning. Boundary spanning refers to key individuals and their actions which structure a self-organization process. Key individuals act as mediators and link the flows of ideas, people and resources (originating from different actors) between them. These key individuals are considered mediators, innovators, frontrunners, people that think out of the box and look forward to new ideas and forms of organization (Boonstra, 2015).

“These are people who are skilled communicators, able to talk the right language of the different forums or networks in which they are active, and have excellent networking skills giving them the ability to gain entry to a variety of settings and to seek out and “connect up” others who may have common interests or goals”(Van Meerkerk *et al.*, 2013, p. 1633)

According to Van Meerkerk *et al.* (2013), the organization in a system results in connections of various subsystems leading to a highly dynamic process. In this dynamic context key persons have the crucial role to bring different sub-systems together and consolidate the ideas of many about the main goal. They bring consistency to an initiative by linking the different ideas and by assuring their future legitimacy. They ensure consensus and understanding between all the actors, by connecting a community initiative with its environment (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). These people bridge the gap between the stakeholders by linking their ideas to common agreed points. Boundary spanning examines the persons that link different actors between them and their actions. This factor reveals which actors have a main role in self-organization.

E. Adaptation of grown practices

The last feature to describe self-organization is the adaptation of grown practices. This feature describes a mutual adaptation in which all the involved actors have the freedom and capacity to be autonomous. Autonomy means that each actor is free to adjust his role and behavior in a given context. The practices that bring consistency, speed up and mature an initiative are those that prevail in the end (Ostrom, 2005). The involved actors are not restricted to certain roles, but consciously adapt their behavior to a common agreed environment.

“The succession of the emerging structures by the self-organizing stakeholders’ coincide with adaptation of institutionalized roles of other actors in the environment” (Van Meerkerk *et al.*, 2013, p. 1649)

The roles, the procedures, and routines, as well as legal norms of the involved actors are normalized (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). They cease to possess the element of surprise, but acquire a permanence and stability (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002). The self-organization gains a structure. The last feature of self-organization examines the capacity of the involved actors to take un-coerced decisions. It examines why certain results have prevailed over others.

2.2. Meta-governance

The concept of meta-governance has emerged as a reaction to the concept of governance (Whitehead, 2003). Within the concept of governance, the governing of modern societies is an outcome of interactions between state, market and civil society (Kooiman *et al.*, 2008). Governance is seen as a new way of government which brings together state and non-state actors in public private partnerships (Herbert-Cheshire, 2000). Rhodes (1996) describes governance as a complex set of organization drawn from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Governance can be seen as a response of the state government to the self-organization of independent actors, who develop complex relations of reciprocal interdependence between them (Taylor, 2007; Termeer *et al.*, 2013). Governance expresses the logic that the decision-making is truly participatory and bottom-up, without the hierarchical interference of the state (Herbert-Cheshire, 2000)

“The fundamental difference between governance and meta-governance is that while the former draws attention to the processes that dislocate political organization from government

and the state, the latter focuses explicitly on the practices and procedures that secure governmental influence, command and control within governance regimes”(Whitehead, 2003, p. 8)

Meta-governance expresses the capacity of the state government to exert control over a decentralized form of organization; either this organization is instigated by the government or it emerged by other third parties (Whitehead, 2003). State government uses different means, strategies and institutions to create a certain environment for governance. These conditions allow the government and its representatives (spatial planners) to have a leading role in the decision making (Jessop, 2003). Meta-governance is not another top-down technique; it guides a developmental or a planning process in a pluralistic way. Meta-governance expresses the role of political authorities in encouraging and guiding the ‘self-organization of governance’ by the use of institutional tactics and other political strategies (Whitehead, 2003). Meta-governance provides a way to explore the new articulations of state power over governance structures and the methods in which governance systems are forged by the statehood (Whitehead, 2003).

Nederhand *et al.* (2016) define meta-governance by discerning certain strategies. In the following paragraphs these strategies are presented. For the needs of this master thesis, they are considered as methods of intervention, used by spatial planners to exert control on community-led planning.

A. Imposing strategic Frameworks and Monitoring

The first strategy that is used by the government to promote and guide self-organization is the imposing of strategic frameworks and monitoring. Strategic frameworks and monitoring are main techniques of governments to control the development of urban regeneration and residential projects (Healey, 2006; Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). In the same line, this research considers the strategic frameworks and monitoring as actions taken by spatial planners to control self-organization in community-led planning.

These frameworks act as regulators to the process of self-organization. The initiatives have to comply with predetermined regulations and norms. These regulations and norms are shaped by the government and they define the context of a self-organization process. They are in the form of binding guidances or regional-national regeneration strategies and they influence the development of self-organization (Whitehead, 2003). A strategic framework does not allow the deviation of self-organization outside a specific context. In this way the government regulates, guides or even controls self-organization (Van Meerkerk *et al.*, 2013).

Monitoring stands for the use of performance and benchmark systems, which allow governments to control the outcome of a self-organized process (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). Certain criteria and standards influence the development of a self-organization. Annual reports, milestone checks or delivery plans act as benchmark for the development of self-organization (Whitehead, 2003). The process of self-organization has to meet these criteria and standards to become real.

Framework and monitoring are not just considered as a government strategy to exert control over self-organization processes, but also as way to ensure the provision of services and spaces of sufficient quality (Börzel & Risse, 2010). In the general context of governance, examples of framework and monitoring can be found in telecommunications or in the German healthcare system where government agencies closely monitor pricing and competition among private firms to make sure they provide public services of sufficient quality and at affordable prices (Börzel & Risse, 2010).

Government does not set margins for the actions of the actors but it sets margins for the outcomes of the process.

B. Framing and storytelling

The second strategy is framing and storytelling. The government presents a story which connects the goals and ideas of all the involved actors with the goals and ideas of the government. In this way the government creates a shared context that helps in aligning different ideas towards common goals. According to Taylor (2007) governments present prerequisites to other actors in the form of a narrative. Through framing and storytelling, the government actors create a shared belief to sparkle a discourse among other actors in a certain context (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). On one hand, according to Healey (2006) the government may have a persuasive role for making the things done and it may strongly intervene in self-organization by framing only the ideas that it considers to be important. On the other hand, according to Sandercock (2003) framing and storytelling widens the democratic discourse by allowing actors to imagine an un-presentable image of the city. In its most developed form, storytelling has certain key properties, such as temporal, explanation and moral topics, which influence the perception of other actors for a spatial plan (Sandercock, 2003).

C. Presence of supporting actions

The fourth strategy has to do with the different forms of capital that are owned by the government. Government plays a supportive role in self-organization and planning as it possesses the vital means for their success. Information, land, resources, money, incentives and access to services are being provided by the government to self-organized initiatives (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). Self-organization depends on the government for means and resources; consequently the government can make use of this dependency for promoting its ideas (Boons, 2008). This strategy can be expressed by the *Carrot and stick* metaphor. Carrot represents the resources and stick represents the capacity of the government to limit or prevent the access to them when the views of the involved actors are opposing those of the government.

D. Formulating play rules

The fourth strategy is formulating play rules. In this strategy the government has the capacity to control the institutional setting of self-organization. In this way the government assigns certain responsibilities and key positions to certain actors (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). The government exerts control over a self-organized process and the environment by selecting the relevant actors. In addition, the government can regulate the relationships between actors thereby stipulating interdependency. The interdependency leads self-organization to a certain direction (Boons, 2008). According to Taylor (2007), the institutional setting allows government to formulate the play rules by limiting the number of people who can take up key roles, by demanding certain skills and knowledge and by placing practical limitations on who can participate. Managers, consultants, human relations experts, accountants and spatial planners are positions designated by the government (Jessop, 2003). The predefined selection of actors formulates the “*rules of the game*” (the set-up of self-organization), therefore the government influences the final outcome (Taylor, 2007; Nederhand *et al.*, 2016).

E. Playing with fear

The last strategy is considered as the most efficient for controlling self-organization and to robustify the position of governments in governance. Fear is used by governments in a way to control the outcome of self-organization and to bring public initiatives back on the governmental track. The idea behind this strategy is that the government uses its power to scare the involved actors. Governments use different mechanisms to scare and to force actors to receive certain decisions such as financial claw-back procedures, project appraisals, and implementation of binding rules (Whitehead, 2003). These mechanisms force the involved actors to follow the ideas of the government and cooperate with it. The government actors tend to scare the other involved actors so to take certain decisions (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). Playing with fear is a strategy in which the form of self-organization is supervised by the government. According to Boons (2008) fear can be used as a technique to speed up decision procedures for finalizing a plan or a project, as it happened in the post-industrial self-organized development of Rotterdam. Fear can be combined with any of the above strategies, so the power of the government goes beyond coercive control forming what has been labeled as “*a shadow of hierarchy*”(Whitehead, 2003; Börzel & Risse, 2010; Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). This shadow of hierarchy represents the capacity of the government to influence governance and self-organization, directly by using an institutional setting or indirectly by creating fear of failure, rejection or punishment.

2.3. Use of theory

The theoretical framework presents self-organization as a shared understanding in the context of meta-governance (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). The outcome of this understanding is the establishment of a new spatial planning arrangement. The approaches of self-organization and meta-governance are the theoretical means of this research to observe the role of the municipal spatial planners in this new spatial arrangement, which are led by community planning, figure 1.

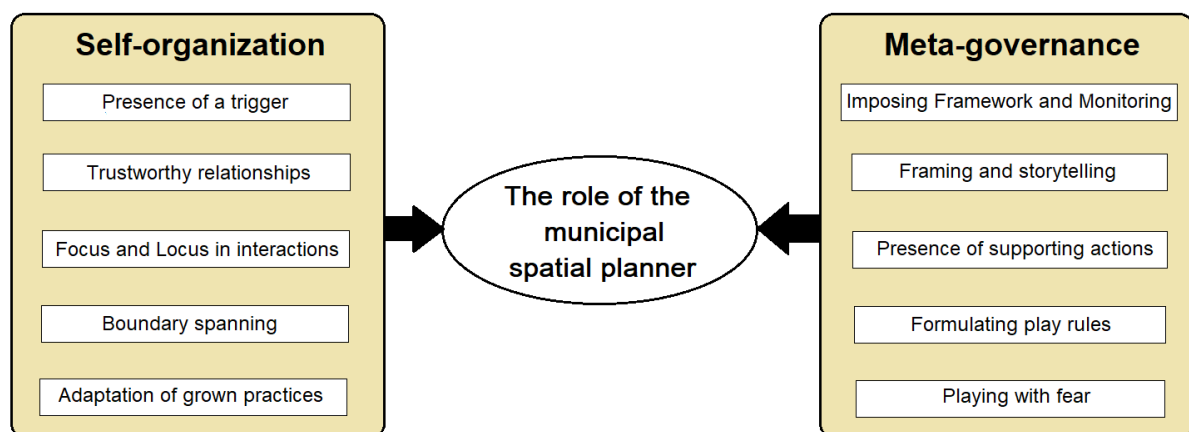


Figure 1 Theoretical framework, own figure based on Nederhand *et al.* (2016, p. 1068)

2.4 Research questions

To understand the role of spatial planners in community-led planning it is important to empirically unravel this problem. This can be done by using the proposed theoretical framework of Nederhand *et al.* (2016). The concepts of self-organization and meta-governance are used to shed light on the role of the spatial planner in community-led planning. Self-organization examines the emergence of order and planning in a dynamic environment (consisting of many different actors), whereas meta-governance examines the strategies of governments in this dynamic environment. The main research question is “*What is the role of spatial planners in community-led planning*”. The sub-research questions are:

- a) *What is the role of spatial planners in triggering self-organization processes?*
- b) *What is the relationship and interaction between spatial planners and other actors in the process?*
- c) *What meta-governance strategies are taken by spatial planners to control the dynamic environment of community-led planning?*

The first sub-research question studies the starting context in which the spatial planner is called to operate as a representative of the government. The starting context is studied through the concept of self-organization. The second sub-research question studies the relationships of all the involved actors in community-led planning. It studies the configuration of relationships between government and other actors using the concepts of self-organization and meta-governance. The third sub-research question examines the influence of spatial planners in community-led planning, by applying the framework of meta-governance. The third research question serves to depict the current role of the spatial planner in community-led planning. Hence by knowing the starting context, the relationships between the involved actors and the influence of spatial planners this master thesis reveals the role of the spatial planner in community-led planning. It aims to offer a more holistic understanding of the role of the government in community-led planning.

3. Methodology

This chapter describes the study plan (methodology) of this master thesis. The aim of this chapter is to create a coherent methodological framework which assesses and depicts the current role of the municipal spatial planner in a systematic, consistent and comprehensive manner.

3.1. Worldview of the researcher

According to Creswell (2014), the term worldview is broadly defined as a core set of notions and perceptions which will guide actions in the research. This research is based on a “*social constructivist*” notion which means that the researcher assumes that every involved actor conceives its surroundings and the environment with his/her own way. For this thesis, the social constructivist notion means that every involved actor (municipal spatial planner, citizens and any other) perceives a process (spatial planning and the role of the planner) in his/her own way. Social constructivism is a worldview that accepts knowledge and reality as socially constructed; meanings that objects, actions and roles have subjective, often socially and historically constructed meanings to each actor (Creswell, 2014). The meanings assigned to objects, actions and roles vary greatly, because the experiences of actors are different. Through social constructivism the main goal of the researcher is to understand the complexity of the reality by exploring the varied and multiple perspectives of the involved actors; and more specifically the role of the municipal spatial planner (meta-governance) in community-led planning (self-organization). The following parts aim to clarify the actions that were taken in order to define the current role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning.

3.2. Research approach

As the objective of this master thesis was to explore the role of the municipal spatial planners in community-led planning, the research approach of this master thesis can be defined as interpretative. Interpretative approaches are characterized by a strong orientation on complexity and an acknowledgment of real life phenomena (Creswell, 2014). The research took place in a complex environment, where different actors influenced the planning process and challenged the traditional dominant role of spatial planners. The research focused on studying the current role of municipal spatial planners in relation to other actors.

3.3. Research Design

For conducting this research a case-study research design was selected. The case study research design offered advantages in this research. According to Kumar (2011) case-study research provides an in-depth and precise description of a complex phenomenon, especially when the study area or phenomenon is relatively unknown. Case-study research is important for the development of a nuanced view of reality, as it recognizes the complexity and the contradictions of real life (Flyvbjerg, 2006); such as the changing role of the spatial planner. As stated in Yin (2009, p. 2)

“The distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena”.

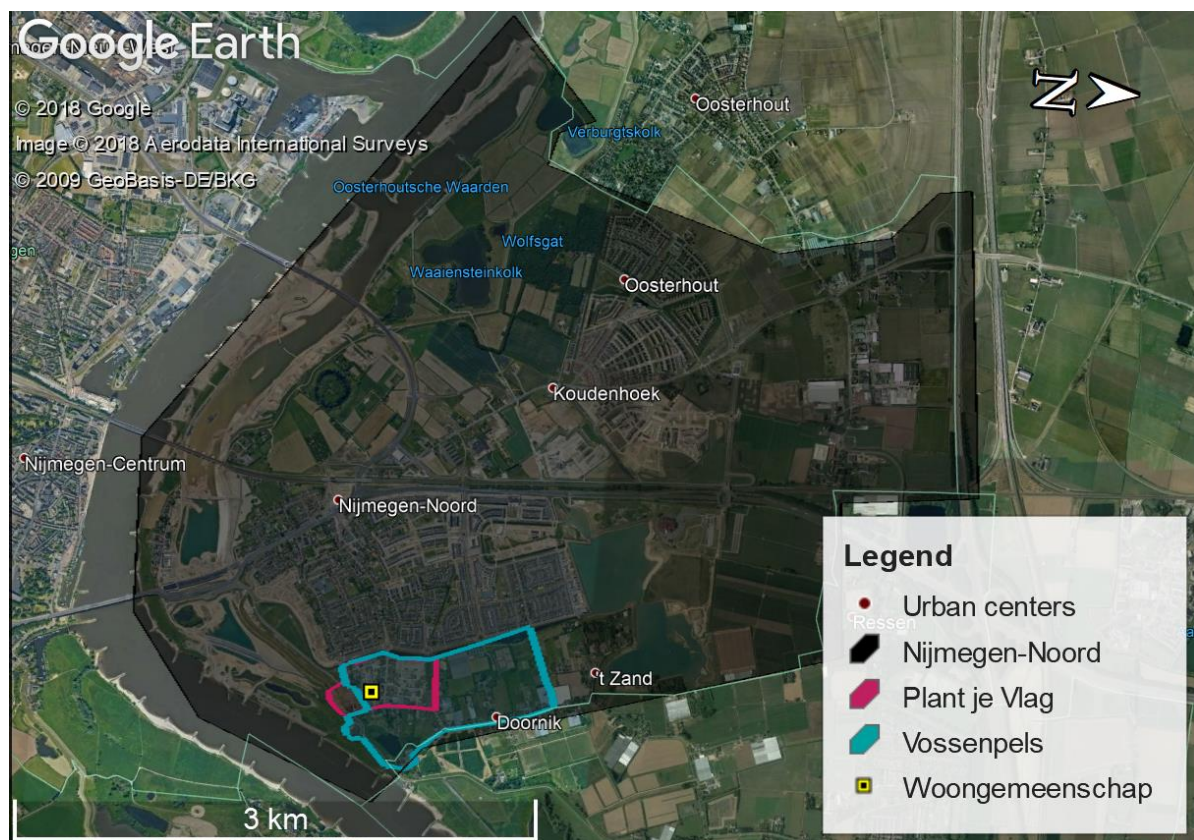
In the same vein Boonstra and Boelens (2011) argue for the scarce empirical understanding of self-organization in the public sector and the need for case study research. According to Creswell (2014), case-study research is commonly used by the planning profession to highlight and analyze in details a specific situation or a phenomenon. Case-study allowed the researcher to observe the role of spatial planners in community-led planning. Through case-study research the current role of municipal spatial planners was observed in a given spatial context, in relation to other actors and its influence in

community-led planning. Case-study research allowed the depiction of reality by looking at all the elements that compose a case and their relations between them. In plain English, case study research allowed to see the general depiction of phenomenon; *the case study research does not miss the forest for the trees*.

The case-study was considered as a proper research design for the needs of this master thesis. Two cases were selected in the context of the community-led project Plant je Vlag in Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

3.3.1. The spatial context of the case studies-Plant je Vlag

The following paragraphs present the reasons that initiated the Plant je Vlag project. Plant je Vlag was the background and the spatial planning context which bounded the development of the two communities; Iewan and Eikpunt. Plant je Vlag was initiated by the municipality of Nijmegen as a reaction to the financial crisis of 2008 and the failure of large investors to respond to VINEX policies. The municipality of Nijmegen developed Plant je Vlag in Vossenpels, Waalsprong¹, following the regional and national plans which designate the wider area for urban development see (map1). The final spatial plan of Plant je Vlag was the outcome of the municipal vision as well as experience and inspiration by the spatial development bureau *We love the city*. The spatial plan was an open call to people who wanted to realize their own homes and design their own landscape; now that the big commercial companies were out of the game. The moto was literally Space to build yourself.



Map 1 The spatial planning scale for the two communities, own creation inspired by Gemeente Nijmegen (2012)

¹ A map for positioning and showing the relations between the areas has been created. It is accessible in the following link:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1F193HKIOWIQzkOXTFdu7DNjYp6SVvuRH&ll=51.89866955268239%2C5.916488200000003&z=10>

Plant je Vlag started in May of 2011 and is spread in an area of 14 hectares close to the river Waal. More than 200 houses reside in the area now. It was developed in three phases. At the start a website was created (www.plantjevlag.nl) on this which people were free to point at a building area by putting a flag. This first step allowed the municipality to see the real demand for the project. In a second phase, *We love the city* organized an open meeting-workshop. During this meeting the people who planted their flags on the website could meet each other and exchange views for their houses and how they imagined their public space. This meeting allowed for the land distribution and neighborhood selection between the participants. In addition, it ensured financial feasibility as the future neighbors could cooperate for their own benefit. Plant je Vlag was a collective self-building residential project which acted as a broker to bring market and people together. So it created fruitful conditions for private, co-housing, and community-led planning. *We love the city* designed the final spatial plan of the area based on similarities that identified in the second phase, i.e. social, ideological, construction and financial similarities came together to make this spatial plan feasible. The last phase was the building phase which started in 2014.

The given area in Vossenpels (see figure 2) was divided in three zoning categories and six areas (*Gemeente Nijmegen, 2012*). The zoning categories represent a scale of freedom in relation to the size of the land. So in zone one, buyers could choose between fixed size parcels, due to monumental and safety reasons. In zone two, they were offered plots which could expand to a certain degree. Zone three offered the most space for a variety of building designs, with an unfixed size. The six areas were used as means for bringing architectural consistency and uniformity between the different ideas of the stakeholders. One of the six areas was Woongemeenschap (see image 1).



Image 1 The Woongemeenschap area, an aerial photograph which shows the two communities Iewan and Eikpunt. The rights of the photo belong to Wen Versteeg.

Woongemeenschap is the place where two community-led planning initiatives Iewan and Eikpunt found available space to build. This area was defined for community building within the Plantje Vlag project and belongs to zone 3 (see figure 2). The two communities were already in contact with the municipal authorities and were looking for available land before the official announcement of Plantje Vlag. Social housing community initiatives such as Iewan and Eikpunt were target to take the whole project of Plantje Vlag one step further. The two communities of Iewan and Eikpunt were the harbingers of the development. Iewan and Eikpunt are also social housing projects which were supported financially by the government by 800.000€.



Figure 2 The zoning regulations for Plantje Vlag and for the community building area. The rights of the photo belong to the development bureau We love the city® source Geerse (2011).

The municipal authorities and *We love the city* applied the minimum of rules for this project, just to ensure the safety of people and a beautiful landscape quality (Projectgroep, 2016). These regulations were related to the following issues:

- The available space for parking; 1.45 to 1.85 parking spaces per house.
- The height of the buildings, in case of the two communities it could not exceed the 11 meters.
- Building regulations Bouwbesluit & WABO for all the buildings and constructions.
- Rainwater should be collected separately and not to end up in the sewage system. This was regulated for each building in Plant je Vlag through water runoff management.
- Only 40% of a bought area was allowed to be build (this regulation could be discussed with the spatial planner and small deviations could be made)
- Potentials for co-management or even self-management of the public green space.

The next two paragraphs introduce the two cases within the urban development project Plant je Vlag, i.e. Iewan and Eikpunt.

3.3.2. The case study of Iewan

Iewan-Strowijk in Nijmegen Lent is the largest complex of straw buildings in the Netherlands. Iewan is a project that has received a lot of inter-national attention. It appeared in Dutch and foreign newspapers and other media. It is presented as an ecological community experiment, one of the first that is also a social housing project. It developed through self-organization of all the involved actors, and even by self-build actions of residents and volunteers. It is an ecological community that addressed to low income groups. The community is self-managed; basic services such as cleaning, taking care of the infrastructures and management of the public space are performed by the community members.

The community project of Iewan was started in May 2013, the construction started in March 2014 and it was completed in April 2015, which means that it needed less than a year (Projectgroep, 2016). Iewan was developed on a plot of 2200 m². It is a two-storey construction, three buildings in a dense cluster, each one next to each other; two as residencies and one as community building. Iewan was designed to be a multifunctional project. It consists by 24 accommodation units, all with their own kitchen and bathroom (see image 1). More information about the specific type of residencies can be found in Annex 1. Around 50 people are living now in Iewan(ESBG, 2015; Strowijk, 2018), .



Image 2 The spatial articulation of Iewan. The rights of the photo belong to Strobouw Nederland®

3.3.3. The case study of Eikpunt

Woongemeenschap Eikpunt is a community which combines social and private housing. The community members feel connected by four principles: multi-generation living, sustainability, silence & reflection and community making.

The association of residents for the community of Eikpunt exists since 2009, the spatial planning of the community started in 2011 and it was subjected to final changes in May 2013. The building process was completed in March of 2016 (Projectgroep, 2016). It was developed on a plot of 6500m². The community of Eikpunt consists of 50 dwellings, of which 42 social housing and 8 private houses. The spatial structure of Eikpunt consists of two residential buildings, for social housing, one community building for activities, a silence building, and eight private houses, two of them designed as yurts² (see image 3). The buildings are sparsely clustered on the given plot. Currently around 65 people are living in Eikpunt (Eikpunt, 2018).



Image 3: The spatial articulation of social housing community in Eikpunt. The rights of the photo belong to the housing association Talis®.

3.3.4. Reasoning for the selected case studies

The research design of two case studies did not enable to develop generalized empirical knowledge, but it provided a detailed understanding of contextual and situational conditions that influenced the role of the municipal spatial planner. The case studies were the field for the unit of analysis (municipal spatial planner) of this master thesis. The case studies had an instrumental role; so this research used the case studies to gain an in-depth understanding about the changing role of the spatial planner. The case studies allowed the drawing of data which were further analyzed and compared, based on the existing theoretical framework. This study aimed to focus on these two case studies for the following reasons. Conducting two case studies responded to the time frame of six months for this master thesis. In order to fully capture the role of the municipal spatial planner, this master thesis

² Yurt is a traditional dwelling which can be found in Central Asia.

preferred to focus on only two case studies. The two case studies allowed for the validation of the results due to saturation of the collected information and data. The two case studies were sharing similarities, which facilitated the use of the proposed theoretical framework as well as the generation of consistent and comprehensive results.

The following similarities of the two case studies drew the attention of this research as they set a solid base for exploring the role of the municipal spatial planner.

- They were social and private housing community projects driven and planned by citizens. They were projects implemented by social groups with limited financial resources. This makes the study of the current role of spatial planner even more interesting as the community planning is not led by a privileged economic group, but by residents who need the support of the government to realize a different way of life.
- They reside in the same Province, *Gelderland*, in the same municipality, *Nijmegen* and in the same district, *Vossenpels*. Consequently they are exposed to the same governmental and spatial context on all three levels national, provincial and municipal.
- They developed during the same period of 2011-2016 within the local spatial development project *Plant je Vlag*, a pilot residential project that initiated by the municipality of Nijmegen (see subchapter 3.3.4.). By selecting cases which were developed during recent years the current role of the municipal spatial planner can be revealed.
- They exposed independency in the decision making process and flexibility in spatial planning. Furthermore, they are considered as prominent pilot examples for presenting the nature of the new environmental law according to the Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu (2016). So they nourished the expectations for a fruitful research environment. Pilot projects are described as

“innovative working form in spatial planning in which parties involved in the issue are brought together and, in a collective learning process, reach innovative solutions for persistent problems in a specific area”(Van Buuren & Loorbach, 2009, p. 378).
- They expressed the willingness to participate in this research.

For all these reasons above both of the community cases are considered good examples to explore the role of the municipal spatial planner in a certain part of the Netherlands. The following figure 3 presents the most important time-milestones for the development of the two communities within *Plant Je Vlag*. Figures 2 and 3 in this chapter present the space-time development of the two community-led projects to the reader.

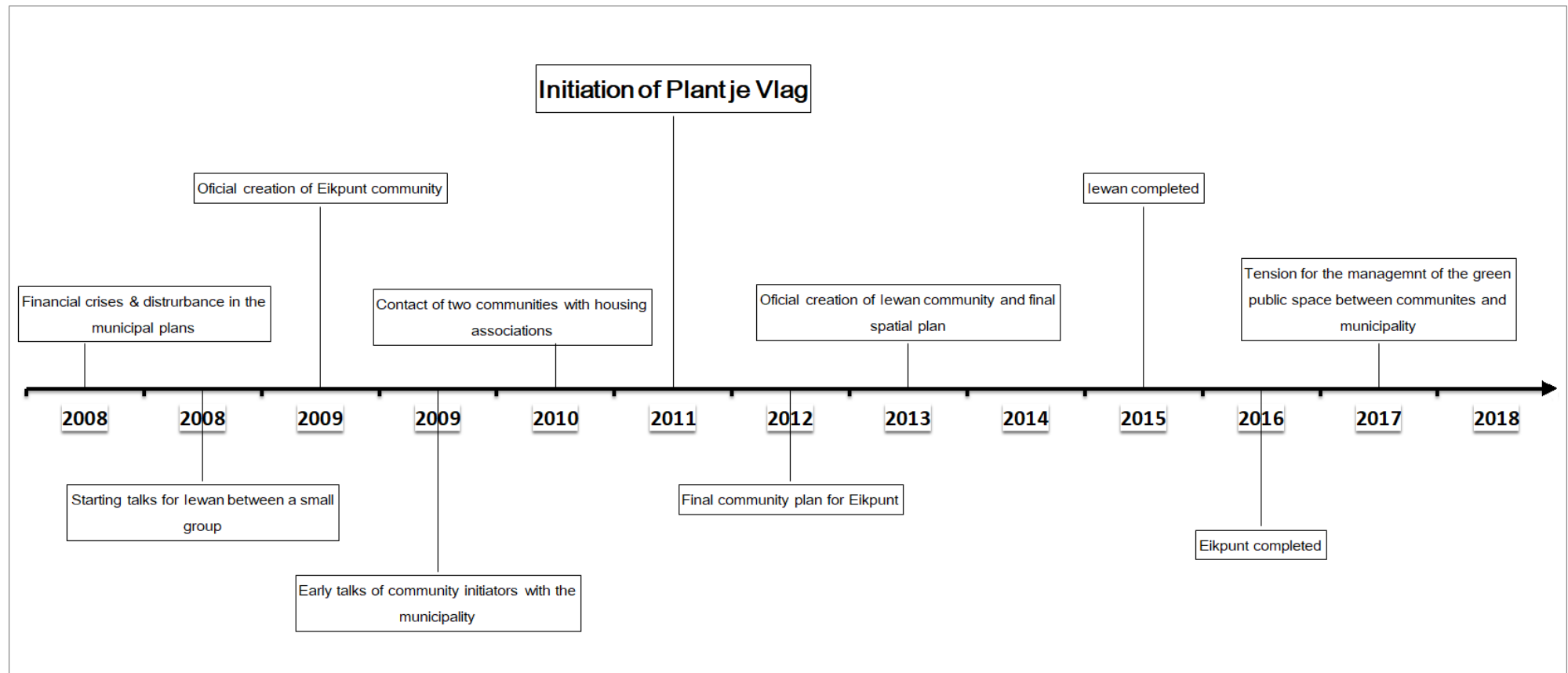


Figure 3 The developmental schedule of Eikpunt and Iewan within Plantje Vlag.

3.4. Types of data and collection methods

This research was based on qualitative data. Qualitative data are extremely varied in nature. They include any information that can be captured and is not numerical in nature. Qualitative data are types of information that have aspects that are unable to be measured (Creswell, 2014). The collection methods fall in two main categories, desk research and field research. Desk research methods were used to create a better understanding of the concepts of self-organization and meta-governance, as well as to depict the role of the spatial planners in the selected case studies. Desk research preceded and followed the field research, to allow for a comprehensive answering of the research questions. For the needs of this master thesis the following collection methods were used.

3.4.1. Desk research

The desk research consisted of literature review in scientific articles and document study. In addition, maps and web sites were studied.

Literature review: Literature review was necessary in order to explore main concepts of the research and preparation of the field work. It was done by using Scopus, the Web of Science and Google-scholar. The results were broadened with Boolean search combinations and snowball technique. Literature review was the main activity in the preparation phase. Literature review contributed to the development of the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework functioned as the basis for the case study analysis. Moreover, literature review was used to frame the problem description both from a scientific and a social perspective. In the end the results of the existing research were reflected on relevant scientific literature.

Document study: According to Green and Thorogood (2013, p. 173), public documents are considered as

“the whole range of written sources that might be available relating to a topic, and by extension other artefacts that can be treated as documents, such as photographs or video recordings”.

Google Maps was used to understand the spatial scale of the case studies and their interplay with the environment. Websites were also used as a means for providing information related to the spatial planning as well as the background of each case study. In addition, relevant documents such as memos, reports, newsletters, proposals, websites, political and government documents were collected, recognized for their relevance and then studied. However, they did not reveal significant information about the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning. As a result, they were mostly used in this research as reference pillars for setting the research background of the two case studies and the spatial context in which they developed. They offered descriptive data for the context of the research, such as the size of the communities, the building costs and the number of residents. In addition, the document study contributed to the recognition of relevant actors as well as to the cross checks of the collected data from the interviews. The reader has the opportunity to look at these sources to get a broader view on the development of the two communities. Table 2 presents eight documents that were recognized as the most relevant for the needs of this study.

Table 2 is a document study table. All the relevant documents that used for collecting data for the needs of this thesis are presented here.

Title	A brief description	How they cited within this research
Interne notitie nr. BO 16-144 Evaluatie projecten IEWAN en Eikpunt (woongroepen Vossenpels)	An internal report (document) that reflects on the ideas of residents, municipality and housing associations for the development of the two communities projects.	Projectgroep 2016
Bestemmingsplan Nijmegen Vossenpels Zuid; Gemeente Nijmegen Afdeling stadsontwikkeling	A government document from the department of urban development in the municipality of Nijmegen. It aggregates the provincial and national directives for a proper urban development in Waalsprong.	Gemeente Nijmegen 2012
Dutch Urban Straw Building-European strawbale Gathering	A power point presentation by the architect of Iewan. It provides information for the development of the community.	ESBG 2015
Programma van Eisen Eikpunt	The development proposal for Eikpunt	Eikpunt Group 2011
The Web page of Iewan	Information about the research https://www.iewan.nl/	Strowijk, 2018
The Web page of Eikpunt	Information about the research https://www.woongemeenschap.eikpunt.nl/	Woongemeenschap Eikpunt 2018
Plant je Vlag Ontwikkelingsvisie Newspaper.	Advertisement material that presents the vision Plant je Vlag to stakeholders.	Geerse, 2011
Pionieren met de Omgevingswet Houd het eenvoudig, maak het beter	<i>“Pioneering with the Environment Act Keep it simple, make it better”</i> is a public report by the ministry of infrastructure and environment which presents the general vision of the New Environmental Law .	Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu 2016

3.4.2. Field research

The field research consists mainly of 18 semi-structured-interviews with spatial planners and civil servants (as representatives of the government), as well as with other involved actors such as community members, developers, and third bodies. In addition, visits to the case studies area allowed the observation of facilities, infrastructure and the surrounding environment. Photographs and field notes were taken, and later used as a cross check general material for the analysis of the interviews.

Semi-structured interviews

According to Kumar (2011) interviews vary in format and structure. Hence, there are flexible, but unstructured interviews and also inflexible but structured interviews. For the needs of this research a “semi-structured” interview format was selected. Semi-structured interviews are those,

‘in which ‘the researcher sets the agenda in terms of the topics covered, but the interviewee’s responses determine the kinds of information produced about those topics, and the relative importance of each of them’(Green & Thorogood, 2013, p. 94).

The semi structured interview format allowed each interviewee to give an open answer. Consequently, the interviewee could elaborate more without getting out of topic. The interviews conducted following an interview protocol, based on Creswell (2014). The same questions were asked to all interviewees. However, the interview protocols were shaped according to the background of each interviewee. An example interview protocol can be found in Annex 1.

The theoretical framework has been translated into 10 questions in order to steer the empirical studying in a consistent way and ensure internal validity (see Table 3). The questions of the semi-structure interviews were split in two thematic topics. The first topic concerned the development process and history of the case studies. In this way, the self-organization approach was used to ask 5 questions. The second topic referred to the role of the spatial planner in community-led planning. In this way, the concept of meta-governance was also used to ask 5 questions. The interviews were done in a nice environment, close or within the vicinity of the interviewees. A bottle of wine was offered to interviewees as a compensation for their contribution in this research. Similar questions on the same topic were asked to confirm the answers given. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to one hour, some of the interviewees preferred to give written answers and one of them was interviewed through a phone call. The interviews were transcribed with the use of the Voice Base’s web app. Table 4 presents the 18 interviewees, a brief description of their general background, and the way they were cited in this master thesis. For reasons of ethics the anonymity of the interviewees is protected. In the present research the names of the interviewees are pseudonyms. An interview report was created which contains all the content of the transcribed interviews. Access to this report may be given after consultation with the interviewer/author.

Table 3 Interview questions

Thematic topics	Theoretical features & Strategies	#	Interview questions	Keywords for codification of the data
Self-organization	Presence of a trigger	1	Who took the initiative for this project? How did it begin? What were your motives that got involved in this project? What was the role of the government and the spatial planner?	Motives, Concerns, Reasons (Nederhand <i>et al.</i> , 2016)
	Trustworthy relationships	2	What made you to trust each other? Which values, actions, views and meanings bond the relations between you and other actors? Did all the involved actors trust each other and how this trust influenced the role of the government?	Values, Actions, Views, Meaning (Dam, 2016)
	Focus and Locus in interaction	3	How do you focus on specific goals - How the different knowledge ideas, working methods, information they converged to the same goal? Where the interaction of different ideas took place? - What means you use to communicate them?	Knowledge, ideas, working methods, information, division of responsibilities (Bootsma & Lechner, 2002; Nederhand <i>et al.</i> , 2016)
	Boundary spanning	4	Are there people or actors that had key roles in shaping the spatial plan of your community? What was the role of the spatial planner?	Key player, Innovators, Mediators (Van Meerkerk <i>et al.</i> , 2013; Boonstra, 2015)
	Adaptation of grown practices (Autonomy)	5	Did you have freedom/autonomy in shaping the spatial plan of your community? Do you consider that all the involved actors have this freedom/autonomy of speech?	Roles, Procedures, Routines (Ostrom, 2005; Nederhand <i>et al.</i> , 2016)
Meta-governance	Imposing a strategic framework and Monitoring	6	Who came up with the spatial framework for your community? What was the role of the spatial planner in framing and monitoring the spatial articulation of your community?	Regulations, Norms, Biding guidance, Regional-National Strategies, Criteria, Standards, annual reports, milestone checks, delivery plans (Whitehead, 2003; Boonstra & Boelens, 2011)
	Framing and storytelling	7	Did the spatial planners use certain stories to expose their ambitions and concerns about your residential project? How did you make your views known to the other actors? How did you pass your message to the society?	A shared belief, Narrative, Discourses, (Sandercock, 2003; Healey, 2006)

Meta-governance	Presence of supporting actions	8	Did the local authorities facilitate or frustrate the organization in community-led planning, and if so in what way? Did the spatial planners influence the form of organization in community-led planning by exerting control to other resources?	Information, Land, Resources, Money, Incentives, Services, (Boons, 2008; Nederhand <i>et al.</i> , 2016)
	Formulating play rules	9	How was the participation of the involved actors defined? Who could participate? Were you able to influence the participation of actors in community-led planning and especially during decision making process?	Predefined institutional setting, limitations on participation, certain skills, designated positions,(Jessop, 2003; Taylor, 2007)
	Playing with fear	10	Did you scare other actors at any point during the project, that something could go wrong? How do you think the other actors perceive your role? Did you have the means to create fear, in order to lead the decision making towards a certain outcome?	Claw-back, project appraisals, implementation of binding rules, rejection, failure, punishment, (Whitehead, 2003; Boons, 2008; Dam, 2016)

Table 4 Interviewees and their background

Government and official initiators of Plant je Vlag		Date	Type-way of interview	Cited form within this research as...
Municipality of Nijmegen (2)	Two interviews conducted with civil servants from the municipality of Nijmegen both of the interviewees were spatial planners.	17/7/2018	Personal interview	Civil servant 1
		11/9/2018	Phone interview	Civil servant 2
City Hall (1)	An interview was conducted with an elected politician; who served in the city Hall of Nijmegen during the development of communities	22/6/2018	Personal interview	City Hall
GEM Waalsprong (2)	It is a public-private company which developed for exploiting the land in Waalsprong. It serves the interests of the municipality. Two interviews were conducted.	18/7/2018	Personal interview	GEM Waalsprong 1
We love the city (1)	A private development company specialized in spatial planning and urban residential projects. It was hired by the municipality of Nijmegen to develop Plant je Vlag. The interviewee was a spatial planner.	27/6/2018	Personal interview	Welovethecity
Parties from the market with important role in community led planning				
Talis (1)	A housing corporation specialized in social housing.	1/6/2018	Personal interview	Talis
Woningbouwvereniging (1)	A housing association specialized in community development and management.	10/7/2018	Personal interview	WoningbouwVg
Orio Architecten (1)	The architect for the community of Iewan. A specialized architect in Straw buildings. The interviewee had a background in spatial planning.	13/7/2018	Personal interview	Architect Iewan
Van Laarhoven Architecten (1)	The architect of Eikpunt. The interviewee had a background in spatial planning.	17/7/2018	Personal interview	Architect Eikpunt
Bouwen met Mensen (2)	Advisory institution for community planning and supportive decision making.	12/7/2018	Personal interview	BouwenmetMensen1
		7/8/2018	Written answers	BouwenmetMensen2
Community members				
Iewan (3)	Residents who live and initiated the community	10/5/2018	Personal interview	Resident Iewan1
		25/7/2018	Personal interview	Resident Iewan2
		16/8/2018	Personal interview	Resident Iewan3
Eikpunt (4)	Residents who initiated the community	26/5/2018	Personal interview	Resident Eikpunt1
		7/7/2018	Written answers	Resident Eikpunt2
		1/8/2018	Personal interview	Resident Eikpunt3
		1/8/2018	Personal interview	Resident Eikpunt4

3.5. Data analysis

In order to analyse the collected data this master thesis implemented a pattern matching technique. Pattern matching techniques are targeted to match the data gathered from the field research with concepts previously exposed. In this research these are the features of self-organization and the strategies of meta-governance. Since the features and the strategies of self-organization and meta-governance were defined before the data collection, pattern matching fits as an analytical technique for this research.

The data analysis has been done through five steps. First the data were collected (interviews and public documents), then were organized and transcribed. Second, all the data were read to acquire a complete meaning of the information. Third, data were codified into **10** categories based on the **5** features of self-organization and the **5** strategies of meta-governance (see Figure 1). Fourth, the data were interrelated to the objective, i.e. the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning. Last, the organized and gathered information of the two case studies was compared to *reveal* any differences in the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning. The transcribed interviews were analyzed based on the main features of the theoretical framework (see figure 1).

Atlas ti8 Qualitative Data Analysis software was used for the analysis of the data in the third, fourth, and last step. In the third step 10 codes were assigned in the program for each case study. Each code represented a basic concept of the theoretical framework. This allowed the collection of all the relevant information of each concept for each community. In the fourth and fifth step the codes were compared with the use of the *Query tool* and the help of *Set Operators* i.e. pattern matching. Table 5 presents the contribution of data by the three main groups of actors in table 4 to the theoretical elements of the existing research for each case study.

Table 5 This table was created by using the feature of co-occurrence table in Atlas ti8. The numbers represent the times that the relevant codes of each concept assigned in a case study and the origin of this data, i.e. Government, market, community members. This table has been placed indicatively to show a small part of the contribution of Atlas ti8 in the analysis of data.

#	Government and official initiators of Plant je Vlag	Parties from the market	Community members	Totals
Self-organization in Iewan	44 36.67%	31 25.83%	45 37.50%	120 100%
Meta-governance in Iewan	46 48.94%	19 20.21%	29 30.85%	94 100%
Self-organization in Eikpunt	44 26.04%	59 34.91%	66 39.05%	169 100%
Meta-governance in Eikpunt	43 40.57%	25 23.58%	38 35.85%	106 100%
Totals	177 36.20%	134 27.40%	178 36.40%	489 100%

3.5.1. Credibility in analysis of data

The aim of this part is to establish the truth and trustworthy in this research. To achieve this, different techniques were used to robustify the quality of the research (Creswell, 2014). The following techniques were used throughout the research and especially during the collection and analysis of data phase.

- **Data triangulation:** Two means were used for gathering data, i.e. public documents and semi-structured interviews. The triangulation technique allowed for the convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in the study. In addition it allowed the cross-checking of the information, as different means were used to study the role of the municipal spatial planner. Triangulation allowed for the verification of saturation of data to be perceived by the researcher, as after one point the same type of information continues to gather, mostly by the interviewees.
- **Clarify bias:** A description of the worldview of the researcher as well the extensive explanation of the research approach and design in the previous parts depicted a clear picture of how this research was conducted (Golafshani, 2003).
- **Member checking:** It was a technique that was applied during the final phase of the research. It enhanced the reliability of data analysis, by sending (the relevant) parts of the report to the interviewees and asking for their feedback and reflection on the text.
- **Peer debriefing:** A peer reviewer and colleague scholars were asked to assess the methodological structure of this research. They provided research assistance and impartial views on the study. Furthermore, professional researchers in the field of community-led planning verified the propriety of the theoretical concept and methodological choice.
- **Rich, thick description:** Final, a rich thick description is given for both case studies. All the data were composed together and analyzed by the features of self-organization and strategies of meta-governance. The different meanings, perceptions and understandings for the role of the spatial planner were expressed in each case study; in an effort to reveal the changing role of the spatial planner in community-led planning.

This master thesis follows an inductive way of reasoning for defining the problem description (the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning) and for answering the research questions. It was an ongoing process of fermentation which contributed to the reliability of this research.

4. Results

This chapter presents the explorative results of this master thesis. The two community cases are broken down by the aspects of the elements of the theoretical framework. First for the community of Iewan and then for Eikpunt the concepts of self-organization and meta-governance are presented. In the end a concluding paragraph identifies similarities and differences between the two projects.



Figure 4 the logos of the actors that got interviewed and participated in community-led planning of Plantje Vlag.

4.1. The community of lewan



Image 4 a view of lewan, own photograph.

4.1.1. Presence of a trigger in Iewan

In the community of Iewan all the involved actors had different starting points, but their expectations were met in the same goal, the building of an innovative ecological social community. Pioneers for Iewan were a small group of young people, who used to live together as students in another community. In 2008 they decided to take action to realize a social residential community. Their common concerns for the environment motivated them to look for an alternative and exemplary lifestyle. In addition, the initiators of Iewan had financial constraints, which meant they had to develop their community as a social housing project (Strowijk, 2018), *Resident of Iewan 1 & 2*.

“We wanted a social housing to be an ecological project, and this to be made by us. This goal was political related, as we wanted to bring change and Iewan to be an example” Resident of Iewan 1

The community of Iewan wanted to bring together social housing, community building and sustainable living. This way, people with modest incomes would have the chance to participate. Iewan was created by idealistic people who were looking for a low carbon emissions lifestyle. In 2008 they addressed to the municipality for finding available land to develop their community. The spontaneous event of the financial crisis created a fertile ground for community and bottom-up development projects. Even though, the municipal authorities did not have any role or involvement in triggering the initiative of Iewan, they ensured to the starting community group the potential availability of a building area. For the municipality of Nijmegen community initiatives were a good kick start for urban development. Furthermore, the municipal authorities advised the members of Iewan to come into contact with the housing association *Talis*. The cooperation with a housing association was considered very important for the development of the community. The housing association *Talis* introduced the community members of Iewan to the construction and building sector of the Netherlands.

During the starting process of Iewan spatial planning did not have a primary role in the actions of the involved actors i.e. community members. Worth to remember is the intention of the municipal government to facilitate Iewan to find available land (Projectgroep, 2016), *GEM Waalsrong 1*.

“Nijmegen is this kind of city that has the social consciousness to take care of other kind of life styles. Iewan and Eikpunt are different types of lifestyle and they have a place where these lifestyles can be realized. For the city of Nijmegen back then, the local government was dominated by GroenLinks, and this political party wanted to do something on its own way” Civil servant 1

4.1.2. Trustworthy relationships in Iewan

Trust existed between the members of the starting group of Iewan. A common social background and a similar understanding of environmental awareness bonded the relations between the members of Iewan and set a clear vision for the community. A strong social capital bonded the relations between the community members. The clear vision of Iewan brought trust between the community and other actors such as housing associations and government. Trust developed in a long period of time between all the involved actors.

“The municipality trusted us because we worked together with Talis. Talis trusted us because we worked together with WoningbouwVg. So it was created a network that brought trust amongst us” Resident of Iewan1.

The gradual creation of a network between the involved actors brought trust to everyone. In the first phase the community of Iewan was the starting node of this network and all the other actors were linked to it. In the second phase the involved actors started to recognize each other. Common past experiences between the actors bonded the relations between them and ensured the commitment of everyone in the project. The involved representatives of housing associations, contractors and the municipality had a common past in working together. The municipal government was skeptic at the start as it did not have experience in social housing community-led projects. However, a clear development vision by the members of Iewan and pressure through “lobbying” by the City Hall helped to get over any limitations. *Resident Iewan 1 & 2, Civil servant 1, GEM Waalsprong 1, Talis*

“In general we have political clients, our time and our work is on changing the system. The city officials are not entitled to change the system. The city official has to work for the system but a politician can make some changes to the system” We love the city.

The trust of the government was encouraged following the trust between the two housing associations. The early contact of Iewan with the municipality and the development of trust between all the involved actors brought a coherent spatial plan in which the ideas of Iewan were depicted clearly. The role of the hired development bureau *We love the city* brought also trust in the project. Transparency and argumentation between all the involved members were means for a flexible spatial planning development, *We love the city*. Transparency and argumentation within the relations of the involved actors sustained and robustified trust. In the case of Iewan trust paved the way for development. The most important proof of trust in the case study of Iewan is the commitment of housing association Talis to invest in this social housing project. The financial commitment by Talis secured the feasibility of the community. ESBG (2015), Talis, Welovethecity, Civil servant 2, Resident Iewan1, 2 & 3.

“Vertrouwen komt te voet en gaat te paard-trust arrives on foot but leaves on horseback. In the case of Iewan it came by horse, because they were really well prepared and they knew what they want”. We love the city.

4.1.3. Focus and locus in interactions of Iewan

In the case of Iewan the interactions between initiators, the municipality and the housing associations were structured within a clear set of time, legal and financial guidelines. A common vision was created by the community members of Iewan. This common vision facilitated the communication within the community group and with the other involved actors.

The community members of Iewan spent a lot of time -a maturation process- for defining a clear vision and recruit new community members. They did a detailed research by themselves on how to organize their community. Travels to similar projects were the first steps the initiators of Iewan took. It was a starting effort to set their vision in a certain spatial and building context. The focus of Iewan was based from the start on three core values. The residents of Iewan wanted a social community, which was planned to be sustainable and ecological, in order to expand its influence beyond social housing and to educate people to an ecological way of living (Projectgroep, 2016; Strowijk, 2018), *Resident of Iewan 1,2 & 3, WoningbouwVg, Talis*

The members of Iewan used different methods for focusing and achieving their goals. For decision making between them, the members of Iewan use a decision making model which is called consensus. Through this way common accepted decisions were taken between the members of Iewan. During the community-led planning meeting in Iewan one person was defined as a facilitator. People could only speak when they had permission from the facilitator. During the meeting they could raise their hand and the facilitator noted his/her name; then at some point permission to speak was given to them. This way of communication brought consistency in decision making and allowed the participants to keep their focus.

Another working method that was used by Iewan during communications meetings was the table of colors with do's and don'ts. Community representatives had a table of choices to react in the discussions with municipal authorities and planners, as well as with other actors such as the constructors and housing associations, for example in the selection of building materials. The housing associations helped the community members of Iewan to become aware of all the necessary steps that were needed for developing a community. *WoningbouwVg* set three topics as point of focus for people of Iewan;

“how many square meters you need, how much that would cost and a time plan on how you want to work together as a group in realizing your community” Resident Iewan1.

For the municipal authorities as well as for the involved spatial planners the community members of Iewan were really well prepared, with a clear orientation. There was no need for spatial planners to guide the actions of the community members of Iewan, either municipal or private *Civil servant 1 & 2, We love the city.*

“When we first met the people of Iewan, we realized soon that we had to do with a really well prepared group” Civil servant 1

The municipal spatial planners granted great freedom and autonomy to the developmental bureau *We love the city*, which was responsible for the general development of *Plantje Vlag*. The municipal spatial planner presented clear guidelines to the community members. Later on, the private hired planner from *We love the city* was able to answer questions and clarify any topic in an interactive web platform. The means of communication and information such as e-mails, workshops, public presentations as well as in situ visits in the area facilitated the exchange of views between the involved

actors. For the community members of Iewan the realization of a sustainable ecological community was more important than the location of the area.

4.1.4. *Boundary spanning in Iewan*

The community members of Iewan were key player for the realization of the project. In addition, the dominant political party in the *City Hall* of Nijmegen made the land available for community building through Plant je Vlag. The municipality of Nijmegen recognized the need of the local society for community social housing and ensured land and financial resources for the development of it. The city hall ensured financial support of 800.000€ for the development of community projects by the government in Plant je Vlag (Projectgroep, 2016), *GEM Waalsprong 1*.

All the interviewees recognized the good cooperation between them. *Talis* bought the land from the municipality-*GEM Waalsprong* and ensured the financial feasibility of Iewan. The municipal spatial planners did not have a central role in the realization of a spatial plan for Iewan. The development bureau *We love the city* made a spatial plan for Iewan in communication with the members and the housing associations. The final spatial planning proposal satisfied the needs and wants of the community members *WoningbouwVg, Welovethecity. Resident Iewan1*

4.1.5. *Adaptation-autonomy in Iewan*

The starting group of Iewan developed their project in a relatively independent environment. They had the autonomy to take many decisions, like the size, the number of houses and the building materials. Resident of Iewan1&2, *WoningbouwVg*.

Taking into account that Iewan is a social housing community and its development was restricted to a certain financial budget by the government and the investors i.e. housing associations, it can be mentioned that the members of the community had great autonomy in decision making. The autonomy was restricted only by the available budget. *Resident of Iewan2&3, We love the city, Civil servant 2*.

The starting group was able to develop its own habits in order to communicate and receive certain decisions. In addition, people of Iewan were among the first who selected land before the official announcement of Plant je Vlag. They chose the architect for designing the buildings of their social community. It was the first time that the housing association *Talis* allowed the residents to select the architect for a social housing project. Furthermore, during the construction phase they self-build part of the project; with the contribution of friends and volunteers. They developed their own working schedules and adopted the role of the builder to their own standards (see image 1). Currently, the community members of Iewan, by getting knowledge from the housing association *WoningbouwVg*, maintain the building infrastructures and provide the basic services such as cleaning, public illumination, and management of the green space by themselves. Resident Iewan 1,2 & 3.

“Autonomy in saying things and propose stuff we had a lot. Although, in doing them and realizing them; we had to comply with our budget, the time schedule and the given rules of Plant je Vlag. For the green area it was promised more freedom to us” Resident Iewan2.

For the authorities who shape the spatial articulation of Plant je Vlag i.e.the municipality, GEM Waalsprong and We love the city autonomy and independence were basic elements. Despite the fact

that Plant je Vlag allowed independence and autonomy to flourish in Iewan, some restrictions and regulations needed to be taken, for the decent and safe management of public space. The autonomy of community members to regulate their space was challenging for the private spatial planners of We love the city, as they had to regulate many details, something that is not common in large scale housing projects *We love the city Civil servant 1&2*.

The given context of Plant je Vlag offered a flexible environment for community spatial planning. In this developmental niche of liberty, the community members had absolute freedom to adapt their desires according to the general regulations of Plant je Vlag. The regulatory planning framework of Plant je Vlag bounded the autonomy of the community members and set the standards that had to be complied with.

*“When you promise freedom, be aware that some people will try to exceed these limits”
We love the city.*

4.1.6. Imposing framework and monitoring in Iewan

The community of Iewan developed within the predefined spatial framework of Plant je Vlag. The community of Iewan had to follow certain bureaucratic procedures and adapt to all the necessary requirements that were asked by the municipality and other involved actors. The municipal government was requested by the hired development company to use of certain procedures such as a list of protocols, criteria, and standards to ensure a safe developmental framework for the community development. All these rules were known to the community members of Iewan. Bureaucracy according to community members of Iewan, necessary rules that ensured the safety of residents according to the perspective of all the involved spatial planners; framework and monitoring was a strategy that was used by the government in Iewan.

Framework and the monitoring of the spatial and building process did not cause a lot of tension between residents and the planners. However, there were two issues that are worth to be mentioned. The first was related to the parking space. The community of Iewan had a strong vision on planning for sustainable development from the start. So they did not wanted to comply with the parking regulation; 1.85 parking space per house. In their view the parking space came at the expense of the green public space. The spatial planners facilitated this request of the community after a pressure from the community members (Geerse, 2011). The second issue had to do with the mandatory use of cement for the foundations of the community buildings. Cement was considered as a non-sustainable material by the community members of Iewan, but the Bouwbesluit made the use of cement mandatory for reasons of safety *Resident Iewan 1,2&3, Talis*. These issues brought tension between the involved actors and set the community members on the sidelines of the building process. The Bouwbesluit was imposed by the government but was fully accepted by all the other involved actors such as housing associations, architects, constructors and spatial planners. Community members of Iewan did not like these regulations but their dedication to realize their community moved them forward. In addition their small “win” on fewer parking spaces was a way to compromise with the regulations of the government.

The community members were really well prepared and their designs and most of their ideas were fully integrated into the regulations of Plant je Vlag. *We love the city, Municipality of Nijmegen*.

The spatial planners framed the development of Iewan according to the national and regional standards. The community-led planning process was flexible but it was guided by a bottom line of regulations that were mandatory for everyone *We love the city, Civil servant 2*.

4.1.7. Framing and storytelling in Iewan

Framing and storytelling is a strategy that was used widely for defining a general and wide vision for Plant je vlag by all the spatial planners and the municipality of Nijmegen. The municipal spatial planners and the hired bureau We love the city used the storytelling as a way to advertise an alternative way of bottom-up development in Plant je Vlag. The hired development bureau We love the city used story telling as a technique for creating a common identity between the residents in close proximity within Plant je Vlag. However, storytelling was not used to influence the community planning process in Iewan. The story came from the residents themselves. The residents were dedicated in making an exemplary environment friendly community. The spatial planners did not need to tell a story to the community members of Iewan.

“They (Iewan) proved to us that it can be a sustainable project. We did not have to tell our story, they had their own story” Civil servant1.

According to the members of Iewan, the municipality used their project in order to advertise sustainable urban development in Plant je Vlag. Iewan was an example of sustainable design that should be followed by everyone who wanted to build in Plant je Vlag *Resident Iewan 1, 2&3, WoningbouwVg*.

The lack of storytelling by the government to the community members of Iewan created an awkward situation for the community members of Iewan. On the one side of the coin the lack of a story gave a lot of freedom to the community members to shape by themselves the general idea of community-development in Plant je Vlag. On the other, they saw their story for sustainable housing and living as advertisement material in the hands of the government and the private spatial planner. For the community members of Iewan, they were the frontiers and the government followed them.

4.1.8. Presence of supporting actions in Iewan

In the case of Iewan the role of the municipal government was supportive. The government did not use its main control over resources to influence the form of organization. The municipality facilitated most of the community plans. It facilitated the communication between the different government layers and with the other involved actors. It broadened the network of the starting group of Iewan. It supported the project with financial resources. It made the land accessible for community building.

In the same line the private spatial planner from We love the city facilitated the community designs whenever it was asked for and was possible. For example the community members of Iewan did not want so many parking spots on their plot. The hired spatial planner, after consultation with the municipal planners, increased the number of nearby public parking places. So the spatial planners facilitated the desire of the residents. Another issue was the helophyte filter, a water sanitation infrastructure which has a prominent position in the landscape of Iewan. A bed reed installation treats the waste water coming from the toilets to a septic tank, the water follows an overflow process and it goes to the bed reed installation. The municipality of Nijmegen bended the rules for waste water

treatment and allowed the installation of this environmental technology *Iewan, TALIS, City hall, WoningbouwVg.*

The hired spatial planning bureau We love the city offered flexibility into the architecture of Iewan until the last steps of the design phase. The main entrance of Iewan was oriented to be on the south, to have direct access to the road, but the architect placed it on the North. Nevertheless, the hired private spatial planner for Plant Je Vlag accepted this and allowed the architect to reshape the general plan of the area. In addition, the architect did not have any limitations in the way he placed his design within the given parcel *Architect Iewan*

4.1.9. Formulating play rules in Iewan

Playing rules for the community-led planning process in Iewan were not defined by the government. The participation was open to everyone. The only limitation for the community of Iewan was an income limit, as Iewan is a social housing community.

“We could not select the representatives of the government but we were able to select architect and housing associations. Also the other way around, the government did not influence the participation in our community. The participation was open to everyone who wanted to bring an idea to the table” Resident of Iewan 2.

For the spatial planners the predefined institutional setting of Plant je Vlag was also determined by the rules of the game in the development of Iewan. Certain skills were needed but not requested for the development of a community project. Permanent community representatives were the only request from the municipal and planning authorities for better communication between them.

4.1.10. Playing with fear by the planner in Iewan

The community did not feel any fear during the planning and designing process by the spatial planners, municipal or private. Later on, after the accomplishment of the construction phase, the community members of Iewan found difficulties to manage their public green space according to their wishes, as the government had a different view. The community members of Iewan wanted to manage the public area nearby their community in an integrated way, in order to harmonize public and private space. In addition they wanted to manage the green area in a communal way with the nearby residents. The municipal government wanted to develop its own plans for the management of the green area. The community members of Iewan claimed that they were subjected to legal responsibility fears by the municipality. Procrastination, long term meetings without focus, were also other tactics that were used by the municipality as ways of pressure against the wishes of the community. In addition the municipality claimed that it had the responsibility to protect the public interests and safety. This legal fear scared the private neighbors of Iewan and they stepped out of this effort. The community members of Iewan used their strong social bond and continued to pressure the municipal government with calls, questions, proposals and complaints. In the end a management framework was created by the municipality. This framework granted rights to the community members for the management of the public space by assigning certain responsibilities and ways of gardening to them *Resident Iewan 1, 2 & 3, Civil servant 1.*

“Some individuals from the local government they really did this. They tried to scare us for accepting their way in doing things. For example what I described before for the green area. They make us to get afraid, by assigning all this responsibility to us, if someone gets hurt by a fruit. I do not have another example” Resident of Iewan 3.

4.2. The community of Eikpunt



Image 5 The entrance of Eikpunt own photograph.

4.2.1. Presence of a trigger in Eikpunt

Eikpunt was triggered by a small group of people who were together in a Zen meditation group. It was an outcome of different life experiences of people to realize an alternative way of living. The collection of all these experiences and knowledge as well as personal motivation and life events were the starting guide for creating the vision of Eikpunt. The consistency of the initial group changed through the years but the members remained faithful in realizing a community way of living away from the daily noisy and destructive environment of the inner-urban world. The dynamic formation of the initial group led to a continuous redefinition of goals and actions. A proof of this redefinition of goals is that the starting formation of the community group wanted to buy a place, but later when there were changes in the members of the community, it was decided to build residencies from scratch. So the community of Eikpunt was triggered through different attempts of trial and error (Eikpunt, 2018). Eikpunt was initiated based on the general motivation for a silence place, but they needed many attempts of try and error till the formation of the final idea *Talis*, *Eikpunt resident 1,2,3 & 4*, *Civil servant 1*.

“There was a long beginning road for this startup, with different ideas and alternatives that ultimately did not make it into reality” Resident Eikpunt2

The final idea was the development of a meditation community for sensitive social groups, such as single parent families, lonely elders, and people with limited financial resources and health problems. The community wanted a mix of social and private houses. *Residents of Eikpunt1&2*, *Civil servant 1*, *GEM Waalsprong*.

The starting group brought together more people and in 2009 they contacted the municipality of Nijmegen for available land. The municipality liked their idea for the community development, but could not promise available land back then. In 2010 they came in contact with the housing association *Talis*. *Talis* liked their idea but the mix of private and social houses was a new and a challenging situation. The contribution of the community housing advisory company *Bouwen met Mensen* was crucial for setting the development of Eikpunt on track. There was no involvement of the government in triggering the community of Eikpunt.

“No, there was no role of the government in the start. Back then there was no vision or something certain. There was an invitation for a meeting somewhere in Nijmegen. I went in this meeting and I met 5 or 6 people, who were also the starters of this initiative” Resident of Eikpunt 3

4.2.2. Trustworthy relationships in Eikpunt

The building of trustworthy relations were a long term process for the community of Eikpunt. There were many nice ideas on the table but without them being priorities. Ideas such as multi-generation living in a green, quiet and sustainable environment for social and creative people were apparent between the community members. Furthermore these ideas were considered noble and attracted the attention of other actors. However, the changing and great number of members during the years of initiation of the community did not allow the creation of strong bonds and clear views between the involved actors. The lack of a clear action plan created tensions in the relations of trust between the involved actors. The municipality liked the idea for a community development that would combine social and private housing but many issues remained unclear. Issues such as a planning agenda with clear actions for the development of a community, the number of residents, and the number of private houses were undefined causing mistrust between community members and other involved actors.

Municipal planners and housing associations advised the community members of Eikpunt strongly to ask for the help of a housing advisory company. In addition, the municipal spatial planners with the contribution of GEM Waalsprong designated an area in Vossenpels before the initiation of Plant je Vlag for the community development of Eikpunt. However, this area needed to be bought by the housing association Talis. Talis was insecure to invest as the general ideas and the designs of the people were not enough for the development of a community. (Projectgroep, 2016), *Civil servant 1, GEM Waalsprong 1, Resident Eikpunt 1,2,3. Bouwen met Mensen1 & 2.*

“It is not that everyone has to agree with everyone, but the argumentation was really important in developing the trust” Resident Eikpunt 3

“During such a long period -a year- people come and they go after a month or they stay; lets say forever or up until now. So it was quite a changing group as well. People come and go. So the trust has to be built up again and again, it is so intense” Resident Eikpunt 1.

Bouwen met Mensen is a housing advisory company for co-housing and community projects which brought trust between all the involved actors by defining a step by step strategy for making the community of Eikpunt. It took the group of Eikpunt by the hand during the community planning process. Bouwen met Mensen introduced the group of Eikpunt into the building and construction world of the Netherlands_Residents of Eikpunt1, 2, 3 & 4, Talis, Bouwen met Mensen1 & 2.

” for the trust with the government; the answer to this is that we talk the language of the government, we know the bureaucratic processes and how the things work. People they do not talk the language of the government; they cannot deal in such complex system. Bouwen met Mensen1

The involvement of the housing advisory company that brought trust between all the involved actors. Bouwen met Mensen started to have a role as mediator, between the group of residents and the other involved actors, especially the private hired spatial planner from We love the city and the constructors. Bouwen met Mensen helped the people of Eikpunt to translate their thoughts and ideas into a coherent professional plan which won the trust of all the involved actors. The municipal planners realized at an early point the necessity for professional communication with the community members of Eikpunt. The municipality of Nijmegen subsidized this learning process for the community members of Eikpunt. *We love the city, Talis.*

“When people reduce their egos they can trust each other. I think professional communication coaching helped to build trust between the people. Also, when there are many layers of decision making people can trust each other” Resident of Eikpunt 3.

4.2.3. Focus and locus in interactions in Eikpunt

The community of Eikpunt felt connected by four pillars: sustainability, community making, multi-generation living, silence and reflection (Eikpunt, 2018). The four pillars have a primary role in shaping the focus of interaction within the community, (see annex 2 for more information).

“There are many concepts-pillars like these, especially in Nijmegen; but the concept of silence is only here. For me the concept of silence is a central thought” Resident of Eikpunt 1.

The concept of silence expressed the point of view for a quiet and tranquil environment. This concept influenced the decision making for the selection of land at the start and the articulation of space later on. The community members of Eikpunt were sharing same focus but they lacked of technical professional knowledge for translating this focus into a feasible spatial and building plan. For this reason the members of Eikpunt hired Bouwen met Mensen to help them develop their ideas in a clear plan (Eikpunt Group, 2011).

Bouwen met Mensen introduced Sociocracy to the community members of Eikpunt. Sociocracy is an innovative working method which allows for consensus in decision making. Bouwen met Mensen clarified and used the four main pillars of Eikpunt to develop a coherent plan with a clear focus on specific building issues such as the number of the houses, the spatial design of the area and the size of the private and public spaces. *Residents of Eikpunt 1,2,3 & 4, Bouwen met Mensen 1&2.*

“This concept is pretty famous in the Netherlands, it is based on the idea that everybody should agree when a decision is taken; not to have a problem. Sociocracy is based on listening each other, when you take decisions it is a really long process, but in the end it generates a lot of trust. Through this process all the involved people knew every detail about the project” Resident Eikpunt 4.

All three spatial planners acknowledged there was better communication between all the actors and especially with the community members after the involvement of the decision making advisory company. A lot of discussions and meetings were needed between all the involved actors, especially during the design phase. Bouwen met Mensen, Eikpunt, Talis, and the architect were in the center of these meetings. The outcome of these interactions generated the final plan of Eikpunt. E-mails, workshops, public presentations as well as in situ visits in the area proved to be necessary for the success of the project. The municipal spatial planners did not influence the focus of interactions in Eikpunt.

“With GEM we talked several times. We went around the area by biking and we were looking for an attractive place to realize our plan. That is how we came here; we want to be here near the river near the dike. So we already wanted to be here and just half a year later they started Plant je Vlag. So we fit in Plant je Vlag. This project made the land available to us for building; for Iewan as well as Eikpunt” Resident of Eikpunt 1.

4.2.4. Boundary spanning in Eikpunt

Key players for the case of Eikpunt were a starting group of people which used their experiences and networks to develop a vision for the community. However, the participation of Bouwen met Mensen was really important in bringing trust between the stakeholders. Bouwen met Mensen acted as a mediator between the residents and the other involved actors. It translated the building and construction jargon of professionals to a common language for the community members of Eikpunt.

The municipality and the city council of Nijmegen are considered innovators for the project of Eikpunt. They ensured provincial and municipal subsidies early at the start of the project, which allowed the feasibility of it *City Hall, We love the city, Municipality of Nijmegen*.

“The government gave us money for coaching in decision making. The professional communication coaching helped to build trust between the people” Resident of Eikpunt 3.

The municipality was an important actor, especially at the start. The municipal representatives and GEM Waalsprong had early talks with the starting group of Eikpunt and informed them about the potential availability of land in a quiet area of Vossenpels away from the urban noise. The residents of Eikpunt recognized that they were facilitated by local municipal authorities and the hired spatial planning development office We love the city for getting a location according to their standards, i.e. silence. *Resident of Eikpunt 1, 2, 3 & 4, and Civil servant 1, GEM Waalsprong 1.*

4.2.5. Adaptation-Autonomy in Eikpunt

The starting group of Eikpunt developed their project within the spatial plan of Plant je Vlag. The community group with the contribution of Bouwen met Mensen had the autonomy to receive many decisions, like the size and the number of houses, the building materials and the general articulation of their space. Following the guidance from Bouwen met Mensen the group of Eikpunt was able to develop its own habits in order to communicate and receive certain decisions. The community of Eikpunt had the autonomy to select the area during the early talks with the municipality (Eikpunt Group, 2011). Similar to the Iewan case, the group of Eikpunt selected its own architect; a decision which is taken by the group itself. *Bouwen met Mensen 1*

“Normally a housing association makes a scale model, a plan and then they look for people who are willing to live in this proposed plan. In contrast, Eikpunt started with the people. The people did their own plan, and then they looked for a housing association and together, commonly realized-implement the plan” Resident of Eikpunt 1.

Furthermore, during the construction phase the community members self-build part of the project. They self-build part of their houses due to cover part of the high construction cost. They adopted their daily lives and routines in a working schedule for finishing the last building details of their community. The members of their community enjoyed autonomy to think and propose everything they wanted (Eikpunt Group, 2011). However, issues like money and availability of time influenced the autonomy of the community. It had autonomy as long as there was the money and the time to its goals.

“So the people are doing things according to the time they have. Furthermore, people were free to do things as far as they can. Freedom is not a matter of engagement but availability of time and money. There are some issues which are considered important for basic living and other things which add in the quality of life, they usually cost a lot of money” Resident Eikpunt 3

“So through communication and modification of our ideas we were able to develop our community, we had a lot of space to act. Money is the most important thing, so in the financial context No” Resident Eikpunt 4.

The existing market system and the commercial building processes had a greater impact on the final autonomy of Eikpunt compared to the impact of the municipal spatial planners. The hired spatial planner bounded the autonomy of Eikpunt within the context of Plant je Vlag. Currently, the community members of Eikpunt managed their public space in a relative independent environment; as they had to comply with the municipal standards.

4.2.6. Imposing framework and monitoring in Eikpunt

Eikpunt developed within the strategic framework of Plant je Vlag. The residents found it difficult to adapt to the criteria and the standards of the planners. The flexibility of the planning environment created confusion among the community members. A lack of many rules meant a lack of guidance for the community members of Eikpunt. The discussions did not narrow down to certain topics and issues. Strong monitoring by the spatial planning development company *We love the city* and milestone checks by other involved actors were necessary for the success of the project. The planning ideas of the community members adapted to certain criteria and standards, the *Bouwbesluit*.

“Apart from the dynamics of Plant je Vlag, the government planners did not influence our designs. Eikpunt was developed within Plant je Vlag, so it exposed to this context” Resident Eikpunt 3/08/2018

“The bureau from Rotterdam did the framework and said, this is the best place you can fit in; because you want a certain type of houses and this type fits here” Resident Eikpunt 1.

The monitoring of the building process according to the *Bouwbesluit* regulations and standards brought tension in the relations between the Eikpunt community and the development company *We love the city*. The residents of Eikpunt had to adapt their architectural designs according to the national construction rules and standards.

For one of the private residents in Eikpunt the *Bouwbesluit* influenced the final design of the house and the landscape of the community. A small number of private owners in Eikpunt wanted to build their houses in the form of a traditional Yurt³. However, the building regulations were setting certain standards and criteria that did not allow the building of a traditional Yurt as a permanent residential house in the Netherlands. Issues like the size of the doors, the mandatory connection of a house with a toilet and the safe connection of it to the electricity network were factors that blocked the building of a traditional Yurt as a house, (see image 2). In the end, the expectations of a small group of residents adapt to the building standards. A more detailed passage can be found in Annex 3.

³ Yurt is a traditional dwelling which can be found in Central Asia.

“So the design of the buildings had to fit into the regulations. We did not like these regulations back then; it was not looking nice for us. So in that perspective government was strict, same with everybody” Resident of Eikpunt 1.

For the initiators of Plant je Vlag, the building regulations were limiting the imagination and the ideas of the communities but they were necessary for providing an architectural and planning coexistence. *Civil servant1, We love the city, City Hall, GEM Waalsprong*

The final spatial framework for the community of Eikpunt came in consultation between the architect and the community members of Eikpunt. The guidance by the advisory company Bouwen met Mensen was important during this process. The architect in consultation with We love the city arranged all the details for the articulation of the community buildings within the spatial context of Plant je vlag, as well as the parking areas, and the connection to the public streets. *Architect Eikpunt, We love the city, Bouwen met Mensen2.*



Image 6 A traditional Yurt in central Asia, the expectation of small number of residents .source google images



Image 7 A round house in the shape of Yurt in Eikpunt, the final house according to the building rules.

4.2.7. Framing and storytelling in Eikpunt

The strategy of storytelling was not used by the municipal spatial planners to frame the community development in Eikpunt. The community members of Eikpunt had their own ideas and did not need a story by others. The storytelling strategy was used as a mean by the advisory company Bouwen met Mensen to make the community members realize that housing and building developments in the Netherlands are subjected to certain standards and regulations. So storytelling and examples of other communities was used by Bouwen met Mensen as a way to present the building context of the Netherlands to the community members of Eikpunt, and set the community development on a certain track. The community members of Eikpunt bonded with the community members of Iewan as neighborhoods, as communities and as people who share their own story. Resident Eikpunt 1 & 3, WoningbouwVg.

4.2.8. Presence of supporting actions in Eikpunt

In the community of Eikpunt the municipal government had a supportive role. The municipal authorities and spatial planners facilitated the community members of Eikpunt for finding an available land according to their standards. The need of the community for a quiet place was respected by everyone. *We love the city, Civil servant*² *Eikpunt residents 1,2,3 & 4*. The municipality supported financially the project, by subsidizing the decision making process. The municipality of Nijmegen offered money to group members of Eikpunt for hiring the advisory community company Bouwen met Mensen, the involvement of this actor facilitated the decision making process and shortened the construction phase of the project *City Hall, We love the city*.

The architect of Eikpunt enjoyed the flexibility of the government regulations and translated the ideas of the community members into a feasible and realistic design. All the spatial planners supported the community development in Eikpunt, even if it took more time than other initiatives. All the spatial planners offered more of their time to the community members of Eikpunt to compare with Iewan case; because Eikpunt was a social-private housing community with a lot of members. This dual form of the community requested more involvement by the government compared to usual projects *Civil servant, We love the city*.

“So, the government was trying to fit all the ideas of the people in a spatial plan. I was part of this consolation team and I did the final presentation for the spatial articulation of Eikpunt”
Architect of Eikpunt

4.2.9. Formulating play rules in Eikpunt

The rules for Eikpunt were the same as for Plant je Vlag. The municipal government allowed the development of Eikpunt in a predefined context in which the community members found difficulties to be attached to at the start. Certain skills were needed, within the community, such as knowledge about investment calculations and building materials. These skills were not apparent in the community members of Eikpunt, so the community asked the contribution of an advisory actor from the market following the request of the government. Most of the technical responsibilities were assigned to the advisory company Bouwen met Mensen and the architect.

“The government did not involve in selecting actors or to influence the participation. Talis, had some objections with the construction company” Resident of Eikpunt 1.

The community members of Iewan requested a small local construction company to build their community. However, the housing association Talis insisted on the involvement of a larger construction company with which it had experience. So an actor from the market and not the government or private planners pressured for the participation of a certain construction company in the project. Talis was the main investor for the community development of Iewan, so it used this as a mean for designating a certain construction company.

4.2.10. Playing with fear by the planner in Eikpunt

The community group got scared in the early phase, by feeling the pressure of municipal and private spatial planners and other actors to deliver clear plans. Later on the community members realize that this pressure was necessary for the success of the project.

“The government has the means to create fear, but the thing is how it uses them. You can use these means in a positive way, for creating a pressure; every development project needs pressure in order to succeed. This could be seen as a positive related to fear” Resident Eikpunt 1.

Civil servants used the fear of failure towards the community members of Eikpunt in order to motivate them to act faster towards clear goals. The community members of Eikpunt felt fear by the municipal government after the completion of the construction phase when they wanted to manage their green public space. The government scared the community members by assigning legal responsibility in a hypothetical scenario of an accident in their public space. Based on this scenario the government requested from the community members of Eikpunt the management of the green public area in a certain way. The desire of the community members of Eikpunt was to create a fruit garden with protected varieties in their private and nearby public space. In the end the municipal government developed a fruit garden in the local area by itself excluding the participation of the communities; both Iewan and Eikpunt. The management of the green areas is done now by the communities.

4.3. A comparison of the two projects

In the following paragraphs the results of the two cases are compared. A comparison with the scientific literature will take place in the discussion chapter.

4.3.1. The two communities in the lens of self-organization

The community members were the innovators in triggering the community development in both projects. Based on the collected data the community members initiated the development of their communities by themselves. Representatives from each community had early talks with the municipal spatial planners to find available building land. The municipal planners recognized the interest of the two communities and other people in bottom-up development in Nijmegen and asked the contribution of a specialized private planner for getting things done.

The observation of the two case studies reveals similarities and differences on how trust developed within the two communities and the other actors. In both case studies the relations of trust developed gradually, but with one main difference. On the one hand the relations of trust developed faster in the community of Iewan as a result of the clear focus of the community members, the small number of community participants and the strong bonds within the group of initiators. On the other hand the relations of trust needed more time in the case of Eikpunt, and also the contribution of a professional advisory company, due to the lack of a clear action plan, the higher number of community members and the changing consistency of the community group.

The two communities showed differences in the way they gained focus to realize their goals. The community members of Iewan were more independent in organizing their relations with other actors but also their community plan. In addition, the clear goal to build a sustainable community and the formation of the community exclusively for social housing facilitated and accelerated the development. The community members of Eikpunt needed the support of an advisory company for setting their project on track. The formation of the community as a mix of social and private houses created a multidimensional environment between the community members to exchange ideas. In this environment the prioritization of actions was difficult.

The municipal and political authorities of Nijmegen were the key players that showed commitment to the realization of the community projects. The municipality of Nijmegen pressured and ensured the economic feasibility of the projects by granting a subsidy of 800.000€.

Within this dynamic context of interactions the role of the private spatial planner was mainly to facilitate the process of self-organization in both communities. The municipal spatial planners and civil servants advised the communities to expand their networks. The spatial planners used certain protocols and contracts in order to ensure the commitment of all the involved actors into the final plans. Both communities had autonomy in developing their own spatial plans, but in different measures. It can be said, by taking into account the existing results, that the community of Iewan had more independence in decision making compared to Eikpunt. The results at this point are ambiguous.

According to one point of view the community members of Iewan had the capacity to meet and arrange many issues with the spatial planners, architects, engineers and other professionals, whereas the community members of Eikpunt needed the assistance of a professional company. According to another point of view the professional company may have offered more autonomy to the community members of Eikpunt, as it was more experienced in the building and housing sector of the Netherlands

compared to the younger group of community members of Iewan. In any case the autonomy in community-led planning in these two case studies was proportional to the availability of time and money of their community members. The two communities had the capacity to realize their autonomy and independence in decision making in the given context of Plant je Vlag. From another point of view certain tested bureaucratic procedures between government and housing associations paved the road for development and ensured the feasibility of the two projects. Tested bureaucratic procedures, such as protocols, contracts, and working conditions fixed for the community-led planning were based on past experiences of the authorities with the housing associations.

Private and municipal spatial planners did not influence the form of the organization in the two communities, and they did not interfere directly in the formation of the final community plan. Indirectly the community plans had to comply with the building regulations and Wabo, but these norms were already known to the community members.

4.3.2. The two communities in the lens of meta-governance

In the dynamic context of Plant je Vlag the private commissioning did not mean less municipal government. The municipal government needed to get involved more than usual in housing projects to solve upcoming issues or clarify others. There were many things that needed to be regulated during this flexible planning process. The municipality of Nijmegen has the legal responsibility for the area in Vossenpels and for the actions of the communities within the public space.

The results show that framework and monitoring was a strategy that was used by private and spatial planners to bound the community-led planning. Both communities were developed under the same spatial framework i.e. Plant je Vlag, but they followed different ways to realize their projects. The community members followed a different way of realizing their projects as they had different backgrounds, goals and priorities. In the case of Iewan the clear focus of the community members allowed the creation of a clear planning proposal. The clear proposal did not need strict monitoring. In contrast in the case of Eikpunt the ideas were not clear and well defined. Hence the monitoring process was more intense as the municipal and the hired spatial planners had to ensure the proper and safe development of the community. The municipal spatial planners needed to be certain about the financial feasibility of Eikpunt and the private spatial planner about the proper implementation of it. Framework and monitoring was used as a strategy by the advisory company Bouwen met Mensen to facilitate the decision making process within the group of Eikpunt. The long term development of Eikpunt and the mix of social and private housing resulted in more monitoring by the spatial planners and housing associations, compared to Iewan. The municipal spatial planners had a stronger involvement in the start of the community development process. During the community design and implementation phase the spatial planning articulation of the area was bounded by the private spatial planner from We love the city. The general role of the municipal spatial planners was to observe and propose small changes to several upcoming issues in order to implement a flexible urban development that satisfied everyone and was not against public interests.

The results show that the strategy of story-telling was not used by the spatial planners as a mean to control community led-planning. The communities had their own stories, which the government used to advertise Plant je Vlag. The community stories allowed the creation of a general vision which was looking attractive and feasible in the eyes of the government and market. Despite the fact that storytelling was not used by the municipal and private spatial planners, storytelling was used by the housing advisory company as a mean to explain the housing and construction sector to the community

members of Eikpunt. This situation leads to the observation that strategies that were used to be means of control for the government became working methods for communities and the market.

Presences of supporting actions were apparent by the municipality and the spatial planners. According to the research analysis on the two case studies, the strategic presence of supporting actions was not used as mean to manipulate community-led planning by the spatial planners and the government. The municipality provided the land to both communities at a low price, so it would be feasible to implement them. In addition, for both community projects the Dutch government provided a subsidy of 800.000 euros, of which 500.000 € came from the Province of Gelderland and the remaining 300.000 € from the municipality of Nijmegen. The municipality supported these community projects financially by making available funds from ISV budget (Projectgroep, 2016). Furthermore the spatial planners, in communication with the municipal authorities, facilitated the development of communities on a range of issues. These issues were different for each community. So in Iewan the private spatial planner facilitated the development of an alternative sanitation system and less parking spaces. In Eikpunt a subsidy was given for hire an advisory company by the municipal authorities. Interesting to observe is that the two communities, although they developed in the same spatial framework, received support from different spatial planners. Iewan was supported more by the private spatial planner whereas Eikpunt was supported more by the municipal spatial planners.

Formulating play rules was not a popular strategy for the government and spatial planners. The play rules were determined more by the society and the market than by the government. The two communities developed within a dialectic and flexible spatial framework. There were no limitations for the participation into the community projects by the government. In addition, there was no request for certain skills. There were no designated positions; the participation was open to everyone. The only request of the government was the existence of permanent representatives from the communities in their meetings for better communication; the communities were free to select their representatives. The communities were developed step by step based on the increasing knowledge of their members.

The fear of failure was a strategy that was used by municipal and private spatial planners as well as by the government to control the desires of the community members. The results showed that both communities were subjected to fear, especially concerning the management of the green public space. This was a situation which created tension between government and community members. Outside this event, the expression of fear by planners was not perceived in a negative way by the residents of Eikpunt; exactly the opposite.

Expressing fear of failure was an alarm bell to the community members of Eikpunt that the long time decision making processes cost money; this cost was against the building investment of Eikpunt, as it increased the final cost. Playing with fear was a strategy that was not used during the designing and building phase by the spatial planners. In the case of Eikpunt the spatial planners used the fear of failure to bring awareness to the community members of Eikpunt that they could not spend their time aimlessly. Fear of failure was considered as an indirect way to motivate the communities even more to achieve their goal and not lose their orientation. Both communities did not consider that the government used any other form of fear to control the community-led planning process during the design and building phases.

However, the government used fear of punishment in the form of a story – a hypothetical scenario to pressure the communities into a certain way of management of the green public space. At the start of Plant je Vlag the prospect for the management of green public space by the residents and community members was proposed by the municipal planners; but there was no institutional setting by the private

spatial planner. The lack of a clear institutional setting for the management of public green spaces triggered tensions between the municipality and the community members. The community members of Iewan and Eikpunt wanted to manage the public area by themselves in cooperation with the nearby private houses. For this reason after the end of the building phase, they united and asked for permission and the possibility to get a grant for the management of the nearby public green space. The effort of community members to manage the public green space by themselves created a conflict with the municipality. The municipality wanted to develop the public green space in the area in a way that would corresponded to the needs of the public environment. Despite this fact, the communities continued to pressure the municipality for the management of the green public space and the integration of it with the surrounding environment. The communities wanted to create a food forest and to manage it by applying permaculture principles. In addition to the tension between communities and the municipality there were also tensions between the communities and the local residents of the area (former glass house owners). The reason of this was the different perspective on the management of the green public space. The permaculture principles were in contrast with the background of the locals. After a time consuming process and a lot of discussions an agreement was reached. The green space is managed now by the communities and three nearby private houses by taking grants from the municipality; *“in a way that all the residents are ok with it.” Resident Iewan1 & 3*. Interesting to note is that the lack of a clear institutional framework for the management of the green public space was responsible for the tensions between the communities and the municipality.

For the municipal and hired spatial planners the strategies of meta-governance were a useful means for setting the projects on a planning and architectural track. The building regulations were limiting the imagination and the ideas of the communities but they were necessary for providing an architectural and planning coexistence. *City hall, We love the city, Civil servant1 GEM Waalsprong*. In the start the private spatial planner, in communication with the municipality, left open a lot of prospects for the management of the green public space, in order to facilitate the realization of a feasible plan. Later the government actors had to come up with dramatic changes, because they had not taken into account so much liberty.

5. Discussion

In this chapter the results of chapter 4, as they were structured within the given theoretical framework, are used to answer the sub-research questions. In the following paragraphs the three research sub-questions, are answered respectively. The final paragraph presents a reflection of the strengths and weaknesses of this research, as well as recommendations for future research. Overall this chapter links the main findings with the relevant scientific literature in an effort to expand the significance of the results beyond the case studies.

5.1. The role of municipal spatial planners in triggering community-led planning

In this research the planning process was sparked by small groups of community members, which they organize themselves. So the government and the municipal spatial planners did not trigger any process for community development. They were receptive to the ideas of the communities and facilitated the development some years after. In a similar line Dam (2016) mentions in her research that housing communities such as *The Golfresidentie in Dronten*, and in a wider spectrum any citizen movement related to land acquisition and land use management are triggered out of pure interest and social needs of people. In another research by Van Meerkerk *et al.* (2013) in the United Kingdom local actors, such as shop keepers and local residents, came together to restore the reputation of the area after the occurring of a criminal event. In another case from United Kingdom the closing of a military school *Caterham Barracks* triggered the reaction of local community, which became involved in long-term discussions with municipal planners in order to avoid the demolishment of the facilities and renovate them for communal use (Van Meerkerk *et al.*, 2013; Edelenbos *et al.*, 2018).

In this research the municipal spatial planners recognized the interest of people for community building and cohousing. Hence, they used the two projects of Iewan and Eikpunt as main promoters for initiating Plant je Vlag. In the same line the case studies mentioned above from the literature needed the cooperation with the local authorities in order to succeed or maintained.

In contrast to the brief discourse above other researches study the early participation of local governments and spatial planners in community-led actions. Hasselaar (2011) mentions that governments all over Europe have still a dominant role in community-led planning. They set the boundaries and the institutional settings to trigger community developments. Taken into account his research it becomes apparent that community-led planning became possible during the last 20 years across Europe; before it was almost impossible to build a private communal house. More specifically in Germany, a country with a strong tradition in community planning, reforms to facilitate cohousing took place just in 2006, in France cooperative ownership was forbidden by law in 1971, it only became possible again in 2003, whereas in Belgium, a country experienced with organic development strategies the government strongly encouraged community-led planning from 2009 (Hasselaar, 2011). So when the form of communal housing and according life styles are not on the agenda of the governments the planning of a communal way of living cannot have a different fate.

The national and social political context seems to be really important for triggering community-led planning. For example in the strong statehood of China, the government retains still a dominant role in shaping the housing market, the development of a communal way of living is limited to cooperation between private developers, local governments and councils (Zhang *et al.*, 2015). So the national and socio-political background of each country influences the role of the planner as initiator or as facilitator in the planning process. For Börzel and Risse (2010) the involvement of the government, either directly or in the background, is necessary for creating a developmental environment in which many actors can be involved. Even in a very particular cross-border situation in which community

members of the *Grensschap* group took actions to plan and manage their environment for their own sake, due to the indifference from the local municipalities of Maastricht (Netherlands) and Riemst (Belgium), a higher government structure i.e. European Union stepped in and hooked at the same time the municipal governments (Buizer & Turnhout, 2011).

The role of the spatial planner is not clear on how s/he can trigger a community planning process out of the strict standards of guidelines and top-down proposals. In a self-organized community-led process the spatial planning design comes from outside-in and not from inside out. Thus, the preparation efforts of the communities to conceive an economic feasible and a technical accurate architectural and spatial plan affects the positive response of the government planners. In any case municipal planners are involved with community-led initiatives either as initiators or facilitators as space tends to belong to the government.

What probably is a unique characteristic of this research is that the municipality of Nijmegen hired a private company to design and communicate with the community members for the articulation of the final spatial design. This action to hire a private company proves that the municipality of Nijmegen was unexperienced with bottom-up, community-led, self-organized development projects from scratch. It seems that we are far from an era in which community-led initiatives would bypass the role of the government planner.

5.2. The relationship and interaction between spatial planners and other actors in the community-led process

The relationships between the spatial planners and the other actor in both cases developed gradually, in regard to the focus for the realization of the communities. Housing associations, advisory community companies and community members interacted between them and with the spatial planners in order to realize a commonly accepted spatial plan. Technical issues such as the wider structure of the space around the communities were discussed between the spatial planners and the architects of each community. Another issue that determined the relationships between the spatial planners and community members is the socio-cultural background of each community and the bond that developed with other actors (Boonstra, 2015; Dam, 2016; Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). In the context of Dutch spatial planning these are the inequalities that occur between and within communities; not all citizens have the capabilities or feel the urge to develop initiatives (Meijer & van der Krabben, 2018).

In this research the community of Iewan consisted of young people with a clear focus on realizing a sustainable project, and a relatively small number of members that allowed for a more direct interaction with the spatial planners. In contrast, the community of Eikpunt, who had more members with more sophisticated and unusual ideas, left a lot of technical issues to the interactions between the advisory community company, the housing associations and the spatial planners. So it can be concluded that the background of community members, the number of the involved actors as well as their availability of time influenced the pace of interactions and the density of relationships with the spatial planners.

In both cases the involvement of the government was necessary as the development of the communities was not subjected to a certain top-down design. More autonomy in spatial planning did not mean less government. The government and their spatial planners are called to operate in a complex environment with many actors. Complex environments with many actors bring to the fore many issues that need to be clarified, as every actor may have a different view. The simplicity of top-

down strategic planning contrasts with the complexity of bottom-up, community-led initiatives (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). This conclusion leads to the observation of a spatial planning *Paradox*.

Many authors such as Rhodes (1996); Boonstra and Boelens (2011); Nederhand *et al.* (2016) argue that new forms of spatial planning and governance arrangements for community initiatives are envisioned within gray regulatory areas that need to be clarified by the government. So the government may have the will to facilitate a community development but needs the capacity of other actors to propose alternatives that clarify gray regulatory areas. Hence, the interactions of ideas between government and other actors request more involvement of spatial planners. Thus, community-led planning is not taking place in a vacuum; the development of successful community projects needs more involvement by the side of the government than the traditional large scale, top-down, old-school plans. In this research the municipal spatial planners invested more time than usual for the development of the housing projects, as well as the community members themselves. Time was needed for all the actors in order to adapt to their roles and responsibilities. Hence, the communities that show more persistence in time are those that finally made it till the end. This can be considered as a very arbitrary conclusion, although the scientific literature tends to focus on implemented and successful community projects and their problems and it does not focus on community projects that never succeed. The case of Eikpunt in this research is an example of community-led planning that was at the edge of failure, but the persistence of the community members and the interest of the municipal spatial planners for a long period resulted in the development of the community. Van Buuren and Loorbach (2009) mention that the rules of the game in community-led initiatives and in dynamic forms of governance evolve over time.

More freedom and flexibility in spatial planning does not mean less involvement of the municipal government. A flexible spatial plan requires professional spatial planners who have a good knowledge of the public sector. Spatial planners, who have experience in the public field as well as patience to work in a multi-stakeholder environment are those who can contribute and create fruitful prospects for bottom-up and community-led planning developments in their municipalities (Boonstra, 2015). A community plan requires more interaction by the public government as it does not subjected fully to a central design and regulations. Hence, many topics emerge on the surface that needs to be addressed carefully by the spatial planners (Zhang *et al.*, 2015).

Based on the study of Hasselaar (2011) a main difference that can be observed with older co-housing projects in Netherlands such as *Waterspin* in The Hague is that in this research the community members of Iewan had more autonomy in realizing the architecture of their communities. This autonomy is the outcome of the openness of the government to support bottom-up development but also the capacity of private actors to offer alternatives.

In this research the interactions between the spatial planners and the other actors developed in a relatively autonomous environment. Each actor had the autonomy to adapt to a dynamic plan. Metaphorically it can be said that the community plan was subjected to a fermentation procedure, in which each actor contributed to the structure of it. There was not a preselected goal, neither a predefined future state that needed to be achieved (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). The community spatial plan was subjected to a constant change –a continuous procedure of becoming until it got the final form. During that process of becoming the municipal spatial planners did not interfere. They let the relations between the involved actors to mature on their own. In contrast, the private spatial planner had an active role.

Apparently, the role of the spatial planner is to end-up with a final spatial plan. Despite this fact, the spatial plan is not just an aggregation of different ideas in one goal or in a final blueprint, rather it is a synthesis of different interests and ideas that come together in harmony with the landscape (Boonstra, 2015). Furthermore, the ideas of the involved actors are bonded together to create an environment suitable for their interests. Within this relation and interaction context between the involved actors, the role of the spatial planner is to process the conjectures of the involved actors into a feasible spatial plan. It seems that in community-led planning there is transitional period in which the spatial design is materialized. So, at the start the design takes the form of a hypothetical spatial plan, to be materialized later on with the contribution of a professional spatial planner into the final plan. Hence, the role of the municipal spatial planner is not the one of the strict, top-down designer, but it comes closer to a composer designer. A composer spatial planner needs be a skillful professional who can speak and translate jargon to professionals and slang to people. In a similar way Boonstra (2015) used the term navigator to describe the role of the spatial planner in community-led initiatives.

Independence from municipal services means more responsibility to citizens. The communities develop relations of trust with other actors from the market. The responsibility for the public space is given by the municipality to the communities. The role of the spatial planner is to follow the background of these relations and to oversee their results (Boonstra, 2015).

5.3. Meta-governance strategies are taken in by municipal spatial planners.

The five meta-governance strategies can be used by spatial planners as means for exerting control over community led initiatives (Nederhand *et al.*, 2016). In this research the role of the spatial planner as representatives of the government that exert control over community-led planning is based on four meta-governance strategies i.e. framework and monitoring, presence of supporting actions, formulating play rules and fear. Framing and storytelling was a strategy that was not used by spatial planners to influence the development of the communities, although it was shown to be used by other actors such as architects, advisory companies, and community members for sharing their ideas and views between them.

The two community projects fitted into the municipal goals. They were alternative ways of development, that gained more interest of the municipality after the financial crisis limited the possibilities for large scale housing projects, while there was still a need for new social houses in the city of Nijmegen. The role of the planners was to create a clear spatial framework within which they could developed the two communities. For this reason the municipal spatial planners from the private and public sector use the framework and monitoring strategy as a way to set clear guidelines to the community members and the relevant involved actors. Frameworking and monitoring is used as a meta-governance strategy in order to set the margins for the development of the communities. In this research frameworking and monitoring was used to create interdependency between the actions of the community members and the intentions of the local government. A set of basic regulations was mandatory in order to set the development on a certain track and facilitate (speed-up) the realization of the communities. In the same line with the observation above but in a different spatial context as their research was situated in China, Zhang *et al.* (2015, p. 163) claims that

“urban development is the result of a set of institutional rules and autonomous behaviors”.

An institutional arrangement is needed in order the development of the communities to be feasible. Similar institutional arrangements are observed in the case study of cohousing in Denmark by Boonstra and Boelens (2011). The spatial planners need to provide a basic regulatory framework in which the local entrepreneurs, real estate developers, housing constructors and house buyers would feel safe for their actions and sure for the payoff (Zhang *et al.*, 2015). Frameworking and monitoring is a necessary strategy taken by spatial planners to ensure the proper development of a project. It makes the stakeholders aware of the basic rules.

The other strategy that was used in in the two research cases by the spatial planners was the presence of supporting actions. This strategy was used by spatial planners to facilitate the development of the two communities. Spatial planners shared their knowledge and expertise with the stakeholders to facilitate the community development. The municipal spatial planners influenced the form of the community planning by defining the articulation of the communal space into the environment. The spatial planners assured the municipal and provincial authorities for the proper development of the project. In this research the municipal spatial planners as government representatives did not manipulate the organization of the project; they facilitate it; in contrast with the examples that were presented at the start.

Formulating play rules was a strategy that was used in combination with fear. The lack of a clear plan for the management of green spaces created tension between community members and the municipal government. Municipal civil servants used the play rules strategy in combination with fear. According to Nederhand *et al.* (2016) the meta-governance strategies can be combined for achieving their goal.

Playing with fear was a strategy that was used by spatial planners who represented municipal authorities. The fear was used in the form of warnings about liability in the case of accidents in green public space, in both communities. The municipality used fear to delay and change the ideas of the community members about the management of the public space. This type of fear is different from the types of fear described by Nederhand *et al.* (2016). It was a way of frightening community members by assigning responsibility to them in a hypothetical scenario of an accident. Playing with fear is a strategy that acquires a bad connotation. However, in this research it was observed that playing with fear was a strategy that motivated the community members even more to accomplish their projects.

The use of meta-governances strategies by other actors, such as market and community members proves that the cases of Iewan and Eikpunt developed in a flexible and dynamic environment. The community members used storytelling to gain the trust of all the other stakeholders. In addition, actors such as housing associations and advisory companies used designated play rules for developing the communities. Certain verified and tested procedures by housing associations and government in the past were applied to ensure a successful and a safe spatial environment.

New public management is a form of governance in which managerialism tactics from the private sector are introduced to the public sector. In this flexible and dynamic context the form of governance in the community-led planning could be described as a new public management (Rhodes, 1996). This claim can be supported by taking into account that the municipality of Nijmegen hired a private developmental company for the development of the spatial plan.

5.4. Reflections on the theoretical and methodological approach of this research

The research design of this master thesis created a fruitful ground to analyze the role of the spatial planner in community-led planning. The theoretical framework corresponded to the need to recognize the relevant actors, the bonds between them and the relations with the government; all of them are needed for capturing the full image of a dynamic planning process and to reveal the role of the spatial planner in community-led planning (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Dam, 2016)

The underlying theoretical framework responded to the call by Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu (2016) to further explore the new relations of trust and the form of the organization between the involved actors, as well as the role of spatial planners and the way of decision making in the new spatial planning context of the Netherlands. The operationalization of the existing theoretical framework offers an insightful view on the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning.

The research gives insights for the role of the spatial planners in the context of the new Dutch Environmental Act. The new Environmental Act calls for research and new insights around different pilot projects in order to enrich its content with clear guidelines. This research studied the community-led planning in the pilot project of Plant je Vlag to contribute to the context of the new Environmental Act. The collected experiences from the pilot community-led initiatives in the Netherlands would contribute in the context of the new Environmental Act.

This research complies with the conclusions of Nederhand *et al.* (2016), who claims that self-organization and meta-governance are two concepts related to each other in a process of evolving interaction. So, the community led planning process does not take place in a vacuum (Börzel & Risse, 2010). The government retains still an important role in land use planning of the Netherlands as the municipality was the main land seller of the area. Furthermore, the municipal and provisional government had the capacity to control the community development by subsidizing it or not.

The results of this master thesis can be compared with relevant scientific literature (Van Buuren & Loorbach, 2009; Boelens, 2011; Hasselaar, 2011; Boonstra, 2015; Niedersachsen *et al.*, 2015; Zhang *et al.*, 2015; Dam, 2016) and other case studies all over the world, in an effort to offer a generalized idea about the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning. It was observed that the relevant literature keeps a distance from proposing certain guidelines for the role of the spatial planner. This thesis tried to break this norm by focusing on the role of spatial planners in two case studies.

The results cannot be generalized in a global context, as the national institutional background of each country affects the role of spatial planners. However, the results presented a rich and full understanding of the community-led planning projects in the municipality of Nijmegen. In the context of the Netherlands the role of spatial planners in community-led planning is still regulated within pilot projects (Van Buuren & Loorbach, 2009). Each pilot project is developed in certain local conditions and the role of municipal spatial planners adapts to these local factors. Nederhand *et al.* (2016), by seeing community initiatives, in the context of governance wonder *how the local context matters for community initiatives?*

Overall, what starts to become apparent, is that the local context matters in the Netherlands for the development of community initiatives and truly bottom-up actions. This can be proved by comparing the results of this research with other scientific works such as those of Boonstra (2015); Dam (2016); Nederhand *et al.* (2016). In all these works it is apparent that local governments correspond to the intentions of citizens by taking seriously into account the local context i.e. social, economic and spatial. Narrowing down this observation and bringing it into the context of spatial planning and the objective of this research, it can be mentioned that community led and citizen initiatives tend to

develop more independently and flexible in situations where the land use is not restricted by other constructions. In this research the municipality of Nijmegen ensured the availability of land. The absence of many houses in the area, and the small amount of existing infrastructure gave the chance for flexibility in community-led planning. In other cases studies such as Fort Pannerden (Dam, 2016), and the case of Almere Oosterwold (Boonstra, 2015), the municipalities acted in different ways, considering the local context. In the first case there was a monument that needed to be protected whereas in the case of Almere the available land offers a lot of opportunities for community development. Furthermore, the particularity of this research is that it used two case studies which are exposed to the same governmental and institutional context. Even though, the two communities have extremely similar backgrounds the community planning was developed in each case following a different trajectory. This observation leads to the conclusion that the role of the municipal spatial planner in community-led planning should be attached to the needs, the history, the culture and the local environment. The use of the local background and argumentation can be a means to control the community-led planning processes.

This research tried to break down the role of the current municipal spatial planner by using the theoretical elements of self-organization and meta-governance. In this effort, this research looked for explorative results out of the dualistic context government – people i.e. residents. It looked into the perceptions and opinions of other involved actors, such as architects, housing associations, advisory companies and mediators. Out of their sayings the research leads to a general conclusion, that requires further research. Is community-led planning limited only by the role of the municipal spatial planner? In the cases of Iewan and Eikpunt the role of spatial planners was not the only limitation for the development and management of the communities. A set of market structures and mechanisms, which are tested by the experience of the government narrowed, down the community-led planning choices. In these two cases the community-led planning was more influenced by the availability of market choices than by the government. The community-led planning had to reconcile with the availability of financial means. Future research should keep looking on the way communities developed and achieve their goals. More attention should be given to the techniques, the actions and the practices that are chosen by spatial planners in community-led initiatives, not only in the spatial, social and environmental particularities of case studies.

6. Conclusion

Subsequent to the discussion section, the master thesis is completed here. In this chapter the most important findings of the research are summarized. The goal is to briefly define the role of the municipal spatial planner, and to give general recommendations to municipalities for community development.

The planner could trigger or facilitate the community-led planning. In any case they should show a receptive behavior towards community projects, and try to recognize from the start the feasibility of a community project. Following the recommendations of Boonstra (2015) municipal spatial planners should facilitate the networking of community members or any other community formation from the early start, if possible. The available land for realizing a community is not managed solely by the spatial planners but also by the municipal government, and the investment intentions of the market. In this dynamic context of constant change the municipal spatial planner should step in and facilitate networking. It is expected that the involved actors by themselves would create a feasible idea based on their pure interest. If there is no pure interest, volunteerism or bonds with the place community-led initiatives, are not truly bottom-up (Dam, 2016). The municipal spatial planners should wait in order to realize which intentions are mature enough and show a commitment. The municipal spatial planners should be able to realize and test the abilities of different actors. The municipal spatial planner should use the knowledge and the life experience of community members and other actors to create spaces that correspond to the daily needs of the users. The municipal spatial planner must be sure that the community planning will not be developed to the detriment of the public life and space. The role of the spatial planner is to develop a planning by promoting networking and cooperation between all stakeholders (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011).

Relations of trust and the expectation of all stakeholders for success create land use plans that tend to serve everyone. The role of the spatial planner is to compose the interests and expectations of everyone in a bottom-up master plan which gives freedom to different actors to self-organize. The municipal spatial planner must intersect information to understand the intentions, honesty and readiness of each community. In the end planners should check the feasibility of an initiative with similar cases all over the world in order to avoid common pitfalls.

The following paragraph presents some recommendations to municipalities, who are willing to develop community planning projects. The municipalities should be in contact with their citizens in order to be aware of their needs and wishes. The creation of an interactive web environment, or a platform, could allow citizens or stakeholders to reflect on their ideas between them. In the start of a community initiative the municipalities should provide clear guidelines. It is better for the government to set limitations at the start than during or at the end of the project. Setting clear guide lines at the start may be a chance for innovation, as the stakeholders will look for possible ways to overcome limitations. Facilitation of communication and networking between the stakeholders are good tactics for triggering community projects in Dutch municipalities.

7. References

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8. Annex

8.1. Interview protocol

Interviewer: Georgios Kontothanasis

Contact details

Email: georgios.kontothanasis@gmail.com

Phone: 0645766377

No. of interviews	Date	Case study	Name	Contact details	Type of interviewee i.e. <i>spatial planner, community member, third party</i>

...

Introduction (stated by the interviewer before conducting the interview)

Dear *spatial planner/resident or third party* of *Centraal Wonen het Punt/ Eco Wonen in Nijmegen Noord*

My name is Georgios Kontothanasis and I am writing my thesis in Wageningen University, in urban environmental master program. The goal of my thesis is to explore the changing role of spatial planners in community-led planning. Community-led planning is seen as a dynamic form of planning which challenges the central role of the spatial planner. *Your/This* case is interested to be studied as it presents strong evidence of community-planning, led by self-organization. Consequently it can provide valuable data for the articulation of space and role of the spatial planners.

I contact you to provide me with information for the way you organize the planning process and the relations that you developed with the other actors (spatial planners, residents, third parties). Your answers in the following questions are used only as part of my study. It is a semi-structured interview and you are called to reflect in two thematic topics of 5 questions each. The first topic has questions about the form of the organization in your community, whereas the second topic focuses on the role of government and its representatives like *you/spatial planners*. So with your permission I would like to record our discussion.

Questions (asked by the interviewer)

#	Translated into everyday language
0	Can you tell me something for your background and your involvement in the project?
1	Who took the initiative for this project? How did it begin? What were the motives the concerns or the reasons of people and other actors that got involved in this project? What was the role of the government and the spatial planner?
2	What was it that made you trust each other? Which values, actions, views and meanings bond the relations between you and other actors? Did all the involved actors trust each other and how this trust influences the role of the government (spatial planner)?
3	How do you focus on specific goals - How the different knowledge ideas, working methods, information they converged to the same goal? Where the interaction of different ideas takes place? - What means you use to communicate them?
4	Are there people or actors that had/have key roles in shaping the spatial plan of your/this community? What was the role of the spatial planner?
5	Did you have freedom of speech (expression), autonomy in shaping the spatial plan of your/this community? Do you consider that all the involved actors have this freedom of speech?

6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who came up with the spatial framework for your community? (<i>for communities and third parties</i>) • What was the role of spatial planner (government) in framing and monitoring the spatial articulation of the community? (<i>for spatial planners</i>)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the spatial planners (government) use certain stories to expose their ambitions and concerns about your residential project? (<i>for communities and third parties</i>) • How do you make your views known to the other actors? (spatial planners) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you pass your message to the society?
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the local authorities facilitate or frustrate the organization in community-led planning and if, in what way? (<i>for communities and third parties</i>) • Did/do the spatial planners influence the form of organization in community-led planning by exerting control to other resources? (spatial planners)
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is/was defined the participation of the involved actors? Who can participate? (<i>for communities and third parties</i>) • Are/Were you able to influence the participation of actors in community-led planning and especially during decision making process? For what reasons would/did you do that? (<i>for spatial planner</i>)
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you scare at any point about the project, that something can go wrong? (<i>for communities and third parties</i>) • How do you think the other actors perceive your role? (<i>for spatial planners</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you believe that you have the means to create fear, for leading the decision making to a certain conclusion?
11	Is there any topic that we did not discuss but which you consider to be important for my research? Or do you have any additions or remarks?

Closing (stated by the interviewer after conducting a semi-structured interview)

All the questions have been answered and I am going to end the recording procedure. Above all, I would like to thank you for your consideration to participate in this interview. Would you like to send you back the transcribed interview to check the correctness of it? Moreover, are you interested in the results of this thesis?

This interview is gone used only for the needs of this research.

Sign here if you agree with the terms of this interview.

8.2. Construction details

Foundation Costs	4.614.382€		
Contract price Vastbouw	2.992.695€		
Constructed wetland and PV panels	95.000 €		
Grants	by		
the municipality	112.500€		
Province	187.500€		
Type of residence	Rent price	m ²	Rooms (24) and people
Studio	475	49	10 of this type 1 person apartment
Apartment	644	82	6 of this type 2 persons apartment
Family house	681	99	3 of this type
Group home	1.652	205	3 of this type 13 rooms in total common space
Communal area		440	De kleine Wiel the central building and The Voko organic shop.

Number	Type	Floor surface per house	Floor surface in total	Estimated ground area
8	One-person apartments	65	520	640
1	Shared space at 1 pers apartments	65	65	80
12	One- to two-person apartments	85	960	960
20	Single family home	95	1900	2600
10	Private houses	120	1200	2250
50	Houses in total			
Subtotal social rent			3445	4280
Total floor area			4645	6530
Common facilities				
1	Steam room with kitchenette (also for yoga, sacred dance, etc., for rent for people outside)	40	40	
1	Activity room with kitchen	50	50	
5	Shared guest rooms (possibly rental / B & B / Friends on the Bike)	12	60	
2	Bathrooms in these guest	8	16	

	rooms for general use			
1	Sauna room with conservatory / tea room with view on garden and 2 baths and a plunge pool	40	40	
1	Creative space (open to people outside the community for a fee)	25	25	
1	Workspace (with tools etc., open to people from outside for a fee)	25	25	
1	Library / info center / office	44	44	
	Voko	25	25	
	Shared spaces (2 to 3 floors) Subtotal 325		325	On ground dwellings
3	Work spaces (office, practice room)	20	60	
1	Heemhuis/BSO	80	80	80
1	Space entrepreneurs		140	140
		Total GBO/ ground surface	5045	6670

8.3. Annex 2

Sustainability, describes the ideas for the architecture of the buildings and the spatial design of the neighborhood. The residential buildings in Eikpunt are designed in a way to make the optimal use of space related to the energy consumption and the indoor environment. The private gardens are integrated with the public environment and the green of the area is managed commonly with Permaculture principles.

Gemeenschapsvorming-Community making: It resembled performance of different community activities such as cooking, eating, gardening, relaxing, playing together, making music, dancing, painting, parties and celebrations. In addition, residents with experience in the care sector they can show interest and solidarity for babysitting or provide help to disabled and elderly people with shopping and cleaning. Community making expresses a self-management spirit as a working method for maintaining infrastructures and providing basic services such as cleaning common spaces and the nearby public environment or changing a broken lamp. The residents are fully responsible for their community.

Multi-generation living: It expresses the focus of the community to have members of all ages. This multi-generation focus allows the community to be self-managed in a big extent as the responsibilities of the members are spread among them. Solidarity, an elder neighbor can care for the young children of a single parent family; in turn the parent can facilitate the life of the neighbor by doing the groceries for him/her. Multi-generation living promotes social cohesion inside the community and robust the bonds between its members. This focus allows for a decision making process which represents all the age groups. Thus the community is not developed based on age stereotypes and is open to all age groups.

Silence and reflection: There is not any religious status behind the concept of silence; the members of the community use silence in a trans-confessional way. Silence is a working method for decision making in the community of Eikpunt. Every meeting starts with silence, a moment of self-reflection for every participant, then a sub-round of statements about how everyone is involved in the meeting. The discussion continues with the use of talking sticks, the final decision is commonly accepted. In moments of tension, a coordinator rings a Tibetan bowl; this action signs a moment of silence for everyone in the meeting, after that the discussion continues.

“This view, the view for silence is part of success for this project and still is. The concept of silence is something that makes this community different; the people who live here they know it” Resident Eikpunt 4.

8.4. Annex 3

This is my house, it is a Yurt, or it looks like, as I used different materials for my walls, I used clay. I wanted to live in this place, and I spend some time to think about the type of a house that would fit into my lifestyle. My house is like a Yurt, but a bit different, my kitchen is outside the main ring. It is like two rings, in the internal one is the living room and in the external one is the kitchen, the access to the garden and the toilet. It looks like the shell of a slug. One of the problems that I had when I was building my house was that the front door must be according to the regulations 2m and 30cm high. Although, the design for my front Yurt was 1m and 60 cm high. So I have to adjust to this regulation. The result was that the whole structure became taller. I did not want that, I did not want to live in a tower, I did not like it. So, I said to the architect to build in two layers, one to be higher and the other part to be lower. The architect ends up with this slug design for my house. It was the same architect who did everything here. Resident Eikpunt4

We have decided from the beginning that we do not want to be excluded from the regulations, to be an exception. We make clear to the authorities that we want all the regulations to be taken into consideration for these projects. We did not want to think about construction and safety risks. We wanted all the regulations that counted for other projects, also to count for us. We followed the building regulations. Talis

8.5. Annex 4

After we finished with the building process and lewan was ready to reside there was a room, a chance, a possibility to manage by ourselves the surroundings of this area. It is not a big space, but we started a formed group together with lewan, Eikpunt and three other private houses next to us. So the government in start allowed us to form a group for managing the green in this area but later on we had some problems. So us a green group we decide that also another house next to us is part of our group even that he is not so active; he is influenced from our decision so we informed him. He is one from the people that used to live here before the urban gentrification and development of the area. So, he

(he was a glasshouse owner) has different ideas from us for the management of a green area and how to develop it. So we do this think now in a way that he is comfortable and we are comfortable. The government promised us money for the green management of the local area, even though the land was owned by the government. They told us in start you are free to decide whatever you want to do. This is what was said before we started to build to all the people in Plant je vlag. Although, after the building process was complete, they changed their minds. They refused that they said that this was just an idea; there is a budget or there is no a budget they were very unclear about it. So we strike back and we push the government to give us the opportunity to manage or local green area, some other green groups from the neighborhoods give up. The management of the green area is controled by the government in these areas. We pushed and because we are a bigger project, we had power... we had a lot of meetings witch they were so boring and frustating. I want to make a note here; what is typical with the government or housing corporations or porfesional parties you can really tell that these people get money, they get paidby the hour!!! The meetings are never efficient, they come really difficult to a decesion ot to a conclusion. This processes with the government is very frustated. Some people, may think, that the way community planning is organized takes a lot of time, but government plannning in my view is not diferent. Actually I think, we are more effective in the way we are organized with our consensus and everything, than these people. The time we put, we do it voluntarily, we do not get paid for it. So our time is precious, this the diference. I think Patricia from Eikpunt pressured the government, when she mentioned to the municipal government that Nijmegen should really reconsider its role as a potential green capital of Europe. The local government wanted to be a green capital in 2018, so they did not want to block a green initiative of residents. "Wouldn't be nice if Nijmehgen could show that they support these kind of initiatives". When she said that the government felt presure. The difficulty for the government was to give us the responsibility of the area; or to say it better to give us the full responsibility of the area. The government was thinking a bout stuff, for example.... The government said, you want fruit trees, what if a pear or any other fruit falls down from the tree. And what if, as it lies down on the ground, in the sun, in a hot day someone falls over it, slips on this fruit and hurt himself. Who is responsible for the personal damage? So this was really a difficult question and they were not really trying to work together with us in a certain direction. They were really trying to

work against us and not to find a solution. We wanted to do a lot of stuff, they could have helped us, the government has professionals that studies law, they can work and adrees this things. Also there is a green department in the city of Nijmegen that manages the green area of the city and it has a lot of knowledge; probably for issues like this one that I mention. They could have used this knowledge and help us, but it did not happened. We contact the green department by ourselves to collect information and we tried to contact a person higher in government hierarchy. In start it is always difficult to make a government to believe in something different. You really have to lobby to achieve visions like this. Some people in the government they act still with a bureaucratic way and they tend to work by spending the time. The government get stressed from new ideas, the government employees are stressed because they do not know how to operate in a new context. They prefer to push away than to find the rules and the ways to make something new. A lot of people, a lot of individuals are really afraid of change, also within the local government. This is the problem, to afraid to change. It has to do with the responsibility...