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Creating Urban Social Sustainability

*A case study of stakeholder involvement and success factors in urban
development projects in Angered*

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Abstract

This study focuses on the complex issue of creating socially sustainable urban development, with a specific focus on stakeholder involvement. In recent years the notion of sustainable cities has achieved political momentum (Dempsey et al., 2009). Even so, in practice little focus has been paid to the social dimension of sustainability (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014), and it is still a concept in conflict (Vallance, Perkins and Dixon, 2011). Urban development projects affect several organisations and individuals, and involving these stakeholders in the process is therefore necessary (Yang, 2014). Furthermore, some scholars suggest that stakeholder involvement is important since it can lead to more just societies if addressed in the right way (Jones, 2003).

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how to create socially sustainable urban development. In order to achieve this purpose a qualitative case study of urban development projects within the city district of Angered has been carried out. The empirical material has been collected through both interviews and document collection. By analysing this material the study aims at describing success factors in the projects, how different stakeholders were identified and involved, and the importance of a common definition of social sustainability in urban development projects.

The empirical evidence reveals that the actors used an empirical perspective in the identification of relevant stakeholders for the projects, but without being aware of the terminology. Furthermore, it shows that stakeholders from the three groups governments, residents and private- and public sector were involved in the process, however they all had different roles, impacting the process in different ways. The study concludes that within every individual project, it is important to discuss which, when and how to involve the different stakeholders in an efficient and participating way. Moreover, a conclusion is that sharing a common definition of social sustainability is not the most important success factor in socially sustainable urban development. Instead it is of crucial importance to collaborate within every individual project, and agree upon a common direction.

Keywords: Social sustainability, urban development, stakeholder identification, stakeholder involvement, collaboration.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Urbanisation and sustainability are two of the most current topics of modern times. By the middle of the twenty-first century, estimations are that more than 70 percent of the world's population will live in urban areas. Urbanisation largely affects the environment, the economy and people's quality of life. This therefore puts profound pressure on cities to address challenges such as population growth, water supply, traffic and social problems (Carley, Jenkins and Smith, 2001, pp. 1-3). Cities are the main areas for economic and social activities, and if they are to sustain the role as the engine for economic growth, the integration of sustainability aspects in urban planning is of vital importance (Colantonio and Dixon, 2011, p. 3). In recent years the notion of sustainable cities has therefore achieved political momentum around the world (Dempsey, Bramley, Power and Brown, 2009). Theory suggests that the lack of consensus on a definition of what sustainability is, combined with the vast amount of stakeholders involved, makes this achievement a demanding challenge (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014). Some scholars suggest that stakeholder involvement is important since it can lead to more fair societies if addressed in the right way. However, the process is complex and empirical evidence has shown that stakeholder involvement includes multifaceted problems (Jones, 2003). With urbanisation and the growth of cities, social problems, such as large socioeconomic differences, segregation and the availability of decent housing, normally increase substantially. In addition, cities are generally not known for effectively handling these types of issues (Broström, 2015). Even so, in practice, little focus has been paid to the social dimension of sustainability (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014). A growing area of interest is therefore the question of how to address urbanisation together with the increasing need for a social sustainability focus (Broström, 2015).

A city which has recognised the importance of creating socially sustainable urban development is Gothenburg, which over several years has worked with addressing social sustainability issues. The overall vision which has guided this work is called River City Gothenburg, which was accepted by the City Council in 2012 (Göteborgs Stad, 2012). The specific case of River City Gothenburg is a highly relevant topic today, and it has gained generous attention from both media, academic scholars, politicians and society.

In the strategy document of River City Gothenburg the social dimension of sustainability is highlighted and the problems of socio-economic differences and segregation are discussed. However, even though these issues are acknowledged as serious problems, the vision only includes the central parts of the city (Göteborgs Stad, 2012). Broström (2015) states that even though the vision only refers to the central areas of Gothenburg, the ambition is that it should have an impact on the city as a whole. However, when looking at statistics on socioeconomic differences in Gothenburg it can be seen that there is a clear difference between the city centre and the sub-urban areas, where many of the suburbs show higher levels of unemployment, lower average income and fewer people with higher education (Göteborgs Stadsledningskontor, 2015).

1.2 Problem Discussion

Due to the challenges following the increased urbanisation the importance of the field of urban development is growing, and both social sustainability and stakeholder involvement are increasingly expressed to be important dimensions in numerous urban development projects (Colantonio and Dixon, 2011, pp. 41-42; Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014; Dempsey et al., 2009). When addressing urban development issues, the work process includes different planning stages as well as different stakeholder groups (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014). A stakeholder can involve any individual or organisation that can affect, or be affected by the outcome of a project (Yang, 2014). According to Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) different stakeholders impact sustainability differently, and the process and implementation of urban development is highly influenced by the relationship between these stakeholders and the power structures and mechanisms they operate in. Jones (2003) argues that stakeholders are diverse and heterogeneous groups, which often have competing interests, stating that:

“[I]t is therefore of vital importance to stress exactly who the participants are” (Jones, 2003, p. 596)

There is an increased perception that stakeholders can and should influence the decision-making and planning of urban development projects, since it is a way for leaders to obtain a picture of what issues need to be addressed, which could in turn lead to a more effective allocation and use of resources (Yang, 2014). Moreover, it can raise awareness of the cultural and social qualities of an area and lead to the fact that conflicts can be avoided in policy

implementation later on (Colantonio and Dixon, 2011, p. 41). The rapid population growth and net migration, combined with factors such as energy and resource limitations, climate change and an increasingly globalised economy, has led to leaders facing a difficult challenge in deciding which stakeholders to include in the decision-making process (Yang, 2014). There is therefore a need for more detailed research regarding the role of different stakeholders and their interrelationship with the planning and execution of urban development projects (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014).

Another aspect of importance when working with urban development is the concept of social sustainability. The discussion regarding the importance and definition of the subject sustainability has been a recurrent topic in recent years. A commonly used definition has its origin in the United Nation (UN) report *Our Common Future*, presented in 1987, commonly known as the Brundtland Report. Stated in the report is the idea that sustainable development should be designed in a way:

”[T]o ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 16)

No matter how the concept of sustainability is defined by different academics there seems to be a consensus regarding the fact that sustainability is based upon three pillars: the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. This is not only valid for sustainability in general, but is also a popular approach for working with urban development and sustainable societies. Although all three pillars are meant to be addressed, little focus has in practice been shared to the social dimension (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014). In recent years there has therefore been a growing interest and demand to engage more in the social aspects, and the sustainability field is now moving towards a greater inclusion and focus of these issues (Vallance, Perkins and Dixon, 2011). However, social sustainability is still a concept in conflict, where theory suggests that the many attempts of a definition have led to difficulties working with social sustainability, restricting both its importance as a concept and the utility of it in practice (Vallance, Perkins and Dixon, 2011). Broström (2015) states that in many cases the uncertainty regarding the definition of social sustainability leads to the fact that what is actually incorporated in the concept is often determined by local planners and decision-makers. It is therefore interesting to investigate how social sustainability is defined

in urban development projects, how it is addressed, and if it is of crucial importance to actually have a definition to be able to work with social sustainability in practice.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the complex processes of urban development it is relevant to study an area with clearly pronounced social sustainability goals, preferably with the potential for further improvement. Since Gothenburg has been working with creating a sustainable image, yet still has large problems with segregation (Göteborgs Stad, 2012), the city is well suited for such a study. Even though Gothenburg has recognised the importance of both social sustainability and stakeholder involvement in urban development (Göteborgs Stad, 2012), focus has mainly been put on the central parts of the city (Broström, 2015). Considering the significant amount of research that has been carried out on the River City (Broström, 2015) it is of great interest to explore a less scrutinized environment.

The city district which differs the most from the Gothenburg average in socio-economic terms is Angered, where 9.4 percent of the residents live. In terms of average annual income, Angered is 83 000 SEK below the city average and the unemployment rate is 13.6 percent compared to the average of 6.6 percent. The number of people with higher education in Angered is low compared to the average of Gothenburg, with 15.1 percent compared to 33.9 percent (Göteborgs Stadsledningskontor, 2015). This polarisation is not a new phenomenon, and Angered has been showing socio-economic measures below the Gothenburg average for several years (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008a). The city district has worked with improving the social conditions over the years. One example of its actions is Vision Angered, which was developed in 2005. Vision Angered is an overall vision that guides different development projects within the city district of Angered. The original purpose of the vision was to provide quantitative and qualitative goals regarding the development of Angered, in the long-term and the short-term. These goals consider several different issues involving aspects such as housing, commerce, infrastructure, people diversity, safety, environment and culture. The overall goal of the vision was that Angered should become more like the rest of Gothenburg, and by becoming an integrated part of the city carry its part of the city's development and economy (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008).

During the time when the vision was developed and implemented several projects were carried out in Angered, many of which addressed social issues. One example is the program for developing Angered City Centre (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008a). The program

involved the planning and execution of several parallel projects, including a new hospital, a new Sports Arena, new housing alternatives, and to work with encouraging increased commerce in the area. Because of the fact that Angered was able to execute these projects, it is interesting to investigate what success factors can be found within them. The answer to this question will hopefully contribute to the discussion on how to address future urban development projects aiming at social sustainability.

1.3 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how to create socially sustainable urban development, and to generate a foundation for further discussion. This will be carried out by conducting a case study of urban development projects in the city district Angered, and thereby analysing possible success factors, with a particular focus on stakeholder involvement and the potential importance of a definition of social sustainability. This knowledge is of particular importance for urban planners and governing organs, to successfully handle both current and future problems with socially sustainable urban development resulting from increased urbanisation. The projects selected for the case study are Vision Angered and the underlying program for developing Angered City Centre (when mentioned together these will henceforth be referred to as ‘the projects’).

To be able to achieve the purpose this paper aims at answering the following research questions:

- What factors were of significant importance for succeeding with Vision Angered and the development of Angered City Centre?
- How were different stakeholders identified and involved in the planning and execution of Vision Angered and the program for developing Angered City Centre?
- How was social sustainability defined by central actors involved in the projects and did the definition of the concept play a vital role in how social problems were addressed?

2. Regional Framework

The following framework aims at facilitating the understanding of the discussion and analysis of the case study by creating a deeper understanding of the operational processes in Gothenburg.

2.1 Governance structure

Administratively Gothenburg is divided into ten different city districts (Figure 1). Prior to the year 2011, Gothenburg was divided into twenty city districts instead of ten, and the city district of Angered was divided between the two districts Gunnared and Lärjedalen (Göteborgs Stad, 2011). To avoid confusion the city districts will further on be referred to as the city district of Angered, even when talking about the time period before 2011.

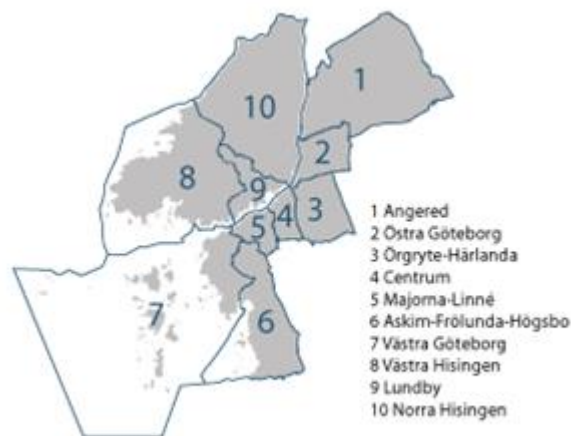


Figure 1. *The ten city districts of Gothenburg.* Göteborgs Stadsledningskontor (2015)

Each city district has its own district committee, which is the deciding-organ for local questions within the city district, such as elementary school and elderly care. The decisions taken by the district committee are carried out by the city district administration office (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.a). The politicians of the district committees are not elected directly by the citizens of Gothenburg, but instead designated by the City Council (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.b). The City Council is the highest deciding-organ in Gothenburg and consists of politicians that are elected every fourth year by the citizens (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.a).

In addition to the district committees there are several other committees influencing the development of the city. These committees have different responsibilities within different

fields, such as education, traffic or environment (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.b). One committee that plays an important role for the construction of the city is the Construction Committee, which is responsible for making several decisions regarding building projects. The decisions taken by the Construction Committee are further implemented by the Urban Construction Office (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.c). Moreover, other committees can be involved based on specific projects and problems (Göteborgs Stad, n.d.b).

In the start-up process of any new project a program is developed, where proposals are put forward presenting the suggestions. After that a consultation is held, where residents, and other interested organisations, are invited to participate and contribute with opinions and suggestions. During the consultation the program is presented at the Urban Construction Office and in a public venue within the city district. After a predetermined period has come to an end a consultation report is published, presenting all the collected inputs and suggestions. The next step is to develop a municipal action area plan, which is a more detailed description of the technical aspects of the presented suggestions. The opinions from the program and the connected consultation report are taken into consideration when producing the municipal action area plan. When the municipal action area plan has been produced, a second consultation is held, resulting in another consultation report. During the second consultation the municipal action area plan is presented at the Urban Construction Office, and after minor corrections it is sent to the Construction Committee for final approval. Unless the plan is appealed or overruled it will gain legal force within three weeks and the implementation process can then be initiated (Göteborg Stad, n.d.d). This process is illustrated in figure 2.

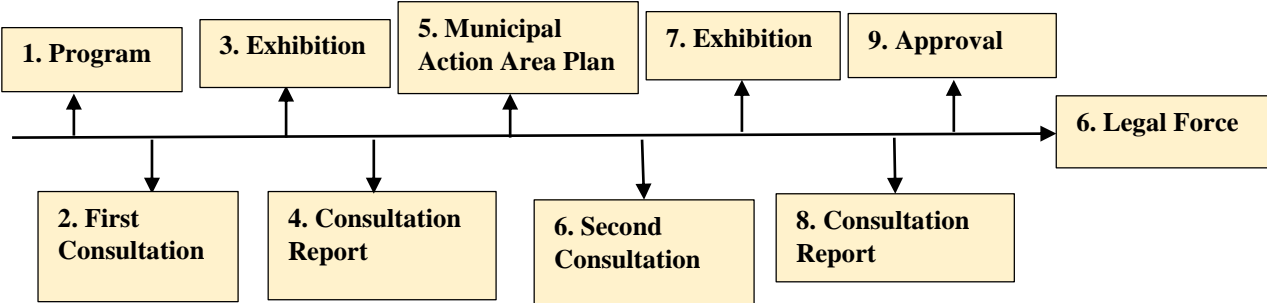


Figure 2. *The development process for a new urban project.*

2.2 Documentation

Vision Angered

Vision Angered is a vision that was produced in 2005 by the city districts of Gunnared and Lärjedalen, with the purpose of providing quantitative and qualitative goals regarding the development of Angered, both in a long-term and short-term perspective. The overall goal for the vision was that Angered should become more like the rest of Gothenburg, and by becoming an integrated part of the city thereby carry its part of the city's development and economy (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008). Vision Angered worked as an overall vision, guiding several underlying projects, such as for example the program for developing Angered City Centre. In 2012, Vision Angered was revised, with the purpose of clarifying roles, responsibilities and operational processes (Göteborgs Stad Angered, 2012).

The Program

The Program for the development of Angered City Centre (henceforth referred to as ‘the Program’) was produced by the Urban Construction Office in 2008 and presented proposals on how to improve the area, both in a short- and long-term perspective. The program included suggestions on several parallel projects, for example the construction of a hospital and a Sports Arena, increased commerce, and the construction of new housing alternatives (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008a).

The Consultation Report

The Consultation Report for the Program was produced by the Urban Construction Office in 2008. The Consultation was held during September and October in 2007, when the program was displayed at the Urban Construction Office and at the community centre Blå Stället (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008b).

The Municipal Action Area Plan

The Municipal Action Area Plan for the development of Angered City Centre (further on referred to as ‘the Action Area Plan’), was produced by the Urban Construction Office in 2010. In this document the technical aspects of the implementation of the suggestions presented in the Program were explored in more detail. It also took into account the opinions and ideas put forward in the Consultation Report (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2010).

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Social Sustainability

Social sustainability is a concept that has been widely discussed, but without a clear definition or consensus. One article presenting a review of the existing literature on social sustainability is written by Vallance, Perkins and Dixon (2011), where they present various examples of authors trying to define social sustainability in different ways. The authors conclude that social sustainability is a concept in conflict, which has led to difficulties working with it, restricting both its importance as a concept and the utility of it in practice. Rather than finding one singular definition of the concept they highlight the complexity of the subject and suggest three sub-categories of social sustainability as a tool of identifying different aspects within the subject itself. The authors argue that there is potential for sustainable development, and that it is of fundamental importance to analyse and understand the complexity of the term, but that the potential can only be realised through a deeper knowledge and understanding of the underlying tripartite social components. For the analysis of this study the three sub-categories will not be explored in detail, instead the focus is on understanding the complexity of the concept and the possible importance of a definition.

Another study aiming at defining social sustainability is carried out by Dempsey et al. (2009), where they integrate urban policy and planning in the concept of social sustainability. In their article they explore and cite the existing literature on social sustainability, together with studies of urban policy and planning, in the UK and around the world. In order to create a better understanding of the term ‘urban social sustainability’ they discuss several factors identified by theorists as contributing factors to creating a socially sustainable urban context. Furthermore, Dempsey et al. (2009) identify two dimensions of urban social sustainability: *Social Equity* and *Sustainability of Community*.

Social Equity is described as a matter of policy concerns dealing with the aspect of justice, such as social justice, distributive justice and equality conditions. In an urban context this means that there should be no obstacles preventing individuals from participating, both on an economic, social and political level. In practice the hindrance of people participating often takes the form of social and/or environmental exclusion. This can be through for instance racism or ageism, or on a geographical level through deprived areas with poor living conditions or reduced accessibility. Accessibility is a common way of measuring social

equity, and some of the services that residents are considered to need every day access to are for example education, housing, public services, supermarkets, banks, restaurants, community centres, libraries, social infrastructures and public spaces.

The second dimension, *Sustainability of Community*, is concerned with the collective features of social life and the sustained functionality of society itself. The authors further specify that sustainability of community deals with aspects such as interaction between community members, resident turnover, participation in formal and informal collective institutions, community trust, security and identification with the community. In order to examine these aspects the writers identify several measurable aspects of sustainability of community: social interaction (social settings and interactions), participation in community networks and groups (such as voting and manifestations), community stability, pride and safety. Furthermore, the authors conclude that the two dimensions of social equity and sustainability of community are not entirely independent; they are merely a useful way of distinguishing between different aspects of urban social sustainability, and they both need to be addressed equally to achieve satisfactory results (Dempsey et al., 2009).

3.2 Stakeholders

3.2.1 Stakeholder Identification

Broadly defined, a stakeholder is any individual or organisation that can affect and/or is affected by an organisation's objectives. In this terminology, a stakeholder can come to include almost anyone, and some authors therefore suggest that an appropriate way to identify and prioritise stakeholders is necessary (Mitchell, Agle and Wood, 1997). Jones (2003) argues that stakeholders ought to be viewed as diverse and heterogeneous groups, which often have competing interests. One example that he presents is the residents of the community, where he points out the importance of acknowledging them as a group consisting of different interests rather than a homogenous group. He further argues that due to these internal differences within the groups it is important to state who the stakeholders are.

One author discussing methods for identifying stakeholders in the context of urban development projects is Yang (2014). She suggests two different perspectives for stakeholder identification: *Empiricism* or *Rationalism*. The author argues that in order to attain a more complete picture of stakeholders' concerns and to be able to manage conflicts between them, it is necessary to develop practical methods for stakeholder analysis. However, she further

states that in practice, the empirical and rationalistic perspectives are applied without leaders knowing the theoretical labels.

Empiricism implies that leaders are best suited to identify stakeholders, and that the best result is achieved when only a person or a small group of people are responsible for the identification of relevant stakeholders. The argument for this is that leaders are assumed to have the most extensive knowledge of the area, which they have gained through experience. The advantage of empiricism is that it is time efficient and decisions can be reached in a relatively short period of time. However, this method cannot overcome the cognitive limitations of those responsible for the selection process (Yang, 2014).

Rationalism, on the other hand, suggest the inclusion of almost all stakeholders instead of only the 'core' ones. This method is time consuming and the practical methods for applying a rationalistic perspective are less developed. However, it is a powerful way to identify hidden stakeholders that could potentially cause disruption to the project. She further suggests that the fairest picture is given when both perspectives are applied, and the results are compared. She also argues that even so, stakeholder engagement is still somewhat unbalanced, and it often has a rhetoric character rather than actually being democratic in practice (Yang, 2014).

3.2.2 Urban Development

The complexity of urban development

Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) discuss and analyse the complexity of the mechanism of achieving sustainable urban development. By conducting a literature review of 81 papers regarding urban development the authors identify two different sub-systems, and an analysing framework for the path to sustainable urban development. These sub-systems are the *planning sub-system*, which is described as including all material elements of a city, and the *social sub-system*, which consists of the different stakeholders involved and the benefits they can receive. The authors argue that to be able to create strategies and solutions for sustainable urban development both the planning issues and the stakeholder involvement have to be considered. This has to be combined with an analysis and evaluation of the past, present and future, and the complexity of creating sustainable urban development is illustrated in Figure 3.

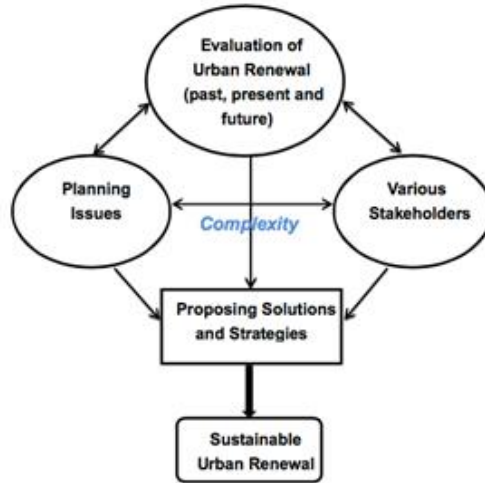


Figure 3. *Path to sustainable urban renewal*¹. Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014, p. 277)

The planning sub-system - Urban design

The planning sub-system is described to involve the material aspects of housing, infrastructure, heritage and land, and together they are addressed through what is called urban design. Different housing policies for example can greatly influence the sustainability of a city, both positively and negatively. On one hand, comfortable and good quality housing can contribute to the well-being of the residents, but on the other hand, it can also have a severe negative impact on the environment. Other than this social and green infrastructure also has an important impact on a city, together with the existing culture and heritage.

The social sub-system - Stakeholder Involvement

Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) also discuss the importance of stakeholder involvement through the social sub-system in urban development. They argue that urban development policies and implementation are highly influenced by several different stakeholders, and the relationships and power structures between them. They further state that stakeholders influence sustainability in different ways. The illustration of stakeholder involvement and the interaction between them is presented in Figure 4.

¹ The authors of the article use the terminology ‘urban renewal’, which corresponds to the improvement of physical, socio-economic and ecological aspects through actions such as redevelopment and rehabilitation (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014). For the purpose of this study the term ‘urban development’ will be used in place of ‘urban renewal’, since it is more inclusive and seems to be more commonly used in academic papers.

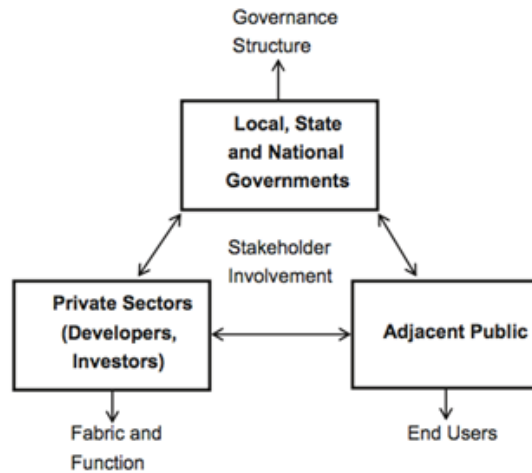


Figure 4. *The social sub-system in urban development.* Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014, p. 274)

Zheng, Shen and Wang's (2014) categories *Local, State and National Governments*, *Adjacent Public* and *Private Sector* are used to describe stakeholders. For the analysis of this study these categories will be used, but with minor modifications. The category 'Local, State and National Governments' will be characterised as including only those with political power to directly influence the governance and decision-making structure of urban planning and development, and will further be referred to as *Governments*. Furthermore, the category 'Private Sector' will be expanded and referred to as *Private- and public sector*, and the category 'Adjacent Public' will be cited as *Residents*.

Governments - Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) stress that governments play the most important role in the governance structure of a city, and have a direct impact on the planning and the development of strategies in urban development. The authors further argue that the governance structure and institutional context in which decisions are taken is of vital importance. As stated above the analysis of this study will use the term governments to include only those with political power to directly influence the governance structure, such as different city district committees, the City Council and other politicians.

Private- and public sector - The authors further mention the role of the private sector in urban development. Participants of the private sector can affect and are affected by urban development projects, since they can alter the urban space, by for example building new venues for their corporations. In addition, they are often providers of capital to the development projects (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014). In the case of urban development

projects in Gothenburg, several of the companies and organisations involved are owned by the county or municipality, but without any political influence or authority, such as for example Västtrafik (public transportation company) and several of the real estate agencies (Västtrafik, n.d.; Göteborgs Stad, 2015). These companies and organisations will therefore be included in this category under the name of public sector.

Residents - Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) acknowledge one of the most important stakeholder groups to be the residents of a city, since they are the ultimate end users of the community. Their behaviour and preferences impact the decision-making of the private- and public sector, and thereby the development of the city. The issue of public participation is therefore of vital importance, and it is believed that it is a requirement for solving urban problems.

3.2.3 Governance structure

Several authors have acknowledged the importance of governance structures in urban development and stakeholder involvement. Brownill and Carpenter (2008) examined the case of the Thames Gateway regeneration in England and carried out an analysis of how to create sustainable communities, stating that:

“Among other things, sustainable communities enjoy representative, accountable governance systems which both facilitate strategic, visionary leadership and enable inclusive, active and effective participation by individuals and organisations” (Brownill and Carpenter, 2008, p. 258)

They further argue that several different dilemmas can arise in the governance of urban development, one of those being the dilemma of *Cooperation versus Competition*. The various stakeholders need to co-operate in some ways, but at the same time they also compete with one another. Brownill and Carpenter (2008) argue that while rhetoric suggest that different units co-operate, reality reveals that different sub-regions are often competing against each other for resources to achieve their goals and strategies.

Barber and Pareja Eastaway (2010) outline how planners and policy-makers in Birmingham and Barcelona have managed challenges that arose in the creation of urban districts. They conclude that the institutional context (i.e. the structures, allowances and powers) in which

leaders operate, as well as the prevailing planning culture heavily influence how cities develop. Moreover, the authors argue that in order to engage stakeholders, leaders need to be visible and show real presence on the ground. They also explain that working across professional boundaries as well as having an overall vision are important factors, since it enables the integration of several different dimensions of urban development within a co-ordinated overall process.

3.3 Summary

Vallence, Perkin and Dixon (2011) argue that social sustainability is a concept in conflict and that this has led to difficulties working with it, restricting both its importance as a concept and the utility of it in practice. This study therefore investigates if there is a common definition to be found within the projects and how this has affected the social sustainability work in practice. Vallence, Perkin and Dixon (2011) further argue that rather than finding one singular definition of the concept it might instead be more important to analyse the complexity of the term. In order to gain a deeper understanding of this complexity the case study will therefore be analysed using the framework presented by Dempsey et al. (2009), to identify what aspects of social sustainability that were addressed in practice within the projects, and how they can be related to the two dimensions Social Equity and Sustainability of Community.

To investigate how stakeholders are identified within the projects, the two different perspectives suggested by Yang (2014) will be used. She argues that either an empirical or a rationalistic perspective can be used, and that the best result is attained when both perspectives are applied and the results compared. She further states that these methods are usually applied without leaders knowing the theoretical labels. This study will investigate if either of these methods were used, and if leaders were aware of the terminology.

In order to further analyse the combination of social sustainability and stakeholder involvement the framework presented by Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) will be used to discuss the complexity of the interaction between different actors when creating sustainable urban development. The focus will be on the social sub system, where different stakeholders within the project will be identified from all three categories, Governments, Private- and public sector and Residents. To further analyse the actual involvement of these stakeholders their different roles and interactions will be explored. Furthermore, the dilemmas and success

factors presented by Brownill Carpenter (2008) and Pareja Eastaway (2010) will be compared with those that can be found within the projects.

4. Method

4.1 Approach

To be able to answer the research questions of this paper, a comprehensive and deep understanding of the context and processes of the planning and execution of the chosen development projects in Angered was necessary. In order to gain this knowledge, a qualitative case study was considered the most appropriate approach (c.f. Holme and Solvang, 1997, p. 79). To be able to describe the situation as fairly and accurately as possible, a combination of different types of empirical materials was desired. This approach is commonly referred to as triangulation and contributes to increased reliability and validity, since the weakness of one method is normally the strength of another (Merriam, 1994, p. 183). The analysis of this study was therefore based on semi-structured interviews combined with document collection of official documents.

The theoretical framework was conducted by reading books and ‘peer reviewed’ articles concerning social sustainability, sustainable urban planning and stakeholder analysis. The books and articles were found using the University of Gothenburg’s library, in particular the database Business Source Premier. Different searches were made with above keywords and relevant articles and books were then read in more detail. Further inspiration was found in relevant articles which referred to a vast number of additional papers and articles.

4.2 Interviews

As stated above, qualitative, semi-structured interviews was considered an appropriate method to be able to answer the research questions and thereby achieve the purpose of this study. Since all the interviewees gave their permission the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Furthermore, all of the respondents also gave their permission to let the authors use their names and professional titles.

4.2.1 Selection of interviewees

Because of the complexity of the governance system in urban planning, the selection of

interviewees was important for making sure that accurate and relevant knowledge and information could be attained (c.f. Holme and Solvang, 1997, p. 101). In order to obtain a more extensive understanding of the processes of urban planning in the city district, a pre-interview was held with the urban development manager of the city district Angered. With the acquired information, a selection of relevant interviews could be accomplished. The interviewees for this study were then chosen based on the centrality to the planning and execution of Vision Angered and the development program for Angered City Centre. The assumption was made that these actors were most likely to have the most comprehensive perception about the meaning of social sustainability and the involvement of stakeholders in these urban development projects. The official documents published for the selected projects gave contact details to different actors.

During a telephone conversation with the Manager of Urban Planning for the development program for Angered City Centre Åsa Swan was recommended as a highly central person. To gain further insight into the development of Vision Angered, Jan-Åke Ryberg, who was the coordinator for the project, was contacted. He further recommended Pelle Isaksson, who had the position of development manager at the City District Administration Office in Angered when the vision was developed. To further gain a more accurate overview of the city district Angered's work with urban development in a broader perspective, Ali Moeeni, chairman of the District Committee of Angered, was contacted.

Ali Moeeni has had several political assignments during the years, and at the moment he is working as a politician in the city district of Angered, where he has served as chairman of the District Committee since 2012. The interview was held on 26 April 2016, in Moeeni's office in the venues of the District Committee of Angered.

Åsa Swan is currently working at Älvstranden Utveckling AB as head of urban planning. During the development of the program for Angered City Centre she was working as an Architect of Urban Planning for the Urban Construction Office and was therefore involved in the development of the Program. This central role combined with her special focus on the dialogue conducted with stakeholders in the area made her a suitable interviewee. The interview was held on 28 April 2016 in Swan's office at Älvstranden Utveckling AB.

Jan-Åke Ryberg was the coordinator for Vision Angered and was furthermore involved in the program for the development of Angered City Centre. He had a central role in the process of aligning and combining different interests and organisational units, with a special focus on involving the residents of the city district of Angered. The interview was held on 28 April 2016 in a group room at the School of Business Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg.

During the time period when Vision Angered was developed *Pelle Isaksson* had the professional title of development manager at the City District Administration Office in Angered, and was involved in the development of Vision Angered. The interview was held on 29 April 2016 in a group room at the School of Business Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg.

Name	Professional title	Date	Place	Length
Ali Moeeni	Chairman of Angered District Committee	26 April 2016	Angered City District, Angered Torg 14	1:57 h
Åsa Swan	Architect of Urban Planning	28 April 2016	Älvstranden Utveckling AB, Lindholmsallén 10	0:43 h
Jan-Åke Ryberg	Coordinator for Vision Angered	28 April 2016	School of Business Economics and Law, Vasagatan 1	1:22 h
Pelle Isaksson	Development Manager	29 April 2016	School of Business Economics and Law, Vasagatan 1	0:59 h

Table 1. *Description of interviews.*

4.2.2 Planning

To be able to achieve the purpose of this study it was of vital importance to ask questions concerning social sustainability, stakeholder involvement and urban planning. However, it was equally important that the interview process could also be flexible, and that follow-up questions could be added and adjusted according to the person being interviewed, specifically related to their area of expertise. Interview guides were therefore prepared with a semi-structured design (Bryman and Bell, 2013, pp. 476-477), and several general questions were formulated within six different areas: personal background, sustainability (social sustainability), urban planning, stakeholders and challenges.

4.2.3 Execution

In order to execute the interviews as objectively as possible, both authors were present during the interviews. This enabled the authors to take on two different roles, one being active asking questions and the other being more passive trying to obtain an overview of the situation as well as taking more detailed notes. To avoid the risk of steering the interviewees answers in a certain direction, the roles were switched approximately halfway-through the interview, to enable the interviewers to ask questions in two different styles (c.f. Bryman and Bell, 2013, p. 482). Conducting the interviews together further enabled a more accurate picture of the interview, since both authors were able to discuss and compare their different perceptions afterwards.

The interviews took place in different locations and for different amount of time. The locations were chosen to adhere to the interviewees' requirements and to make it as easy as possible for them to participate. Depending on how much time the interviewees had available the interviews lasted between 40 minutes to 2 hours. When the interviewers felt that all of the predetermined themes had been touched upon in a sufficient way the interviews were finished. In order to increase the credibility of the study all the interviews were recorded, furthermore, to be able to repeat the information as accurately as possible the interviews were then transcribed (c.f. Bryman and Bell, 2013, p. 489).

4.3 Document Collection

Since it is standard procedure to publish different official documents throughout the decision-making process of urban development projects in Gothenburg several official documents were selected as a complementary basis for analysis alongside the interviews. A thorough investigation of different official documents and protocols was done in order to obtain a greater understanding of the overall structure and the importance of the different documents. In the end, the analysed documents were chosen on the basis of their relevance to Vision Angered and the program for the development of Angered City Centre, specifically with the focus on stakeholder involvement. The documents that were selected as a base for the empirical material were:

- Vision Angered (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008)
- The revised version of Vision Angered (Göteborgs Stad Angered, 2012)

- The program for development of Angered City Centre (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008a)
- The Municipal Action Area Plan for the program for the development of Angered City Centre (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2010)
- The Consultation Report for the program for development of Angered City Centre (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008b)

4.4 Processing

The processing of the empirical material was made in several steps, and both the interviews and the selected documents were processed using the same method. To start with all the information collected was read through without any evaluation or categorisation being made, to get an overview of the areas covered in the vast span of information. Thereafter a discussion took place to try and identify recurring themes and categories found throughout the material. In order to facilitate the analysis of the material irrelevant information was removed and several general categories were decided upon, based on the relevance to the gathered information and the purpose of the study (c.f. Merriam, 1994, pp. 140-151). The categories that were chosen were background and personal information, social sustainability, stakeholders and challenges and possible solutions. As all the interviewees discussed the importance of governance structures, this was also added as a category in the analysis of the material. Based on these themes, the material was processed again, this time colour coded connected to the different categories. To avoid biased interpretation of the information and categorisation based on human factors the documents were divided between the authors. After the categorisation was made the authors exchanged parts to proof read the categorisation and add extra comments. Thereafter, the empirical material was compiled and connected to the theoretical framework, to be able to analyse the material and draw relevant conclusions.

4.5 Validity

4.5.1 Subjectivity

One aspect to consider was the fact that when analysing the material, it was collected and processed by the authors. This means that the information was filtered and interpreted based on their values (Merriam, 1994, p. 192). This was a fact that the authors were aware of, and it was a fact that would prevail regardless of the chosen method. To make an attempt of

reducing the subjectivity, the authors made sure to proof-read each other's texts, comments and analyses and discuss the different opinions and interpretations of the results thoroughly with each other.

4.5.2 Political belonging

Another aspect to consider was the fact that urban development projects in Gothenburg are influenced by the political governance system, both on national and local level. Even though none of the projects studied were connected to political parties or policies, at least two of the interviewed individuals had strong connections to the Social Democratic party in Gothenburg, which could possibly influence their opinions and political influence.

4.5.3 Interview design

When carrying out the interviews it was important to be aware of the challenge of designing the interview questions in an objective way, without influencing the answers in any specific direction. When preparing the interview guide for this paper the authors worked carefully to ask open questions, without a predetermined direction or interpretation. However, during the semi-structured interviews conducted there were many occasions where the interviewers left the guides to ask follow-up questions, which increased the risk of unintentionally influencing the discussion. On the other hand, it also created a possibility of a more rewarding discussion (c.f. Bryman and Bell, 2013, p. 484).

4.5.4 Generalisability

This study is by no means aiming at providing a complete description of the situation, and the authors are aware that it is merely a minor investigation, focusing only on a small part of a larger context. As this study was conducted with four interviews and five additional documents, the generalisability of the study is limited and it is an empirical question whether or not the same result would be obtained in another context or situation or at a different point in time (Bryman and Bell, 2013, p. 404). However, the authors of this paper believe that due to the successful planning and execution of Vision Angered and the program for the development of Angered City Centre, it is still an interesting area of study since it could create a deeper understanding as well as provide a foundation for further discussion on social sustainability and the role of stakeholders within similar urban development projects.

One of the research questions of this study discusses significant success factors identified within the projects. When discussing the success of the projects the term success does not refer to a change in socio-economic standards in Angered, since this is a change that takes

time and is influenced by several other aspects. Instead the term success refers to the fact that many parallel projects were implemented as a result of Vision Angered. The authors are aware that there is a vast amount of factors that can influence how cities successfully manage to create sustainable urban development, and that there are technical aspects such as legal regulations and budget constraints that to a large degree have an impact on how to address these issues. However, these aspects are beyond the scope of this study, and the discussions regarding this specific question were based only around the recurrent answers given in the conducted interviews and found in the documents.

4.5.5 Translation

The official documents selected for this study were only available in Swedish, and all the interviews were also conducted in Swedish. This resulted in a large amount of information that had to be translated into English. The authors are aware that the exact words and formulations of the documents and interviewees were processed when translated into English, and that due to this there is a risk of misinterpretations and lost meanings. To ensure an objective translation that captures the original meaning as accurately as possible, the authors discussed different translations with each other as well as consulted several online dictionaries. The main objective was to avoid changing the original meaning of the quotations and to make sure not to include any of the authors' own opinions or interpretations.

One of the main challenges with translating the material was the use of specific expressions and terms used only in the Swedish governance system, specifically in connection to official regulations and documents. These terms often differed substantially from those used in English speaking countries, and sometimes there was no direct translation available. A translation corresponding as closely as possible to the original term was used in most cases. When no direct translation could be found a short description of the term was used instead, to keep the meaning of the word. A complete list of translations is attached in Appendix I. The original quotations and the corresponding translations can be found in Appendix II.

5. Empirical Result

5.1 Collaboration and Competence

Collaboration

In Gothenburg, urban development is in practice carried out within the different city districts. Despite this, Ali Moeeni stressed the importance of seeing the city as a whole:

“...we are one city, and we cannot put walls around an area and say that it is not our problem.” (Interview, Ali Moeeni, 26 April 2016)

Pelle Isaksson explained that the focus of urban development has to be to work towards a common positive change, without trying to see only to your own interests as a city district or as an individual. He stated that if everyone is focused only on their specific territory or individual duties, change will never be achieved. Jan-Åke Ryberg expressed similar thoughts, and further explained that people who only protect their own interests have even been labelled with the specific term ‘committee hugger’. One of the major reasons for creating the overall vision, Vision Angered, was according to Ryberg that this was recognised as a huge problem. There was a realisation that the city districts of Gunnared and Lärjedalen could not go on working together while at the same time being at war with each other. It was therefore important to develop the new vision in co-operation, and to remove the old territorial mind-set of the two previous city districts. The idea of collaboration can also be found stated in the original document of Vision Angered from 2008:

“The work of implementing Vision Angered has to be carried out in collaboration. Everyone involved, not only Angered but also the city as a whole, must aspire towards the common goals” (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008, p. 4)

When asked what importance the vision had for the development of Angered, Ryberg answered the following:

“I believe that it has been of great importance, it enabled several different interests to work in the same direction, express the same things and invest in Angered.” (Interview, Jan-Åke Ryberg, 28 April 2016)

Isaksson expressed similar thoughts, stating the importance of everyone working in the same direction. He stressed the necessity of having a common platform as a base for the development work, in the form of a vision. This vision, he stated, should formulate the main goals, which can then more easily be broken down into practical aspects later. This helps everyone involved to agree on a direction, and it sends a united message about a way of working, making sure that everyone is on board, working in the same way.

Political agreement

Ryberg stressed that an important aspect for successfully planning and executing the urban development proposals was that political agreement within the District Committee had to be reached. He stated that they did not work with questions which they could not reach a political agreement upon. They only chose to work with and put forward the proposals where political consensus had been reached. Moeeni stated something similar, saying that once a proposal is agreed upon within the District Committee there is no political barrier to pass on the proposal to the City Council:

“...we only put forward the questions which we can agree upon and put away those where we have different perceptions on how to reach the result. This gives us a strength in our work towards the City Council [...]. We agree upon what we say regardless of which political party we represent.” (Interview, Ali Moeeni, 25 April 2016)

Isaksson also stressed the importance of political agreement saying that:

“Those questions upon which we can agree, that is where we can unite and make things happen, and together we can put forward the thoughts and ideas we have within the frame for this vision and present them to our politicians [...] who in turn can present them to the City Council. If the same message comes from several different directions, things happen.” (Interview, Pelle Isaksson, 29 April 2016)

Potent doers

Isaksson discussed the advantages of identifying and including a group of people who were ‘potent doers’ when addressing urban challenges in a project such as Vision Angered. He stated that this group should be included throughout the entire process. When talking about ‘potent doers’ he explained that this referred to both the professional positions and the

personal competence of the different individuals. What was important was that they had the right kind of knowledge, power and a drive to be productive. Isaksson explained that in the assembling of this group, different civil servants were invited to different meetings. Some were a permanent part of the discussion, while others were invited based on knowledge and relevance to the question discussed at the specific meeting. Isaksson described that some organisations were always invited, for instance the police and different real estate agencies. He pointed out that the representatives for these organisations had to be well informed about their area of work. He further argued that another important aspect for urban development was to create a strategy that was agreed upon, and anchor and establish the operational processes with the people in power.

5.2 Stakeholders

Considering the analysed documents for the projects there is a vast amount of stakeholders mentioned. It is stated in Vision Angered that since the city district lacks mandate in many strategic questions concerning the development of Angered a number of partners therefore have to be included (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008).

5.2.1 Identification

When asked how the different stakeholders were identified, Åsa Swan clarified that in terms of stakeholders other than the residents of the area, it came to turns fairly quickly which stakeholders that were relevant to include, as soon as the investigation of an area started and its problems were addressed. She exemplified this by stating that if there was a connection point or tram stop in the area, the public transportation company Västtrafik had to be included. Similarly, if there was a park in the area, then the Park and Nature association had to be involved. Swan further stated that one stakeholder that was always included in the dialogue was the emergency services.

Private- and public sector

The document for Vision Angered specifies that the city districts, different committees, real estate agencies, several private actors and Business Region Gothenburg (BRG) were all important partners, and thus relevant stakeholders for the project. In order to implement the vision, the document therefore states that a dialogue must be held with these parties (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008, p.7). Both the Program and the Action Area Plan also list a

number of public and private enterprises, such as different associations and architect offices, to be important stakeholders (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008a; Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2010).

Governments

Moeeni described that politicians are always important stakeholders in urban planning. He stated that their political influence is especially important in suggestions affecting the population structure. This was further mentioned by Isaksson and Swan, who both pointed out politicians as important stakeholders.

Residents

All the selected documents consider the residents of the area to be important stakeholders. When asked questions about what residents were included in the projects, Swan explained that Ryberg assembled a group of 20-30 citizens to represent the opinion of the residents of Angered:

“[...] he did not include those who would always claim to represent everyone’s opinion, and he picked a diverse group of young, old, pensioners, people who worked there, people who owned a shop there. It was a mix of people.” (Interview, Åsa Swan, 28 April 2016)

Ryberg was asked how these people were selected. He replied that throughout the years he had been working in Angered he had encountered a great number of people, and that he chose the representatives based on the people he had met and been in contact with. Ryberg explained that his aim when assembling the group was to include residents of varying ages and backgrounds. He clarified that he did not want to include the people who were always keen on expressing their opinions. Instead he aimed at including the ones who were capable of expressing their thoughts and ideas and reason about different suggestions. He further stated that meeting different people and presenting the proposals at different locations also was an important part of his work in order to attain external knowledge.

When asked if there were any possibilities for other residents not included in the resident group to get their voices heard Ryberg started discussing the risk of only capturing individual interests:

“Not any other than that I was out talking, presenting and reasoning around these different suggestions. This is of course a problem, but at the same time I believe that it is more efficient if you find the right group to work with a proposal like this. If you go to a meeting at Blå Stället there will always be ten people naming themselves as professionals knowing everything.” (Interview, Jan-Åke Ryberg, 28 April 2016)

Considering the documents from the projects however, there are other opportunities mentioned where residents not part of this group were invited to participate. One example of this is the Consultation, however, it was only held on the already accepted proposal for the Program (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008b).

5.2.2 Involvement

As presented above there were several different actors and stakeholder groups engaged in the process of working with the projects. When discussing the involvement of the different stakeholder groups the interviewees mostly discussed the importance of including the residents in the process, but also highlighted several other groups being involved in different ways depending on their interests, roles and responsibilities.

Private- and public sector

Some stakeholder groups involved in the process can be recognised in the Consultation Report. During the Consultation the city district of Angered reached out to collect opinions from several committees, authorities, public sector departments, enterprises, associations and other private actors and organisations of interest. Some examples of these are different housing associations, the local police, the Education Committee, the Traffic Committee, emergency services and Västtrafik. The Program was displayed at several different locations, where one of these was an open house at the community centre Blå Stället in Angered, where stakeholders were welcome to express their opinions. The Consultation Report summarised the opinions, together with individual comments and feedback on each suggestion, explaining how they would be taken into consideration when developing the Action Area Plan.

Governments

Isaksson stressed the fact that residents and others involved in the process could contribute with putting forward suggestions and inputs, but that in the end it was down to the politicians

to actually make the final decisions and go through with the implementation of the projects. Swan similarly explained that whenever there was a conflict of interest between different stakeholder groups, it was the political interest and will that steered the projects. The political units made the crucial decisions on how to prioritise to move forward. Moeeni also stated that politicians always play an important role in the process of urban development projects, and that they are a stakeholder group of vital importance.

Residents

Swan stressed the importance of allowing the residents of a district the possibility to be included in the process at an early stage. Ryberg also acknowledged this by stating that many of the important decisions are made in connection to the Program, rather than in the Action Area Plan, which is produced later on. When working with the projects Ryberg therefore requested that the citizens were involved already in the development of the Program. Ryberg mentioned that together with Swan he worked with involving a group of residents in different workshops and events, where they had meetings approximately once a month. Swan explained that before each workshop, she had prepared suggestions and questions for the group to discuss. Swan stressed that it was important as a coordinator of such a workshop to actively listen to the discussions. Much of the important information was only presented verbally between the citizens while having the discussions and not written down in their final presentation and suggestions. Another example of how they worked with involving the citizens was put forward by Ryberg. He described that when working with the suggestion of building the Sports Arena they took the group on a walk in the area where the arena was planned on being built. This resulted in several suggestions and solutions on how to make this area safer and properly lit during night time, which was put forward to the next step of the process and the creation of the Action Area Plan.

An additional aspect that was pointed out by Moeeni in the question of involving residents as a stakeholder group is that the purpose of involving them is not that they should act as decision makers. When the residents get involved, several important decisions and suggestions have already been taken. The residents then have the opportunity to give their opinions, criticism, suggestions and inputs on how to move forward with changing, improving and shaping the projects when moving forward. This way of working can further be recognised in the document of Vision Angered. In this document the aspect of citizen

involvement is emphasised, but expressed in a way allowing them to become involved only after a proposal has been put forward:

“A dialogue with the residents (including a dialogue with merchants) should primarily be held discussing already accepted proposals from the Vision.” (Göteborgs Stad Angered, 2012, p. 3)

Both Swan and Moeeni therefore stressed the importance of clearly communicating to the group that the dialogue is exactly that: a dialogue and not a decision set in stone. The expressed opinions and suggestions from the resident group are indeed important contributions and inputs, however there is no guarantee that what is expressed will actually be executed and implemented in practice.

5.3 Defining urban social sustainability

During the interviews, social sustainability in an urban context was discussed extensively. When asked how social sustainability was defined within Vision Angered Ryberg replied that it had several dimensions, but that one of the most important aspects was to create job opportunities. Ryberg argued that having a job is extremely important in order to become an integrated part of society, and that it in turn leads to people with different backgrounds getting the chance to meet, which could potentially reduce both prejudice and segregation. He further stated that a community as a whole is strengthened the more people that are in employment. Ryberg also spoke about several other dimensions, such as education, safety, pride, public health, equity, prejudice, accessibility and becoming a city district corresponding to the average of Gothenburg.

Another perspective on social sustainability in urban development came from Moeeni. When asked about the District Committee of Angered’s definition of social sustainability Moeeni talked about several aspects, but specifically stressed the importance of education and housing. He emphasised the importance of working with creating an attractive opportunity for a housing career within the city district of Angered, and in that way encourage people to stay, and through that change the problematic socio-economic structure. He also explained that social issues are of particular interest for the city district, since many of the challenges they

face derive from these questions. Other important aspects that he mentioned were for example attractiveness, job opportunities, equity and justice, diversity, crime, prejudice and public spaces.

Swan identified a change over time, where she stated that when working with the Program the term social sustainability was not used. However, she described that most of the projects and initiatives included many aspects aiming at solving social issues, such as for example creating a mixed city and public spaces with the opportunity for different people to meet. One of the problems she discussed was the issue of segregation. She pointed out the project of building a new Sports Arena as an example of how to work with this, claiming that a positive effect of placing the Sports Arena in Angered was that it would attract people from other areas of town, creating a possibility for people to interact across different city districts. She concluded that even though there was no structure or commonly used definition of what social sustainability was, they were still working actively with these issues in practice, for example through projects involving aspects such as public health, education and safety.

Isaksson mentioned several different social aspects that were of great importance when working with Vision Angered, such as communication and public transport, status, employment, accessibility, attractiveness and becoming a city district corresponding to the average of Gothenburg, but without using the actual term social sustainability. He further stated that one of the more prevalent problems that has been apparent in Angered over the last couple of years is that people do not tend to stay in the area, and that it is common that when people's financial situation improve, they move to a different area of town. Following this problem Isaksson pointed out the need to work with building more housing alternatives, making it possible for the residents of Angered to engage in a housing career within the city district.

Considering the documents of Vision Angered, the term social sustainability is used, but there is no further explanation or definition specified. Instead several aspects of importance are presented and discussed, such as the possibility of making a housing career, increased commerce, diversity, infrastructure, education, safety, public health, employment, public places, accessibility and pride. The documents further state that a mutual time perspective is needed, because achieving urban development goals requires a long-term commitment. One of the main goals of the vision is to work towards becoming a city district more similar to the Gothenburg average (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008; Göteborgs Stad Angered, 2012).

Within the documents for developing Angered City Centre (the Program, Consultation Report and the Action Area Plan) there are more concrete descriptions on particular projects.

Propositions were made regarding the possibility of building more housing opportunities to encourage a housing career, looking over infrastructure and transportation designs to improve accessibility and safety, building a new hospital and Sports Arena to improve public health, create increased opportunities for commerce, boost Angered's status and reputation and to work towards decreasing segregation (Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2008a; Göteborgs Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2010).

6. Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Success factors

Collaboration

When working with urban development Brownill and Carpenter (2008) point out that there are several challenges, where one of them is the question of *cooperation versus competition*. Several of the interviewees of this study mentioned aspects indicating the existence of this challenge and acknowledged it to be a problem. Moeeni highlighted the fact that even though a city consists of several districts working separately it is important to remember that Gothenburg is actually one united city. Ryberg acknowledged that this can sometimes be difficult and that 'committee huggers' are common. Isaksson stressed the importance of not only focusing on your individual interests, district or tasks. Looking at the empirical evidence of this study a clear recognition of the problem of cooperation versus competition can therefore be seen. The empirical evidence also suggest that this challenge was actively address by working with uniting different parties, both across organisational borders and within the city district, around the overall vision of Vision Angered. The original idea and motivation behind creating Vision Angered was to try and remove the territorial mind-set between the city districts Gunnared and Lärjedalen, and to unite several different interests to work together towards improving Angered.

In the urban development of Angered the overall vision of Vision Angered was created to unite several different interests to work together towards the common goal of improving Angered. The importance of having an overall vision is one of the factors that Barber and Pareja Eastaway (2010) point out as crucial to successfully address sustainable urban

development. Since several of the interviewees expressed the opinion that the vision worked effectively to unite different parties to work together in the same direction, across borders and between co-workers, the empirical material of this study seems to be in line with the theory.

Political Agreement

An aspect that has not been examined within the theoretical framework, but that was extensively discussed by the interviewees as an important way of working was the question of political agreement and consensus. Several of the interviewees stated that they had a strategy put in place where they only presented suggestions to the City Council on proposals where political consensus within the city district had been reached. By only putting forward proposals supported by all the politicians they strengthened their position and sent a united message to the City Council, at the same time as avoiding internal conflicts between different political ideologies. This way of working made it easier to stand united and to actually push forward the important questions of interests and to improve the chances of getting the proposals accepted by the City Council.

Potent doers

Another aspect, highlighted by Isaksson as crucial to the implementation of Vision Angered, was to make sure to include the 'right kind of people' throughout the entire process. He stated that it was important to include a group of people who were 'potent doers', both considering their professional position and their capabilities, to ensure that the process moved forward efficiently. He further stressed that there has to be a common strategy in place that everyone has agreed upon, but that this strategy and the way of working also needs to be anchored and established with the people in power. This is not something that has been discussed or mentioned in the theoretical framework, but instead a success factor found only within the empirical material of the study.

Early involvement and communication

An additional dimension that could possibly be identified as a success factor in the work with the projects was that the residents of the area were involved at an early stage of the process. Swan and Ryberg both expressed the importance of involving the residents early on, since it is in the beginning of the process that they can influence the most. However, even though the early inclusion of the residents made it possible for them to express their opinions and put forward suggestions, their involvement was more of a consultative character rather than

decisive. Both Swan and Moeeni therefore stressed the importance of clearly communicating to the residents that their involvement was more of a discussion on how to improve the projects rather than actively making decisions about what projects to take on. Even though the residents had more of a consultative role within the projects, the interviewees expressed that it was still crucial to ensure that they got involved from the start, so that their opinions and suggestions could be taken into consideration on how to improve and design the different projects to their liking. Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) discuss the complexity of socially sustainable urban development, and stress the importance of involving several stakeholder groups in the process, where they identify the residents as one of the most important groups. Even though they mention the importance of involving the residents, they do not discuss in further detail regarding when and how this should be done. The empirical material of this study is consistent with what is stated in theory regarding the importance of involving residents, however it also shows that the timing of when they are involved might impact the outcome of a project.

6.2 Stakeholders

6.2.1 Stakeholder Identification

When discussing stakeholder identification within the projects the interviewees mentioned several different stakeholder groups of importance. The interviewees and several of the documents acknowledged participants of the private- and public sector, governments and the residents of the city to be important, which is consistent with the groups presented by Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014).

Empiricism versus Rationalism

Looking at the empirical material different stakeholders were identified in different ways. Moeeni stated that governments are always identified as important stakeholders in urban development. Swan further explained that it comes to turn fairly quickly who to involve when starting to look at an area. In the selection of residents, Ryberg assembled a group based on people he had met and been in contact with throughout the years he had been working in Angered. Neither the interviewees nor the documents labelled exactly which method was used for stakeholder identification in the projects, however, according to Yang's (2014) terminology an empirical perspective seems to have been applied. In accordance with what

she states, the interviewees also seemed to be unaware of which theoretical perspective they had used.

Yang (2014) argues that the most effective outcome is reached when both an empirical and a rationalistic perspective are applied, and the results are compared. However, the empirical evidence of this study suggests that in the projects leaders were unaware of the terminology of the different perspectives. In this particular case there seemed to be a general understanding that the most efficient outcome was reached when only a few stakeholders were included, which is consistent with the empirical perspective. Ryberg mentioned the risk of capturing too many individual interests if all residents were to be included, which could lead to a less productive outcome. He believed that by selecting people for the resident group, citizens of different backgrounds who were not normally included had an opportunity to influence the development of Angered. Therefore, a difference between what is stated in theory and what was carried out in practice can be recognised. Theory states that applying both perspectives is ideal, whereas practice implies that doing so would not be time efficient. There is a possibility that it is not as simple as to say that both perspectives should always be applied, but that it must instead be discussed based on the conditions for every individual project, since the appropriate method most likely varies with the complexity and the size of the project.

6.2.2 Stakeholder Involvement

Urban development is according to Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) highly influenced by several different stakeholders, which all impact sustainability in different ways. They further argue that in order for sustainable urban development to be achieved both the *planning sub-system* and the *social sub-system* must be addressed. Looking at the empirical material of this study the documents and interviews discussed aspects from both of these systems, which suggests that both the planning sub-system and the social sub-system have been considered in the projects.

Planning sub-system

All of the interviewees and several of the documents mentioned material aspects such as different housing policies and infrastructure to be important factors in order to create social sustainability, which are consistent with what Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) claim to be part of the planning sub-system. Some of the documents discuss practical aspects of land usage, but this was not something that was discussed in detail during any of the interviews.

Furthermore, the question of cultural heritage was not explored, but whether this was because of the way the interview questions were designed, or because of a lack of importance is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss.

Social sub-system

When talking about the social sub-system (illustrated previously in figure 4) Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) explain that this system includes the interaction and involvement of several different stakeholder groups, categorised as governments, private- and public sector and residents. They further state that *governments* play the most important role since they have a direct impact. This can be recognised as a coherent answer from several of the interviewees who expressed that politicians were of vital importance in the urban development projects, and that whenever there was a conflict of interest between stakeholders the political interests had the power to settle the disputes and make the final decisions regarding the implementation. This indicates both that politicians played a crucial part in the planning and execution of the projects, but also that the nature of their involvement in the process was highly focused on decision making, consistent with Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014).

This study reveals extensive information and descriptions of how the *residents* of Angered were involved in the projects. Examples of these activities were monthly workshops and dialogues with the residents, exhibitions of the projects, a city walk around town and the Consultation Report. However, as stated in the documents of Vision Angered, the residents only had the possibility to come with inputs and discussions on how to design and improve already accepted proposals, rather than affecting the decision making from the start. This made the involvement of citizens more of a consultative character rather than decisive. This is an example of what Yang (2014) calls the unbalanced nature of stakeholder engagement. On the one hand, the empirical material of this study shows arguments in line with Yang's (2014) ideas, revealing that the residents did not actually have the power to impact any of the bigger decisions. On the other hand, all of the interviewees mentioned the importance of including the residents, and that even though their involvement was not of a decisive character, it was still important to consider their opinions and suggestions.

Other actors than residents are the *private- and public sector* which also contribute and influence the process of urban development projects (Zheng, Shen and Wang, 2014). Looking at the empirical material of this study it shows that several organisations and institutions from

the private- and public sector have indeed been involved. Throughout the projects a consultation was held, including an exhibition, where participants and organisations from both the private- and public sector were invited to attend and provide comments, suggestions and ideas. Another way of involving the private sector was by inviting actors from different organisations to meetings, with relevance according to the precise question being addressed at that specific meeting. Considering the different roles of the stakeholders, residents seemed to have more of a consultative character whereas governments had a decision-making role, which is consistent with the argument presented by Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014), stating that different stakeholders can impact sustainability in different ways.

Criticism of model

According to the model that Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) present, it is only the relationship between different stakeholder groups that complicates the process of urban development. However, this model seems somewhat simplified when analysed in practice. Jones (2003) argues that stakeholders are diverse and heterogeneous groups, which often have competing interests, and that it is therefore important to state exactly who the stakeholders are. This is consistent with the answers provided by all of the interviewees and several of the documents, which stated that there were several different interests involved. Criticism can therefore be levelled at the model presented by Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014) because it does not consider the internal relationship within the different stakeholder groups. Over-simplifying a model in this way might impact how different stakeholders are involved. In the case of the projects, a resident group was assembled to represent the opinions of the residents. When working in this way there is a risk that the decision-makers believe that they have captured the general opinion of the citizens by working with this group. However, looking at Jones (2003) theories of heterogeneous stakeholder groups this might not be the actual case. The risk is then that certain stakeholders are said to be involved, but in reality only a small fragment actually gets to represent the group.

6.3 Social sustainability

All the interviewees stressed the importance of working with social issues, however no consensus on a common definition of social sustainability could be found. Despite the fact that there was no common definition of social sustainability, many social problems were addressed in practice within the projects. Several of the factors that Dempsey et al. (2009)

identify as commonly contributing to a socially sustainable urban context could be recognised both in the official documents and in the material from the interviews.

Social Equity

One example that several of the interviewees and documents mentioned as an important aspect was the question of decent housing. This can be related back to what Dempsey et al. (2009) state about social equity, where they explain that accessibility is a common way of measuring social equity in a community. They argue that in order for a community to reach social equity the residents need to have access to certain facilities, decent housing being one of them. Dempsey et al. (2009) further argue that other important facilities to have access to are education, commerce and public spaces. This is consistent with what is found in the empirical material, where several of the documents and interviewees stressed the importance of these aspects.

Sustainability of Community

Looking at the second dimension of Dempsey et al. (2009) framework for urban social sustainability an important aspect is the question of community stability and resident turnover. They state that keeping people in the area is an important aspect to create social sustainability in an urban area, which could further be recognised in what was stated in several of the interviews and documents. Both Moeeni and Isaksson expressed concerns regarding the fact that there was no possibility of making a housing career within the city district of Angered, and that this led to a high turnover of residents moving out. They therefore stressed the importance of working with ensuring more housing alternatives in the area, to make it possible for the residents to stay in a long-term perspective. This is also stated in several of the documents, where suggestions were presented on how to build new and different housing alternatives in the area. Other aspects from the dimension of sustainability of community that were mentioned by the interviewees and documents were the importance of working with increased safety and a sense of pride for the area.

Theory versus practice

The empirical evidence of this study shows that even though no consensus on a common definition of social sustainability could be found, aspects that according to Dempsey et al. (2009) fall under the concept were addressed in the projects. This is rather contradictory to what Vallance, Perkins and Dixon (2011) state, since they argue that the lack of a definition of social sustainability restricts the importance of the concept and its usefulness in practice. This could therefore be an area where theory and practice collide. Even though Vallance,

Perkins and Dixon (2011) argue that a definition is indeed of crucial importance, practice shows that this might not actually be the case. Instead the empirical evidence of this study indicates that it is possible to successfully address social issues regardless of if there is a clear definition of social sustainability or not.

7. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how to create socially sustainable urban development, and to generate a foundation for further discussion. In order to achieve this purpose, the study aimed at answering the following research questions:

- *What factors were of significant importance for succeeding with Vision Angered and the development of Angered City Centre?*
- *How were different stakeholders identified and involved in the planning and execution of Vision Angered and the program for developing Angered City Centre?*
- *How was social sustainability defined by central actors involved in the projects, and did the definition of the concept play a vital role in how social problems were addressed?*

This study shows several *success factors* present in the work with urban development projects in Angered, mainly concerning the involvement of stakeholders and the alignment of interests. Within the projects the importance of collaboration was recognised, and through this active action was taken. The overall vision of Vision Angered successfully managed to unite several different interests to work towards a common goal, instead of focusing on individual interests and territorial mind-sets. Additionally, emphasis was put on working together, both across organisational borders and between co-workers within the city district itself, which further lead to increased collaboration towards a common goal. Another important aspect that influenced the successful implementation was that decision-makers made sure to include the ‘right kind of people’ in the process. By involving a group of ‘potent doers’, as well as establishing the operational processes with the people in power, actors could ensure that the projects moved forward efficiently. Furthermore, they chose to only put forward suggestions to the City Council where political agreement had been reached, which prevented internal conflicts and conveyed a united image.

In the *identification* of stakeholders an empirical perspective seems to have been applied. The actors were not aware of the specific terminology, but instead they carried out what they believed to be the most efficient method for the projects. Theory suggests that both empiricism and rationalism should be applied, but in the case of stakeholder identification in the studied projects this was not what was carried out in practice. We therefore suggest that what perspective is applied for stakeholder identification should be discussed in every individual project, since what method is appropriate may vary with the size and complexity of the project.

Considering the *involvement* of stakeholders throughout the planning and execution of the projects this study reveals that both the planning- and the social sub-systems were considered in the process. This implies that the actors were aware of the complexity of creating sustainable urban development, even though they did not use these specific classifications. Consistent with theory, residents, governments and the private- and public sector were all considered as important stakeholder groups. However, their roles varied and governments had a decision-making role while the involvement of residents had more of a consultative character. Furthermore, there is the question of whether or not the stakeholders that were said to be involved actually were. Jones (2003) suggests that stakeholders are heterogeneous groups, which is an aspect not accounted for in the model presented by Zheng, Shen and Wang (2014). We therefore argue that this model is in some ways inadequate and that stakeholders must be viewed also as heterogeneous groups. If this is not done, there is a risk that certain stakeholders are said to be involved, but in reality only a small fragment actually get to represent the group. Moreover, this study suggests that although theory and practice are consistent regarding the importance of involving stakeholders, it is not only a question of *that* or *how* stakeholders are involved that can impact the project, but it is also a question of *when*.

Regarding the *definition of social sustainability*, no common definition could be found within the projects. However, when analysing the work carried out in practice several issues addressing social problems seemed to be present, and many of the aspects recognised by theorists as commonly contributing to socially sustainable urban development were identified. This implies that contrary to what is stated in theory, actually having a common definition of social sustainability might not be crucial to working with these issues in practice.

In conclusion, we agree that successfully creating socially sustainable urban development is a complex task. We further suggest that having a common definition of social sustainability is not the most important success factor when working with socially sustainable urban development. Instead it is of crucial importance to collaborate within every individual project, and agree upon a common direction. Since many of the stakeholders are the actual end users of the area it is furthermore of crucial importance to discuss which, when and how to involve the different stakeholder groups in an efficient and participating way. Instead of finding an agreement upon one common definition of social sustainability we therefore highlight the importance of analysing and understanding the complexity of the process, to be able to adequately adapt every individual project according to relevant circumstances.

8. Suggestions for further research

Future research should continue exploring the relationship between stakeholder involvement and urban development, particularly with focus on how this relationship affects the ability to create socially sustainable cities. It would be relevant to compare the results of different projects in different areas of the same city. It would also be of interest to examine if the results vary between cities. Moreover, the internal differences and heterogeneous interests within a stakeholder group should be explored in further detail, especially with a focus on how to manage potential conflicts and how to involve a more representative sample the group.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Translation of Words

Architect of Urban Planning - Planarkitekt
Association - Förening
Authority - Myndighet
City district - Stadsdel
City Council - Kommunfullmäktige
City District Administration Office - Stadsdelsförvaltning
Civil servant - Tjänsteman
Collaboration - Samverkan
Commerce - Handel
Committee - Nämnd
Committee hugger - Nämndkramare
Construction Committee - Byggnadsnämnd
Consultation - Samråd
Consultation Report - Samrådsredogörelse
Dialogue with the residents - Medborgardialog
District committee - Stadsdelsnämnd
Education Committee - Utbildningsnämnd
Emergency services - Räddningstjänst
Highest deciding-organ - Högst beslutande organ
Housing association - Bostadsrättsförening
Housing career - Boendekarriär
Manager of Urban Planning - Planchef
Merchant - Näringsidkare
Municipal Action Area Plan (Action Area Plan) - Detaljplan
Municipality - Kommun
Mixed city - Blandstad
People diversity - Mångfald
Public health - Folkhälsa
Public spaces - Mötesplatser
Real estate agency - Bostadsbolag
Resident Group - Medborgargrupp

Sports Arena - Angered's Arena (Bad- och Ishall)
The police force - Polismyndigheten
The Urban Construction Office - Stadsbyggnadskontoret
Traffic Committee - Trafiknämnd

Appendix II: Translation of Quotations

"...we are one city, and we cannot put walls around an area and say that it is not our problem." (Interview, Ali Moeeni, 26 April 2016)

"...vi är en stad och man kan inte sätta väggar runt ett område och säga att det är inte vårt bekymmer." (Interview, Ali Moeeni, 26/4)

"The work of implementing Vision Angered has to be carried out in collaboration. Everyone involved, not only Angered but also the city as a whole, must aspire towards the common goals" (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008, p. 4)

"Arbetet med att förverkliga Vision Angered i ett tillväxtperspektiv måste ske i samverkan. Alla berörda, inte bara i Angered utan även i staden, måste sträva tillsammans mot de gemensamma målen" (Göteborgs Stad Gunnared, 2008, p. 4)

"I believe that it has been of great importance, it enabled several different interests to work in the same direction, express the same things and invest in Angered." (Interview, Jan-Åke Ryberg, 28 April 2016)

"Jag tror att den hade en oerhörd betydelse för man fick ett antal olika intressen att gå åt samma håll, säga samma saker och satsa på Angered." (Interview, Jan-Åke Ryberg, 28/4)

"...we only put forward the questions which we can agree upon and put away those where we have different perceptions on how to reach the result. This gives us a strength in our work towards the City Council [...]. We agree upon what we say regardless of which political party we represent." (Interview, Ali Moeeni, 25 April 2016)

“Vi säger såhär, vi tar de frågor som vi är överens och vi lägger undan det som vi kanske tänker olika om hur vi ska nå dit. Och det ger oss en styrka i vårt arbete gentemot de här facknämnderna, gentemot kommunstyrelsen[...].Vi är överens om det som vi säger oavsett parti.” (Interview, Ali Moeeni, 25 April 2016)

“Those questions upon which we can agree, that is where we can unite and make things happen, and together we can put forward the thoughts and ideas we have within the frame for this vision and present them to our politicians [...] who in turn can present them to the City Council. If the same message comes from several different directions, things happen.”

(Interview, Pelle Isaksson, 29 April 2016)

“För det vi är överens om, det kan vi skapa en gemenskap kring och få någonting gjort, och vi kan tillsammans plocka fram de tankar och idéer vi har inom ramen för den här visionen och lägga fram de till våra politiker [...] så kan de marknadsföra den, ta idén med sig till Gustav Adolfs torg, och förankra med sina respektive partier. Kommer det från flera olika håll, då händer det ju någonting.” (Interview, Pelle Isaksson, 29 April 2016)

“[...] he did not include those who would always claim to represent everyone’s opinion, and that he picked a diverse group of young, old, pensioners, people who worked there, people who owned a shop there. It was a mix of people” (Interview Åsa Swan, 28 April 2016)

“[...]han inte tog de som alltid liksom utså sig för att säga allas åsikter, och att han tog väldigt många olika unga, gamla, pensionärer, sådana som jobbade där, sådana som hade en affär där. Det var liksom en salig blandning. (Interview Åsa Swan 28/4)

“Not to any other than that I was out talking, presenting and reasoning around these different suggestions. This is of course a problem, but at the same time I believe that it is more efficient if you find the right group to work with a proposal like this. If you go to a meeting at Blå Stället there will always be ten people naming themselves as professionals knowing everything.” (Interview, Jan-Åke Ryberg, 28 April 2016)

“Inte mer än att jag var ute och pratade, presenterade och resonerade kring de här olika förslagen. Det är naturligtvis ett problem, men samtidigt tror jag det är effektivare om man hittar rätt grupp som jobbar igenom ett sådant här förslag. Går man på möte på Blå Stället så är det ju tio proffs-tyckare som vet allting.” (Interview, Jan-Åke Ryberg, 28 April 2016)

“A dialogue with the residents (including a dialogue with merchants) should primarily be held discussing already accepted proposals from the Vision.” (Göteborgs Stad Angered, 2012, p. 3)

“Medborgardialog (inklusive dialog med näringsidkare) ska i första hand ske om och kring Vision Angered accepterade förslag och visioner.” (Göteborgs Stad Angered, 2012, p. 3)