Stakeholder Involvement and Public Participation in Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning

Training SUMP Meeting Finland 8-05-2015
Patrick Auwerx
Mobiel 21 – Belgium
Overview

• Importance of participation
• Frequent challenges
• How to handle a participatory approach?
• Useful tips
• Participation in the Flanders SUMP Policy Framework
• Reflection and conclusions
Importance of participation in SUMP

- Communication becomes strategically part of transport planning.
- Planning for the people!
- Engage stakeholders and citizens
- It entails public involvement and strengthens public support
- Essential part of community building: actively involve end users!

Participation = basic principle of SUMP
Transport planning as a frequently controversial area

Oosterweel Link project, Antwerp
## Different Policy views

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<th>Type Policy Towards Citizen Participation</th>
<th>Communication Level</th>
<th>Policy Message</th>
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<td>Closed Policy</td>
<td>Public relations &quot;Mandatory&quot;</td>
<td>Minimal: communication (information)</td>
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<td>Transparent Policy</td>
<td>Partnership &quot;Responsible citizen&quot;</td>
<td>Various involvement techniques</td>
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Barriers to successful participation

- the **lack of political will** and support for carrying out an (in-depth) participation process
- **limited financial and personnel capacities** within local authorities
- **lack of skills** on how to plan and carry out a participation process
- a so called ‘**consultation fatigue**’ mirroring the low interest and awareness of transport planning among citizens and stakeholder groups;
- ‘**dilemma of participation**’ as common problem
- an **imbalance of stakeholders**
- difficulties to initiate **behavioural change**
- the **lack of a participation tradition** in some European countries
Participation practices in Europe

- Countries with formal, mandatory consultation procedures for mid- and large scale transport projects as well as for the development of transport plans and SUMP

- Countries with experience in innovative involvement tools

- Countries with no or only very limited formal procedures for involving citizens and stakeholders
How to handle: step by step

- Define subject & scope
- Perform stakeholder analysis
- Assemble a budget
- Manage timing
- Choose a mix of appropriate tools
- Implement participation actions/event
- Specify evaluation of process and outcomes

Involvement strategy or (part of) Communication Plan
Subject, scope & context

- Geographical scope?
- Legal requirements?
- Knowledge of topic?
- Novelty?
- Complexity?
- Controversial?
- Tradition in participation?
- Views on participation?
- Other planning context?
Perform stakeholder analysis

- **Who** should be involved and **why**?
- **Consider:**
  - Concerns, positions, expertise...
  - Interactions, conflicts...
  - Social in-/exclusion aspects: hard-to-reach groups
  - Make (better) use of existing networks, multiplicators
  - Careful recruitment (criteria, representatives, random sample, diversity, good examples, 10%-reply rule)
  - Defining stages that will be subject to which stakeholders
  - Identifying degree of involvement (see later)
  - Accept varied commitment, personal approach for...?
Who is at stake

- Stakeholder categories affected by, or involved in SUMP:
  - Citizens (inhabitants of SUMP perimeter)
  - Primary stakeholders (ultimately affected)
  - Key stakeholders (power position)
  - Intermediary stakeholders/multipliers: (broad range of organisations who implement, expertise, inform and report)
Manage timing

• Continuous participation throughout all stages of the process
• As early as possible
• Participation is a 'never ending story'
  – Pre-event: planning stage
  – Event: implementation stage
  – Post-event: follow-up stage (monitoring – evaluation)
• Allow ample time for participation
• Be flexible: delays, extra day-by-day events
Budget

- Allocate sufficient budget for participation following:
  - Scope (geographical, political, social...)
  - Methods, techniques and tools
  - (external) experts help
  - ...
Mix of appropriate tools

- There is no 'right' tool.
- Main criteria in choosing:
  - What is your **objective**?
  - What **stage** are you in?
  - What is the **nature and scope of issue**?
  - **Who** do you want to involve?
  - What is the **level of involvement** to achieve?
  - What **budget and time** is available?
The participation ladder

- Which level of participation do you aim for (when)?
  - Information
  - Consultation
  - Advise
  - Co-production
  - Co-decision

“good information beats bad co-production”
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Evaluation

• Make goals concrete and find result indicators
• Incorporate a feedback loop
• Action and evaluation plan per event
• Analysis of the output
  – Process
  – Impact
Useful tips

- Be positive about your SUTP: advantages
- Changing is never easy, but soon it will become better!
- First things first: e.g.
  - One (inside) vision
  - start in city ‘centre’
- Use citizens giving good examples: multipliers
- Keep people informed about what is happening
- Visualise, avoid technical jargon, make it fun
- Communication: combine participation with media & marketing
- Key attitudes: trust, understand, respect, willingness ...
- Take ideas on merit, not (status of) person who provided it
- Risk management: battlegrounds, dominant stakeholders, if decisions already been made it turns out wrong...
Status Mobiliteitsplannen
8 oktober 2010

Legende
- gemeenten die nog geen moederconvenant hebben
- gemeenten met een mobiliteitsplan dat vijf jaar of ouder is, zijn aan de slag met de snelloops (of in voorbereiding ervan)
- gemeenten die bezig zijn met de uitwerking van hun eerste of tweede generatie mobiliteitsplan
- gemeenten met een eerste mobiliteitsplan dat nog geen vijf jaar oud is en dus nog geldig
- gemeenten met een tweede generatie mobiliteitsplan

Data: aBMV
Lay-out: Kelly Van Wijndaele
Datum: 14 oktober 2010
Participation in Flanders SUMP Framework

- Participation Principle defined in:
  - Parliament Act on Mobility
  - overall ‘Municipal Decree’
  - GBC: Municipal Guiding Commission: all stakeholders (+ citizens)
- Obligation to involve citizens early, efficient and in all stages of the policy process.
- Mayor and city council decide autonomously
- Minimal: public investigation procedure
- Practise: too much ‘old tradition’ (information, hearings...)
- New active citizenship approaches (active citizens in cities)
In the 90’s

• **One way information:**
  – Start of communication in the city – communication bicycle plan
  – Telling people about the plans and upcoming works

• **Classic tools:**
  – Press releases
  – Advertisements, local TV
  – Information evenings
  – Websites
  – ...
Gent 2000

Up to 2012...

- **Two way information:**
  - Telling people about plans and work
  - Asking for ideas, suggestions, comments

- **Classic tools + new tools**
  - Public hearings
    - General
    - Specific projects
  - Dialogue cafés (for instance railway station development)
  - Workshops on different themes
  - Sound board groups for large projects
  - Start using social media
From 2012 on...

- **Co-creation**
  - plans and ideas come from citizens – transition thinking

- **Tools**
  - Small working groups on different subjects
  - City administration is facilitating, **NOT** steering
  - Spreading the virus
Living streets Gent 2002

• **Pilot of 2 streets**
  – Cars were banned for one month
  – Instead: picnic tables, swings, mobile trees, grass, ...
  – New forms of mobility were tried out (e-bikes, carrier bikes, ..)

• **Results**
  – One month is too short for a pilot
  – Most people were very positive
  – People who were sceptical became more positive
  – Social contact was increased
  – Children loved it
Antwerp Ringroad
Antwerp 2015
Ringland citizen network

- Horizontal democracy initiative
- Opposite of old technical school traffic engineers
- Ringland created own mandate
- Crowdfunding: 100000 € for 3 studies
- Basic scenario: underground ring road + new public space + air quality filters
- 5,6 bio € financed by road charging (2€/car)
- Pre-financing through citizen shareholdership
Some critical reflections...

• Trend in cities observed to move away from top-down planning approaches to collaborative planning
• Phenomenon of “Particitainment”? (Selle, 2013)
• Quality of decisions – does it increase or decrease?
• The question of democracy
  – Representative Political democracy by Parliament Actions?
  – Involvement of only small sections of the public or stakeholders
  – “democratic” is not equal to “accepted”
• How to take the results into account in the on-going technical planning process?
• How to come to a joint, accepted decision?
Thanks for your attention!

Questions?

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Mobiel 21

(SUMP Network Belgium)