

Private–Private Cooperation in Urban Regeneration Projects

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SUMMARY

Traditionally urban regeneration in the Netherlands has been based on either ‘public-led’ development projects, with the municipality in a leading role in the development, or public-private partnerships, with the municipality and one or more private developers closely working together in the development project. Usually, municipalities had (and still have) a very substantial role in these projects, not only in the planning process, but also in financial terms. For various reasons, the effectiveness of these development models is now being questioned. Many projects have come to a standstill. The on-going financial and economic crisis can partially be hold responsible for this, but shortcomings of the development models have been suggested as a cause of the problems as well (Buitelaar, 2011; Janssen-Jansen et al., 2012; Van der Krabben & Jacobs, 2013). Moreover, apart from the possible shortcomings, municipalities have now become very reluctant to take a role as investor to the extent they were used to. As an alternative development model private sector-led and private-private partnerships have been put forward (Heurkens, 2012). In the context of this paper, we define private-private partnerships as the collaboration of two or more private developers in an urban regeneration project, both in organisational and financial terms. Recently, the ministries responsible for planning in the Netherlands, in cooperation with several Dutch universities, have launched a national pilot program to experiment with innovative private-private partnership in urban regeneration. Ten pilot projects have been selected as part of this program. In this paper we address the question to what extent private-private partnerships for urban regeneration can be effective, in the context of the present Dutch planning system. Regarding this effectiveness we analyse two different aspects: (1) how effective are private-private partnerships in the process of purchasing the necessary land and properties in the redevelopment area, and (2) to what extent can the public interest be protected properly and, related to this, can cost recovery of public works take place? To answer these questions we will, first, study the international literature on private-led urban regeneration projects. Second, we will analyse to what extent Dutch planning law ‘supports’ such a private-private partnership. And third, we will discuss the results of the pilot projects. We conclude that planning law, in its present form, lacks the right instruments to deal properly with private-private partnerships in urban regeneration. References: Buitelaar, E. (2010) Cracks in the Myth: Challenges to Land Policy in the Netherlands. *TESG* 101 (3), 349-356. Heurkens, E.W.T.M. (2012) Private sector-led urban development projects: management, partnerships and effects in the Netherlands and the UK. *Architecture + Built Environment*, Vol. 4. Delft: Delft University of Technology. Janssen-Jansen, L., Lloyd, M.G., Peel, D. & Van der Krabben, E. (2012) Planning in an environment without growth. Invited essay for Raad voor

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