URBAN PLANNING – HUMAN-CENTERED AND HISTORICALLY INFORMED (CONTINUED)



Rotterdam, meeting of the International Advisory Board to the Mayor, Ahmed Aboutaleb.

I have seen my role as a member as one of representing the principles of human-centered design to the processes of urban planning and government. (See also – [link] [Link] [Link])



My emphasis has frequently been upon narrative and story – understanding people's orientation to the history of the city, orientations upon different pasts in this very diverse community, future hopes too. The stories told and those that people tell themselves. This year the Board considered some foresight models – future scenarios for the port and city – the shape of things to come (and how this influences what we do now).

Much of this is about the construction of place, sense of place, and belonging.

We were joined this year by Larry Beasley –

> a true city is about a place. It is about a city you can enjoy for free, that no matter how wealthy you are, you can enjoy it because it's there

As City Planner, Larry played a leading role in transforming Vancouver's downtown core into a vibrant, livable urban community. In doing so, he developed a participatory and socially responsible approach to zoning, planning and design. This is often called the "Vancouver Model".

Human-centered planning.

Here in Rotterdam Larry proposed increasing the density of the inner city as a crucial factor in attracting people back there, and offering rich urban lifestyle.

Get people together. But its not just about bodies or creative spirits.

Think of urban experience. Person – street seating – person – doorway – building – tree – motorcycle – traffic island – person – arranged goods (shopfront) – dog and person …

So care needs to be taken in what we mean by human-centered. Human-centered urban planning instantly suggests a much more nuanced view of human experience – as such hybrid assemblages, their qualities and their quantitative density.

Haecceities and quiddities – herenesses and whatnesses.

This is so much more tangible than stories.





