

From Counterculture to Cultural Icon

How the Effenaar Highlights Eindhoven's Cultural and Urban Development Strategies

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Abstract

The Effenaar in Eindhoven evolved from a grassroots squatter initiative in the 1970s into one of the city's most prominent cultural institutions. Founded by young activists who reclaimed a former textile factory, the venue reflected the countercultural and political climate of the time, particularly the influence of the squatters movement. Over time, the Effenaar developed from an informal, community-driven space into a professional concert hall, mirroring Eindhoven's broader transformation from an industrial hub to a center of design, culture, and innovation.

Its spatial, cultural, and political evolution reveals how cultural centers can play a vital role in redefining urban identity and contributing to long-term municipal strategies. The Effenaar's transition shows the integration of bottom-up initiatives into official planning, the reuse of industrial heritage, and the shifting relationship between alternative culture and institutional recognition. As a case study, it demonstrates how cultural venues rooted in activism and local need can become lasting fixtures in the urban fabric and spearhead meaningful change.

Key words

Adaptive Reuse, City Development, Concert Hall, Cultural Center, Effenaar, Eindhoven, Industrial Heritage, Para+, Squatting Movement, Urban Development.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Cultural centers have long been recognized as having the capacity to be able to act as catalysts for urban revitalization and community engagement (Aalst, 1997). They can serve as hubs for artistic expression, social interaction, and cultural exchange, contributing to the economic and social vitality of cities (Verschoor, 2009). They can create jobs, lifestyles, and compete with other cities. The presence of such centers can lead to the development of cultural clusters, which can attract tourism, stimulate local economies, and create a sense of community identity. The phenomenon of cultural clustering has been explored as a strategy for remapping urban cultural policy by municipalities, emphasizing the role of these centers in post-industrial city transformation (Mommaas, 2004).

But for cultural centers to succeed in combination with city development, some factors need to be considered. They need a mix of functions and users, great positioning and profiling, shared ownership and communal purpose, local support, a sustainable business model, an active community, and meeting a need of that specific area (Brand, n.d.).

All these factors could be different per city. For this thesis, the city of Eindhoven will be used as a case study. Eindhoven's history is deeply intertwined with industrial development, primarily driven by the presence of electronics giant Philips and DAF Trucks. Starting from the 1970s and 1980s, the city underwent significant changes, transitioning from an industrial hub to a center of technology and design. Eindhoven leveraged its industrial heritage to reinvent itself (Blanc et al, n.d.). This strategic shift not only preserved the city's economic vitality but also enhanced its cultural appeal, attracting creative industries and creating a vibrant cultural scene.

This thesis will look at the Effenaar, a cultural center turned music venue that had a great impact on the city starting from its founding in the 1970s. The Effenaar began as a squatted initiative by local youth under the name 'Para+', initially serving as a space for music and social gatherings. The space quickly gained a reputation as a regional hub for alternative culture. Despite early challenges, including associations with drug use (Drunen, 1980), the venue was officially recognized and continued to evolve, focusing more on cultural events over time.

The Effenaar's influence extended beyond music; it became a focal point for youth culture and social movements. Its establishment coincided with a broader squatting movement in the Netherlands during the 1970s and 1980s, reflecting a period of social activism and a push for alternative cultural spaces (Verbakel, 2017).

Chapter 2: Topic of thesis

This thesis explores the relationship between cultural centers and urban transformation, using the Effenaar in Eindhoven as a case study. The thesis examines how cultural spaces born out of counterculture can evolve into formal institutions and contribute to a city's identity, image, and development. Through the lens of architectural history, the Effenaar is analyzed not just as a music venue, but as a cultural institution shaped by broader municipal strategies, industrial heritage, and social movements around the time of its founding and bloom, the 1970s and 1980s.

Chapter 3: Research question

Starting from the late 19th century, Eindhoven has been known for its industrial heritage, mostly pertaining to companies like auto maker DAF, tech giant Philips, and some textile businesses (Blanc et al, n.d.) (Schippers, 2011). In addition to these famous industries, Eindhoven is now also known for its design and art. Not much publishing has been done about these two topics relating to Eindhoven's city development. This history thesis offers some research about this missing piece of publishing. This information could contribute to the architectural history of Eindhoven and its development as part of the larger story that is already available.

Additionally, this thesis will look at the larger picture of how cultural centers intersect with municipal planning, industrial reuse, and grassroots activism, in a changing society of the 1970s and 1980s.

The analysis done in this thesis will answer the main research question of this paper: *"How does the evolution of the Effenaar reflect broader processes of urban transformation, adaptive reuse, and socio-cultural change in Eindhoven and the Netherlands?"*. To answer this question there are a few sub questions that need to be answered:

- *What makes a cultural center successful within the context of urban development strategies?*
- *How has Eindhoven's transitioned from an industrial city to a design and innovation hub?*
- *What influence did social movements of the 1970s and 1980s have on cultural and spatial practices in the Netherlands?*
- *How did the Effenaar get started and evolve over time?*

Chapter 4: Research method

The research questions in this thesis will be answered by reading and analyzing scientific literature and archival documents from the 'regionaal historisch centrum eindhoven', checking newspaper archives, and displaying images of the case study throughout the years. All this information will be regarding the general topic of the relationship between cultural centers and urban transformation, and regarding the specific case study of The Effenaar in Eindhoven. The findings that will be done will be connected from all these places in a logical way to answer the research questions.

Chapter 5: Cultural centers and city development

Cultural centers can serve as important places within their cities, functioning as hubs of artistic expression, social cohesion, and economic stimulation. So much so that, in some cases, they can have a direct impact on the development of cities, in their direct surroundings or the city at large. If that is the case, their impact goes beyond their purpose of cultural engagement, influencing a range of aspects of urban development, including tourism, economic vitality, and community identity. This chapter sets up the theoretical framework of assessing a cultural center's success. It highlights the benefits cultural centers can have on city development (section 1.1), their potential strategic use by municipalities (section 1.2), and the criteria by which they can be deemed successful (section 1.3).

5.1 Benefits of cultural centers on city development

Cultural centers can contribute to city development in multiple ways, including, but not limited to, encouraging artistic expression, social interaction, and cultural exchange, and contributing to the economic and social vitality of cities, as detailed in the master's thesis of Mieke Verschoor (2009).

In more detail, Irina van Aalst's dissertation 'Culture in the City; on the role of cultural amenities in the development of city centers' (1997) highlights multiple effects that cultural initiatives can have on a city:

- Economic benefits: creates jobs and opportunities for the area, through job creation, tourism attraction, and the support of local businesses.
- Attracts people to a city: competition between cities to attract people are based on a lot of different amenities within the city, cultural facilities are one of many that can attract visitors.
- Create lifestyle: art and culture can be seen as instruments to live a certain desired lifestyle.
- Seen as modern and innovative: the area where the cultural facility is located can be seen as doing something new, it attracts attention.
- Bring people together: in more diverse places, a cultural facility can bring people together.

These points can be applied to cultural centers. And, when present, can encourage investments in surrounding areas, leading to increased property values and revitalization of neighborhoods.

Moreover, cultural centers can enhance the social fabric of cities by providing spaces for community interaction, learning, and cross-cultural exchanges, creating a sense of belonging among residents. Additionally, they can serve as platforms for innovation and creativity, attracting artists, intellectuals, and entrepreneurs who contribute to the overall dynamism of the city.

5.2 Cultural centers as part of the municipality strategy

Because of the possible positive influences that a cultural center can have on a city (section 5.1), municipalities in that case have started to use them as a strategy to diversify their city offerings, expand their reach, and financial contributions. There are several ways a municipality can do this.

By establishing or revitalizing cultural institutions, city officials can promote cultural tourism, drawing visitors who contribute to local economies through accommodation, dining, and entertainment expenditures. Moreover, cultural centers can play a role in placemaking strategies, helping cities cultivate distinct cultural identities that differentiate them from others. Municipalities can also use cultural centers as instruments of social inclusion by ensuring accessibility to cultural activities for

diverse populations. In many cases, cities can invest in cultural infrastructure as part of larger urban renewal projects, transforming underdeveloped areas into (cultural) districts that attract both businesses and residents (Aalst, 1997).

This phenomenon of cultural clustering has been explored as a strategy for urban cultural policy, emphasizing the role of these centers in post-industrial city transformation. As described in a paper by Hans Mommaas (2004), urban development policies have increasingly embraced the formation of cultural clusters based on ideologies of 'enterprise culture', 'urban imagery', and 'positioning strategies'. These clusters serve as instruments for economic and cultural revitalization, contributing to the spatial transformation of cities. However, despite initial promise, cultural clusters often face challenges due to conflicting cultural, economic, social, and spatial interests. While these projects present opportunities for urban cultural development within a 'post-modern' urban framework, they also run the risk of creating tensions that can ultimately hinder progress. To achieve sustainable and effective cultural cluster projects, a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between culture and commerce is necessary.

5.3 Cultural centers success factors

Cultural centers aren't always guaranteed to be a success in relation to city development. For municipalities to integrate cultural centers in their strategy, they want them to be successful at their goals. But when is a cultural center successful for the city it's situated?

Rinske Brand (n.d.), co-founder of BRAND The Urban Agency (an agency aimed at making cities healthier, more innovative, and more inclusive), believes that there are 7 aspects that make cultural centers succeed in combination with city development and a city strategy in general:

1. Having a mix of functions and users
2. Having great positioning and profiling
3. Having shared ownership and communal purpose
4. Having local support
5. Having a sustainable business model
6. Having an active community
7. Meeting a need

In Brand's view, these points must be present in a sustainable and impactful way. Economically, success can be measured through increased foot traffic, higher revenues from cultural tourism, and the growth of creative industries around the center. Socially, a cultural center is successful when it fosters inclusivity, engagement, and educational opportunities for a wide demographic or the specifically targeted demographic. A successful cultural center also strengthens the cultural vibrancy of a city by supporting artists, hosting diverse events, and maintaining strong community involvement. Furthermore, the longevity and adaptability of a cultural center to changing urban dynamics can serve as indicators of its effectiveness in contributing to city development.

Looking at all these points, if a cultural center remains a vital part of the urban landscape over time, continually drawing new audiences and evolving with the city's needs, it can be deemed truly successful.

5.4 Conclusion

Cultural centers can play an essential role in city development by driving economic growth, enhancing social cohesion, and establishing unique cultural identities. If this is the case, municipalities usually recognize their strategic value and invest in them as tools for urban revitalization, tourism, and community engagement. According to a variety of sources mentioned in the previous sections, the success of a cultural center is determined by having one or more of its abilities to generate economic benefits, create social impact, and sustain cultural relevance over time. As cities continue to evolve, cultural centers can play an integral part into their growth, serving as cornerstones of creativity, education, and urban identity.

Chapter 6: Eindhoven's heritage and development

Eindhoven, a city in the southern Netherlands, has transformed over the past century. From its roots as an industrial powerhouse in the 19th and 20th century to its current reputation as a hub of innovation and design, the city's architectural and urban development reflects a strategy of adaptation and reinvention. This chapter explores Eindhoven's industrial heritage (section 6.1), its post-industrial shift towards technology and design (section 6.2), and the strategic decisions by the municipality that have shaped its current urban fabric (section 6.3) to be able to relate it to choices made in the case study of the Effenaar (chapter 8).

6.1 Industrial heritage

In the early 20th century, Eindhoven rapidly evolved into an industrial city, largely driven by the establishment and expansion of companies like Philips and DAF. These companies played a crucial role in shaping the city's economy and built environment. The presence of these major industrial companies solidified Eindhoven's status as a center of production and technological development (Schippers, 2011).

This industrial growth of Eindhoven led to significant urban expansion, with factory complexes, workers' housing, and infrastructure projects. Key industrial areas, such as Strijp-S, were developed as self-sufficient districts with housing, recreational facilities, and factories integrated into a single urban fabric and surrounding. The architectural style of this period was largely functional, with modernist influences shaping the factories and worker accommodations. Industrial architecture, characterized by red brick façades, large windows, and steel frameworks, became a defining feature of Eindhoven's built environment.

6.2 From industry to innovation and design

At the end of the 20th century, Eindhoven faced a turning point as industrial decline led to the closure and/or relocation of many factories. Philips gradually moved its headquarters and production facilities out of the city, leaving large vacant industrial sites behind (Blanc et al, n.d.) (Schippers, 2011). Rather than allowing these areas to fall into disrepair, the municipality adopted a forward-thinking approach, reimagining Eindhoven as a city of innovation, design, and knowledge-based industries.

A crucial step in this transformation was the repurposing of former industrial sites into creative and high-tech districts. Strijp-S, once known as the 'forbidden city' due to its restricted access as a Philips complex, became an area full of adaptive reuse. The area was redeveloped into a cultural and residential district, retaining its industrial aesthetic, while integrating contemporary architectural interventions (Blanc et al, n.d.). The former Philips factories were transformed to design studios, co-working spaces, and cultural venues, creating a creative ecosystem that aligned with the city's new identity.

6.3 Municipal strategies for urban development

Another crucial urban development strategy was the promotion of Eindhoven as the ‘Design Capital of the Netherlands’. This branding effort was spearheaded by events like Dutch Design Week, which showcases the city’s creative power and attracts designers, entrepreneurs, and investors. The municipality also invested in architectural projects that reflected Eindhoven’s innovative spirit, such as the redevelopment of the former VDMA terrain (VDMA-Eindhoven, n.d.).

Moreover, Eindhoven’s approach to urban renewal emphasized mixed-use development, combining residential, commercial, and cultural functions within formerly industrial areas. This strategy ensured that areas like Strijp-S and the city center remained lively and economically viable while at the same time maintaining their historical character. By prioritizing sustainability, technological integration, and design, the city successfully reinvented itself without getting rid of its industrial past.

It is important to mention that Eindhoven wasn’t the only city to undergo a change like this. In Rotterdam the Van Nelle factory now houses creative businesses and events, and the Westergasfabriek terrain in Amsterdam contains a mix of leisure functions. This approach to adaptive reuse and industrial heritage revitalization gained widespread popularity through social- and architectural and planning movements in the 1980s (chapter 7).

6.4 Conclusion

Eindhoven’s evolution from an industrial powerhouse to a leading center of innovation and design is a result of strategic urban planning and adaptive reuse. The city’s industrial heritage, once defined by factories and mass production, has been integrated into a forward-thinking urban vision that tries to balance history and modernity. Through initiatives like the transformation of areas like Strijp-S, the municipality has positioned Eindhoven as a city that honors its past while embracing the future.

Chapter 7: Social change and new movements in The Netherlands in the 1970s & 1980s

The 1970s and 1980s in the Netherlands are known because of its significant social changes, driven by economic shifts, political activism, and cultural transformations. Several movements emerged, challenging traditional power structures and advocating for environmental sustainability, social equality, and democratization of urban spaces. These movements challenged traditional institutions and proposed alternative ways of living, often influencing public policy and the built environment. In this chapter, movements that had impact on urban development will be discussed (section 7.1), with the squatters movements being seen as the most influential one (section 7.2).

7.1 Architectural and urban impact of new movements

Some of the new social movements of the time had a direct impact on architecture and the built environment. One of them being the growing environmental awareness of the period by publications such as 'The Limits to Growth' by the Club of Rome. This led to new approaches of sustainable architecture and urban planning. There was a push for energy-efficient buildings and green spaces within cities, reflecting concerns about pollution and resource depletion. Another movement, feminism, influenced architectural designs by advocating for more inclusive housing models, such as communal living spaces and co-housing projects that promoted shared responsibilities and social cohesion. At the same time, municipalities also began experimenting with participatory planning, incorporating public input into urban development projects as a response to demands for more democratic city planning processes, as demonstrated by the 'cycling protests' (Bruno et al, 2021).

7.2 The squatters movement and its impact on urban development

But one of the most influential movements in shaping the Dutch urban development during this period for this thesis was the squatters movement. Emerging in response to a housing crisis and the high number of vacant buildings, the movement started in the 1960s but really gained traction in the 1970s, with activists occupying empty properties to protest housing shortages and speculative real estate practices (Gemert et al, 2012) (Tromp, 1981). The squatters not only provided shelter for those in need but also turned several abandoned buildings into vibrant cultural and social centers. This created alternative ways of living and working within the city.

Some occupied buildings were transformed through 'Do-It-Yourself' (DIY) renovations, introducing new spatial configurations and experimental communal living models. Squatting also led to the reuse of historic buildings that were planned for demolition, preserving parts of the urban fabric that might have been lost otherwise. Squatters saved some spaces that now have evolved into permanent cultural venues, such as Paradiso in Amsterdam, WORM in Rotterdam, and the Effenaar in Eindhoven (chapter 8). All of these centers continue to function as important hubs for music, art, and activism to this day.

From a policy perspective, the squatters movement forced municipalities to reconsider their approach to urban planning and housing policy. The pressure from squatters contributed to the implementation of social housing programs, increased regulations on property speculation, and a shift towards mixed-use urban development (Gemert et al, 2012). In some cases, cities negotiated with squatters to legalize their occupations.

Despite crackdowns on squatting in the 1990s, and a 2010 law banning the practice, the legacy of the movement continues to influence contemporary urban strategies. Many of the ideas pioneered by squatters, such as interim use of vacant spaces, bottom-up urban development, and collaborative housing models, have been embraced by municipalities and architects seeking innovative solutions to contemporary urban challenges.

7.3 Conclusion

Some specific social movements of the 1970s and 1980s in the Netherlands, namely environmental awareness, feminism, and participatory planning, played a critical role in reshaping the country's urban and architectural landscape. Additionally, the squatters movement had the most tangible impact on city development strategies. It forced municipalities to reconsider vacant property policies, encouraged adaptive reuse of buildings, and promoted more inclusive urban planning processes.

Chapter 8: Case Study: the Effenaar and the city of Eindhoven

In this chapter the case study of De Effenaar will be examined, from its founding (section 8.1) to its current situation (section 8.4). Additionally, the transformation of the original building (section 8.2) and its place in the social-cultural landscape of Eindhoven (section 8.3) will be highlighted.

8.1 Founding and early history as Para+

De Effenaar found its roots in the late 1960s and early 1970s countercultural movement of squatting (chapter 7.2). Originally established in 1970 under the name Para+, it was founded by a group of activists, artists, and young people who sought to create an alternative space for music, art, and social engagement (Schippers, 2009) (Verbakel, 2017) (Jentjens, 2022). Para+ could be seen as being part of a broader movement in the Netherlands that aimed to reclaim abandoned spaces for cultural and communal activities, challenging the commercialized entertainment industry and promoting grassroots creativity (section 7.2).

The center was born out of a need for a venue that catered to youth culture and underground music, offering a stage for alternative bands, experimental performances, and political discussions.

In 1971, the name changed to De Effenaar, referencing the building's previous function as a textile factory that produced linen and cotton fabrics (Effenaar means "flattener" in Dutch, referring to the textile finishing process) (Schippers, 2009) (Verbakel, 2017) (Jentjens, 2022). This industrial heritage became part of the venue's identity. This was in line with Eindhoven's transition from a manufacturing city to a center of creative expression (chapter 6).

8.2 The original building and its reclamation

The original home of De Effenaar was a former textile factory, a leftover of Eindhoven's industrial past (see figure 1 & 2). Located on the Dommelstraat 2, The building had been left abandoned as the textile industry declined. When the founders of Para+ took over the structure, it was in a state of neglect, but its industrial character provided a raw and flexible space for cultural experimentation. Unlike purpose-built cultural venues, the factory's large open spaces and high ceilings were well-suited for concerts, exhibitions, and other large-scale events (see figure 3). The building was transformed to include offices, a (small) cinema, café, music studio, library, store, and other functions (Renovation plan Dommelstraat 2, 1970) (appendix 1).

The reclamation of the building was not only a practical decision but also a political statement. At a time when many cities were demolishing their industrial past to make way for modern development, the decision to reuse an existing structure for alternative culture challenged mainstream urban planning trends. This DIY approach reflected the squatters movement (section 7.2). Figures 3 – 8 show this bottom-up approach in reclaiming the building with self-made furniture and other interventions in the space.



Figure 1 – The original building of the Effenaar (Eindhoven in beeld, 1972)



Figure 2 – The Effenaar seen from another angle (Eindhoven in beeld, 1995)

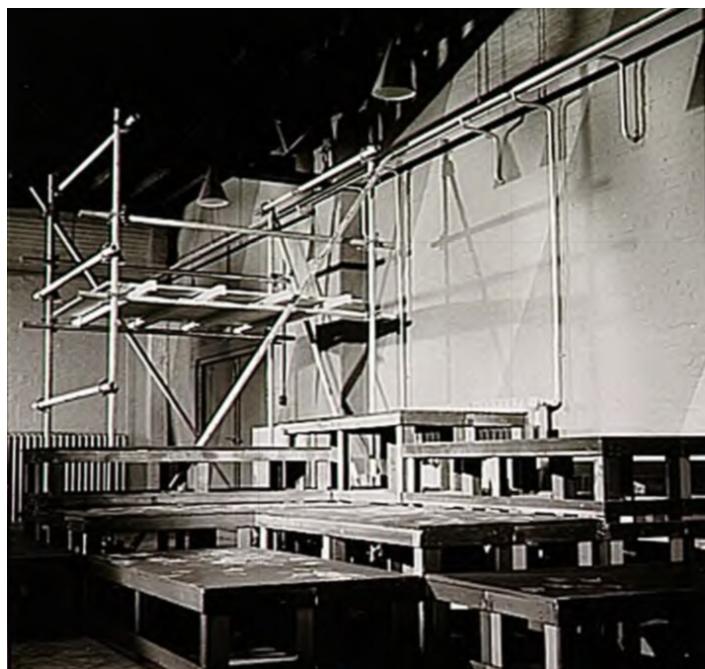


Figure 3 – A multi-level sitting area/stage as part of the interior of Para+ (Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, 1970)

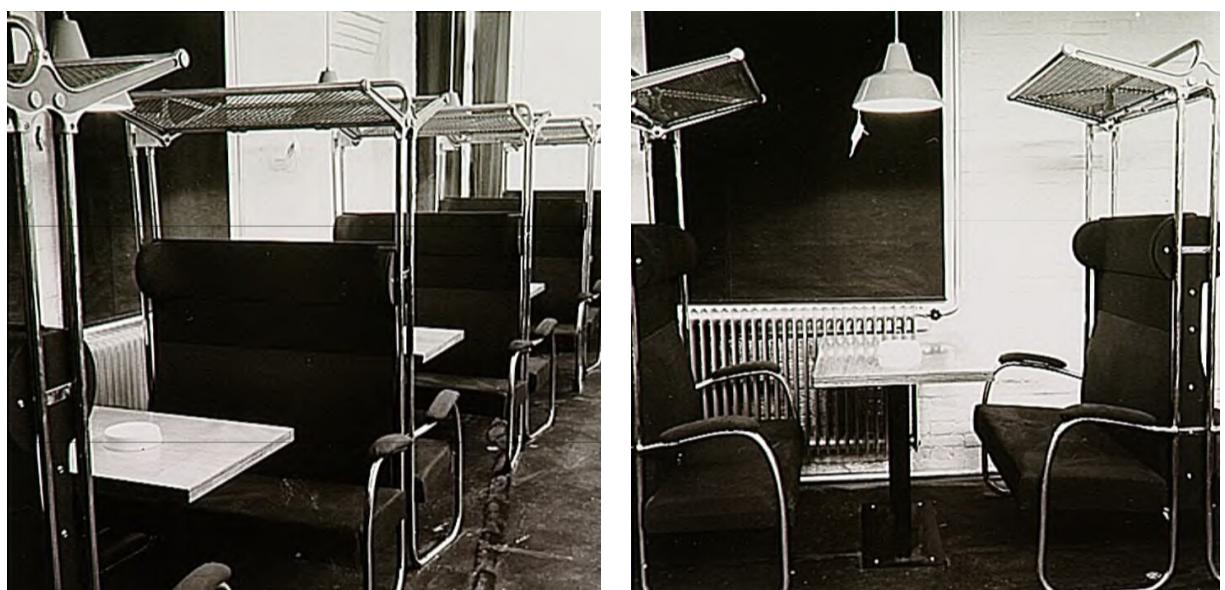


Figure 4 & 5 – Reclaimed train/tram seats as part of the interior of Para+ (Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, 1970)



Figure 6 & 7 – Makeshift sitting areas as part of the interior of Para+ (Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, 1970)



Figure 8 – Makeshift sitting areas as part of the interior of Para+ (Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, 1970)

Inside, the space was adapted organically, with volunteers and community members contributing to renovations and modifications. Walls were repainted, makeshift bars were set up, and a stage was constructed to accommodate live performances. The atmosphere was raw and unpolished, but this rough aesthetic became part of De Effenaar's identity. Over the years, it grew into a space that hosted a variety of events from The Sex Pistols (Het Parool, 1977) to the International Women Festival (De waarheid, 1982). In addition to events, many more activities could be attended. These ranged from film screenings to karate, and from an astrology class to yoga (Activity overview Effenaar, 1972) (appendix 2). Its reputation as a hub for countercultural activity attracted a devoted following, solidifying its role in Eindhoven's cultural scene. Throughout the week, these activities resulted in a total of 1480 visitors. The end goal of all these activities was to "improve the wellbeing of youth in Eindhoven" according to the Effenaar's policy goals (n.d.) (appendix 3).

8.3 The Effenaar in the social-cultural landscape of Eindhoven

From its founding, the Effenaar focused on providing services specifically for the youth of Eindhoven. The municipality recognized the need for the addition of such a facility in the city. In 1971, one year after the national government began supporting the center, the municipality began subsidizing the Effenaar (Drunen, 1980).

Over time, however, this local positioning began to shift. While the Effenaar initially mostly served the city itself, it gradually expanded its reach to include a wider audience from the surrounding region. This transition is documented in a detailed study conducted for the municipality by Ed van Drunen (1980), which explored the Effenaar's evolving role within Eindhoven's socio-cultural landscape. In this report, a timeline of the Effenaar's positioning is presented (figure 9), alongside an analysis of its relationship with the municipality, image, programming, and more. The report shows a clear development in both the public image of the Effenaar and its official ties with local government. In its early years, the center had a bad image due to aggressive behavior and drug use. The relationship with the municipality was also poor in this early stage. Over time, however, this evolved into a much more positive partnership characterized by direct and efficient communication. The image also improved and the Effenaar was now seen as a great, semi-commercial center.

PERIODEN	ALGEMEEN TYPERING	STAF COORD.	DOELGROEP	HISTORIE O.J.G. LANGS SPECIFIËKE BELEIDSLIJNEN				PROBLEMEN	IMAGO	SCHEMA I 13
				PROGRAMMERING	ACTIVITEITEN	HUISVESTING	AMBTELIJKE CONTACTEN			
1970-1972	start park jan '71 effenaar okt	Edmond Dieleman	werkende jeugd	drugsfase astrale fase	- vorming - ontmoeting - hulpverlening	gekraakt pand (slecht) 6-1-1971	slecht geweerd (Ph W, BK)	- tekorten - t.a.v. afsplitsing JAC release - algemeen beeld	slecht drugs agressief langharig tuig	
1973-1974	afsplitsing en wederopbouw	Jan Knibbe	werkende en studerende jeugd	"met beide benen weer op de grond" periode	- recreatie - vorming	herstel d.m.v. verbouwing 8 mnd dicht!	minder gewenst ad hoc controllerend (HS, Ph.W.)	- agressiviteit - naar een goede beeldvorming	minder slecht naar verbetering zoekend hervorming	
1975-1976	spanningen	Bert van Ummelen (Petra v Hoek)	oudere scholieren en studenten	periode van de nota's	- informatie - cultuur - vorming	bezettingen 3 mnd dicht!	poging tot samen- werking (E v D)	- bezoekersinspraak - samenwerking staf - onduidelijke konkretisering beleid	slecht ruzies persoonlijk en inhoudelijk bezettingen	
1977-1978	beginning stabilisering	Rob Vermijs (Marion Smit)	idem	de periode	- informatie - ontmoeting - cultuur - vorming	-	regelmatig gestruct. goed overleg (E v D)	- relationeel	goed goede zakelijke leiding	
1979-1980	culturele revolutie	Hans Baaijens (Yvonne Prüst)	idem	periode van ongebreidelde mogelijkheden	idem, met accenten op cultuur en vorming	plan verbouwing (schaalvergroting)	veelvuldig informeel overleg (E v D)	- financiële tekorten	goed paracommercieel	
1981-1982	uitbouw?	?	idem studierenden Jongvolwassenen	+ f 300.000,-	cultureel vormend (grensverleggend, cultureel)	verbouwing	minder frequent verwijdering?	sanering?	het kulturpaleis van de stad?	

Figure 9 – History of Effenaar in the 1970s through early 1980s (Drunen, 1980)

It is in this later phase, end of the 1970s, that the Effenaar starts to attract bigger events and performances (section 8.2) to also aim at attracting people outside of the city. With this increase of programming and audience, the function of the Effenaar began to shift.

Van Drunen's report outlines a framework of four "echelon" levels to classify cultural facilities (appendix 4). In the 1970s, he considered the Effenaar a 2nd echelon facility, which refers to centers that offer a broad set of functions, such as diverse cultural programming and community activities. He suggested, however, that the Effenaar has the potential to move into the 3rd echelon, which typically refers to facilities with a more specific focus, such as a concert hall. This predicted transition

took place during the 1980s, when the Effenaar began to prioritize cultural programming over social engagement. At its founding, both aspects were balanced, but from the 1980s onward, the cultural side gained dominance.

This more specific function allowed the Effenaar to set itself apart from the other cultural centers in the city by having a clear positioning. It did mean, however, that it lost most of its original more rebellious nature and activities that the center made its name with.

With this success of the venue, the aging building eventually became a limitation. By the late 1990s, it was clear that the original structure could no longer meet the demands of a growing audience and more professionalized cultural offering. Safety regulations and accessibility issues also were a challenge, leading to discussions about a possible renovation or relocation.

8.4 The Effenaar today

In the early 2000s, recognizing the need for modernization and expansion, the municipality of Eindhoven supported the redevelopment of De Effenaar. In 2005, the original building was replaced with a new, modern concert hall designed by the Dutch architectural firm MVRDV (MVRDV, n.d.). The new venue preserved the Effenaar's role as a key cultural institution, but now with upgraded facilities that allowed it to host larger and more professional events.

The building is still located on its same address Dommelstraat 2. The redevelopment of the site took a thoughtful approach to heritage preservation. The original façade of the building was retained, while the new building was constructed next to the former building (figure 10 & 11). This decision ensured that a link to the past remained intact, allowing the legacy of the Effenaar, and a remnant of Eindhoven's industrial heritage, to live on. The preserved façade serves as a reminder of the institution's roots and its longstanding cultural significance within the city.

Today, the Effenaar continues to function as a major cultural venue in Eindhoven, offering a wide range of programming and attracting large numbers of visitors from both within and beyond the city.



Figure 10 & 11 – The façade of the original Effenaar building next to the new Effenaar building by MVRDV (Own pictures, 2025)

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The evolution of the Effenaar from a squatted textile factory to one of Eindhoven's most prominent cultural institutions reflects the broader trajectories of urban development, social change, and adaptive reuse in the Netherlands. This case study serves as an example of how local initiatives and activism intersected with larger municipal strategies and national movements to reshape both the cultural landscape and the urban fabric.

As Chapter 5 explored, the success of cultural centers can be grounded in their ability to respond to local needs while also responding to broader shifts in society and governance. The Effenaar's origins as Para+ reflected a moment of social unrest, creativity, and resistance against both spatial and institutional constraints. It began as a bottom-up response to a lack of cultural space for young people in Eindhoven, shaped by DIY values, volunteer labor, and political activism. When assessing the venue against key urban development success criteria as set out by Rinske Brand, such as having a mix of functions and users, good positioning, shared ownership, and local support, it is clear that the Effenaar has met many of these criteria. Its ability to remain a relevant cultural space for over 50 years can be attributed to its active community, its continuous adaptation to the evolving needs of the public, and its evolving positioning. These factors explain why the Effenaar has not only endured but thrived, successfully balancing bottom-up culture with professional programming and city-wide recognition.

Chapter 6 showed that Eindhoven's transformation from an industrial city to a hub for design and innovation relied on a willingness to embrace its industrial past while, at the same time, reimagining it for new functions and users. The Effenaar's original Dommelstraat 2 former textile factory building was a physical and symbolic example of this transition. It preserved the raw, industrial aesthetic while transforming it into a platform for alternative culture through low tech homemade interventions. This was all done before similar strategies became formalized parts of municipal urban planning policies in the 2000s. The approach was ahead of its time in the city and would later be mirrored in the city's strategy of adaptive reuse and integration of former industrial heritage sites like Strijp-S.

Chapter 7 highlighted how the squatters movement and other social movements of the 1970s and 1980s laid the groundwork for practices such as adaptive reuse, participatory planning, and interim cultural use that are now common in cities across The Netherlands. The Effenaar fits into this context. Its emergence from squatting, its experimental spatial use, and eventual institutional recognition show how radical beginnings can become integrated into official urban strategies over time.

Over the decades, the Effenaar's identity shifted from a rebellious cultural hub to a professionally run venue. A transition that mirrors broader changes in the relationship between alternative culture and municipal governance. The support of the municipality of Eindhoven played a crucial role in this transformation. As detailed in Chapter 8, the Effenaar's gradual formalization was shaped by improved ties with the municipality, a broader regional audience, and the need to professionalize cultural offerings. What began as a tense relationship, with the Effenaar viewed as subversive and unruly, developed into a productive collaboration. The construction of the new venue in 2005, while preserving elements of the original façade, symbolized the coming together of past and present,

aligning with Eindhoven's urban development philosophy that values both innovation and heritage, while highlighting the importance of the Effenaar throughout the years by honoring the façade.

In sum, the story of the Effenaar is not just about one building or one venue. It shows how a city like Eindhoven navigated industrial decline, responded to youth-led movements, and strategically integrated grassroots culture into a broader municipal strategy. It is a prime example of how a city can transform itself without erasing its past. Instead, it shows how using that past as a foundation for inclusive, creative, and sustainable development can improve the solution. The Effenaar shows how places born from counterculture can evolve into permanent institutions, and how their legacies continue to shape the cultural and architectural character of a city.

Chapter 10: Reflection

The process of analyzing the evolution of the Effenaar revealed how a single cultural center can go through multiple layers of urban, social, and architectural transformation. The combination of archival material, theoretical frameworks, and visual documentation helped to construct a narrative around the venue's spatial and cultural significance. However, there are several ways the work could be further expanded or improved.

First, the research was primarily focused on the Effenaar itself, with less attention paid to comparisons. Future research could explore similar cultural centers across the Netherlands, such as Paradiso in Amsterdam or WORM in Rotterdam, to better understand patterns in the reuse of industrial buildings and the institutionalization of countercultural spaces. This would allow for a broader understanding of how different cities engaged with cultural activism and urban redevelopment. Additionally, other cultural venues in Eindhoven could be analyzed to get a more completed view of the city's offerings and stance.

Second, interviews with former organizers, local policymakers, or visitors could have added personal insights and helped to contextualize the archival findings with lived experience. Incorporating oral history perspectives could have expanded the understanding of how the Effenaar was perceived and used over time.

Finally, while the focus on the 1970s and 1980s was deliberate, it could also be valuable to explore the Effenaar's current role more deeply, particularly how it navigates the balance between heritage, professionalism, and cultural experimentation in a contemporary setting.

Altogether, the project serves as a solid starting point for further research into the complex relationships between municipal planning, industrial reuse, and grassroots activism.

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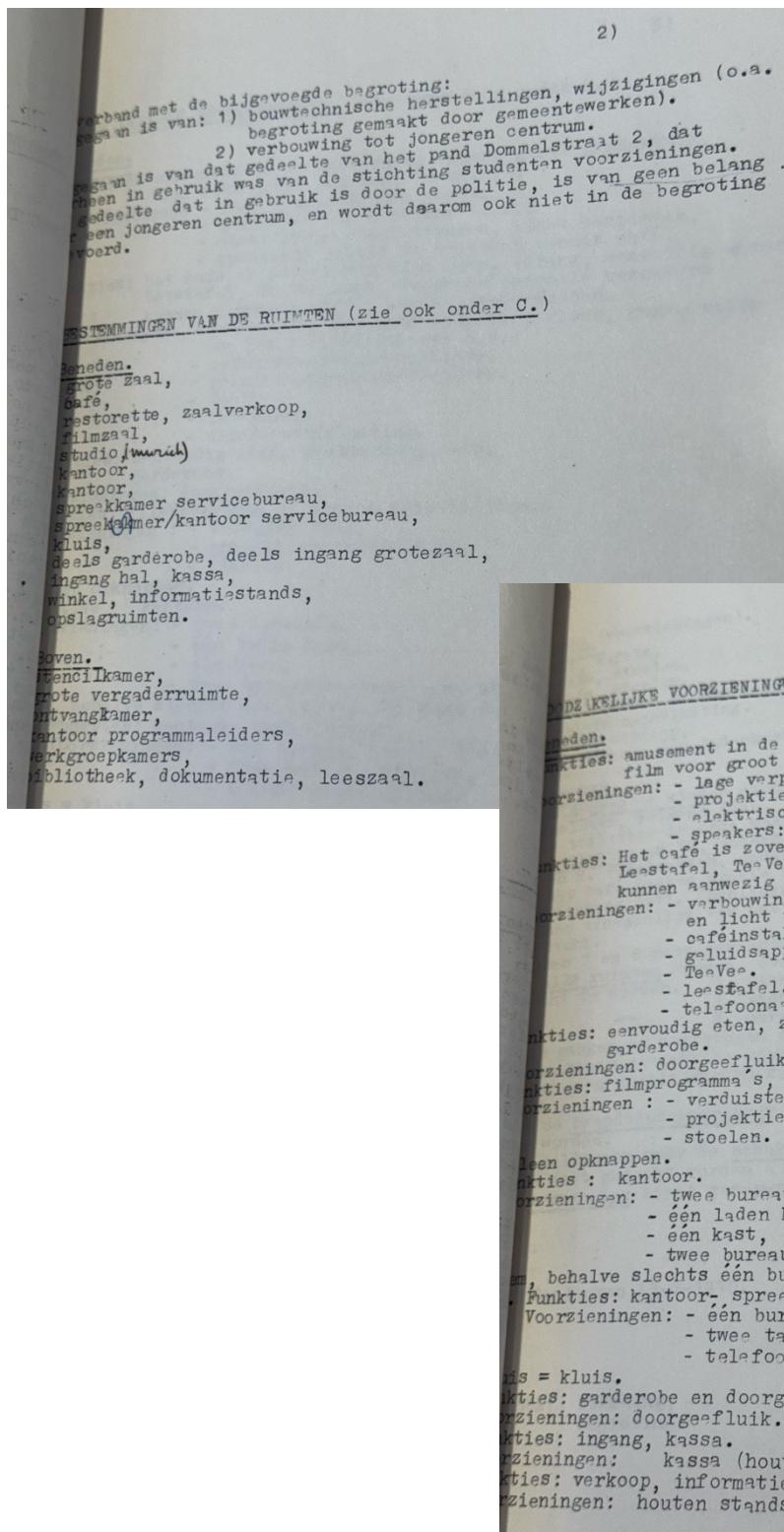
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Appendix 1 – Renovation plan Dommelstraat 2 with a list of facilities to be added to the building for full transformation into the Effenaar



Renovation plan Dommelstraat 2 [document]. (1970). Gemeentebestuur Eindhoven, 1970-1989 (box 10882, folder 3803). Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, Eindhoven, NL

Appendix 2 – Activity overview Effenaar

MW. C

ACTIVITEITEN OVERZICHT O.J.C. "DE EFFENAAR"		DOMMELSTRAAT 2; EINDHOVEN.	augustus 1972
V / R	Frequentie		
no. aktiviteit			Ruimte.
1. café	R. zo. di. wo. do. vr. za.		café
2. café/amusement	R. 1x per maand		café
3. café / begel.	V. zo. di. wo. do. vr. za.		café
4. Zen-tuin	R. di. wo. do. vr.		Zen-tuin.
5. Makrobiotiek	V. di. wo. do. vr.		Zen-tuin.
6. Pop	R. za. 1x per maand		Zen-tuin.
7. Film	V./R. za. 2x per maand		Grote zaal.
8. Sport & spel	V. wo. vr.		Grote zaal.
9. Jazzballet	V. di. 1x per week		Grote zaal.
10. Handenarbeid	V. wo.		filmzaal.
11. Visueel projekt	V. vr.		werkplaats.
12. Hatha yoga (Jannie)	V. wo. (2x)		werkplaats.
13. Raja yoga	V. vr.		medit.ruimte.
14. Iyengar yoga (Agnes)	V. do. (2x)		medit.ruimte.
15. Zen-meditatie	V. wo. (2x)		medit.ruimte.
16. Totaaltheater	V. vr./za.		medit.ruimte.
17. Kreatief spel	V. zo.		filmz./gele zaal.
18. Free-day	V. vr.		— grote zaal.
19. Info-avonden (pol.kult.aktueel)	V. do. (2x per maand)		— grote zaal.
20. Karate / judo	V. do.		filmzaal/gele zaal.
21. Toneel	V. za. 1x per maand		grote zaal.
22. EVA	V. di. 1x per week		grote zaal.
23. EVA	V. wo.		gele zaal.
24. EVA	V. do.		
25. Gestalt	V. ma. 1x per 3 weken	Zentuin.	
26. Astrologie kursus	V. wo.		
27. Drugkursus	V. 10 dinsdagen		medit.ruimte.
28. Tarot kursus	V. do. (10x)		werkplaats.
29. Maatsch.werkpl.	V. 2x per maand		zolder.
30. Entree/info-balie	V. di. wo. do. vr.		gang.

Functiewijziging zakelijk coördinator

note zaal komt maximaal
op 15 deelnemers maand in gebruik!
m. 1.26.17

open jongerensentrum

EFFENAAR

goede speelfilms teruggetrokken worden. De positie van de bond van bioskoopeigenaren lijkt op die van een kartel of een monopolie met alle gevaren vandien!

7.

D. Experimentele avonden.
Rgelmatic organiseren wij in het weekend avonden waarop bijzondere producties plaats kunnen vinden. Hiervoor is met name belangstelling bij de deelnemers aan expressiegroepen. De diverse avonden hebben geen massale maar wel gemotiveerde deelnemers. Nieuwe mogelijkheden geboden, zodat wij menen deze avonden zeker door te zetten in 1973.

E. Combinaties.

Na de gunstige ervaringen met toneel, cabaret, ten dele met film, maar vooral met de experimentele avonden, willen we in de toekomst combinaties van deze verschillende vormen kreeën. De eerste ervaringen wijzen op een goede kans van slagen.

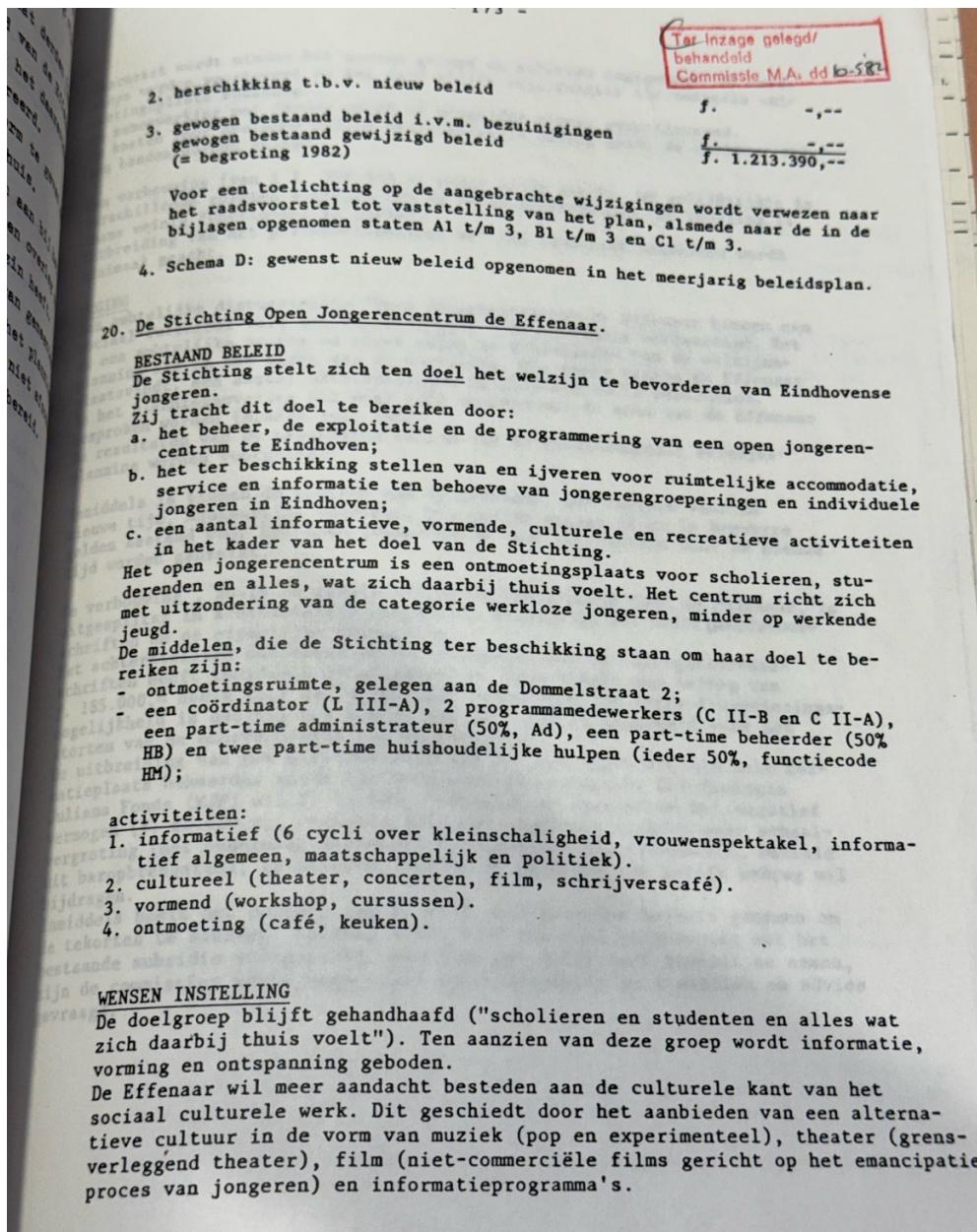
Aantal deelnemers per aktiviteit per week:

café	750
Zen-tuin	40
Makrobiotiek	50
pop e.a. zaterd.aktiv.	300
Zen-meditatie	30
Iyengar yoga	25
Yoga en meditatie	20
Totaltheater	10
Kreatief spel	35
3 Expressiegroepen	45
Experimentele progr.	10 (1x per maand)
Tarot	35
Politieke werkgroep	10
Judo	10
Drugkursus	30
Diverse werkgroepen	10 (A.K.I.E., Publiciteit)
Maatschappijwerkplaats	10 (1x per maand)
Leeskamer	30
Raja yoga	15 (1x per maand)
Jazz-ballet	15

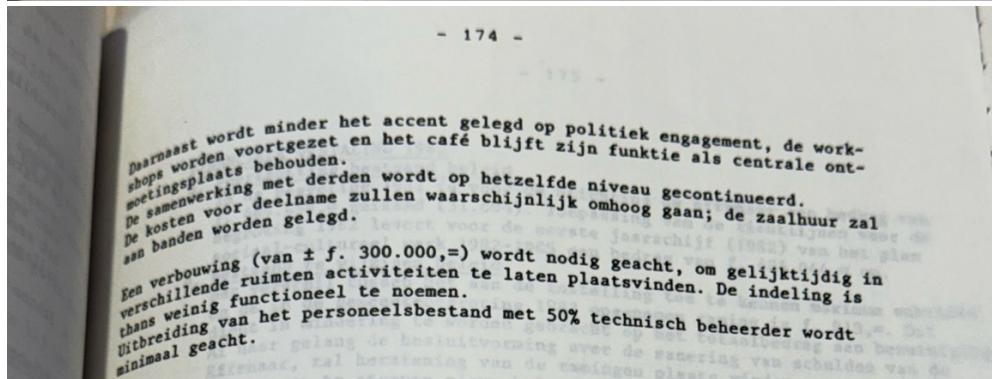
Totaal 1480 bezoekers per week.

Activity overview Effenaar [document]. (1972). Gemeentebestuur Eindhoven, 1970-1989 (box 10882, folder 3801). Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, Eindhoven, NL

Appendix 3 – Goals Effenaar

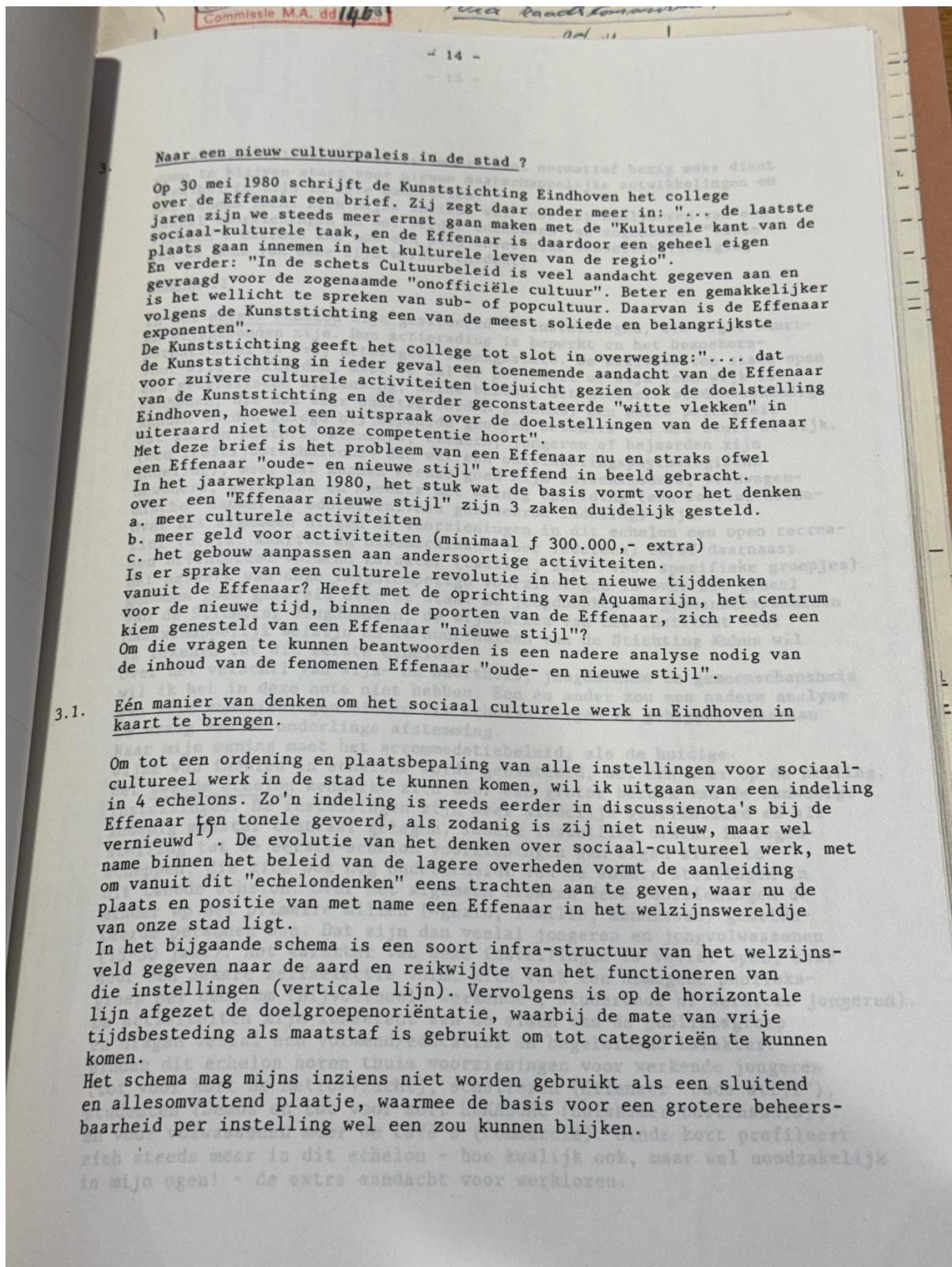


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Goals Effenaar [document]. (n.d.). Gemeentebestuur Eindhoven, 1970-1989 (box 10882, folder 3801). Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, Eindhoven, NL

Appendix 4 – “Open Jongerencentrum De Effenaar” within the social-cultural field of facilities and its evolution and positioning within the city



Het sociaal-culturele werk is immers niet normatief bezig maar dient open te blijven staan voor nieuwe maatschappelijke ontwikkelingen en flexibel te zijn in alle onderdelen. Het schema leent zich mijns inziens wel voor het analyseren van een aantal voorzieningen en het verder ontdekken van zogenaamde "witte vlekken". Daarmee kan ook een stuk onvervulde behoeftebevrediging van de mens van deze tijd worden ontdekt.

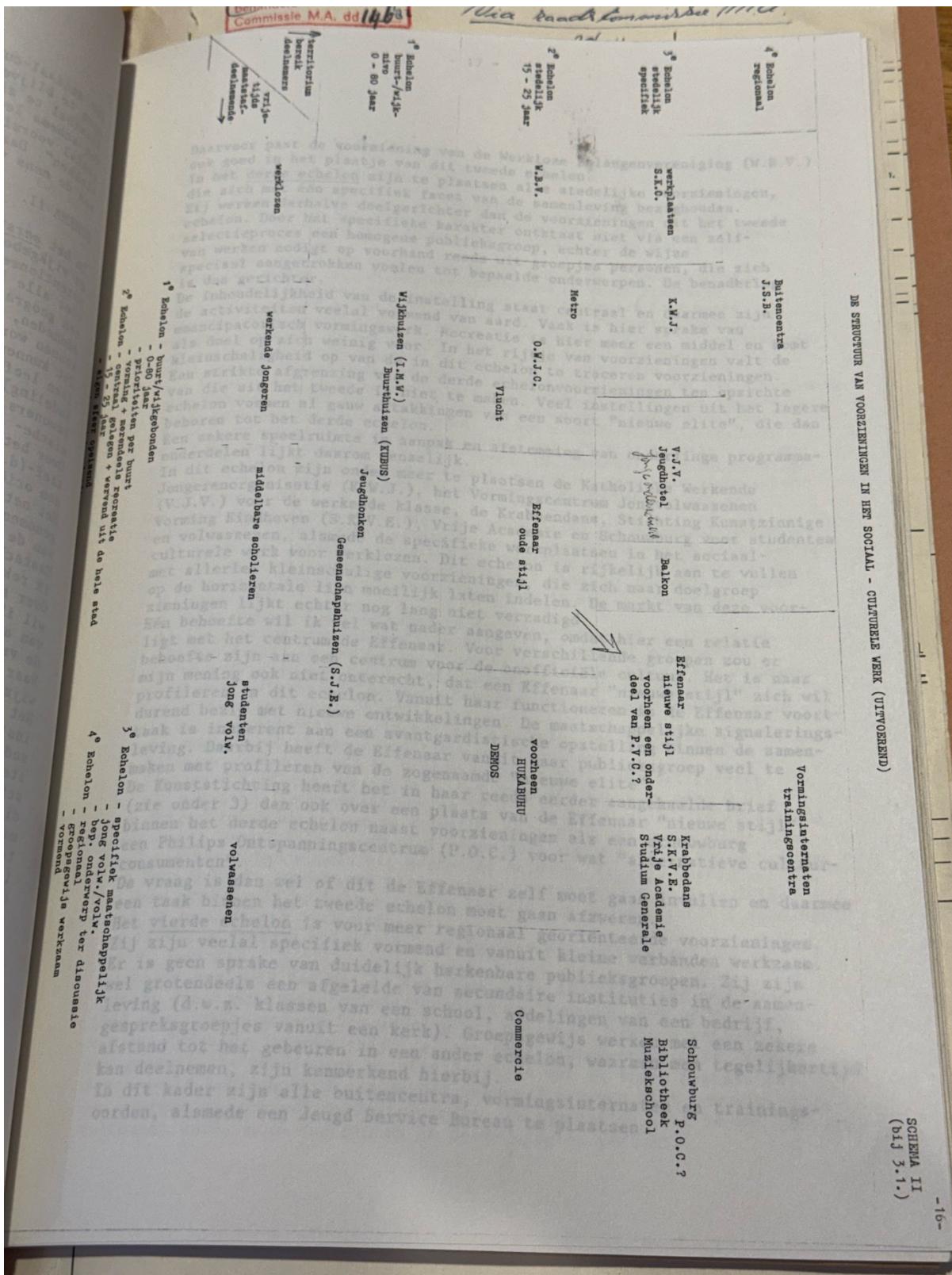
SCHEMA II.

In het eerste echelon zijn gesitueerd de instellingen, die nogal buurt- en wijkgebonden zijn. Hun actieradius is beperkt en het bezoekerspotentieel is vrij heterogen samengesteld. De activiteiten staan open voor alle leeftijden, maar zo zal er per buurt of wijk (een wijk is een geografische afgrenzing, welke bestaat uit meerdere stedebouwkundige éénheden, die dan weer buurten worden genoemd) een extra prioriteit kunnen worden gelegd bij bepaalde groepen bewoners uit die buurt of wijk. Dat kunnen peuters, kleuters, tieners, jongeren of bejaarden zijn (een leeftijdstechnische- dan wel een ontwikkelingspsychologische indeling), maar dat kunnen evenzo goed zijn buitenlanders, woonwagenbewoners, werklozen en moeders met weinig opleiding (een sociaal-economische- danwel op educatieniveau gebaseerde indeling) zijn. Over het algemeen dragen de voorzieningen in dit echelon een open recreatief-(d.w.z. kaarten en bloemschikken voor iedereen) en/of daarnaast een oriënterend-vormend karakter (taalles, koken voor specifieke groepjes). Het netwerk van deze laagdrempelige voorzieningen is over het geheel genomen goed gespreid over de stad. De jeugdhonken en gemeenschapshuizen van de Stichting Jeugdhonken, de wijkhuizen van het Instituut voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn en de buurthuizen van de Stichting Kubus wil ik rekenen tot dit eerste echelon.

Over het verschil van wijk- en buurthuis, jeugdhonken en gemeenschapshuis wil ik het in deze nota niet hebben. Een en ander zou een nadere analyse van alle voorzieningen binnen dit echelon vergen en gekoppeld daaraan de vraag van de onderlinge afstemming.

Naar mijn mening moet het accommodatiebeleid, als de huidige wijze van indelen in echelons wordt gehanteerd, wel een keer op de helling. Het tweede echelon kenmerkt zich door een groter bereik van de aanwezige instellingen. De instellingen zijn meer stedelijk georiënteerd en als zodanig meestal centraal gelegen. Iedere instelling tracht in tegenstelling tot de eerste-echelon voorzieningen een eigen sfeer te scheppen, die zich ook nog onderscheidt van de andere stellingen in dit tweede echelon. Over het algemeen trekken deze voorzieningen de minder op het primaire milieu (=gezin, familie, kennissen) georiënteerde personen aan. Dat zijn dan veelal jongeren en jongvolwassenen (15-30 jaar). Het karakter van deze instellingen is veelal open, maar door een zekere zelfselectie vormt zich vaak een homogene publieks-groep per centrum (Bijvoorbeeld werkende-, studerende of werkloze jongeren). De activiteiten zijn inhaerent aan de eisen van de publiekgroep en dragen veelal een vormend/educatief en begeleidend karakter. Binnen dit echelon horen thuis voorzieningen voor werkende jongeren (tot voor kort de Metro/Vlucht), scholieren (Effenaar "oude stijl"), studenten (Demos en tot voor kort HUKABUHU (huiskamer buitenshuis), en voor volwassenen meer de café's (commercie). Sinds kort profileert zich steeds meer in dit echelon - hoe kwalijk ook, maar wel noodzakelijk in mijn ogen! - de extra aandacht voor werklozen.

DE STRUCTUUR VAN VOORZIENINGEN IN HET SOCIAAL - CULTURELE WERK (UITVOEREND)



Daarvoor past de voorziening van de Werkloze Belangenvereniging (W.B.V.) ook goed in het plaatje van dit tweede echelon. In het derde echelon zijn te plaatsen alle stedelijke voorzieningen, die zich met één specifiek facet van de samenleving bezighouden. Zij werken derhalve doelgerichter dan de voorzieningen uit het tweede echelon. Door het specifieke karakter ontstaat niet via een zelf-selectieproces een homogene publiekgroep, echter de wijze van werken nodigt op voorhand reeds uit groepjes personen, die zich speciaal aangetrokken voelen tot bepaalde onderwerpen. De benadering is dus gerichter.

De inhoudelijkheid van de instelling staat centraal en daarmee zijn de activiteiten veelal vormend van aard. Vaak is hier sprake van emancipatorisch vormingswerk. Recreatie is hier meer een middel en komt als doel op zich weinig voor. In het rijkje van voorzieningen valt de kleinschaligheid op van de in dit echelon te traceren voorzieningen. Een strikte afgrenzing van de derde echelonvoorzieningen ten opzichte van die uit het tweede is niet te maken. Veel instellingen uit het lagere echelon vormen al gauw aftakkingen van een soort "nieuwe elite", die dan behoren tot het derde echelon.

Een zekere speelruimte in aanpak en afstemming van onderlinge programma-onderdelen lijkt daarom wenselijk.

In dit echelon zijn onder meer te plaatsen de Katholieke Werkende Jongerenorganisatie (K.W.J.), het Vormingscentrum Jongvolwassenen (V.J.V.) voor de werkende klasse, de Krabbendans, Stichting Kunstzinnige Vorming Eindhoven (S.K.V.E.), Vrije Academie en Schouwburg voor studenten en volwassenen, alsmede de specifieke werkplaatsen in het sociaal-culturele werk voor werklozen. Dit echelon is rijkelijk aan te vullen met allerlei kleinschalige voorzieningen, die zich naar doelgroep op de horizontale lijn moeilijk laten indelen. De markt van deze voorzieningen lijkt echter nog lang niet verzadigd.

Eén behoeft wil ik wel wat nader aangeven, omdat hier een relatie ligt met het centrum de Effenaar. Voor verschillende groepen zou er behoeft zijn aan een centrum voor de onofficiële cultuur. Het is naar mijn mening ook niet ontrecht, dat een Effenaar "nieuwe stijl" zich wil profileren in dit echelon. Vanuit haar functioneren is de Effenaar voortdurend bezig met nieuwe ontwikkelingen. De maatschappelijke signalerings-taak is inherenter aan een avantgardistische opstelling binnen de samenleving. Daarbij heeft de Effenaar vanuit haar publiekgroep veel te maken met profileren van de zogenaamde "nieuwe elite".

De Kunststichting heeft het in haar reeds eerder aangehaalde brief (zie onder 3) dan ook over een plaats van de Effenaar "nieuwe stijl" binnen het derde echelon naast voorzieningen als een schouwburg een Philips Ontspanningscentrum (P.O.C.) voor wat "alternatieve cultuur-consumenten".

De vraag is dan wel of dit de Effenaar zelf moet gaan invullen en daarmee een taak binnen het tweede echelon moet gaan afzweren.

Het vierde echelon is voor meer regionaal georiënteerde voorzieningen.

Zij zijn veelal specifiek vormend en vanuit kleine verbanden werkzaam. Er is geen sprake van duidelijk herkenbare publiekgroepen. Zij zijn wel grotendeels een afgeleide van secundaire instituties in de samenleving (d.w.z. klassen van een school, afdelingen van een bedrijf, gespreksgroepjes vanuit een kerk). Groepsgewijs werken met een zekere afstand tot het gebeuren in een ander echelon, waaraan men tegelijkertijd kan deelnemen, zijn kenmerkend hierbij.

In dit kader zijn alle buitencentra, vormingsinternaten en trainings-orden, alsmede een Jeugd Service Bureau te plaatsen.

cultureel werk, maar dan blijven de derde echelon gedachte.

3.2. De Effenaar "oude en nieuwe stijl"

Plaats ik de ontwikkelingen van de Effenaar als instelling tegen de achtergrond van het plaatje, de structuur van voorzieningen binnen het sociaal-culturele werk in een aantal echelons, dan kom ik tot de volgende conclusies.

De Effenaar, zoals die functioneerde tot ver in de vierde periode, is een instelling voor middelbare scholieren en deels studenten in het tweede echelon. Zij vervulde een complementaire taak naast de voorziening van de Metro/Vlucht. De Stichting Ontmoetingscentra, waaronder de accommodaties, de Metro en de Vlucht vallen, is werkzaam voor werkende jongeren. Op het moment streeft zij ernaar één grootschalig Omdat onderzoeken onder de jeugd te krijgen. Dat wordt dan het O.W.J.C. voor tegelijkertijd de werkende- als studerende klas hebben aangetoond, dat één voorziening heden behoert, lijkt het gewenst deze doelgroepen in het sociaal-culturele werk gescheiden te benaderen. In het commerciële uitgaansleven (cafe's) selecteren deze groepen zichzelf uit. Zo zijn er cafe's in onze stad waar nimmer werkende jongeren komen. (De Leeuwerik aan het Stratumseind, Trafalgar Pub in de Dommelstraat) en cafe's waar weinig studerende jongeren komen (Bonzo aan het Straumseind en de Korenbeurs aan de Tongelreestraat).

Overigens komen studerende jongeren gemakkelijker in voorzieningen voor werkende, als andersom het geval is. In programmering van de activiteiten vindt reeds een latente poging tot uitzuivering van de doelgroep plaats, werkende jongeren apprechieren veelal de wat massaler gerichte consumptieve passieve activiteiten (tafeltenissen en het pilsje drinken aan de Flipperkast).

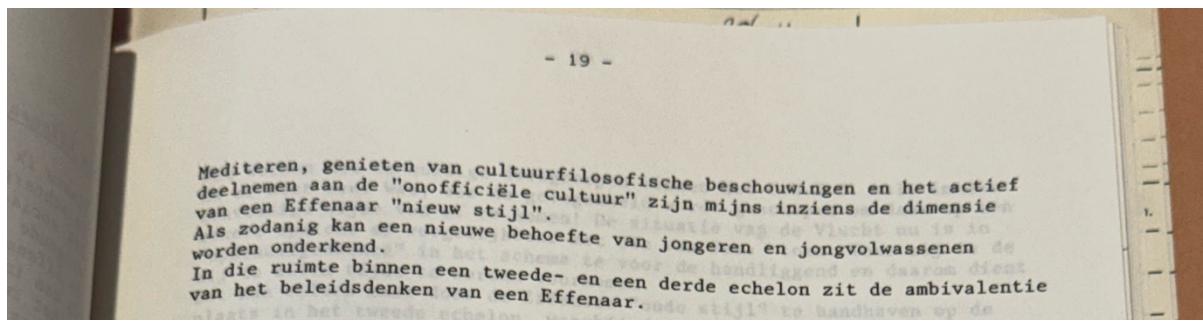
Studerende jongeren wensen vaker te discussiëren, zich te informeren, in kleine groepen vormend bezig te zijn ('t pilsje en ouwehoeren). In dit beeld past in gescheiden circuits goed naast elkaar één werkende jongerencentrum en één scholieren/studentencentrum. Er mag in dat opzicht geen Effenaar verdwijnen. Maar wat komt er dan terecht van de Effenaar in nieuw perspectief?

Zoals al is aangegeven kan in het derde echelon een "witte vlek" worden aangetoond in het circuit van voorzieningen.

De Effenaar schreef reeds in vroegere nota's zelf, dat het circuit in Eindhoven 2 hiaten vertoonde. Dat zijn één groot en open O.W.J.C. en één plaatselijke vormingscentrum (P.V.C.). Eén O.W.J.C. is er gekomen (de Metro/Vlucht waren immers verzuild, maar zijn dat reeds enige tijd niet meer), een P.V.C. is er niet of er moet een wissel worden getrokken naar voorzieningen binnen het educatief netwerk. Er zijn immers wel een Open School, educatieve streekcentra, moedermavo's en dergelijke en deze voorzieningen hebben op het terrein van het plaatselijk vormingswerk al baanbrekend werk verricht.

Een Effenaar "nieuwe stijl" is in mijn ogen een uitvloeisel van de P.V.C. gedachte.

Het heeft veel weg van het op besloten wijze aanbieden van een stukje cultuur aan zogenaamde "ruimdenkende mensen" mensen. Het op 9 november 1980 opgerichte centrum "Aquamarijn" is binnen de bredere benaming van een Effenaar "nieuwe stijl" al een aardig herkenningspunt. Vanuit een geestelijke verdieping omtrent de wijze van je eigen bestaan in deze wereld kan een bijdrage worden geleverd aan een stuk bewustwording van groepen mensen, zo is de filosofie van Aquamarijn. Dat is ook sociaal cultureel werk, maar dan binnen de derde echelon gedachte.



Drunen, E. (1980). *"Open Jongerencentrum De Effenaar" within the social-cultural field of facilities* [document]. Gemeentebestuur Eindhoven, 1970-1989 (box 10882, folder 3800). Regionaal Historisch Centrum Eindhoven, Eindhoven, NL