SOUTHWEST DEN HAAG
through the eyes of Jane Jacobs
Southwest Den Haag
through the eyes of Jane Jacobs

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Preface

This booklet is part of the RMIT graduation project for Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture. The first task for the students is to analyze the postwar neighborhoods of southwest Den Haag, based on a theme of one’s choosing. In a later stage this research will contribute to an intervention in the district. The project is executed under supervision of ir. L. Spoormans and ir. W. Quist.
1. Postwar urbanism according Jane Jacobs
   Ebenezer Howard
   Decentralization
   Le Corbusier
   City Beautiful
   De wijkgedachte

2. Postwar urban development in the Netherlands
   De woningwet van 1901
   Nationaal plan
   Eerste Nota

3. Industrialization and standardization
   Industrialization of construction methods
   Rationalization in housing
   Faster and less expensive housing construction
   Standardization

4. Masterplan Morgenstond
   Urban plan for Den Haag
   Dudok and de wijkgedachte
   Urban plan for Morgenstond

5. The philosophy of Jane Jacobs
   Safety in cities
   Contact
   Assimilation of children
   Ballet of the sidewalks
   Three main characteristics

6. Jacobs three main characteristics in Morgenstond
   Eyes focused on the public space
   Constant use of the sidewalks
   Clear distinction between public and private space

7. Jacobs ingredients for diversity
   The need for diversity
   How to generate diversity

8. Mixture of primary use facilities
   Mixture of primary use facilities
   Mixture of primary use facilities in Morgenstond
   Mixture of primary use facilities, Coevordenstraat and Haveltestraat.
   Lack of diversity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. The need for small urban blocks</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functioning of the blocks in Morgenstond</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The need for varying types of building and building age</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monotony of buildings in Morgenstond</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monotony in wealth</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentrification</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The need for population concentration</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for population concentration</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing density</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreasing functional diversity by increasing density</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demography</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Economical monotony</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnical diversity in Morgenstond</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and employment in Morgenstond</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local research</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample of residents</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major interview result</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Building technique</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gietbouw</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The influence on architecture</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korrelbeton</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardization</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renovation</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on urban scale</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on architectural scale</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on technical scale</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The philosophy of Jane Jacobs</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuation</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevancy</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

During the Industrial Revolution many people moved to big cities, where industry had been established. In most Dutch cities the population doubled between 1875 and 1900. To house these people new neighborhoods like de Pijp, de Dapperbuurt in Amsterdam and Spangen in Rotterdam where planned and built after 1875.

The deep and narrow three-to-four story houses were usually of poor quality and inhabited by large families in small, dark, and humid rooms. This way of building was known as revolutiebouw and can be recognized by its ground floor commercial space with one door to reach the ground floor and one for the stairwell to the top. The houses were often three windows wide and crowned by a roof frame with a white canopy and a lifting beam.¹

After the Second World War the Netherlands had to deal again with a housing shortage. Influenced by new thinking in the field of urban planning, the industrialization of the building process, a general lack of money, and de Woningwet, a new kind of urban planning and a new architecture was born in Holland.²

These new neighborhoods are often recognizable by monotonous architecture, buildings which are surrounded by green lawns, and facilities which are clustered together. Examples are the neighborhoods Overvecht in Utrecht, De Bijlmer in Amsterdam, Pendrecht in Rotterdam and Morgenstond in Den Haag.

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1. Carol Schade, 1981 (Woningbouw voor arbeiders in het 19e eeuwse Amsterdam)

2. Brendan Cormier, 2012

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Figure 1: Vibrant streets of De Pijp in Amsterdam, photo by Paul Fennis, (De Pijp, 100 jaar verandering in beeld)

Figure 2: Unused green. Coevordenstraat & Haveltestraat, Morgenstond in Den Haag, photo by P.G. Kempff, (Haagsebeeldbank)
The realization of prewar expansion neighborhoods was often without a systematic approach nor was attention paid to long term issues. It is highly remarkable that these prewar expansion areas, such as de Pijp in Amsterdam and Vogelbuurt in Utrecht, were able to rise above their initial problems and evolve into the most popular districts of the Netherlands.

Unfortunately the outlook is less bright for the postwar neighborhoods, which were designed as a response to the appalling design of the prewar urban expansion districts.

These days there are – despite good intentions, careful planning and government controlled legislation – many concerns about the qualities of these districts. They are associated with unsafe streets due to social and economic problems; the maintenance and renovation is often too expensive; and developers have questions about the abundance of green space and the low property values. Nowadays many postwar neighborhoods are demolished to make place for new projects as a part of urban renewal.

Theme

My area of interest can be characterized as ‘Lively public spaces versus lifeless public space.’ The theme was chosen out of my observations of the post-war neighborhoods’ often quiet and insufficient public space – there seems to be a striking lack of vitality in these neighborhoods.

Comparing postwar planned districts with unplanned organic neighborhoods or even the prewar urban expansion areas, I can’t help but prefer the well-used Sarphatipark in Amsterdam over the unused green strips of Morgenstond in Den Haag. I prefer the lively streets of De Pijp in Amsterdam over the deserted streets of Pendrecht. I prefer the mixture of program and building age of the Lower East Side in New York over the monotonous architecture of the public housing projects in places like Brownsville, Brooklyn.

My personal opinion is not shared by everyone. There will undoubtedly be people who say “I love the quiet green strips free from playing children who disturb the peace” or “The endless repetition of the same window frame creates an interesting consistency” or “By repeating the same floor plan we bring down the costs.”
Research

Last winter I read *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* from Jane Jacobs and discovered an interesting overlap between her theory and my chosen theme. Jacobs describes the positive effect of a well-functioning vibrant urban street life in the city. She describes the need for cities to have an extremely complex and intricate diversity of facilities with a blend of commercial and residential elements.4&5

During this graduation project I want to discover the philosophy behind the postwar neighborhoods and research if it’s justified to associate postwar neighborhoods with quiet and insufficient public space. With the theme *Lively public spaces versus lifeless public space* in mind I want to analyze the postwar neighborhood Morgenstond in southwest Den Haag and investigate if and why there is a lack of a vibrant street life in this borough, and what the consequences of this absence implies. I want to learn about the positive effects of a complex diversity in a city landscape based on the theories of Jane Jacobs.
Approach

At urban level I analyzed southwest Den Haag and focused particularly on the district Morgenstond. At architectural and detail scale I wanted to take a closer look at the housing complex between the Coevordenstraat and Haveltestraat in the western part of Morgenstond. I chose this neighborhood because the housing corporation Staedion want to destroy this complex, a decision which doesn’t match with the ideology of Jane Jacobs. On the other hand there are some architectural interventions in the area directly surrounding the housing complex which fits the ‘population concentration’ ideology of Jane Jacobs.

The first step was to investigated about Jacobs reaction to the garden city philosophy. I analyzed postwar urban developments in the Netherlands and how the garden city philosophy, together with other underlying ideas, influenced postwar urbanism in the Netherlands.

I wrote about the need for industrialization and standardization of the building process.

After this first part I investigated how these developments have influenced Dudok and his plan for southwest Den Haag and the neighborhood Morgenstond.

Then the step was made back to the Jane Jacobs’ “Ballet of the Sidewalks” theory, her four main characteristics and how this worked out in Morgenstond Den Haag.

After the analysis on the presence of Jacobs’ characteristics I made a step to Economical monotony, an important result of urban monotony and has been written about consequences on the level of detail.
Figure 10: Location indication, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012

Figure 11: Location Morgenstond and location case study, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012
Figure 12: Plan Voisin from for Le Corbusier for Paris, 1929 (hanser.ceat.okstate.edu)
1. Postwar urbanism according
Jane Jacobs
Urban development, which took place after the Second World War, throughout northwest Europe and North America, is in many cases based on the garden city characteristics.

Urban planners, architects, and later sociologists, spoke out against the massiveness of the big city and saw life in the big city as a denial of the dignity of man.3

The urbanism, based on garden city principles, was very harmful to the livability of cities according to Jane Jacobs because it meant a strict separation of functions, monotonous architecture and useless public space. Jacobs explains in her 1961 book: The Death and Life of Great American Cities, how the garden city ideas evolved. This chapter is dedicated to Jacob's perception about this development.

Ebenezer Howard

According to Jacobs the "orthodox" urbanism began with the work of the English urban planner Ebenezer Howard.

Howard is known for his publication: Garden Cities of To-morrow (1898) in which he analyzed the conditions of London's poor in the end of the 19th century and was unhappy with his conclusions. He didn't like how modern cities were being developed and he also hated the city by itself. He found the agglomeration an insult to nature.

In 1898 he proposed the re-population of the countryside by the creation of new suburban towns of limited size and advanced planning. This plan would replace the bad city and allow poor people to live closer to nature.

He divided these garden cities autonomously and surrounded them by agricultural land. In each city there was a zone for industry and a central zone for commerce and culture. Schools, houses and green space were located in the residential zone.

These garden cities would be independent, managed by the citizens who had an economic interest in them, and financed by ground rent; yet they would be controlled to protect them from changes and growth (the maximum population was 30,000 people). This all would work if the inhabitants didn't have their own plans.

Howard was not interested in the complex, cultural life of the metropolis; despite this, the basic principles of the garden city had a remarkable influence on contemporary urbanism. Even though

3. Anita Blom, Bregit Jansen, Marieke van der Heide, 2004 (De typologie van de vroeg-naaoorlogse woonwijken)

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
Figure 13: A scheme from Ebenezer Howard, Garden Cities of To-morrow.
the basic thoughts behind the garden city was the decentralization of the big cities, his principles were seen as the solution for city problems and were used as the model for many suburbs and new urban plans.4

Decentralization

The philosophy of the garden city was picked up in the 1920s and further developed by a group of dedicated people.

The basic idea of Lewis Mumford, Clarence Stein, Henry Wright, and Catherine Bauer was to decentralize the cities, reduce the population and relocate the inhabitants and companies in smaller cities and villages.

They shared the opinion that the street is a bad environment for humans so housing should be introverted and focused in a hidden green inner courtyard instead of the dangerous street. They preferred the urban block as the basic element instead of the street and wanted to separate commercial activities from green and residential areas. Similar to Howard, they also resisted future planned changes by the users so that every significant detail in the urban plan could be controlled by the urban planners. Those embracing decentralization promoted their own plans by issue the big city. They did not pay attention to the successes of cities. In the book: The Culture of Cities by Mumford, he compared the city with “the living death”. Midtown New York is described as a stabilized chaos. They did not try to understand and cultivate successful big cities.

Despite this, the philosophical ideas of this group of people were accepted as basic guidelines for urban planning and architectural education, as well as in the U.S. Congress, state law and city halls.4

Jacobs is surprised about the fact that people who honestly want to improve big cities are using recipes that were developed to end the functioning of cities.

Le Corbusier

Le Corbusier is, according to Jacobs, the man with the most dramatic ideas about urban planning.

In the 1920’s Le Corbusier designed Ville Radieuse. In this plan the middle class man was housed in a composition of residential high rise towers in a park. This city had a density of 300 inhabitants per square kilometer and the infrastructure was elevated
so the park was not divided by roads. In his eyes, the original garden city was not achievable because the green area would fall under the invasion of roads and buildings thereby crowding the hidden places. He described his plan as the applicable version of the garden city, “the vertical garden city”.

The plans of Le Corbusier were easily accepted because the fundamental ideas of the garden city had a lot of support from students, architects and urban planners who were already working on housing projects, the pre-developed and unchangeable plan and this all surrounded by incredible amounts of grass, grass and grass.¹

The ideas of Le Corbusier had a major influence on modern urbanism and this turned into the realization of numerous projects, from public housing to commercial projects. Le Corbusier made the garden city globally achievable.

City Beautiful

The Columbian Exposition in Chicago took place in 1893, around the same time that Howard formulated his garden city ideas. Colossal monumental buildings where situated in an exhibition park and this appealed to the imagination of public and city planners and triggered the City Beautiful movement. Daniel Burnham from Chicago became a leading character in this movement.

The goal for City Beautiful was the monumental City. Extensive schemes were designed for systems of baroque boulevards but this lead to nothing. A point that did work was the idea of the “monumental center” surrounded by a park. It was important to isolate this from the rest of the city to shape a perfectly independent and defined unit.

These centers were unsuccessful though and instead of improving the ordinary city around them, the centers invariably fell into disrepair. The City Beautiful movement fell out of fashion but the basic idea was not questioned. This concept, to isolate cultural or public functions from the ordinary city, fit well with the doctrine of the garden city.¹
Figure 14: Urban plan by Lotte Stam-Beese for Pendrecht in Rotterdam based on the ideology of de Wijkgedachte, 1949-53.
A typical theoretical framework for the postwar neighborhood is *De wijkgedachte*.

The concept comes from the American urban planner Clarence Perry. He stated that the social fragmentation and the massiveness caused by the big city, could be reduced by accommodating the residents into clearly defined neighborhoods. This would create a feeling of security and a rich community life.\(^6\)

W.F. Geyl, the official of Public Works from Rotterdam, played a crucial role in the discussions about *De wijkgedachte*. He supported this concept and in 1947 he translated the ideas of Howard and Perry to a diagram: *de gelede stad* and published extensively on this matter.

The diagram shows the spatial and social organization of the city, based on the hierarchy: dwelling, neighborhood district, city and metropolitan area. Each unit includes a fixed population or a fixed number of dwellings. The facilities of the neighborhood are then integrated on the basis of this fixed amount of dwellings. These are the bearers of *de wijkgedachte*.

He founded this diagram from the belief that the designed city has to fulfill a important role by the formation of a healthy community. The purpose of *de wijkgedachte* was to answer the perceived de-socialization of citizens and the destructive force of individualism. He noted that this process of “*spiritual renewal*” could not be imposed by a government, but that this had to arise from a spatial structure of the environment.\(^3\)
Figure 15: Ruins of the Laurens Church in Rotterdam after the bombardment. (defensieweb.wikia.com)
2. Postwar urban development in the Netherlands
After the Second World War, the Netherlands had to deal with a housing shortage. The construction industry had stagnated since 1942. 86,400 of the 2.1 million houses were destroyed and many houses were damaged and stripped for firewood. In addition the population increased dramatically following the war. The population grew from 8.8 million in 1940 to 12.9 million in 1970. This phenomenon is known as the babyboom.

During the German Occupation efforts were made for the reconstruction of devastated parts of the Netherlands. In 1941, an Urban Planning Advisory Committee was established to advise on the reconstruction plans of such cities as Rotterdam, Rhenen and Wageningen.3

The postwar urban development in the Netherlands was, as mentioned before, significantly different from prewar urban extensions. Various causes – discussed in this chapter – are responsible for this change of urbanism.

De Woningwet van 1901

The poor conditions and quality of construction of prewar buildings resulted in a growing political support for stricter building regulations and de Woningwet – a housing act from 1901 – which had to be approved by Dutch parliament. This law forced municipalities to set rules and building regulations to establish a better quality of housing, better and larger dwellings and government-controlled expansion plans.7

De Woningwet led to an improved quality of housing but eventually this law also contributed to a certain degree of standardization of housing because minimum requirements were often used as maximum construction standards in order to keep down the building costs. This had a major influence on the standardization of floorplans and on the atmosphere, thanks to standardized details.

This development is more particularly described in chapter 3 (Industrialization and standardization).

Nationaal plan

In the meantime the centraal geregelde stelsel van ruimtelijke ordening was proposed by the prewar commission commissie Frederiks to investigate de Woningwet. In addition the committee pleaded for the

3. Anita Blom, Bregit Jansen, Marieke van der Heide, 2004 (De typologie van de vroeg-naoorlogse woonwijken)

7. Wouter van Stiphout, 2005 (Maak een Stad, Rotterdam en de Architectuur van J.H. van den Broek)
establishment of the *nationaal plan* with guidelines and provisions concerning zoning of the Netherlands.

A first step towards this goal was the creation of a list of protected nature areas in 1942 which in 1950 developed into a national plan for nature, landscape protection and outdoor recreation. This plan was not publicly available but was used in opposition against unwanted spatial developments initiated by local governments, businesses and individuals.

For a more effective organization the *Werkcommissie Ontwikkeling van het Westen des lands* was founded in 1951 to make recommendations for development of the *Randstad*. This led in 1958 to the *ruimtelijk plan voor de Randstad*. The most important terms where the development of new towns and to make sure *het groene hart* stayed green. The new cities were called *overloopsteden* and were based on the idea of the English “new towns” and the Garden city principals of Ebenezer Howard.3

Het *ruimtelijk plan voor de Randstad* – influenced by garden city principals – allowed architects and urban planners to develop an static urban plan for a fixed amount of inhabitants since an unexpected further increase of the population would be absorbed by the new *overloopsteden*. Chapter 4 (*Masterplan Morgenstond*) describes how Dudok’s philosophy matched these developments.

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3. Anita Blom, Bregit Jansen, Marieke van der Heide, 2004 (De typologie van de vroeg-naoorlogse woonwijken)

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**Eerste Nota**

In 1957 the government pleaded for cohesion in the various government policies relating to space to ensure coordination between different departments. This led in 1960 to the *Eerste Nota* which focused on the distribution and separation of working and living.

The *Eerste Nota* saw success due to a countrywide balanced growth of wealth which stopped the migration from the countryside to the cities. Income increased by 30% which helped people afford to own a car. This made the separation of work and living possible. The population of the cities decreased and the suburbanization in the Netherlands increased.3

The distribution and separation of working and living resulted in a less varied functional composition of neighborhoods. The distance between working and living also resulted in the increase of traffic congestion.
3. Industrialization and standardization

Figure 16: The installation of the first element for the construction of prefabricated houses of Morgenstond, Den Haag, 1952. Photo by Friezer. (Beeldbank Haags Gemeentearchief)
Industrialization of construction methods

The Netherlands had after the war, as mentioned earlier, two major tasks. These were the restoration and growth of the economy and catching up the shortage in housing. Both were primarily left to the market before the war but because of the poor economic situation after the war the government was forced to intervene. An intervention in the industrialization policy was chosen for this agent, and the government looked for a way to speed up the building process of new housing projects.3

There were several problems, caused by the shortage of materials, a shortage of skilled construction workers and shortage of available funds. Until the war the Netherlands was mainly using traditional construction methods while other countries had already switched to a faster – and therefore in many cases cheaper – non-traditional modular construction method, mentioned as systeembouw.8

According to Hugo Priemus, there was a distinction between traditional and non-traditional methods. The definition given for traditional building methods:

“Traditional was any construction which was characterized by a wooden floor construction (beams and wooden parts) that was produced on site, or from concrete casted in non-standard moulds on site, and by a load-bearing wall construction made by limestone or brick masonry, according to the “waal” format (brick with the dimensions 21.5 length x 10.5 width x 5.5 cm. height), or by concrete that was casted on site in non-standard moulds.”

Therefore, non-traditional was identified as any construction consists of a floor and a load-bearing structure that cannot be characterized as traditional building methods according to the previous definition.9

The government invested extra money to promote the use of additional building systems. Larger municipalities negotiated with contractors in order to ensure a continuous flow of construction.3

Rationalization in housing

After the Second World War attempts were made to solve the housing shortage quickly through the systematization and rationalization of the building industries in order to get more houses build in less time.
and to lower the production costs.

A collective of traditional and contemporary architects from the Association of Dutch Architects (BNA) concentrated on the consequences of the expected massive housing problem. They investigated the role of the architect in the large scale building process, the impact of standardization and serial production on the architecture of housing project. They also developed minimum floor plans for different household compositions. This resulted in 1943 in the report *Richtlijnen voor de woningarchitectuur*. These guidelines for residential architecture set the minimum conditions and sizing for dwellings and guarded the minimum quality. These guidelines had a major influence on minimal conditions for acceptable postwar housing.

In practice these minimum requirements were often used as the maximum construction standards in order to keep down the building costs.³

**Faster and less expensive housing construction**

There was not much built in the first years after the war but a lot of research took place concerning *systeembouw*.

For this way of construction, prefabricated components, such as concrete blocks and mountable elements were made in the factory and put together on site. The government decided in 1948 to encourage companies to invest in *systeembouw* by means of subsidy. Municipalities were also rewarded a fee for building with this system.

The government also tried to promote labor-saving construction methods by so-called continuous contracts between municipalities and construction companies to cover the disadvantages of *systeembouw* like the big investments in machinery, factories and cranes. These contracts ensured a collaboration for a long time. In 1956 Den Haag signed a contract to build 10,000 dwellings over 5 years with the companies Muwi and Van Wijnen.⁸

Meanwhile the government was also encouraging other speed-enhancing construction methods. The Minister of Housing and Construction requested the *Studiegroep Efficiënte Woningbouw* to establish a set of efficient, affordable housing plans. This led in 1960 to the *keuzeplanwoning* which are standard housing solutions for low paid tenants.³

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³ Anita Blom, Bregit Jansen, Marieke van der Heide, 2004 (De typologie van de vroeg-naoorlogse woonwijken)
⁸ Aikaterini Loukopoulou, 2012 (Building envelope refurbishment of multi-residential postwar buildings)
Figure 17: Construction site with prefab elements, window frames and building cranes in Morgenstond Den Haag, 1957, Unknown painter. (Beeldbank Haags Gemeentearchief)
Standardization

Construction companies tried to build as much as possible with limited variation because contracts were bound on quantity agreements. The government supported this effort to further standardization because in its view the housing shortage was still not resolved. Building with structural elements increased rapidly in the early sixties with the use of movable molds and other new labor saving technics. A large-scale approach was necessary to cover the costs for the expensive construction crane. The houses were mostly carried out as gallery flats accessible through a lift.

Minister Bogaers stimulated the prefabrication significantly and gave 25% subsidy to build in a modular way. In 1962, 39% of the new build family dwellings were located in a gallery flat and this amount grew to 80% in 1962.

Consequences were a limited number of housing types and a rigid and uniform urban image, which eventually led to a harmful monotony of building types.3

More is written about the harmfulness of monotony of building types in chapter 10 (The need for varying types of building and building age).

The Association of Dutch Architects was not happy with the new developments and especially not with the keuzeplanwoning because the housing plans did not have to be designed by a recognized architect. Another point of criticism was that there was no need for a complete design plan; a facade and a floorplan was enough.

The urban planner W.F. Schut, successor of Bogaers, broke radically with the stimulation of prefabrication policy. At this time the ideas about housing changed and the first factory for large building components closed in 1972.5

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3. Anita Blom, Bregit Jansen, Marieke van der Heide, 2004 (De typologie van de vroeg-naoorlogse woonwijken)
Figure 18: Painting of a pig farm across the street of boerderij Morgenstond and a part of the Leyweg looking towards Wateringen, by Houbolt, Eduard, 1937. (Beeldbank Haags Gemeentearchief)
4. Masterplan Morgenstond
Urban plan for Den Haag

The Dutch architect W.M. Dudok was from the twenties an urban planner, active in the Dutch city Hilversum. Dudok, similar to Ebenezer Howard and lots of other urbanists form that era, worried about the too large and endlessly growing city. His processing of this ‘problem’ led him to the idea of the Hilversum expansion plan. This plan worked as “the finishing expansion” for Hilversum.10

This idea was supported by the municipality of Den Haag and in 1934 Dudok on a proposal from Berlage was asked for an expansion plan for Den Haag. In 1949 Dudok developed Concept-structuurplan voor Groot ‘s-Gravenhage, a master plan for the extension of the city.11

Dudok and ‘De wijkgedachte’

Dudok had a completely unique and very pragmatic attitude. He believed that the neighborhood concept provided order and a hierarchical structure which should not be interpreted as a definite plan. About the social significance of de wijkgedachte he was frankly pessimistic because the existing religious differences in society.3

Despite his skepticism, his design for Moerwijk, Den Haag, from 1948-1949, became one of the earliest examples of the application of the de wijkgedachte as an organizing principle.10

Urban plan for Morgenstond

Within this master plan Dudok designed the neighborhoods Moerwijk en Morgenstond. The plan served for years as the basis for urban activity in Den Haag, although the plan had no legal ratification. His plan was based on an urban study by the Gemeentelijke Dienst der Stadsontwikkeling en Volkshuisvesting. This study included the geomorphological conditions, livelihoods, parking and traffic counts, cultural and spiritual life. A limited number of residents is predicted in the future. The study contains topics such as: formulated needs for residential homes; guide numbers for the distribution of high-rise and low-rise; and suggestions for the layout of the city and districts.

After the Second World War Dudok proposed a
Figure 19: Structuurplan with the position of Moewijk, Morgenstond and the Zuiderpark. M.W. Dudok, image from Toelichting bij de aanbieding van het Concept-structuurplan. Den Haag. z.j.
decentralization concept in order to limit the growth of the city. Dudok suggested that because of improved technical communication, the cultural benefits of society did not depend strongly on large population centers as the new satellite towns could absorb the population growth instead of the existing cities. This decentralization was once again, a typical modern thought in urban planning taken directly from the ideas of Ebenezer Howard.10 & 12

The idea for the expansion of Den Haag is comparable with Hilversum because Dudok chose again to create a design that worked as the finishing expansion of the city. Dudok wrote about this:

“het is een der belangrijkste landschappelijke opgaven van de stedebouwer, een schone relatie tussen stad en land – in vroeger eeuwen zo vanzelfsprekend – te herstellen. Daarbij zal men ernaar moeten streven vooruitgeschoven bestaande bebouwingen binnen de uiteindelijke stadsom te brengen; gave afronding is een eerste vereiste.”10

10. Theo van de beek, Hans van der Heijden, 1987 (W.M. Dudok en het Haagse stadsbeeld)
Figure 20: Morphology, illustration by René Buitenhuys, 2012)
Figure 21: Drawing Dudok. M.W. Dudok, (Toelichting bij de aanbieding van het Concept-structuurplan. Den Haag, z.j.)
The design of Dudok can be described as a finely meshed geometric system. Structuring the Hague takes place by an orthogonal road system parallel to the coast, where the orientation of the existing city structure is adopted. The main roads provide access to the city and form six quadrants. Each quadrant is divided in four parts by the local roads.

The green structure is an important connecting element in the design. On the urban scale, important parks are connected with the surrounding landscape by wide green zones with public recreative functions.

The neighborhoods Moerwijk and Morgenstond can be considered as a rather coherent district. Morgenstond makes a homogeneous impression with only open blocks and strokenbouw.

Dudok largely determined what type of block should be built. Along the main roads he positioned a fairly closed building mass of four stories high, open blocks. The interpretation of the neighborhood within these relatively closed edge is much more open. The positioning of the houses was determined by the pattern of streets and not by a choice of the sun.10
Figure 22: Children jumping rope on the sidewalk of a South Side Chicago street, Photo by Russell Lee, 1941, (Child’s Play in the Alley, Preserving DC Stables)
5. The philosophy of Jane Jacobs
Safety in cities

Streets and sidewalks are the most important public spaces of cities. The city looks nice when the streets and sidewalks look nice. The city feels safe when people feel safe in the streets.

In villages and other less populated areas, people in general feel relatively safe. In most cases the neighbors know each other and this leads to popular control over acceptable behavior by a web of reputation, gossip, public disapproval, public approval and penalties.

A characteristic of densely populated areas is that each person that lives in these areas, meets more strangers than people that they know and this happens not only in public areas, but also in front of their own door. Even people that live very close by are often strangers.

The basic goal of a successful city neighborhood is that you feel safe amongst all of the strangers. If this is not the case, then the area is functioning poorly.4

Contact

“The blend of commercial and residential elements in the alleys was critical because it created a diversity of activities that offered rich interpersonal encounters for everyone.” 5

In city streets people, without personal relations and those who don’t even have the need to know each other, come in contact with each other regularly. To feel safe in an environment like this, people need to trust all these strange people, and have confidence that these strangers will help them if something bad happens. This faith grows over time through lots of little public street contacts like advice from neighbors, or by people that warn children (figure 9). If this faith doesn’t exist in a neighborhood it can lead to disaster and impersonal city streets with anonymous people.

A well functioning city street balances the privacy needs of the residents with their need to socialize, amuse and get help with other people in the neighborhood. To reach this goal there must be a lot of places available, positioned on the sidewalks of the streets, and on the actual sidewalks, were it is possible to maintain public contact. Stores, bars, restaurants and other places can function as informal meeting spots. People are free to walk in and out or just hang around without any pre-conditions. The neighborhood

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)

5. Preserving DC Stables, 2011, (Child’s Play in the Alley)
must be diverse and contain a lot of facilities to be successful.4

Assimilation of children

Prewar urban planners thought and still think that it’s bad for children to play on the city streets. They separate all the functions of the city and reserve space for children to play. These formal playgrounds are often isolated from city streets, located in inner courtyards and separated from the ‘dangerous’ city life.

The problem with this is the need for people to be able to keep an eye on these places. At the isolated formal playgrounds, there must be a paid supervisor or children’s parents or there is nobody to supervise. A lot of children don’t use the formal playgrounds the way they are meant to be used, preferring the lively city streets (figure 22). For children it’s unnatural to choose to go to a space to do formal things, guarded by a supervisor they don’t know. A large part of their day is already reserved for formal activities like school, homework, and meals. The valuable remaining moments are preferably used for activities on their own initiative. Many children enjoy roaming around and playing in informal settings, like streets and sidewalks where they’re more free to use their imaginations.3

Ballet of the sidewalks

Safety in cities is not only provided by the police. The public order is maintained by a complex, almost unconscious network of voluntary control by the users of the streets.4

Jacobs calls this unconscious network a “ballet of the sidewalks”. A woman takes out her trash. Shopkeepers unlock doors and pull carts onto the sidewalk. A man hails a taxi as students pass on their way to the subway. This is an unrehearsed choreography of urban dwellers going about their business that, in her view, created the vitality of city life.13

Currently I live in the neighborhood Spangen in Rotterdam. This area is from a socially economic point of view one of the Netherlands’ poorest neighborhoods and well known for crime, poverty, prostitution and drug problems. During several hours of the day the majority of the streets are relatively empty with the exception of groups of bored teenagers, loitering around the
neighborhood. The lifeless streets often cause an unsafe feeling.

An exception is the street where I live. Here we find, in contrast to the rest of Spangen, a variety of functions. The ground levels of the building blocks are used by a variety of small businesses, restaurants, small offices and coffee shops, nightclubs, a kindergarten. Around the corner there is a supermarket and a deli and at the edge of the park we find the district office of the municipality and the Marconiplein subway station.

A unsafe feeling doesn't play a role in this street because the presence of Jacobs' “ballet of the sidewalks”. There are always people around to keep an eye on the public space. The businesses attract a frequent stream of customers, and the owners of this shops act like informal security guards. At night this role is taken over by the bouncer of the nightclub.

Three main characteristics

To make this voluntary control possible, a successful neighborhood needs according to Jacobs three main characteristics.

The first and very important characteristic is that there must be a lot eyes, focused on the public space. These eyes are from the natural users of the street, residents, visitors, owners of the businesses and other facilities. Sufficient visual control is only possible if the buildings are focused on the public streets.

The second characteristic is the need for a reasonably constant use of the sidewalks to make sure there are more eyes focused on the street and to make sure the people in the buildings are also keeping their eyes on the streets. Nobody likes to watch out the window onto an empty street as people prefer to see activity. In other words, they enjoy being a spectator of the “ballet of the sidewalks”.

The third characteristic: There must be a clear distinction between public space and private space. Different spaces must not merge into an undefined space without a clear border.

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
6. Jacobs three main characteristics in Morgenstond
In chapter 6 (Jacobs three main characteristics in Morgenstond) I wrote about Jane Jacobs’ philosophy and her three essential characteristics for a successful neighborhood. This capital is dedicated to the presence of these three main characteristics in the study area.

Eyes focused on the public space

The first and very important characteristic is that there must be a lot of eyes, focused on the public space. These eyes are from the natural users of the street, residents, visitors, owners of the businesses and other facilities. Sufficient visual control is only possible if the buildings are focused on the public streets.4

The strokenbouw housing complex consists of six building blocks of three residential levels, on top of a layer of basement storerooms. The alignment of the blocks is special. These blocks are in fact obliquely aligned in relation to the surrounding buildings. The building blocks are situated parallel to each other, and they are positioned back to back. Green courts are situated between these blocks (image x).

A study (figure 23) shows that all buildings are focused on public space and there are hardly any blind spots to discover in the environment of the housing complex. The fact that the buildings are positioned back to back has a number of advantages: The corridors of each block are within sight of the opposite block, and so are the green courts between the building blocks.

Weak points, as in locations without visual inspection of surrounding buildings, are the stairwells.

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
FUCUS ON PUBLIC GREEN

FOCUS ON STREET

FUCUS ON PUBLIC GREEN

MAIN ORIENTATION

PUBLIC GREEN
Figure 24: Use of sidewalks, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012)
**Constant use of the sidewalks**

The second characteristic is the need for a reasonably constant use of the sidewalks to make sure there are more eyes focused on the street and that people in the buildings are also keeping their eyes on the streets. Nobody likes to watch out the window onto an empty street as people prefer to see activity. In other words, they enjoy to be a spectator of the “ballet of the sidewalks”.4

A consistent use of public space by pedestrians is important according to Jacobs. This ensures effective and informal social control and therefore safer streets. The activity attracts more people, which is good for wide range of facilities.

Precisely this lack of vibrancy and the presence of actual people on the majority the streets and public space of the neighborhood, is something I noticed while visiting the neighborhood a couple of times. This absence is also shown in many photo’s. Exceptions are in particular the clustered commercial areas (figure 24), and anchor points such as public transport stations.

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4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
Clear distinction between public and private space

There must be a clear distinction between public space and private space. Different spaces must not merge into an undefined space without a clear border. 4

The housing complex between Coevordenstraat and Haveltestraat is remarkable in its environment because it’s the only building in the area with access through a shared gallery. Glass staircases are located in the extension of the galleries.

These staircases and galleries are publicly accessible for residents of the complex and strangers as well. This provides an unclear transition between private and public space and strangers have a direct view through the apartment windows into the private kitchen and private bedroom of the residents. As a result residents have to protect their privacy in many ways. I saw normal curtains, newspapers, towels and even blinding through garbage bags.

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
Figure 25: Gallery, Photo by René Buitenhuis, 2012

Figure 26: Public & privat, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012
Figure 27: Jane Jacobs: Urban Ideas, Urbanspace Gallery, Max Allen, August 2011
7. Jacobs ingredients for diversity
The need for diversity

It’s not easy to accomplish Jacobs three main characteristics, in order to ensure a vibrant street life. People can for example not be forced to use the street when there is no need for them to use it.

The fundamental element for this kind of public control is, according Jane Jacobs, a substantial amount of diverse companies, stores, bars and restaurants along the sidewalks, especially places that are open during evening and night. This diversity gives the residents and visitors reasons to use the sidewalks of that area at all times. In this way the owners of these places become informal security guards since they hate vandalism and crime and want their customers feel safe. The activity that is generated by people that are shopping or using the sidewalks to get from one place to another also attracts other people and this means more eyes focused on the street.4

How to generate diversity

Jane Jacobs arrived at four principles for healthy cities by making observations of neighborhoods in use. In some places, she saw what she called a veritable “ballet” of activities on the sidewalks. In others, she saw stagnation. Many cases fell somewhere in between. She discovered that the most economically successful areas, as well as those that were the safest and most pleasant to be in, had these for characteristics:

- The uses were mixed, not just all one kind of thing.
- There were frequent streets and very few long blocks.
- There were various types and ages of buildings.
- There was a high concentration and density of uses.13

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)

8. Mixture of primary use facilities
Mixture of primary use facilities

A healthy city district needs more than one primary function according Jacobs. Examples of primary functions are working, shopping, living, and education. A combination of primary functions gives the people different purposes to leave their homes in order to use common facilities, guaranteeing the presence of people at different times. Residential buildings, offices, factories, educational institutions, and certain types of recreation like parks are examples of primary use facilities.

A park is successful when it attracts users during each hour of the daytime. It’s a waste of space if a park is not well used but an abandoned park doesn’t disappear. If a store is unused the most part of a day they disappear. Or they never appear at all at that specific location. Similar to a park, a regular store needs a frequent stream of users to exist.

A combination of primary functions from a different kind, for example working and living, in a neighborhood can have a stimulating economical effect. When this is the case, there is a viable place for secondary diversity. Secondary diversity refers to the companies which serve the people that are attracted by the presence of primary use facilities.  

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
Figure 28: Mixture of functions, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012)
Mixture of primary use facilities in Morgenstond

In the neighborhood Morgenstond we find a combination of primary functions from a different kind. We find predominantly residential buildings. In addition we find an certain amount of commercial program, most of them positioned on the Leyweg area.

The average size of remaining companies or institutions in Southwest are small. More than 78% consists of fewer than five employees. Most of the companies are active at a commercial level, business support and storage. There are hardly larger offices in southwest Den Haag.\textsuperscript{14}

Southwest Den Haag has a limited number of commercial functions with an urban or regional footprint. These are the recreational facilities and sports functions in Het Zuiderpark and De Uithof and shopping centre Leyweg.

With the arrival of the new municipality district office the percentage of employees which are working in the neighborhood significantly increased and this is contributing into a healthier mixture of functions.

Mixture of primary use facilities, Coevordenstraat and Haveltestraat.

Each individual level contains twelve residential units. The architect designed a separate business space at the both ends of each individual block, which is unique for this kind of building typology.

Each block consisted of 36 dwelling. At the both ends of each individual block we found a consultation bureau, offices, health care dwellings, and a collective space for the neighborhood.

Figure 28: Amenities, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012
Figure 30: Haveltestraat, Photo by P.G. Kempff, (Haagse-beeldbank)
Lack of diversity

The mixture of primary functions is not balanced enough to generate a consistent amount of people, using the streets at different times of the day. The neighborhood is not a viable place for secondary diversity as a result of this unhealthy balance. Secondary diversity refers to the companies which serve the people that are attracted by the presence of primary use facilities.4

Companies in the southwest are depending particularly on the local population. A number of the companies – secondary diversity – had to close their doors due to disappointing amount of visitors. The original design of southwest Den Haag provided a dense retail – secondary diversity – sector. This original setup was not able to survive, due to reduction in the level of spending of the residents.14

This reduction was caused by the social economic status of the population, described in chapter 10. (The need for varying types of building and building age).

The municipality determined that this failure is due to better parking facilities at shopping centers in neighboring suburbs such as Rijswijk.15 They did not talk about a unbalanced mixture of primary functions.
Figure 31: Luchtopname Coevordenstraat Den Haag, 1957. (Fotocollectie Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst)
9. The need for small urban blocks
The additional benefits of an area with small city blocks are that a person doesn't have to walk the same monotone route to a certain point anymore. With small blocks, he can choose alternative routes so the amount of pedestrians using different streets of a neighborhood is more balanced and there's a wider range of good locations for companies to settle. In this kind of neighborhood, it's far more likely to start and maintain contacts with people from other streets.4

I used to live on West 83rd Street between Columbus Avenue and Amsterdam Avenue in the Upper West Side, New York City. When I would go to a store, I would walk west or east to one of the two avenues. When I went to the subway I headed west to Broadway. To Central Park, I would walk east. It took me a period of three months to discover what was going on, at West 82nd Street and West 84th Street. This seemingly obvious discovery of the parallel streets only took place when I started to explore the neighborhood via skateboard. As people are creatures of habit, it's quite possible that residents of 83rd street rarely use the parallel streets by their apartments and visa versa.

The result of this is that you are less likely to meet people or to use and even be aware of facilities on these parallel streets. Long streets in effect are isolating. Stores and businesses that want to settle down choose the points where the long separated roads come together with cross points like Columbus and Amsterdam Avenue.

However, Jacobs' opinions do not hold true in the case of the Upper West Side, where long blocks have still remained relatively safe, with the avenues producing a lively commercial and civic culture, and pleasant contrast between quiet residential streets and lively commercial throughways.

**Functioning of the blocks in Morgenstond**

I did not discovered blocks in Morgenstond with an insulating effect, due to too-large dimensions. But there is a an insulating effect, due to the positioning of the staircases. For the majority of the people, there is no reason to make use of paths through the green strips except when they choose this alternative route on purpose. (figure 32)
Figure 32: Building blocks, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012)

Figure 33: Building blocks, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012)
Figure 34: Varying types of buildings, (Photo by René Buitenhuys, 2012)
10. The need for varying types of building and building age
To create diversity, cities and neighborhoods need buildings with varying types and varying building ages. Particularly a high percentage of old buildings according Jacobs.

Old renovated buildings in good shape are strong ingredients against a monotone neighborhood. But more important is a large number of buildings of low value to make sure that there is a variety in economic efficiency.

If there are only new buildings in a neighborhood, the companies and individuals that rent or buy the buildings will have to be able to bear the costs. Wealthy established companies and wealthy individuals, retail and food chains, banks and supermarkets are able to succeed here where restaurants, little bars, book and antique stores, art studios, and students more often occupy older buildings, giving a neighborhood an attractive and original character. Flourishing diversity in a city means a mixture of companies with high profit, medium profit, low profit and without any profit.

The age of buildings in relation with the functionality is relative. In a vital neighborhood almost nothing is too old to use. There are always people without a lot of choice that end up in these places or middle class families that are looking for a bargain to renovate. Cities need a variety of old buildings because these are the breeding places of new primary diversity.4

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
Figure 35: Luchtopname 
Coevordenstraat Den Haag, 
1957, (Fotocollectie Rijks-
voorlichtingdienst)
Monotony of buildings in Morgenstond

In 1953 a article from H.G. Beusekom appeared in the magazine Bouw with a very negative judgment on the Dudoks plan. In his eyes the endless blocks, of three or four floors high, along straight streets ignored the value of the personality. He said that the plans are old fashioned and offered too little freedom to executive architects.10

“Wij missen in de Haagse stedebouwkundige plannen de grote stedebouwkundige visie, de openheid voor moderne mogelijkheden, die alleen waarborgt dat onze plannen toekomstwaarde hebben, d.w.z. dat zij tot in lengte van jaren in de behoefte en van de jongere generaties zullen voorzien.” 14

The majority of buildings of Morgenstond were realized in a relatively short period, just after the Second Word War. This means that the majority of buildings were build with comparable intentions, and under similar circumstances. The result is a neighborhood full of buildings with comparable details and scale. All of these projects served for a specific purpose relevant for that time – the time of a housing shortage and limited financial possibilities (chapter 2 and 3).

The result is a large amount of small inexpensive dwellings.

“Uit analyse blijkt dat Zuidwest een sterk eenzijdige voorraad heeft wat betreft woningtype (meergezins), eigendomsverhouding (corporatiebezit) en omvang (klein).” 14

10. Theo van de beek, Hans van der Heijden, 1987 (W.M. Dudok en het Haagse stadsbeeld)

Figure 36: Apartment types, illustration by René Buitenhuys, 2012)
Figure 37: floorplan, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012)

Type A, 48,1m²
Living room 16,8m²
Bedroom 7,5m²
Bedroom 9,6m²
Kitchen 5,3m²
Bathroom & toilet 2,7m²
Corridor 6,2m²
Type B, 39.8m²

Living room 16.8m²
Bedroom 9.6m²
Kitchen 5.7m²
Bathroom & toilet 2.7m²
Corridor 5m²
Figure 39: Type C, 68.8m²
- Bedroom 20.2m²
- Bedroom 8.7m²
- Bathroom & toilet 4.9m²
- Kitchen 5.2m²
- Corridor 9.9m²
- Living room 19.9m²
Monotony in wealth

Because the majority of the buildings in Morgenstond doesn't meet contemporary requirements, the residents move to other neighborhoods as soon they are able to afford it. They leave their low value apartment to find more spacious dwellings, a private garden or a vibrant neighborhood. This effect is confirmed by the municipality and is recognizable in many postwar neighborhoods.

“Er zijn weinig mogelijkheden om wooncarrière te maken binnen Zuidwest. Het gevolg is een uitstroom van draagkrachtige huishoudens.”

The collective of residents who can not afford to move away, are often less wealthy and a economical monotony appears. The influx of new residents in southwest consists in general of poor households or starters. They are leaving once it get better in financial terms. The result is a lack of attachment and involvement towards the neighborhood. This affects the use public spaces and is a cause for congestion, courtyard-pollution and crime.14

Gentrification

There are many examples of bad neighborhoods and neighborhoods of low value which are evolving into the most popular districts of a city.

It usually starts with students and artists with little income who’d like to settle down, attracted by the low value of the buildings; The new vibrancy, generated by students attracts people with medium income who like to buy a cheap place and renovate it; Other young people launch a business or start a restaurant in a old abandoned warehouse; The studios of the artists, restaurants and bars are a magnet for tourists.15

Examples of this kind of gentrification are SoHo in Manhattan, Williamsburg in Brooklyn, De Pijp in Amsterdam and these day’s the same thing is happening in the south part of Spangen in Rotterdam

This gentrification almost never occurred in postwar neighborhoods. Investors are not attracted because of the lack of flexibility due to the monotony of the buildings stock and the monotony of building types and age.


15. Erick Lyle, 2008 (On The Lower Frequencies, A Secret History of the City)
11. The need for population concentration
The need for population concentration

There is a strong relation between the density of people in a city and the available facilities. To generate and maintain diversity there must be a significantly high number of people in a neighborhood to use different facilities. This number includes people that visit the neighborhood and especially people that are living in the area, because the residents will use these facilities more consistently. If there are less people, it’s more likely that there are less facilities able to keep running without the local support.

Most districts in a city have residential purposes, inhabited by the people that use the local streets, parks and facilities. Therefore successful neighborhoods need a high population and enough available housing to achieve high residential density.

High residential density is a bad thing in the eyes of orthodox urbanists. If they are referring to overpopulation, they might be right but a positive high density means a high amount of available housing that can accommodate the population that seeks to live in a certain area.

Neighborhoods with a higher density function better in general terms of safety, quality, popularity and are more capable of generating diversity but this is only the case when the neighborhood meets the other three conditions.

Housing density is too high or too low when it prevents diversity instead of generating diversity. In some suburbs a low housing density works well but in cities this is a bad thing for the diversity. A to high density needs a certain level of standardization of buildings to be able to fit a lot of houses on a specific location. This standardization often causes a lack in building variety, and the associated problems like monotone buildings, little choice in housing value, similar kind of residence and comparable building age. When this happens the diversity of residents and facilities might become monotone, resulting in monotone demographics incapable of maintaining a diverse fabric of facilities.4

The most successful neighborhoods have a wide variety of building types and while it’s not easy to combine this with a high density, there are good examples. One of the most impressive examples of a densely populated neighborhood without standard building type is Manhattan’s Greenwich Village. Its high density and variety is realized with a mixture of single

4. Jane Jacobs, 1961 (The Death and Life of Great American Cities)
Figure 41: Density, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012)
family houses, studios, multi-unit apartment buildings and other types from different ages and sizes. The high density is obtained from a high percentage – estimated between 60-80% – of the buildable area being occupied by actual buildings. This high amount of used ground even allows some buildings to be a bit less efficient without frustrating the diversity.4

Increasing density

While Morgenstond was built a critical reaction appeared to the monotony of the neighborhood and the high percentage of low dwellings. As a response three buildings of seven stories, designed by ir. F. Ottenhof, were built in 1955 at the corner of the Leyweg and Melis Stokelaan. In 1959 four, fourteen story buildings from ir. C. Pet were built at the corner of de Dedemsvaartweg and Melis Stokelaan.11

Decreasing functional diversity by increasing density

The construction of the streets of Morgenstond began in 1950 and the first building was completed in 1951. Shortly after the construction start, it was decided to increase the housing density from 7700 to 9200 dwellings. Therefore the number of single-family houses, and the size of individual apartments had to be reduced. A lot of blocks where provided with an additional fourth story. To increase the amount of apartments, the original scattered shopping strips of the initial design had to be replaced by clustered shopping malls.11

In other words: one ingredient of Jacobs is gaining ground at the expense of another ingredient.

Demography

The neighborhood Morgenstond is located in the borough Escamp. Respectively 22.6% of the total population of Den Haag lived in this borough in 2008 which equates 107400 inhabitants. It is expected that the population grows by 6.1% to 113,900 inhabitants in 2025.16

In one of the RMIT presentations, a Den Haag urban planner said that the municipality intends to realize more dwellings in the neighborhood Morgenstond. It can be assumed that this intention is in response of the
This differs from Dudoks original plan and his decentralization concept meant to limit the uncontrollable growth of the city.

On the other hand, it is interesting that this idea aligns with the concentration of population philosophy of Jacobs.
12. Economical monotony
Ethnical diversity in Morgenstond

The economical monotony, described in chapter 10 (The need for varying types of building and building age), is often the cause of a wonderful ethnic diversity.

In southwest Den Haag we find 124 different nationalities and 83 in Morgenstond. The district has with 53% a relatively high percentage of immigrants from outside the European Union. This amount is 37% in Den Haag.

There is a strong correlation between age and ethnicity. The average age of the native population is significantly older than those of residents from foreign countries. Approximately 20% of residents below the age of 20 are Dutch, 35% of the adult residents are Dutch as well and this number is 80% for elderly people.17

Education and employment in Morgenstond

A consequence of the monotony and low value housing are a high unemployment rate. The large stock of low cost apartments is often rented by people with little income. Since 2007 the unemployment increased by 13%. This is 3% more than Den Haag. Little income is connected to the educational level. Approximately 50% of the inhabitants of Morgenstond have a low lever of formal education.18

Local research

In chapter 10 (The need for varying types of building and building age I wrote about the large amount of small inexpensive dwellings in Morgenstond.

For a better impression of the neighborhood and in order to investigate the influence of this monotony at the level of the complex between Coeverdenstraat and Haveltestraat. I decided to interview residents of the complex.

I was able to interview around thirty residents of type A and B dwellings and two residents of the type C dwellings. I was curious about the family composition, origin, profession, and i asked for an opinion concerning safety and availability of facilities (figure 42).

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17. Dienst OCW, 2009 (Onderzoek en Integrale Vraagstukken)
Figure 42: Statistics housing complex between Coevordenstraat & Haveltestraat, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012
Sample of residents

A resident from a type B apartment told she fled from Moldavia after her communist husband was murdered.

A retired soldier of Indonesian descent, who has lived for 20 years in one of the type C apartment, told me that the housing cooperation Staedion offered him 5000 euros to leave his house. Furthermore, he complained about the flooding in the basement floor.

His young neighbor said that she really did not have time for questions because she just lost her job and was just on her way to file a job application.

In another block a student lived in a so called, househopping dwelling. Staedion – a housing corporation with 32000 dwellings in The Hague – owes buildings with the plan to demolish them within a few years. These homes of a reasonable condition are temporarily rented to tenants of 18 to 27 years for a low price. The student did not really want to answer questions because he thought I was a Staedion employee and would find out that he secretly lives with another student which is not allowed.

Major interview result

This investigation confirmed the theoretical research concerning unemployment and the assumption on economic monotony. Despite the variety of types of residents, there is an extreme economic monotony. Disadvantages of this economic monotony are described in chapter 10 (The need for varying types of building and building age).
Figure 43: Statistics housing complex between Coevordenstraat & Haveltestraat, illustration by René Buitenhuis, 2012)
Figure 44: Detailing, head-appartment, Coevordenstraat, (Tekeningen Steadion)
13. Building technique
Chapter 3 (*Industrialization and standardization*) describes how after 1946, the popularity of the non-traditional building systems rapidly increased because the need for cheaper construction methods reduced labor.

Research led to new non-traditional building systems, and new concrete casing and concrete molding techniques such as *gietbouw*.\(^{19}\)

The six blocks between Coevordenstraat and Haveltestraat were designed by ir. J de Jonge and ir. L. de Jonge and built between 1954 and 1957 according to a combination of traditional, and the non-traditional *gietbouw* building system.\(^{20}\)

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19. *Bestek, 1953 (250 Bestek en voorwaarden)*

20. *Bouw, 1954*
The influence on architecture

The weight of each block between Coeverdenstraat and Haveltestraat is supported by approximately 140 pre-fabricated poles of 5 or 6 meters to bear the concrete foundation beams and by the two separation walls.\textsuperscript{19}

Because of the new construction methods it was not longer necessary to create four load bearing walls. The front and back facade only had a closing function and it was possible to create thinner and more transparent facades.

The construction – a composition of horizontal and vertical lines – plays a role in the architectural articulation. The facades are made up of horizontal floor/balcony lines and vertical lines of the separation walls. The space in between shows a much lighter and – in a certain way – more flexible expression.

Korrelbeton

\textit{Korrelbeton} is the kind of concrete that was used for the six blocks between Coevordenstraat and Haveltestraat.

A new kind of concrete gained popularity, especially in West Germany, because the rubble of German cities was a perfect ingredient for \textit{korrelbeton} concrete. After the rubble of cities was used the new building technique was able to be continued with additional materials.\textsuperscript{21}

The non-traditional building method, combined with the use of \textit{korrelbeton}, was an important step in the progress of rationalization of building and to ensure optimal continuation of this new construction method extensive research took place at the Technical University in Stuttgart.\textsuperscript{22}
Figure 45: Haveltestraat, in direction of Coevordenstraat, photo by P.G. Kempff, (haagsebeeldbank)
Standardization

The mold system for the korrelbeton elements was intelligently designed to ensure, trained but unskilled workers were able to assemble the molds. The casing was able to be used multiple times, which is a considerable cost saving as well.\textsuperscript{22}

This method of building with a re-usable mold, provided a degree standardization, the impact of this standardization has been discussed in previous chapters.

Renovation

After time, problems appeared in terms of climactic conditions and moisture problems, due to the rather experimental non-traditional building methods. Years after the construction the houses of the complex between Coevordenstraat & Haveltestraat were renovated. Wooden frames were replaced by synthetic frames. And the building was provided with an outer wall insulation. The original slenderness and detailing of the architecture was not well reflected because of this renovation.\textsuperscript{22}

Demolition

The quality of the majority of postwar buildings in Morgenstond is outdated. The current state of the housing complex between Coevordenstraat & Haveltestraat is so bad, according to residents and housing cooperation, that there are plans to demolish the complex within a few years. Residents who own a apartment is offered money to leave in advance.

\textsuperscript{22} Cement 22, 1958 (Nieuwe bouwsystemen voor woningen)
\textsuperscript{20} Bouw, 1954
Figure 46: Queen Juliana visit the neighborhoods and Moerwijk Morgenstond in 1953. photo by Friezer. (Beeldbank Haags Gemeentearchief)
Figure 47: Gallery woning Coevordenstraat & Haveltestraat, photo by P. van Oosterhout, (Beeldbank Haags Gemeentearchief)
Conclusion
My area of interest ‘Lively public spaces versus lifeless public space.’ was chosen out of my observations of the postwar neighborhoods’ often quiet and insufficient public space.

First I had to discover the philosophy behind the postwar neighborhoods. I learned that a certain degree of standardization and monotony arose from a lack of money and materials, industrialization and de Woningwet. And I learned how urban planners of these districts often where influenced by the Garden City philosophy of Ebenezer Howard.

I learned how this had an major impact on the vibrancy of postwar neighborhoods like Morgenstond at urban, architectural and detail scale.

Impact on urban scale

By the separation of working and living, city districts appeared with predominantly residential function. Facilities with different functions were often clustered and this resulted in a functional monotony.

The original design of southwest Den Haag provided a dense retail sector. This original setup was not able to survive because the mixture of primary functions is not balanced enough to generate a consistent amount of clients at different times of the day.

A high percentage buildable space was reserved for green space. Therefore a certain standardization was required in order to achieve the desired density and for cheaper building costs.

Impact on architectural scale

The standardization of buildings process led to monotone architecture and often to standardized of floorplans which were applied repeatedly. The lack of housing types and lack of facilities with different functions eventually led to a monotonous neighborhoods population. These people often had similar daily schedules, reducing liveliness on the streets during several hours of the day.

One of the most important discoveries is the presence of a monotony in wealth. As a result of government policy, rationalization and industrialization of the housing. The majority of the buildings in Morgenstond doesn’t meet contemporary requirements. As a result residents move to other neighborhoods
as soon they are able to afford it. They leave their low value apartment to find more spacious dwellings, a private garden or a vibrant neighborhood. The collective of residents who can not afford to move away, are often less wealthy and a economical monotony appears. The influx of new residents in southwest consists in general of poor households or starters and they are leaving once it get better in financial terms. The result is a lack of attachment and involvement towards the neighborhood. This affects the use of public spaces and is a cause for congestion, courtyard-pollution and crime. And therefore it is affecting the livability of the district. This effect is confirmed by the municipality of Den Haag.

Impact on technical scale

Cheaper and faster ways of building through rationalization and standardization led to new experimental building methods. These days there are many concerns about the quality of this projects. They are associated with poorly insulated walls and moisture problems caused by thermal bridges. Costs for renovation of these postwar neighborhoods are often too high. As a result many of these postwar projects are demolished to make place for new developments.

The endless repetition of architectural elements and detailing caused a dominant cohesion in the neighborhood. The disadvantage of this type of cohesion has a effect on the flexibility of the neighborhood. It is hard to fit in a new development in the neighborhood with other architectural characteristics and another way of detailing.

The philosophy of Jane Jacobs

The postwar urbanism was in 1961 criticized by Jacobs. In her book: The Death and Life of Great American Cities, she describes the need for cities to have an extremely complex and intricate diversity of facilities in order to generate a well-functioning vibrant urban street life.

The fundamental element for this kind of street life is a substantial amount of diverse companies, stores, bars and restaurants along the sidewalks, especially places that are open during evening and night. This diversity gives the residents and visitors reasons to use the sidewalks of that area at all times. To make
this possible, a district must meet the following characteristics:

– Mixture of primary use facilities.
– Need for small urban blocks.
– Need for varying types of building and building age.
– Need for population concentration

Continuation

Jacobs describes the need for cities to have an extremely complex and intricate diversity of facilities in order to generate a well-functioning vibrant urban street life.

After this research I am almost convinced that such a vibrant street life would have a positive impact on a neighborhood like Morgenstond. I refer not to a vibrancy as that of an city center. I refer to a healthier composition, obtained using Jacobs’ four fundamental ingredients.

Relevancy

Concerning the, mixture of primary use facilities theory, a start was already made with the realization of the new municipality office and the initial plan of the complex between Coevordenstraat & Haveltestraat.

Studies show that the morphology of the neighborhood fits according the need for small urban blocks theory.

Nowadays Den Haag considers the: need for varying types of building and building age and the need for population concentration theory as a solution of socioeconomic problems. The demolition plans of the complex from Staedion are not compatible with this statement.
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