P3 Reflection

P3 date: April 12 2013 – P4 date (preliminary): May 24 2013
Architecture & Dwelling: At Home in the City
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Main comments:
However the urban scheme is appealing, the aim for this design ("Activating Steigereiland Noord/IJburg) is still very vague. From the urban scheme to the dwelling scheme is a step too big, the intermediate step is missing/not showed. Work out or define the appearance/characteristics of every different (3) public space/building block, to make the design on all levels a whole and complete story. Define what the goal is and what “Active IJburg” means. The structure of the block on urban scheme is nice, and has a potential to become/create different public spaces, but are now filled with standard types of dwellings. It could be an idea to not mix all dwelling types through the entire design, but use dwelling types to strengthen the (desired) character of the block. On the ensemble level: is the harbour that important for the public space/appearance of the block that it needs two bridges? Could it be that there is only one operable bridge or not one operable? → water becomes not accessible for big(ger) boats, doesn’t this strengthen the design? Issues like these have to be discussed for determining the appearance and therefore strength of the design!

P2-P3:
At P2 the stated problem was the following: “Steigereiland is mainly focused on families. However, the public space is insufficient: it does not attract to be used as a meeting and/or playing area, which makes the island very introvert. The border between the public and private is very strict: all public spaces are surrounded by a very formal, closed façade. Every building block is focused on the inside space and does not have a relation to the public space. Therefore this public space has no character or identity.”

The essence of the problem lays in the position and “openness” of the building blocks on the main island of Steigereiland Noord. The P2 research shows that they all are a small variation on the original Dutch closed building block. The fundament of the typology is present; where the courtyard is completely closed off from the public realm, but also variations where the courtyard has a certain publicness. However, these openings are again closed off with fences. The border between the public and private space therefore gets another level in between: semi-public spaces. This development (opening up closed building blocks) could improve the “emptyness” of the public space, as done at Molenvliet in Papendrecht (Frans van der Werff). However, the public space must have a clear connection and
identity with the opened up courtyard. At Steigereiland this last named is missing.
As a reaction to this development of making a variation on the closed building block, my plan is to design building blocks on the Proefeiland as well, but with different characters; a variation in publicness with a clear connection to make it a whole.

**Road to P4:**
After the P3 it is clear that one scale is missing in the design that connects every level. Because of the lack of defining the appearance of characteristics of a building block the next scale (dwelling/neighborhood) is quite standard.
I have to zoom out from the dwelling level towards the block level and define the relation and variations of the different blocks and public spaces of the urban scheme and also define the goal/meaning of “Activating IJburg”.

*In terms of steps:*
First: decide what the goal is, how is the problem stated at P1/P2 handled in the urban scheme? The shape of the building is strong, but without an aim and “guidelines” about function/appearance/building typologies the shape looses its “power”. Do this for every separated space created by the shape – how do all the different spaces work together towards a solution for the problem?
Next: Translate/Continue this to/on the level of the dwelling types and constantly zoom out – zoom in and reflect on all scales to improve the entire story and make it consistent.
Also: make climate design an important part of the scheme, don’t wait until the last moment when the design is more or less fixed and climate design “stil has to be done”.