Dealing with segregation

Improving livability in a segregated neighborhood

Urban regeneration in European context
Project location: Carnisse - Rotterdam
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Problem of segregation emerged as a side effect of the industrial society and is still a threat to the contemporary city. In cities with diverse socio-economic and ethnic populations like Rotterdam also falls into this category, segregation can deepen feeling of inequality between the disadvantaged and the prosperous. Segregation can represent itself in a spatial manner. Furthermore, looking at Rotterdam’s city center one can easily observe the contrast between northern and southern bank of the Maas River in terms of socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Disenfranchising and isolating are outcomes of segregation and can terribly affect investments, development and reputation of the area. Consequently, designing and reducing segregation is an important societal matter.

Analysis
The research done about segregation led to the understanding that exclusion both socio-economic and socio-spatial is the basis for segregation. Therefore, the analyses mainly focused on investigating socio-economic and socio-spatial exclusion. The analyses resulted in exploring the two types of exclusion and therefore identifying whole problems has to be tackled. For instance, exclusion from housing market and labor market was identified (and later tackled in this project) along with spatial exclusion caused by characteristics of the urban form. This project did not focus on socio-economic exclusion (absence from labor market) since this issue requires a much broader regional or national approach.

Design
The key point to start the design process was that enhancing public life is crucial for diminishing segregation. Public life and functionality of public space is important since public space is the urban domain where various socio-economic and demographic divisions represent themselves and share activities therefore confirming each other as equal groups of society. This project tackled socio-spatial exclusion by removing spatial barriers. Based on the analysis, this project worked from exclusion in order to improve livability in Carnisse enhances public life, weaken residential mobility and improve the image of the Carnisse neighborhood. The approach is to introduce various interventions which will fit in an overall urban regeneration framework to achieve the objectives of this. Planning is also implemented in this project based. The planning classified interventions into four groups based on priorities which means that phase one includes the most important interventions.

Conclusion
Segregation is a multi-dimensional issue and solving problems in segregated areas requires an integrated spatial, social and economic approach. There are aspects that must be tackled such as unemployment and educational issues but cannot be solved within the framework of urban regeneration. Reducing socio-economic exclusion is the central concern in segregated areas but it requires approaches in broader scale. Therefore, this project focused on improving livability and improving experience of residence in the Carnisse neighborhood. Spatial improvements can establish an opinion of positive change among residents in a neighborhood and reduce the feeling of exclusion and inequality from the mainstream society.