

Atelier populaire d'urbanisme

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Short description

Since 2019, Un Centre Ville Pour Tous has been organizing and leading Ateliers Populaires d'Urbanisme (APUs).

The first APU was launched in the 1970s in France by residents of the Alma Gare, a working-class neighbourhood of Roubaix, supported by a small group of experts called ABAC : together, they succeeded in avoiding demolition and imposing a counter-project. Others followed, in Lille, the Paris region and several French cities. The intention of the APUs is to develop participatory urban planning projects that stand for the interests of local residents. But the method used to conduct these workshops varies from city to city.

The APU set up by Un Centre Ville Pour Tous in Marseille is related to the method used in Grenoble (Villeneuve). The specificity is that the APUs carried out by Un Centre Ville Pour Tous are punctual, whereas in other cities they are permanent.

Purpose

Enable residents to make an informed contribution to urban planning.

Details

The method can be used in the framework of a public "consultation" process with residents, or "public inquiries". It can also be used outside this framework to enable residents to decipher the issues and consequences of a development project, or even to question the public authorities.

Supporting the understanding and formulation of residents' opinions/observations

When documents are provided by the public authority, for example as part of a public inquiry, Un Centre Ville Pour Tous will:

- Organize a meeting with residents affected by the development project,
- Decipher the documents communicated, which are often highly technical. The deciphering is, most of the time, carried out by members of Un centre Ville Pour Tous who have expertise

in urban planning (former director of the urban planning department of the Region or the City, former urban planning project manager),

- Help residents decipher the issues and consequences of the project for their area,
- Help residents formulate their observations (in the case of a public inquiry), their opinions (in the case of a public consultation) or their demands in the case of a APU outside the public system.

In the case of a public inquiry, once residents' observations have been submitted to the investigating commissioner, Un Centre Ville Pour Tous may bring residents together again to comment on the commissioner's opinion.

Tags/ keywords

Method, Ateliers populaires d'urbanisme, grassroots workshops, urban planning, urban struggle, right to the city, knowledge sharing, expertise, empowerment.

Who can use this method/ be involved?

All people concerned/ affected by urban planning

Resources, materials, skills required

- The presence of a person with experience in urban planning documents readings and understanding as well as on the underlying issues is required. But when it comes to formulating comments or counter-planning proposals, it's the presence of the directly impacted inhabitants that is the most important.
- It may be useful to call on architects and urban planners to help compare the proposals with the technical constraints, but also to stimulate the imagination and translate the proposals into the language of your institutions.
- To explain what is planned and what could be planned, maps are very useful tools.

Tips/ What to pay attention to

- The Ateliers Populaires d'Urbanisme are not conceived as a top-down approach from expert residents to non-expert residents. While there is time for the "technical clarification" needed to understand urban planning documents, this technical knowledge, which is provided by members of Un Centre Ville Pour Tous or invited guests, can also be contributed by other members of the assembly. It is also very much appreciated when this knowledge is complemented by real-life experience, feedback from the field and from the people who are directly impacted by the urban planning (especially the inhabitants). The aim is to bring

together all the sources and resources (inter-learning) that may be able to shed light on a situation, and to avoid the overhanging postures of the knowing to the uninitiated.

- Wherever possible, workshops are accompanied by documentation and mapping.
- For the "contributions" phase, it may be useful to organize exchanges and contributions in small groups, which facilitates expression by all, even the most timid, and then to organize a restitution of all the small groups in a large group (whole assembly).

Examples

The Urban planning workshops were used by Un Centre Ville Pour Tous for:

- The public inquiry launched in 2019 prior to adoption of the Intercommunal Local Planning Scheme (PLUI) > <https://pluimarseille.wordpress.com/>
- In February 2021 in the framework of the public inquiry into the Declaration of Public Utility (land reserve) of the upper Rue d'Aubagne > <https://centrevillepourtous.fr/?s=APU>
- In 2022, within the framework of the Mastery of Uses' Assembly (Collège des Maîtrises d'usages | CoMU): this time with the endeavor to present the Partnership Planning Project (PPA), its challenges and the role of the CoMU, to local residents.

Further reading/(re)sources

- Cossart Pauline, Talpin Julien, 2015, *Lutte urbaine. Participation et démocratie d'interpellation à l'Alma-Gare*, Vulaines-sur-seine, Editions du Croquant
- Davidoff Paul, « Advocacy and pluralism in planning », *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 1965
- Deboulet Agnès, « Le renouveau de l'advocacy planning: planifier et plaider pour les habitants dans la ville compétitive », in CITEGO, 2018, https://www.citego.org/bdf_dossier-615_fr.html
- Fezer Jesko, Heyden Mathias, « L'ambivalence de la participation et l'urbanisme situationnel », in Revue *Multitudes*, 2007/4 [n°31]