

NIEUWVEENSE LANDEN

INTERACTIVE PLANNING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
FOR A NEW CITY DISTRICT, MEPPEL

BRIEF

The city of Meppel is planning an extension for the next 25 years. A district as large as half the current city is going to be added. Evaluating previous expansions, the city wants this one to be different: more integrated with the city and with respect for the landscape. The strategic plan needs to be founded on a broad support to be able to function for 25 years.

DILEMMA

Also the development is going to take place in a sensitive landscape. Lots of pressure groups are following the initiative with Argus-eyes. How can the city grow with respect for this vulnerable landscape? At the same time the new development should become a valuable and well-connected part of the city. On top of that, the development could stop or be delayed any time. At all stages the new district has to form a completed whole.



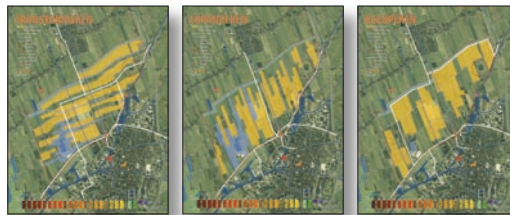
Landscape into which the city will expand



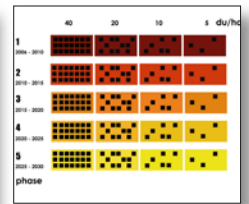
Historical centre; water-rich city; typical linear village in the landscape

SCENARIO GAME

Based on careful analyses of the brief, site, city and landscape, we develop a scenario game. Three boards each show a different urbanisation pattern, reflecting different urban concepts and landscape values. Councillors and politicians of all parties, developers, representatives of community groups, pressure groups and civil servants of various governmental levels and



3 Urban patterns, 3 different boards



Pieces: 4 densities in 5 phases



Impressions of the scenario games



departments are taking part in the game. In mixed groups they play on one of the three boards. They receive cards for housing areas in 5 different densities and cards for the required urban facilities (shops, schools, cemetery, sportsgrounds, etc.). Each group has to decide on the way they want to grow the city into the landscape and the desired densities, mixtures and locations of the facilities. The groups have to lie 5 phases of growth on their board, each with a certain amount of dwellings. The whole expansion has to stay within the given pattern, to be economically affordable.

others with dislike. After the presentations the groups discuss the effects of the three patterns. One is basically rejected; the other two both are both valued for different attractive aspects. During the games participants make a wealth of valuable suggestions that we take along in the development of the plan.

RESULT

With the result of several scenario sessions, a concept master plan is designed, combining the two selected urban patterns. The concept is discussed with the full council meeting. Several subjects of debate are determined. They are further researched, discussed with parties concerned and options are again presented to the council meeting to decide on. This leads to a master plan with a broad support. The plan is ratified by a vast majority of the council meetings.

Many players already have thought about the new city district. But soon their ideas turn out to be one-issue thoughts, which are sometimes opposing each other. This results in lively discussions. Overall, the groups agree on the start of the development, the mixture, density and distribution of facilities. A few dissenting ideas are put down on the boards. In the presentations some are met with enthusiasm,

*Under: impression of the new city district;
Right: the masterplan*

