

South African City Studies Conference – Cape Town, 7-9 September 2011



Street trading pilot stalls – design workshop, 2nd Year Architecture Students, 25 August 2011

The politics of community engagement – the case of Yeoville Studio

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Outline

- 1. Research a special focus on trading
- 2. Entering the political arena
- 3. Ways forward?





Outline

- Brief presentation –
 Yeoville Studio
- 2. One short story of engagement
- 3. Lessons learnt?



Masters students present their design model for the soccer field to a group of residents, April 2010.



1. What is Yeoville Studio?

A partnership between academia and community organizations

A teaching and learning initiative

An academic, multidisciplinary focus on a very local space (2010&2011) Inaugural workshop, Yeoville, 28 February 2010



To empower communities to have a say in their environment:

- -with **socially relevant** research / **locally adapted** design or policy solutions;
- -as crystallizing debates on local issues
- **-exploring and imagining alternative** urban futures with residents

How?

- Monthly strategic meetings with local leaders
- Participation in monthly ward meetings, YSF meetings
- Publication in Yeovue News (local), website, Library office, Newsletter
- Community workshops (data collection/ feedback)
- 5. Public events (exhibitions, installations)

Four (jointly defined) themes:

- 1. Yeoville Stories
- Public spaces/ trading
- 3. African Diversity
- 4. Housing



Scale of the project:

2010: 15 staff members involved for one year / 20 courses / 200 students

2011: 13 staff members / 10 courses / 130 students

2. One short story of community engagement





Street trading illegal(ised) but present in RR (Street trading perception survey)



Market governance survey – Market not working as trading solution

a) Engaging into localised and practical research on trading in Yeoville



Shopkeeper: 'Without them Yeoville is a ghost town" (trading video)

...Findings challenging dominant discourses and policies

-(expected) complaints about street trading's lack of management

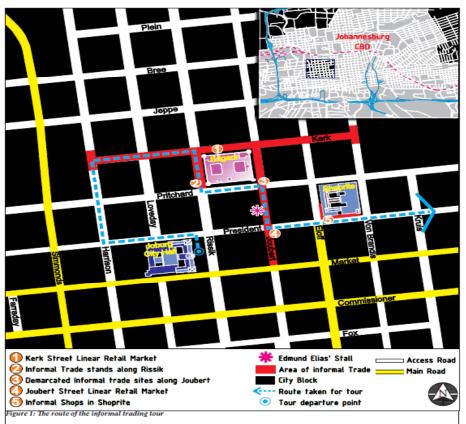
-(surprising) support to street trading as 'part of the street vibe and activity'

-(expected) lack of economic attractivity of the market

-(surprising) this is an issue of market design rather than street trading competition

... Proactive, empirical, solution-oriented research

 Looking for alternatives elsewhere in the city – towards integrated trading solutions



Integrated trading solutions – examples from the inner city



Typology of street trading stalls – towards designing locally adapted and street-friendly stalls

 Basing recommendations on knowledge/ workshops: ex- designing locally adapted street trading stalls



Street traders stalls – design workshop with 2nd year students (in progress)

Informal trading in Yeoville Believue - a study by Yeoville Studio, Wits University

Yeaville Studio reports on the results of research they did in Yeaville Believue on street trading. This is being published as a contribution to the debate about the future of sheet trading. Yeaville News does not necessarily agree with or support the findings and views contained in his article.

Introduction

Our conclusions on (formal/informal) trading are based on several Ysoville Studio projects:

- Second year planning disdente flarwy on paraptions of street traders (street traders, pediatrians, shop keepen) (quantitative survey: sample = 30)
- Masters thesis in Development Planning (Willy Claude Hebandjuks): relationships between formal and informal traders in Rulnigh Street (quantitative survey: sample = 30)
- Third year planning students: Survey with the market trades on the them of the market governance and politics (qualitative and quantitative survey; sample "12)
- Sealer researchers* (Aly Karam, Margot Rubin) survey on informal traders in Yerville (quantitative survey; sample = 90)

Survey results on street trading in Rockey-Raleigh

- Street trading does offer a specific service to Yeaville residents and serve it is convenient, it is quick and easy, it is charp, it is there.
- Street trading is seen as contributing to street activy and encurity, as street trades are always present, they are the eyes of the street, they have an interest in street activy.
- Street trading is also men as contributing to calon, first to the extent it is an illegal activity; exceedly became them is no regulation or control over the goods sold.
- Street trading contributes to etreet vibrancy and local identity; it is seen as attracting customers in the area, and beauting generally good for localizers.
- Street trades are not able to diversify their products due to their illegal status (all selling treatme – not costly if confluents). This size limits business not contain with formal shore.
- Street trading is seen as generating litter and sometimes blocking padestrian traffic, mostly became it is not managed.
- Street traders are ready to pay a fee for the right to trade in the etreet.

Survey results on Market traders

1. Many market traders are strangling and completing about the lack of beames in Yorkille market.

What is Yeaville Studio? A patiently between academic and community

- An exadenic, multidesigitively focus on a very local space
- A bushing uncleaning into be
- Objectives and principles

 Topindus existly release research/local)
 existed design or policy editions
- To tain students in red the student (parameters and community members)
- To crystalize details on local lieuse, explore and imagine other other future with residents
- Reason Parning and Architecture are not only for the people, they need to be with the people. Tended Static works in partnersing with the YSF and the YRCOT in Yearding Rectings.



- Amongst market traders interviewed
 All vegetable traders ON
- EXTERNAL STALLS was happy, All trades of one—specialized from (sweets, beauty products, dorbing) ON INTERNAL STALLS was not
- Stone todas of hyper-specialized instea (Alliana Sod perduct) CNI DTERNAL STALLS were happy Allinego new traders any lank of hustones in the Market in humans of attest trading, it seems it is also linked to the type of practice and inputational or may and the stalls' humans (may and the stalls' humans (may all fast and in the market (the in MCST African oils market) (the
- b. Most market trades were concerned about the except of their lease and saw thereashes as long term trades in the market is accidenteement investment. This constraint with the management view who care the market as a temporary place for trades, from which market trades whether trades political activities to exemply years for trades, from which works trades should gradient on any leave stalls for other trades (political activities to summply) years! Individually the waiting like waiting like.
- Some market trades were happy to have arrend stalls and to be able to extend mer their stall (business development and contributedity). This contracted

with management view that there should be only one stall per trader (political mateinability) (its strategy might help control market

City strategy major halp control market broading and respond to political trans-(retains market stalls healthen), but major hamper bustness dynamics (han on malit stall revenable; and sub-letting) and further controlled these who do not comply (e.g. the postwards weaker).

Conclusions – suggestions based on research results so far

- It does not make economic wone to be street trading (that works businesswise and works for the potentity and expend the making (that does not fully work as business and carpent accommodate the potents).
- The problems with the lack of trainers in market cannot be reduced to except trading competition – it is very likely that chaning away street traders won't order the market louers.
- The problems with street trades relates mody to their lasts of management (due to their likepal dates). Legitining them would contribute to their own growth, diventification and to localizy Rabingh development as a vibrant retail street.
- There is not OVE solution to trading instant in Yanville but a variety of instant in Yanville but a variety of solutions that can accommodate different types of buying (impulse, or fast of presendants), buy this and different types of business (narrhadians (sattepeasure), Only this diversity can lead to satting Verville both a vibrant and includes trading are, that can gove, diversity, attent new mathemat.

Suggestions – enhancing the oversil commercial attractiveness of the area

Short term: restricture the market to attact more customers especially PGIDC:

- Open more disculation paths inside the market (internal streets, not mass) to increase the number of 'external' stalls
 More light needs to come in the market
- (not windown) retractable confe? internal 'streets'?) to make it less dark • Organize regular cultural events inside on week ends to attract customers.
- install delibers play area or other attracting activities services • Petter advertising of the market (of restaurants)

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b) From research to politics



Publicising and debating our findings in various platforms:

- -YS participates in Trading Task Team meetings (Dec 2010-March 2011)
- YS facilitates a workshop with street traders towards a street traders position paper (March 2011)
- YS publishes findings and 'recommendations' in the local community newspaper (Yeovue News)/ our partner.

"Yeovue news does not necessarily agree with nor support the findings and views contained in this article"



Yeoville Studio facilitates workshop for street traders' position paper, with YS partner (March 2011)

→ Divided partners: where to stand?

Yeoville Studio publishes its findings for debate in *Yeovue News*, March 2011

Challenging the dominant views, proposing alternatives for debate = making enemies?





ECVILLE STUDIO is a research and learning initiative, driven colleboratively by the Wits University School of Architecture and Planning and the Yeoville Sakeholders Froum, and supported by several other partners. It aims to produce quality excelentic research that is relevant useful and otherwal to the Veroolle community.

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Johannesburg, 11 April 2011

Dear Market Traders Representatives

Unfortunately, I was unable to participate in the Trading meeting organised by the City on the 6th of April at the Yeoville Recreation Center, due to prior commitments. One of our students was able to attend. He reported that serious accusations have been expressed by you against Yeoville Studio, stating in particular that it had been 'manipulating' street traders in the workshop process leading to their position paper.

Yeoville Studio wishes to put the records straight, in light of these allegations. Yeoville Studio has no hidden agenda. Its aim and mandate have allways been clearly and publicly stated: to support communities with resort infinings and expertise so that they can explore various futures for themselves. We have participated with various community groups in Yeoville to make this happen through guidance and not interference. We also, as you are well aware, have discussed with you (on April 5") about facilitating a market design workshop with all interested market traders, to listen to their issues and aspirations and help them formulate what they want collectively for the market. You enthusiastically supported the idea at the time.

During the meeting of April 6th, it has also come to our knowledge that you expressed dissatisfaction regarding the results of our research on trading in Yeoville, as presented in a previous meeting (March 22th, 2011). We at Yeoville Studio are surprised to hear that you were not aware of the research since you yourselves were interviewed as Market Traders Leader and Manager and were actually key in the research process. We understand that our research results might not please everyone; they might also not be well understood. The findings might be seen as incompletely capturing of the Yeoville realities, and call for further research or clarification. We are aware of that and are happy to discuss our research findings with market traders in order to clarify issues on both sides.

It is perfectly understandable that you right for your business and livelihoods. While flighting against street traders, it was a logical political move to attack Yeoville Studio as a support that street traders have been mobilising. Such an attack however might be short-sighted, as you might be depriving yourselves as market traders from access to the resource and assistance we offer. Once again, we assist each group that requests our support — on the basis of mutual trust and respect.

Parando

Claire Benit-Ghaffou. Yeoville Studio coordinator

CC: Xolani Nxumalo (DED), Maurice Smithers (YBCDT), George Lebone (YSF), Angelina Motsepe (Street Traders representative), Zaabe Mogwaza (Region F).



YS writes to market traders, refuting accusation and offering debate, April 2011

- Divided YS partners (different agendas YSF-YBCDT-SANTRA)
- Implicitly / explicitly stressing past City policy failures (to avoid making them again)
- Market traders' attack on Yeoville Studio

Difficult post-electoral context:

Trading steering committee meetings suspended after the elections

No-one driving the process publically and collectively (individual initiatives) – fragmented Yeoville community

Elaborating responses to political challenges

- Divided YS partners(different agendas YSF-YBCDT-SANTRA)
- Implicitly / explicitly stressing past City policy failures (to avoid making them again)
- Market traders' attack on Yeoville Studio

- → Dialogue with each partner
- →Outlining / consolidating common positions and interests (e.g. a management structure for Yeoville trading as a whole.
- → An unlikely but necessary 'local coalition'
- → Engaging the Dpt of Economic Development (CoJ) (presentation April 2011)
- → Official letter
- → (reiterated) proposal for market workshops: debate on findings / market design
- → Continued engagement (other YS activities)

Continuous
engagement:
Responding to
requests for support /
Being available: not
pushing

Publicisation
of YS
activities –
bring in the
broader
picture

Classic, minimal response

Local coalition
building – idea
of a 'Pilot
Yeoville
Trading
solution'

Provoking public debate? Final Yeoville Studio exhibition 2011 on trading

A more proactive involvement?



Conclusion - some reflections on the way

1) Community- which community?

We knew that knowledge is power... so we wanted to empower our community partners with knowledge. Which partners? (the initial partners? The partners who ask for support? The partner we feel needs the most support? The partners that 'deserve' (?) it?...)

2) Where to draw the line? Can wits be 'neutral' in highly political processes? Wits became a political player in a hot/ contested political debate, willingly or not... Issue of exploring new avenues, challenging existing/dominant representations: it is political.

3) Self-reflexivity and positioning

Having accepted that it is important to be self-reflective and try and be consistent with one's position. A difficult balance in times of rapid urban/ political change and obvious inequalities (learning through trials and errors)

4) Local level partnerships versus city-level engagements

Initially we wanted to restrict our direct engagement to 'the community' level. While this remains the main focus it is often untenable.

... To be followed!