

GATING AND CONFLICTING RATIONALITIES: CHALLENGES IN PRACTICE AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

Gated communities have grown significantly in many parts of the world including South Africa. This paper focuses on gated communities in the City of Tshwane. The discussion is based on a study carried out between 2013 and 2014 on enclosed neighbourhoods - a type of gated community - and the processes involved to apply for permission to close off existing neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods are used as a lens to highlight the challenges facing the planning practice and the consequent tensions that emerged due to conflicting rationalities and deep differences between the various stakeholders. Planners are caught in the middle. The paper indicates that planners are aware of the tensions but have limited means to address them due to strong political pressure, emotional upheaval from community members and a restricted legal base. This has several implications for both planning theory and practice.

KEYWORDS: Conflicting rationalities; tensions in the planning process; gated communities; South Africa

Introduction

Crime continues to be a serious challenge in South Africa. Although there has been an overall reduction in crime between 2004 and 2009, the past era (2012 – 2015) not only witnessed very little crime reduction, but also threatened to deplete the gains of the previous eight years. For example, while theft out of motor vehicles (-2.1 per annum) and residential burglaries (-2.3%) have decreased in 2014/2015, partially due to increased target hardening efforts, there

has been an increase in house robberies (5.2%), carjacking (14.2%) and aggravated robbery (9%) (De Kock 2015:10-13). In addition, the National Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS) done by Statistics SA over the past three years have reported an increased fear of residential burglaries (now called home invasions) and street robbery from the public (De Kock 2015:10-13). Furthermore, it has been indicated that in 2012 the murder rate in South Africa was 37.3 murders per 100 000 people, nearly five times the global murder rate of 7.6 murders per 100 000 (Breetzke et al 2013). This also had an impact on the fear of crime. A national survey conducted in 2003 indicated that only 25 percent of all South Africans feel safe in their daytime residential areas as compared to almost two-thirds in 1998 (Lemanski, 2004:105).

In this context of high crime rates and an increased fear of crime, it is not surprising to find a growing demand for gated communities in the country. In response to the fear of crime and various types of insecurities (Landman 2005), some people choose to live in gated communities, which can broadly be defined as a physical area that is fenced or walled off from its surroundings. Access to these areas are either prohibited or controlled by means of gates and/or booms. In many cases it refers to a primarily residential area with restricted access and privatised communal spaces, but may also include controlled access areas for business, retail or recreational purposes (Landman 2006). In South Africa, gated communities broadly include two types, namely enclosed neighbourhoods and security villages – understanding ‘village’ in a very broad sense. Enclosed neighbourhoods refer to existing neighbourhoods that are fenced with controlled access for security purposes (Figure 1), while security villages are new, privately developed gated areas with a variety of land uses related to specific types. These subtypes range from large luxury lifestyle estates to medium and smaller gated townhouse complexes or apartments and can also include non-residential gated parks, including office, business, commercial, corporate and industrial parks (Landman and Badenhorst 2014).



Figure 1: Entry to an enclosed neighbourhood in Tshwane

The roads within enclosed neighbourhoods were previously or in most cases still is public domain, depending on the model used: a public or private approach. Municipalities may support neither of these, only one, or allow both approaches. The implications are very different. In the public approach, the municipality is responsible for maintenance as the roads, parks, and sidewalks are still publically owned and consequently access cannot be denied into the area. However, in private areas, residents are responsible for the maintenance, while being able to restrict access. The implications for accessibility are therefore dependant on the model used. According to the constitution of South Africa, it is the right of all people to have access to and free movement within all public space. Therefore, if the enclosed area stays under public control through the utilisation of the public approach, all people have the right to enter (Landman 2007; Landman and Badenhorst 2014).

Residents need to apply to the municipality for the right to monitor access into existing neighbourhoods and the municipal planners are required to review these applications. However, in practice the application process results in many tensions due to a disjuncture between context-specific realities and broader policy ideals. Post-apartheid legislation and policies in South Africa, including the more recent National Development Plan (2011) and the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA 2013), emphasise the need for integration and calls for planning and development that would address the spatial fragmentation and social exclusion of the past. This has contributed to the inclusion of a range of normative principles in many Municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) that are centred on greater integration and inclusion. However, while some argue that gated communities are a solution to the high crime rates in South Africa (Zinn 2010), including some planners (Landman 2012a), others point out that these developments promote

fragmentation, exclusion and segregation in the society (Lemanski 2004; Harrison and Mabin 2006, Paasche et al 2014). Enclosed neighbourhoods also threaten normative principles of town planning such as inclusive and integrated neighbourhoods, the promotion of pedestrian access and walkability, accessible open spaces, etc. (Smit et al 2015). Planners are often at the centre of these tensions as they have to consider applications and make appropriate context-related decisions.

Although having to deal with tensions is not new to the planning profession (Forester 1989; Hillier 2002), the South African context often poses different realities and exacerbated circumstances that may question the more traditional responses to planning practice and theory. Watson (2003) points out that planning theory continuously have to deal with the tension between context-related diversity and a desire to produce normative theoretical positions. This raises questions about 1) the role of planners in terms of the conflicting demands and expectations encapsulated in the application processes for enclosed neighbourhoods and 2) the relevance of some of the international theories and principles to guide planners in particular local contexts. The paper focuses on these two questions through a discussion of a study carried out between 2013 and 2014 on the application process for enclosed neighbourhoods. The study was conducted in the City of Tshwane, the municipal area that includes Pretoria, capital of South Africa. Enclosed neighbourhoods are used as a lens to highlight the challenges facing the planning practice and the consequent tensions that emerged due to conflicting rationalities and deep differences between the various stakeholders. The paper also contributes to the body of knowledge on gated communities through a) an indication of the difficulties experienced by planners in decision-making related to applications for neighbourhood closures and b) by highlighting the implications of neighbourhood closures for the implementation of normative planning goals within the contextual realities present in South Africa.

Challenges facing planners in practice

Planners face several challenges in practice, such as land use conflicts, disputes resulting from the zoning appeal processes, special permit and subdivision applications. They are expected to serve politicians, legal mandates, local governments and the special demands of conflicting groups of individuals in the society, while working in uncertain situations where there are great power imbalances and ambiguous political goals. What actually happens in

city politics and planning is often opposed to the normative planning ideal. Planning practitioners face and are engaged in power-plays between the members of the council, power struggles within the municipal authority, pressure from ratepayers, power struggles between the planning practitioners, etc. (Hillier 2002:4-5). Often the ethical and political dimensions of planning are neglected although they are most important given the impact of conflicts and power relations on planners' decisions (Forester 1989; Albrechts 2003).

According to Forester (1989) and Hillier (2002), planning does not only involve technical analysis but also a clash of social identities and arguments. Therefore, local planning decisions cannot be understood in isolation from the social issues, territorial identities and values of the communities, involving a range of participants with different values, identities, images and emotions. These issues influence the decision making process in planning (Hillier 2002:4-6). Planners have to consider special requests of certain communities, whilst protecting the interests of the least powerful, being simultaneously negotiators and mediators as communities often have different and conflicting requests (Forester 1987:303-306). Yet, although the planning profession is accompanied by emotional complexities, planners are expected to be professional and objective by appearing detached from issues. Communities, on the other hand, often distrust planners and perceive them as threatening. When planners fail to respond emotionally to such perceptions, their failure to respond is not accepted as professionalism but seen as a wilful disregard for the communities' wellbeing (Forester 1999:40). Consequently, a growing number of academics have shared dissatisfaction with the planning practice for being understood as a purely technical problem solving exercise whilst it is endowed with many political realities (Forester 1987:84). Hillier (2002) explains that many planners are advocates for democratic planning decision-making in theory but in reality, the process is inevitably messy, emotional, exasperating, disorderly and chaotic. One of the reasons for this may be the presence of conflicting rationalities and deep differences between the various stakeholders.

Conflicting rationalities, deep differences and the relevance of planning theory in South Africa

Watson (2003) introduces the concept of conflicting rationalities to explain the contradictory demands and responses of various stakeholders in practice. She indicates that there is a huge gap between planners' and administrators' view of 'proper' communities and the rationality

informing their survival strategies in very challenging African urban environments as there is a constant and dynamic interpretation of various aspects of human experience, from the political to the religious. Healy (1992:152) points out that various groups may operate within different “systems of meaning” as they communicate. This means that they “see things differently because words, phrases, expressions, objects, are interpreted differently” according to their own particular frame of reference. In spite of this, the assumption remains that diverse groups can reach consensus (Watson 2003). However, this is not always easy in the context of diversity and multiculturalism, where citizenship is fragmented by identity and society is structured by culturally different groupings (Sandercock 2000).

These conflicting rationalities have a direct influence on the interface zone where regulation and policy need to shape and reshape the city (Watson 2009). The planning practice responds to the deep challenges of the socio-political and economic realities through policies and legislation. Planners implement policies that serve a number of demanding parties at the same time, for example, the government wants a sustainable transportation system; residents demand safer neighbourhoods and environmentalists call for natural spaces to be conserved. Despite the differences and the contrasting demands, planners have to develop collaborative, viable and informative policies to deal with the pressing challenges. Such policies should be inclusive and viable to different actors (Forester 1999; Healey 1997). Policies are, however, often loaded with political content, which may cause conflict to communities whose values and identities have not been acknowledged (Hillier 2002:222). This may be further exacerbated by a situation of deepening difference, which makes the achievement of democratic deliberative process increasingly difficult. Such processes become more difficult due to an increasingly divided and conflictual public and secondly, as a result of growing inequalities, identity differences and hybridities that opens the way for the destructive operation of power (Watson 2006:46).

The planning practice is confronted by spatial processes and socio-economic groups that are responsible for the dynamics within the communities they serve. One of the biggest factors that contributed to the form and function of South African cities is the Apartheid ideology with its focus on separate development. “South Africa is considered one of the most heterogeneous, complex and divided societies characterised by deep-rooted racial and cultural differences” (Bornman, 2005:5). Consequently, Post-Apartheid development policies emphasise the need for spatial integration and social inclusion. However, it is not always clear how these can be applied in practice, especially in relation to a multitude of

complexities exhibit in the post-apartheid city. Forester (1999) suggested that planners should always be practical and rational, considering carefully the facts of racism and poverty as these issues have the ability to influence people's actions. Yet, as pointed out, conflicting rationalities of diverse groupings may challenge the simplicity of ideal actions, with in turn questions the relevance of planning theory in such contexts.

While there are theories that attempt to recognise social difference and multiculturalism, in some instances the clash of rationalities is so great that it may be difficult for any amount of conflict resolution to overcome the divide. This is because, as Watson (2003:402) continuously points out, "differences go far beyond speech level misunderstandings or an unwillingness to see others' point of view". In some instances, social and cultural differences may be more imbedded in contexts such as Africa than what is seemingly the case in traditional Western countries. Planners can underestimate these differences and assume a shared rationality where there is none (Abram 2000). Given this, there is a need for planning theorists to move beyond the current dominant paradigms and consider the "issue of planning in a context of conflicting rationalities, recognising the operation of power as it both shapes and maintains them" (Watson 2003:403). This is very relevant to the comprehension of planning's role to regulate and/or guide the development of different types of gated communities in practice.

Gated communities and planning

Gated communities are a global phenomenon. The search for safety and security is believed to be the main driver for gated communities in many countries, including the USA (Blakely and Snyder 1997), the UK (Atkinson et al 2004), Mexico (Sheinbaum 2008), Argentina (Roitman and Giglio 2010), Brazil (Caldeira 2000), Indonesia (Leish 2000), China (Miao (2010), Malaysia (Tedong et al 2014a), Nigeria (Uduku 2010), Australia (Lee and Herborn 2003) and New Zealand (Dixon and Lysner 2004). Obeng-Odoom et al (2014), however, points out that need for security may be encouraged through the presence of relatively deprived people outside the gates and therefore that security becomes "illusionary" as gated communities offers the attainment of privilege and access to quality service. Gated developments are considered to be catering for the rich through high prices that exclude the non-elites and as such may contribute to urban inequality and insecurity over time (Obeng-Odoom 2015). This is reflective of broader global practices, such as neo-liberalism, which also contributes to the development of gated communities (Pow 2009). Grant and Rosen

(2009), however, cautioned that gated communities are not only driven by major international influences, but that global and local processes collectively produce gated communities with varying regional expressions. Therefore, while gated communities emerge due to several international factors, including neo-liberal urbanism, improved service delivery and increasing crime rates, they are also the result of local factors such as the fear of earthquakes and the promise of safe homes and a particular lifestyle, as noted in Turkey (Tanulku 2013). As indicated in the introduction, there are different types of gated communities. These different expressions have different implications for planning. In the case of private gated developments, developers have to seek approval for township establishment. However, in the case of enclosed neighbourhoods, resident associations apply for permission to establish temporary barriers such as boom gates. Yet in some countries “guarded” neighbourhoods lack formal approval from local authorities (Tedong et al 20014b:1014).

Planners need to consider the applications for neighbourhood enclosures. This sometimes takes place within a context of limited or no legal support (Tedong et al 20014b). Yet planners are pressurised by the demand from residents and politicians to approve enclosure applications, for example in Malaysia (Tedong et al 2014a). Similarly, in Canada, despite a disjunction between professional values and the local culture, planners are often pressurised by residents and politicians to approve gated communities (Grant 2005a). Planners in South Africa face similar challenges.

Gated communities in Tshwane

Gated communities occur throughout South Africa, especially in the larger metropolitan municipalities, including the City of Tshwane (Landman 2006). The prevalence of gated communities has risen in Tshwane as they have become a popular choice of security in five ways: personal security (against crime and violence); financial security (related to property prices); security in terms of service delivery (to counter inefficient local councils); social security (to ensure acceptable social norms) and lifestyle (related to facilities and amenities) (Landman 2005:35). Despite the growing number of these developments, there is still a dispute about their relevance. Some believe these developments are an effective crime reduction mechanism (Coetzer 2001, Zinn 2010), whilst others argue that they contribute to exclusiveness and inconvenience (Tshehla 2004) and that there is insufficient evidence linked to crime reduction in some cases (Naude 2003, Breetzke et al 2013). According to the

Tshwane Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF 2012), gated communities is a fast growing phenomenon in the city. The municipality indicated that over 60% of enclosed neighbourhoods are found in the eastern region of the city, which is the region with the highest per-capita income as compared to the other parts of the city. A recent study confirmed that gated communities primarily occur in the south east of Tshwane and encompasses 14.4% of the built up area (Nel and Landman 2015) (Figure 2). Another survey indicated that there are 71 enclosed neighbourhoods in the municipal area. The spatial distribution of enclosed neighbourhoods shows clear clustering in the higher income areas of the City and 92% occur in the southeastern regions of the City of Tshwane (Smith et al 2015). There are also a number of illegal neighbourhood enclosures. Maps from the City of Tshwane indicated that in 2013 this constituted 22 neighbourhoods.

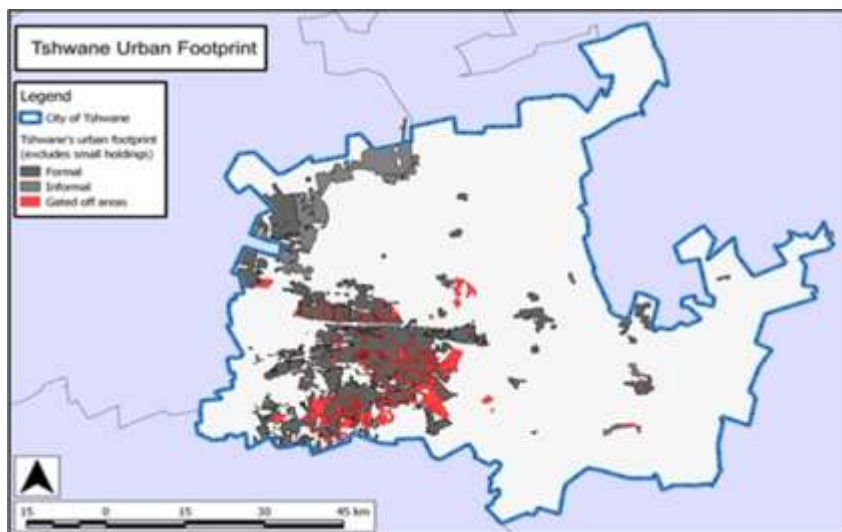


Figure 2: The distribution of gated communities in the City of Tshwane (Nel and Landman, 2015).

Only one out of nine provinces in South Africa makes provision for road closures for security purposes through Chapter Seven of the Rationalisation of Local Government Affairs Act (Act 10 of 1998). This Act is used to evaluate and assess applications for neighbourhood enclosure in the City of Tshwane and other municipalities in the Gauteng Province. The Act was designed to deal with the issues of access restriction in public spaces for safety and security purposes. According to the Act, road closure can only be granted for two years. Any closures that exceed two years and have not been renewed, are considered illegal. Application fees are payable for every application and renewal of neighbourhood enclosures. The municipality

also requires additional monthly maintenance fees. Restriction of access is normally acceptable in cul-de-sac and access-only streets (class-5) in residential and commercial areas. A broad framework, namely the *Access Restriction framework of Tshwane* (2003) outlines detailed technical issues that should be considered in closing neighbourhoods.

Planners in Tshwane face a challenge of managing urban growth, supplying infrastructure services, responding to crime, poverty and inequality and creating urban spaces that are engines of growth. This often gives rise to tensions between various groups to promote their specific needs. Planners tend to be at the centre of these tensions as it is expected of them to have solutions. However, not much attention has been given in planning research towards understanding the pressures faced by planners who are responsible for gated developments in municipalities. Grant (2005b) notes that planners in North America and elsewhere barely seem to consider the implications of gated enclaves and started to explore why planners seem to approve gated communities when they often contradict existing planning policies. Given the increasing demand for gated communities in South Africa and the challenges emanating from the application processes for enclosed neighbourhoods, there was a need to understand the position of planners in more depth. The study was conducted by engaging planners in a narrative of what challenges they face in their everyday work when dealing with gated communities.

Methodology

Case studies offers a way to identify the interactive processes between state and other actors that together create conditions that allows particular urban forms such as guarded neighbourhoods to emerge (Tedong et al 2014a). Watson (2003) also calls for a case study approach to understand the context-specific rationalities operating in particular local contexts and the interactions between various stakeholders. This study adopted a qualitative case study approach based on documentation review and in-depth interviews with municipal officials at the City of Tshwane municipality to understand the challenges they face assessing and evaluating applications for gated communities.

Comprehensive documentation review allowed an in-depth exploration of existing national, provincial and local policies to understand what guidelines and measures have been put in place to guide gated developments in South Africa. In addition, seventeen in-depth semi-

structured interviews were conducted. Six interviews were conducted at the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality offices in Lyttelton with municipal officials. Officials included town planners and policy writers that have dealt with gated developments. The City of Tshwane Metropolitan municipality is comprised of seven regions. Seven interviews were conducted with each of the regional managers as each one is responsible for the enclosed neighbourhoods in his/her region. Two administrative officers responsible for the documentation on the existing enclosed neighbourhoods in the city were also interviewed. Five semi-structured interview questions were used in order to facilitate the discussion, giving the respondents an opportunity to frame their own ideas and perceptions.

Enclosed neighbourhoods and the conflicting rationalities in the application process

This study revealed that planners in Tshwane face several challenges when having to deal with applications for neighbourhood closures, including pressures from politicians, concerns from emotional community members and insufficient direction from spatial frameworks and legislation. This section provides a summary of the main challenges in the City of Tshwane in relation to gated communities.

Politics, Planning and Power

Events in the City of Tshwane confirmed that politics and planning are intertwined. Planners make decisions that are later reversed because of the influence of politics. This is illustrated by the following event. The case involved the approval of the enclosure of part of Lynwood Manor a few years after it was rejected by the city council's planning committee. Lynwood Manor was one of the most controversial of the seven residential areas, which had their development applications denied in 2006. The city council's planning committee was forced to reverse their decision because of the political influence of the Freedom Front Plus, which played a leading role in continually pressurising the Metropolitan Council to approve the application. Their case was further strengthened by the murder of Mrs Cathy Odendaal in October 2007 shortly after the community had been denied approval to close the neighbourhood. In 2010 a Freedom Plus councillor appealed to the Metropolitan Council to get rid of any unattended obstacles so that applications for neighbourhood enclosures could be processed speedily. After the community was given the go ahead, the councillor was quoted saying: "Why is it necessary for people to die and communities to fight long court

battles before their basic rights are acknowledged?” A resident in Lynwood Manor said that, “this confirms the municipal council may not make uninformed decisions, but that the right to safety clearly weighs heavier than the ill-conceived decisions made by the municipal council.” The application was not approved initially due to a number of objections from those who live outside the area, including that they are expected to use alternative routes and that the development may cause traffic congestion.

Planning, history and emotional appeal

High crime rates and lack of confidence in the state security provision is a contributing factor to the growing number of gated communities in South Africa (Harrison and Mabin 2006; Landman 2005). Crime, demographics, poverty and other social issues have an influence on the planning process and planners, considering gated communities, have to take these into account. Communities have emotional stories and scars from crime and it is a challenge for planners to ignore such emotions. Forester (1999) argues that planners should act sensitively and be attentive to needs and emotions of the communities whilst retaining objectivity. In public hearings, community members highlighted incidents of rape and murder that took place in their neighbourhood, involving friends and family members. One of the town planners at the municipality argued that:

“If people are getting murdered and property are getting stolen on a monthly basis, would one still argue that free flow of movement and integration is so important that it actually outweighs the right to live? Sometimes the value of integration is small as it gets compared to the value of human life”.

In these emotional cases, planners tend to make decisions that favour the communities to avoid protests, criticisms, political and media intervention. This highlights the complexities involved in decision-making when planners are sometimes forced to make decisions that go against their wishes or against normative planning principles to appease politicians or the public. Officials explained that although planning principles are important, one cannot just look at them in isolation and neglect other aspects when considering applications. An official who has been processing applications for over a decade explained that:

“Without lessening the importance of the town planning principles, what decision would you take when a ninety-one-year-old woman is sitting in a hearing crying

because she has been raped in her house because of a compromised security system? What would you do?"

Yet many people oppose neighbourhood closures. Due to the South African history of segregation, the implementation of enclosed neighbourhoods reminds people of the painful history of exclusion and marginalisation. Municipal officials explained that when making planning decisions, they also have to take into consideration the realities, histories and sensitivities of the people they serve. Making a planning decision is already a complex task, even more so when communities bring painful histories into the process. Forester (1999) maintains that it is impossible for planners to make decisions free of the historical legacies of pain and suffering. Municipal officials, however, indicated that the expectations of the public are often unrealistic as they are uninformed about all the complex issues that planners have to take into consideration when assessing enclosed neighbourhood applications. Members of the public see planning as a pure technical process relating to either just approving or rejecting an application. Municipal officials explained that most people fail to understand that they are still allowed to access a neighbourhood even though it may be enclosed. In practice, communities are only allowed to control and restrict access. The misunderstanding is also fuelled by historical practices of exclusion, making it difficult to accept what is perceived as practices of exclusion. This relates to Forester's (1999) notion that democracy is painful and that citizens revoke painful histories of racism and displacement during the planning process, making it impossible for a planning process to be free of past legacies.

Spatial legislation and policy frameworks in the Post-Apartheid context

Policies and regulations, when implemented effectively, can empower planners. Gated developments, however, flourished at a faster pace than legislative transformation. It was indicated that absence of a national policy in South Africa exacerbates debates around the issue of gated communities as it leaves planners in a position where they make decisions, which can be easily criticised as there is no national guidance to support the decisions of planners at a local level and to protect them from political pressures.

The South African Constitution also provides for various rights, which may at times conflict each other; it gives citizens the right to freedom and security, as well as freedom of movement to enter public space. Planners therefore, are confronted with a situation where

they face opposing groups and rights in practice. Restricting access to public space can constitute the violation of human rights. The Human Rights Commission in South Africa found that enclosed neighbourhoods have the potential to and in some cases do violate a number of rights. They also pointed out that these measures cause social division, dysfunctional cities and lead to further polarisation in the city. The Commission, therefore, does not support the use of boom gates (Human Rights Commission 2005). The interviews indicated that the municipal planners are not ignoring the right of the public to access the enclosed neighbourhoods but they are also obliged by the Constitution to protect citizens from crime.

There is also no coherent and uniform approach by municipal authorities in South Africa related to Gated Developments. The findings of this study show that the absence of a national policy on gated communities has led to inconsistencies for provinces and municipalities; further complicating the decision-making process for planners. In practice, gated developments contradict the vision and principles of the National Development Plan and even local Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs).

Implications for planning practice and theory

The findings revealed that the process for neighbourhood applications often contribute to tensions between various stakeholders and create many additional challenges for planners who have to consider the views of all the relevant stakeholders. This has several implications for planning practice and theory, which include firstly, a need to recognise conflicting realities, secondly, exploring the zone of interface and thirdly, reconsidering spatial policies and dominant planning theories to some extent.

Watson (2009) indicates that globally, cities are increasingly becoming concentrations of poverty and inequality and important sites for intervention, but simultaneously it means planners will be faced with issues that have not been faced before. Societal divisions have been increasing, while society takes on different forms in different parts of the world. Urban crime and violence, supported by drugs and armed syndicates have brought about a decline in social cohesion and an increase in conflict and insecurity. In this context, current planning practices are often unable to deal with the specific issues confronting cities of the South and the challenges present in Sub-Saharan African cities (Watson 2002). Planners in these areas are located within a fundamental tension – a conflict of rationalities – between the logic of

governing and the logic of survival. Although Watson (2009) primarily refers to the conflicting rationalities between the state (represented by the planners) and those involved in the informal economy, she points out that these are not the only rationalities at play or conflicts in cities.

This discussion has demonstrated that there are conflicting rationalities between residents within enclosed areas that support the closures and residents from outside objecting to these closures, as well as between politicians supporting residents within enclosures and planners considering larger urban issues such as access for all to public roads which are contentious given the history of the country. Urban integration and access to public spaces is of deep concern but the extraordinarily high crime rates cannot be ignored and it is therefore a serious matter for public policy. Generally, government have not been able to find an enduring solution to the issue of crime in South Africa, leaving planners vulnerable as communities approach them for solutions. Unless crime is combated in a community, it is unlikely that gated communities will decrease and consequently that the impact on integration and larger issues of sustainability can be mitigated (Landman, 2012b:239). At the same time, black people were excluded from accessing certain areas during the Apartheid era. Consequently, whenever people are restricted from entering certain spaces, they are quickly reminded of the painful history of Apartheid. Municipal officials pointed out that sometimes people do not want to understand that some restrictions are for safety reasons; they quickly feel discriminated against and marginalised. However, in practice members of the public and even residents have been restricted from entering enclosed neighbourhoods and have been asked to produce identity documents, violating their human rights. In addition, at the Public Hearings in Tshwane protesters indicated that enclosed neighbourhoods impede greater freedom of movement advocated by the Post-Apartheid ideology (Landman 2007). Planning therefore needs to recognise these conflicting rationalities and deep differences between various groups and try to find ways to negotiate working solutions. This would necessitate a focus on the zone of interface.

A central task for planning is to explore various concepts that may assist planners faced with such conflicting rationalities, paying attention to the 'interface' between opposing views or rationalities. "The interface is a zone of encounter and contestation between these rationalities and is shaped by the exercise of power" (Watson 2009:2270) and depending on the situation, may be a zone of resistance or appropriation. The nature of interactions at the interface can also vary greatly; some interventions or policy responses can be of direct benefit

to some households, but may negatively affect others. For households within enclosed neighbourhoods it becomes a matter of survival in terms of crime, while others outside are negatively affected through traffic congestion and longer traveling routes. Planners in this case are not the voice of those that govern in opposition to those trying to survive as described by Watson (2009), but rather the facilitators that need to mediate between various groups interacting in the zone of interface. Planning needs to explore the various dynamics at play within the zone and realise that they “interface with a highly differentiated and ‘situated’ urban citizenry” (Watson 2009:2269). Responses to interventions are always varied and people engage with systems in diverse and unpredictable ways, depending on current or past realities and experiences. “It is where linkages occur across the interface that some of the most interesting possibilities for understanding, and learning arise” (Watson 2009: 2269).

This does not only imply a need for continuous engagement fora on the matter that includes all relevant role players, but also to reconsider policy responses and dominant planning theories. Mabin and Harrison (2006) argue the realities of crime in South Africa make it difficult for the local councils to have a strong position on gated communities and hence they tend to just ignore their development (Landman and Badenhorst 2012). This coupled with limited resources to follow up lapsed enclosures in practice, give rise to many illegal neighbourhood enclosures. Since crime and violence remains a major concern and government solutions does not appear to have a real impact, there is a need for collective action from communities to address crime, increasing the demand for different types of gated communities.. National guidelines in South Africa, in the absence of a national policy, can go a long way to empower planners to make difficult decisions and perhaps even more importantly tease out linkages across the interface to facilitate broader understanding. Instead of ignoring gated communities or only superficially referring to their existence, spatial policies should suggest ways to approach them and reduce potential negative effects, such as the creation of greater integration and diversity within different types of gated communities (Landman 2012b).

Mainstream planning theory has provided little guidance to planners working with such tensions and for the reconceptualising of urban systems (Harrison 2006, Watson 2003). Although there are many theories on how planners should handle urban problems, adapting these theories to the City of Tshwane’s circumstances can be a daunting task given the South African complex urban realities, as well as political and institutional challenges. For example, if one considers three prominent theories, communicative planning, multicultural theory and

the Just City, it becomes evident from the data that although these theories may offer some value towards understanding and responding to neighbourhood enclosures in Tshwane, they are less useful in other cases. Communicative planning assumes that it is possible to build consensus through the process of communication and that existing power differences can be neutralised; thus giving rise to a shared understanding (Watson 2002). While this theory is useful to recognise the political nature of planning and the existence of power struggles between groups, it does not offer sufficient guidance on how to work with specific contextual power differences that cannot be neutralised, for example between those motivating for and against enclosed neighbourhoods. Consequently, Watson (2003; 2009) proposes that theories of collaborative planning could be combined with approaches that acknowledge conflicting rationalities and context-specific dynamics.

Secondly, multicultural theory celebrates difference and identity and thus promotes the empowerment of marginalised groups through politics of difference. Similarly, to communicative planning, it also assumes that it is possible to reach consensus between diverse groups through identity building and thus to progressively reach greater democratisation (Watson 2002). Recognising diversity and cultural difference can be useful to understand the needs of opposing groups, i.e. safety or access to public roads. However, strong resident associations in enclosed neighbourhoods can also take charge in the context of a weaker state through collective actions that may not enhance democracy but rather reflect underlying conservative trends, giving rise to a 'darker side' of identity construction, "where identity defines elements of similarity, and simultaneously of difference – of 'the other' (Watson 2002:38).

Thirdly, the Just City approach is concerned with redistributive planning actions, giving rise to a call for spatial equity through spatial interventions such as compaction, diversity and high density mixed use areas. Although this may prove to be valuable in theory and indeed be possible in some cities, many African cities are characterised by differentiated patterns of access to resources between the elite and the poor. Declining state capacity to deliver urban services or regulate the environment give rise to two trends, namely 1) large scale informalisation of the urban fabric and land use to cater for the poor and 2) the growth of 'high-security enclaves' where the wealthy barricade themselves from crime (Watson 2002:40). Thus, while it is useful to look at the impact of decisions on equity and democracy, it becomes difficult to focus on redistributive planning interventions in a context where spatial fragmentation is reinforced by new investment that confines itself to wealthy, better

serviced, more attractive areas or nodes (Turok and Watson 2001, Oranje and Landman 2015) and often barricaded or securitised parts of the city, further exacerbating inequality. Even if one transcends the pure spatial focus, regarded by Harvey (2000:196) as a “spatial form utopianism”, and focus on a set of rights, the question remains; whose rights is the most important – those who demand a right to safety or access to public roads?

Conclusion

This paper focussed on gated communities in the City of Tshwane and used it as a lens to highlight the tensions and dilemmas facing the planners in relation to the growing demand in the city. The paper indicated that gated communities are portrayed as a necessity to aid crime prevention in the built environment. However, the potential negative impacts create tensions in a context where there is a strong normative and political drive towards greater integration. Planners are caught in the middle and expected to consider both the demands and the objections in a context that is highly politicised and characterised by high levels of crime and violence.

The findings indicated that planners from the municipality are aware of the tensions but have limited means to address them due to strong political pressure, emotional upheaval from communities and a restricted legal base. Politicians use their power and influence to interfere with the planning decision-making process. Emotional communities use examples of crime incidents on the one hand and examples of Apartheid exclusion on the other to persuade planners to be more sensitive. This reveals the conflicting rationalities and deep differences between different groups of stakeholders. In the midst of these complexities, existing policies tend to be silent on gated communities or only acknowledge the existence thereof without giving concrete guidelines for development and leaving planners in the centre of the conflicts without sufficient support to make concrete decisions.

This raises questions about the role of planners in terms of the conflicting demands and expectations encapsulated in the application processes for enclosed neighbourhoods. When planners do not meet the demands of the public for gated communities, they are regarded as inefficient and insensitive. Yet, when they approve certain gated communities, they are accused of violating the rights of access for others. Planners play a major role in shaping the spatial form of the city and their decisions are critical for the sustainability, efficiency and

effectiveness of the city. The findings show that the challenges they face, together with external influences often prevent them to pursue these objectives. If such challenges persist, future South African cities may not necessarily be a reflection of the normative views of spatial integration and social inclusion encompassed within planning and development policies, but rather an expression of the multiple complexities inherent in a severely divided society with deep differences. It also questions the relevance of many existing international planning theories and normative principles to guide planners in specific local contexts. Given this, it is important to develop practical guidelines to assist planners to make decisions on different types of gated communities, especially enclosed neighbourhoods. In addition, it requires the adaptation of existing internationally planning theories developed for the more comfortable contexts of Western states where law and order generally prevail, the recognition of conflicting rationalities in specific contexts and the exploration of ways to mitigate potential negative implications of certain spatial interventions such as enclosed neighbourhoods. If we only use theories developed in specific kinds of political and social contexts to critique places with different cultural experiences, we may be more critical of South African planners than warranted.

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