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STRATEGIES TO ANIMATE
TORONTO'S TRANSITIONAL, POST-INDUSTRIAL WATERFRONT

by

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ABSTRACT

Post-industrial waterfronts are spaces in transition. Waterfront land will be redeveloped eventually, and until that time, planners must turn to new approaches for these transitional spaces, with a goal to activate and animate them. Animation strategies can be used in any post-industrial or transitional space, but in waterfronts, they are essential. This paper discusses two case studies. Gas Works Park and Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord are public space projects in which animation techniques have fostered transformation and engagement of the public. Several typologies of post-industrial space illustrate the animation techniques described within the case studies. The paper evaluates these techniques or strategies and applies them to a post-industrial area slated for redevelopment, Toronto's Port Lands.

Key Words: post-industrial space, waterfront, animation, loose space, ephemeral landscapes.

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I would like to thank my parents, Elaine and Kevin Tito, and my sister, Kaitlin Tito, for always supporting me in all my adventures in life.

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to Andrew Guay, who convinced me to take my first urban planning class, who has encouraged me through every step of this master's program, and who loves cities for the same reasons I do.

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1.

Introduction: Animation and Transitional, Post-industrial Waterfront Sites

Waterfronts, as highly visible, exposed spaces, are stages for representing the city (Marshall, 2001). Different actors and interest groups are involved in the creation of water developments, which in turn create new urban images. As Western economies move away from manufacturing to more knowledge-based, creative economies, post-industrial waterfronts are also spaces in transition (Lister, 2009). Therefore, there is all the more reason to focus on, study, and honour their transition. Waterfront land will be redeveloped eventually, this is for certain. Until then, there is no reason for planners to rely on lacklustre waterfront development “models” that do not seem to engage the culture, past or present, of the place where they are situated. Instead, planners must turn to new approaches for these transitional spaces, with a goal to activate and animate them. Animation strategies can be used in any post-industrial or transitional space, but in waterfronts, they are essential. Landscape, uses, and the meaning(s) of a waterfront change throughout the history of a city, and they do so in ways that reflect the interests and perceptions of those most concerned with it (Cooper, 1999). This is as much the case in Toronto as it is in other cities. What we call “the Toronto waterfront” is not a natural phenomenon, a clear line separating the land from Lake Ontario. Instead, it is a historical, cultural and social product, and an unfinished one (Cooper, 1999). It is of the utmost importance for citizens to be directly

involved in shaping meanings for the Toronto waterfront. This paper explores animation strategies to achieve this.

The research paper's objectives are:

1. To determine what techniques or strategies can be used to re-animate post-industrial spaces in cities
2. To apply these techniques or strategies to a waterfront site (the Port Lands) in Toronto, Ontario.

This research paper's contribution to contemporary planning is threefold. Toronto faces a budget shortfall in excess of \$500 million next year, and the interventions I explore need not be expensive to implement. The strategies, for instance the use of digital and social media, and planning sites with less programming, are low-cost, small-scale, and temporary. Focusing on the transitional qualities of a site will mean doing less, not doing more, while providing a high-quality experience for the public. Examples of parks and public space will show that less interpretation, less programming of a site, allow people to interact with spaces in their own way. Second, interactive strategies will engage the public, intended to promote active stewardship of a space that was previously forgotten by many. Digital and social media projects such as [murmur] in Toronto have achieved this. This is important because planners need sustained political and public support for their work, especially when planning for the waterfront. Finally, planners will benefit from having a new framework with which to think about planning transitional spaces when facing pressure from developers who propose plans that often tend to erase the history of a site.

What does animation mean, in the context of planning?

For the purposes of this paper, animation of a post-industrial site means creatively evoking the history of a site, often including careful attention to memory, cultural narratives, and temporary uses, while successfully engaging the public in its planning, its interpretation and its active stewardship.

Animation can occur with a range of techniques. Techniques explored in this paper are:

1. Thoughtful adaptive reuse of a site: engaging its layers of meaning, to create cultural-natural hybrids.
2. Through neutral design, giving a site's users the opportunity to re-interpret the land in their own way, to bring their own layers of meaning to it, in an endless palimpsest.
3. Social media and digital techniques of storytelling. Digital media (video, mp4s, podcasts, and so on) can be used with social media to activate and animate the transitions of post-industrial spaces by giving citizens the chance to tell their story, and others to hear it.

I have found the concepts of loose space and ephemeral space useful in building my argument. Post-industrial waterfronts are sites of transition, and traditional planning often does not know what to do with these sites of transition in the gap before they are redeveloped. This does not mean the sites are not used. Rather, citizens use them and their landscape values change over time. The uses they took on in the interim can be used to inform future planning and make it relevant to citizens. The concepts of loose space and ephemeral space address these ideas.

Loose space is a concept discussed by Franck and Stevens (2006), who write that “the previously established uses [of a site] have become detached from the space leaving it open for new uses and new meanings—for a community garden, for inhabitation by homeless people or runaways, for transgressive activities that require remoteness and seclusion” (8). The degree of looseness of a site can change over time. A derelict waterfront can become the site of exploring, art installations, fishing, and picnics, and then is redesigned to be a public park, still loose but less so than previously (Campo, 2002). A former brickworks in Toronto became a site for illegal raves and graffiti artists in the 1980s and 1990s, and recently has been redeveloped as a community environmental centre (Milley, 2011). During the time they are loose, these sites are used creatively, then end up becoming relevant to the public again. Transitional spaces such as post-industrial waterfronts will eventually find a new use. In the meantime, they might benefit from temporary use, particularly in the context of re-animation for the purposes of drawing citizens back into the space as active stewards and participants. When planning tools such as traditional master plans fail, or when implementing them is too expensive, temporary use offers potential as a new tool for a strategic planning process.

Ephemeral space is a concept discussed by Qviström in many articles (2004-2009) as part of a research project of ephemeral landscapes at the urban fringe. Qviström's (2006) notion of ephemeral space can also be applied to transitional, post-industrial waterfronts. Qviström's research focuses on the blurry landscapes that appear at the rural-urban divide, and these share many traits with the edge landscape found in Toronto's Port Lands. The term “ephemeral landscape” captures the transitional character of edge landscapes. According to Paul Brassley

(1998), the momentary aspects of the landscapes are very seldom studied. It is precisely these transitional periods that deserve to be celebrated in contemporary planning. Instead, the urban fringe is always about to be transformed, and therefore is ignored. The human and non-human activities that thrive in such a landscape while awaiting the planned transformation have until now rarely been considered within planning. User values develop in landscapes stuck in a state of waiting. Some of these have later been noticed and accepted within institutionalized planning, and the plans have been altered in order to protect these values. Observing or engaging with citizens in how they use transitional spaces and using this to inform the sites' future planning is a key part of animation. This type of progressive planning for the urban public realm will move contemporary planners beyond memorializing the past to active re-engagement with a site in transition.

Animation is important. By slowing down, and encouraging appreciation of, engagement in, and active stewardship by local citizens of the transitional, ephemeral landscapes that develop in the gap before new development, planners will have a better chance at encouraging the sorts of development that are truly contextual and relevant to a city's diverse population.

Berrizbeitia (2007) has written that the techniques of process-based design bring out the aspects that make places memorable and unique: the legibility of the various forces at work on a site, the inclusion of traces left on the land by previous uses, the expression of environmental change, the commitment to diversity, and the determination to adapt existing forms to new social practices. Gas Works Parks and Duisburg-Nord Landscape Park, case studies in this paper, have

employed such design strategies. Process-oriented performative design links with animation and engagement because it makes the landscape history legible and educates citizens so they will become more aware, active stewards. Post- industrial, disturbed sites tell stories, and these landscape with their strange, toxic beauty can move and educate people on a visceral level, more so than reading a book (Meyer, 2007).

Another way to tell stories is through digital media. The [murmur] project in Toronto aims to animate spaces through audio technology. [murmur] is a documentary oral history project that records stories and memories about specific geographic locations. These stories are an opportunity to escape predictable accounts of what is actually complex history, with multiple narratives and interpretations. This encounter with the past and the attempt to infer and deduce what happened reveal the impossibility of capturing it in an official fashion. This is truly the genius behind the [murmur] project. Everyday, even banal, stories by residents may tell one more about the workings of the city than its official history. Stories are always selective and partial although they masquerade as singular and authoritative, and this is glaringly the case with historical accounts (Edensor, 2006). Methods of animating transitional post-industrial spaces remind us of this.

2.

Method

Animation is a technique to transition the development of post-industrial sites, and it is essential when planning for the eventual redevelopment of post-industrial waterfronts, such as the Port Lands of Toronto. In this research paper, I use secondary research to identify animation techniques, and apply these conceptually to the Port Lands.

The paper begins with the discussion of two case studies. Gas Works Park, in Seattle, Washington, and Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord, in the Ruhr region of Germany, are public space projects in which animation techniques have fostered transformation and engagement of the public. These case studies illuminate several useful concepts of animation, such as the importance of limiting interpretation of the site by the designer. Next, I use several typologies of post-industrial space, from loose space, defined by Franck and Stevens (2006) to ephemeral landscapes, studied by Qviström (2004-2009), to illustrate the animation techniques described within the case studies. The descriptive concepts of loose space and ephemeral landscapes, related to landscape types, are helpful frameworks for conceptualizing an approach to animating transitional sites. I explore digital and social media animation techniques under the same frameworks, because their capacity to tell complex narratives and convey landscape values, driven by citizens and users of a place, directly relates to both loose space and ephemeral

landscapes. Finally, I evaluate these techniques or strategies and apply them to conceptually to a post-industrial area slated for redevelopment, Toronto's Port Lands. When redevelopment eventually happens in the Port Lands, it is essential that it is contextual to the history of the area and relevant to the citizens of Toronto. Animation techniques will ensure this.

3.

Case Studies

The following case studies demonstrate contemporary approaches to redeveloping and animating post-industrial waterfront spaces.

3.1 Gas Works Park

In the late 1960s, American artist Robert Smithson photographed industrial relics in Passaic, New Jersey. He called these “Monuments of Passaic” and predicted that this man-made landscape held the clues to our future (Reed, 2005). A few years later, in 1971, landscape architect Richard Haag created the Gas Works Park in Seattle (Weilacher, 2008). Gas Works Park set a precedent for the adaptation of industrial ruins in a contemporary park (Reed, 2005). The park was created on the site of a coal gasification plant, the sole remaining plant of its type in the U.S. (Weilacher, 2008). The highly polluting plant, on a 19.1 acre site on Lake Union, was decommissioned in 1956, when the import of natural gas rendered the plant obsolete (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004). Gas Works Park, opened to the public in 1975, is seen as landscape architecture’s first successful attempt to deliberately build industrial ruins *into* the design of a park. This strategy was Haag’s method for engaging the people of Seattle with the industrial past of their city. I will analyze the strategies that contributed to animation of the site, beginning with the straightforward (adaptive reuse) and ending with the more profound (cultural narratives). Haag’s

approach to reconciling the people of Seattle with the industrial legacy of their city engaged citizens by allowing them to see beauty in the industrial remnants and to use the site for recreation.

Figure 1: Aerial, Gas Works Park

Gas Works Park was among the first in which an industrial site was positioned as a piece of heritage (Campbell, 2006). In the early 1900s, aesthetic considerations were important to landscape designers. In the mid-century, ecology was a major concern. Only in the late twentieth century did recovery and restoration become important elements in landscape design (Campbell, 2006). During the same time, landscape designers lost interest in international modernism, and

instead began to interpret the past and current context of their sites. Haag's plan was ahead of its time, with the aim to reconcile the citizens of Seattle with what was previously an unwelcome industrial legacy (Campbell, 2006). Only later did landscape theorists such as Berrizbeitia (2007) begin to write about the connections between legibility of a post-industrial site and the way this exposing of the past could teach citizens to become active stewards.

Figure 2: Aerial, Gas Works Park

Haag's design illuminates the many layers of meaning and previous uses of the site, which includes acknowledging the reality of its contamination. Many landscape designers before Haag were given the task of redeploying obsolete industrial sites. Usually, the designers would call for the removal of all buildings and equipment, and then propose cleaning or excavation of the soil, before reshaping and replanting the grounds for the envisioned new purpose (Campbell, 2006). Instead of following this pattern and making a more conventional, renewed waterfront

park, Haag re-imagined the site and retained the gas works. He also chose the technique of biophytoremediation to clean the soil, thus making legible the biotic processes of cleansing, and therefore, an active educational device in the transformation of the site. Preserving the buildings and grounds was unique at the time, as well as inexpensive and less time-consuming than the alternative rebuilding of the site.

The design of the site involved preservation and adaptive re-use of key structures. The refinery towers were left largely intact. The boiler house was converted to a picnic shelter. The exhauster-compressor building became a children's play barn, featuring brightly painted machinery. The earth mound, also known as Kite Hill, was molded out of rubble from the site. Pumps, compressors, and piping were left in place. Finally, Haag covered the park with the tough grass which naturally infests abandoned urban sites (Campbell, 2006). By making new uses for old buildings, Haag shifted public perception of what a park should be and how it should look (Campbell, 2006).

Figure 3: Brightly-painted machinery in children's play barn.

Haag has described the park's master plan as under-designed, saying “it represents a

strong skeleton which can evolve in rhythm and rhyme with the new directions in life and play-styles” (Weilacher, 2008, 14). Haag began by wanting to save “the most sacred structure”, the largest oxygen generator tower (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004, 1). Then he decided to save as many of the buildings as he could, comparing them to a family which should not be broken up (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004, 1). It is clear from Haag's sentiments that saving the industrial remnants was not simply an aesthetic decision, as many detractors had thought. In fact, he has claimed that the industrial remnants are intrinsic to the beauty of the site (CCLRTv, 2009).

The park is a tangible, visible piece of Seattle's history. The structures tell a complex story about values, disregard of the environment, and the fact that the Gas Company was a significant contributor to the growth of Seattle (Olin, 2009). Gas Works Park is what landscape scholar Elizabeth Meyer terms a “disturbed site” (Meyer, 1998). It reflects histories of human actions modifying natural rhythms and natural events modifying human rhythms (Meyer, 1998). Before 1956, the gas plant was a public health problem, and local histories contain accounts of the plant's noise, smells, and smoke (Meyer, 1998). Many Seattle residents were uncomfortable with retaining the source of past pollution, and Haag's plan was fiercely resisted by those who called the plan dangerous and ugly. Haag explains the conflict: “We promoted a concept of a new kind of people's park. The concept of crafting a park featuring ‘forgotten works’ greatly appealed to the younger generation while older generations lobbied for the stereotypical image of ‘park’ such as English pastoralism” (Weilacher, 2008, 14). Haag persisted and was able to fulfill his prescient concept of a post-industrial park, that of accepting the historical qualities of a site, however complicated, of embracing industrial ruins rather than erasing them (Olin, 2009).

Despite initial hesitancy by the public, the park is now in constant use. It has been the site of numerous political rallies, concerts, public meetings, and all types of recreation. This strong degree of use by the public is one aspect of animation.

Haag's park design involved as little site intervention as possible. His philosophy was that change can come about by editing, removing, managing, or shaping the existing condition, and he taught that time works just as powerfully to change the landscape (Hilderbrand, 1998). At the top of the earth mound, there is an interactive sundial. Created from found objects such as shells and broken bottles, it requires viewers to use their own shadow to read the time. The sundial reminds one that the park is an evolving landscape (Campbell, 2006). Honouring the site's past while fulfilling the needs of the present, Haag's layout is flexible so that it can accommodate future changes (Campbell, 2006). Meyer (1998) has written that "the park's power to move lies in its ability to challenge a sense of spatial boundaries through temporal means, to suggest the open-endedness of processes, the *longue duree*, not simply the fleeting moment" (16).

Figure 4: The interactive sundial.

Post-industrial sites often occupy land that is at the center of our cultural landscapes, and represent us as a society (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004). Haag's work as a landscape architect emphasizes the spirit of place, feeling, direct contact with sites, and informed intuition (Olin, 2009). Olin (2009) writes that Haag is interested in psychological needs and behaviour found in human experience of landscape. Haag has described his design process for Gas Works Park this way: "I began with the site. I haunted the buildings and let the spirit of the place enjoin mine. I... decided to absolve the community's vindictive feeling towards the gas plant" (Reed, 2005, 25). Reconciling memories, emotions, and culture is the goal of Richard Haag's post-industrial animation.

The site of Gas Works Park evolved over time, and Haag's design engages those prior stories and forms. Meyer (1998) explains that since sites engage with the world beyond them, a designed landscape requires a community that is actively engaged and literate. She argues that the stories embedded within the experience of a place must be decoded, interpreted, and sensed by the community (Meyer, 1998). Successful animation requires that a designed landscape stories tap into the collective memory. In the case of Seattle, the content of the stories is well known and central to the identity of the region (Meyer, 1998). Haag's park provides space for flights of imagination, periods of wonderment, and revelation (Reed, 2005).

3.2 Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord

Richard Haag's approach to reanimating obsolete industrial sites set a precedent, which is evident in Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord, one of nearly a hundred projects in the IBA Emscher Park International Building Exhibition in the Ruhr district of Germany (Krinke, 2001). Created by Latz + Partner, Duisburg-Nord is a 230-hectare park on the site of the former Thyssen Steelworks. The main planning and realization phase took place from 1991 to 1999 (Krinke, 2001). As with Gas Works Park, the reanimation techniques range from obvious to nuanced, from creative adaptive reuse to evocative narratives.

Latz + Partner, headed by landscape architect Peter Latz, concentrated on redefinition, redirection, and reinterpretation of what they found on site. Like Haag, Latz decided not to turn the old steelworks site into a bucolic park. Instead, the design adapts and reinterprets industrial features and natural processes already occurring on the site. The design made very few changes to the spatial structure of the works or the site overall. Most of the industrial features were retained and adapted to be safe for public access. Latz's approach was to leave as much as possible of what had been formed, first by industry and then by decay and pioneering plants (Tate, 2001). He described the working method for the park as being "one of adaptation and new interpretation, a metamorphosis of industrial structures without destroying them" (Tate, 2001, 119). The renovated buildings house amenities which include restaurants and a theatre. A gasholder has been filled with water for divers, while rock climbers scale the walls of coal storage bunkers.

Figure 5: Climbers on coal storage bunkers.

Gardens have been created in the bunkers, and at night a light installation by Jonathan Park brings the steelworks glowing back to life as an imaginative, colourful mega-structure (Tate, 2001). The park does not have a prescribed circulation system, but the three old rail routes became bicycle and pedestrian paths, and there is a brightly coloured catwalk (the bright colour signifies safety) that gives “visual access to the slowly rusting remains” (Tate, 2001, 120). A very important feature of the park is its open access: open 24 hours, every day of the year, the park is free. Fences were placed only in particularly dangerous or contaminated areas (Weilacher, 2008).

Figure 6: Rail lines as circulation paths.

As was the case with Gas Works Park, Latz's design philosophy saved money in terms of capital costs. The park was developed in stages, so building initiatives only required incremental infusions of cash (Lubow, 2004). Some have argued that erasing the past would have been fiscally irresponsible (Reed, 2005). The cost was about US \$24 million to renovate the buildings and another US \$24 million was spent on the grounds (Lubow, 2004).

Duisburg-Nord's method of animation is not just adaptive reuse, although that is the aspect that seems to capture the most attention. More importantly, the park honours history, but without reconstructing the past in a didactic way (Berrizbeitia, 2007). Large parks often build on existing places, and if landscape architects and planners creatively engage the traces left by previous uses, the parks become memorable, animated places (Berrizbeitia, 2007). Anita Berrizbeitia has written that the techniques of process-based design bring out the aspects that make places memorable and unique: the legibility of the various forces at work on a site, the

inclusion of traces left on the land by previous uses, the expression of environmental change, the commitment to diversity, and the determination to adapt existing forms to new social practices (2007).

Figure 7 (left): Industrial remnants. Figure 8 (right): The sinter park

Czerniak has also written about legibility. Czerniak (2007) defines legibility as the capacity of a project to be understood in its intentions (meaning its evolution and goals), identity (its distinguishing character and organization), and image (the project's appearance, whether pastoral or post-industrial, and its marketing strategies). She links this concept to resilience, writing that a park's “ability to accommodate diverse and shifting social, cultural, technological, and political desires while maintaining its identity is a characteristic of its resilience” (Czerniak, 2007, 216). Further, Czerniak writes that designers must decide what layers of history, even the

unsavory ones, to make legible. In fact, Duisburg Nord has been criticized for not making legible the site's affiliation with the Nazi party during WWII (Beardsley, 2007). Czerniak also makes clear an important connection between legibility and stewardship. In describing Field Operations' winning proposal for Fresh Kills Park in New York, called Lifescape, she explains that one task of the master plan was to create a constituency that will maintain and nurture the landscape over the long term. To achieve this, James Corner of Field Operations suggested that the landscape must be legible to its users. Field Operations achieved this through a planting strategy understandable to the public and an ambitious community outreach program including ads for the city's website, widely disseminated posters for public meetings, and graphics for bus ads. The strategies were intended to generate public interest and participation in the master planning process, and in the park's future life. Czerniak (2007) concludes that parks are places where designers can “develop constituencies that will understand, nurture, and maintain the parks—a positive collective act-- because the aspirations of *their* large park in *their* contemporary city are legible to them” (226). The connection between legibility and stewardship can be seen in Duisburg-Nord's design as well.

At the time the park was built, the Ruhr district was a run-down, densely populated region, devastated by deindustrialization. The steelworks plant closed in 1985, and thousands of workers were dismissed. This left desperate working families behind, and acres of polluted landscape (Weilacher, 2008). Latz's ideas for the park came from seeing that the total demolition in the Ruhr, beginning in the sixties, destroyed the relationships and history of many people (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004). He was inspired to reanimate the devastated areas and regenerate them as a

landscape (Latz, 2001). Nina-Marie Lister (2006) writes: “Latz pays homage to the industry that sustained generations of miners and their families, while offering new opportunities for recreation, regeneration, and reflection” (71). Latz was also interested in the idea that individual memories and stories associated with culture could gain recognition in such a park (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004). The park is now seen as a symbol of hope for the declining city in post-industrial times (Greenstein, R., Sungu-Eryilmaz, 2004).

Peter Latz describes the park as an endless palimpsest, and is “convinced that the public will bring further information layers to it... the whole work has become an open artwork” (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004, 1). To Latz, landscape is the cultural result of the work of generations. To preserve these cultural layers and display them, any new design should exercise restraint (Weilacher, 2004). Latz + Partner did not disturb the intelligibility of the site layers any more than was necessary. The project added a new text as a current layer of meaning for the post-industrial landscape. These new signifiers, including steps and paths, link the fragments of the past and present, and the natural and cultural history of the site (Weilacher, 2004). This approach does not restore the site to an unknown past, but rather addresses the fact of human intervention (Krinke, 2001).

Animation is also evident in creative reinterpretation by the park's users. In one case, the park's users erected a summit cross on “Monte Thyssino”, a coal bunker named after German steel magnate August Thyssen. Latz's minimal effort permanently changed the way the former industrial landscape is read (Weilacher, 2008). Latz remained firm that interventions should be cautious and subtle, with the industrial structures mostly unchanged and without a specific

program for use. In this way, it would be possible for all users to develop their own interpretation of the space. Latz explained that the design “gives people the opportunity to interpret the land in their own way” (Lubow, 2004). For the same reason, Latz wanted Duisburg-Nord to contain multiple references. Latz maintained: “Everyone who uses the park has a different park. There are different information layers, and you may understand only one or two, but somebody else may understand 50” (Weilacher, 2008, 118).

Latz has said his idea for the site came about when he learned how the *genius loci*, or spirit of place, can be fixed to ruins of the past and linked to new elements and new uses (Pirzio-Biroli, 2004). This would not happen via preservation of the blast furnace as a museum, but, instead, when the buildings have been given an active new life. Different layers of time simultaneously coexist in Duisburg-Nord. The park is conceived of as an ongoing process; it is alive and complex. The old industry provides an armature for new experiences of activity. Using a bunker wall for rock climbing is one type of animation. Investing the surviving building components with new meaning that can stimulate new readings of existing material, and add richness to cultural narratives, is another.

An important characteristic of Peter Latz's design is that it is open-ended and process-oriented. Latz did not want to show a site plan for the park; this would have implied that it was somehow complete (Tate, 2001). The park's design strategies show the temporal quality of the landscape as a dynamic, performative, open-ended process medium (Meyer, 2007). Instead of building objects for specific uses, fantasy and playfulness allow the existing abstract structures to function in new ways and for users to project their own meaning onto them. Process-oriented

performative design links with animation and engagement because it makes the landscape history legible and educates citizens so they will become more aware, active stewards. Post- industrial, disturbed sites tell stories, and that these landscape with their strange, toxic beauty can move and educate people on a visceral level, more than reading a book (Meyer, 2007).

Disturbed sites are contaminated landscapes previously used for industrial purposes (Meyer, 2007). In many cases, landscape camouflage masks the histories and processes of these sites and thus severs a connection with the past – a connection that might otherwise render these parks more meaningful to the public. The sites have the capacity to tell stories about consumption and production (Meyer, 2007). The awesome structures of Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord evoke memories, associations, emotions, and an aura of mystery that inspired Latz to construct narratives and stories that allude to a mythic past (Tate, 2001). Latz's park reinterprets the historical structures for contemporary uses that engage the community beyond simply reading the past. Duisburg-Nord offers a new hybrid, celebrating community and culture and successfully animating a post-industrial site (Kirkwood, 2001).

4.

Typologies of Post-industrial Space

4.1 Loose Space

The idea of loose space is a useful one for thinking about and working with transitional landscapes. Loose space is accessible to the public and takes many forms in urban locations, whether it is planned public open space or leftover and abandoned space (Franck and Stevens, 2006). Post-industrial waterfronts, spaces that once had been assigned functions but no longer do, possess similar qualities. Franck and Stevens (2006) write that “The previously established uses have become detached from the space leaving it open for new uses and new meanings—for a community garden, for inhabitation by homeless people or runaways, for transgressive activities that require remoteness and seclusion” (8).

Loose space has much in common with what the late architect Ignasi de Sola-Morales calls *terrain vague* (1995). It stands in contrast to other kinds of open space such as parks and sidewalks. Also called “no man's lands,” “indeterminate spaces” and “free zones” (Groth and Corijn, 2005) abandoned and leftover spaces, temporarily free of official planning and commodification, are appropriated for other uses. The relationship between the absence of use and the sense of freedom is fundamental to understanding the evocative potential of the city's *terrain vagues*. These spaces are internal to the city yet external to its everyday use. There is a common, pervasive and collective sense that they are uninhabited, unsafe, and unproductive.

Instead, contemporary evidence suggests these spaces are actively useful: abandoned mines in Tyneside, England, have become places for bird watching; former railway sheds in Helsinki are occupied by artists' collectives (Franck, Stevens, 2006). In Toronto, Leslie Spit, a landfill and waste site, has become a significant ecological and recreational area for bird migration, bird watching, cycling, canoeing, boating, and walking.

The degree of looseness can change over time. Utopian environments are those where the potential for ongoing change and development has been removed. In contrast, loose space constantly changes (Sibley, 1988). Spaces may start off loose and become more controlled regarding appearance and acceptable uses. A derelict waterfront can become the site of exploring, art installations, fishing, and picnics, and then is redesigned to be a public park, still loose but less so than previously (Campo, 2002). A former brickworks in Toronto became a site for illegal raves and graffiti artists in the 1980s and 1990s, and recently has been redeveloped as a community environmental centre (Milley, 2011). In this case, the Toronto-based environmental group Evergreen worked with the City of Toronto and the local Conservation Authority to take over the management of a publicly owned industrial and natural heritage site (Lister, 2007). The Brickworks is a 40 acre site containing a former brick-making plant, fifteen heritage buildings and a public ravine and park. The site contains a series of constructed wetlands for stormwater management and habitat protection, as well as hiking trails and nature interpretation (Lister, 2007). The site is being programmed to offer gardening workshops, heritage tours, clay-making, and organic food markets, to a retail nursery, and demonstration gardens. As such, it is a manifestation of cultural and natural heritage within the urban context. Similarly to Duisburg

Nord, the Brickworks site moves beyond adaptive reuse and is designed to engage people (Lister, 2007).

The decommissioned steelworks at Duisburg-Nord was used for raves and for scuba diving before the landscape park was created. These unofficial uses were formalized and privatized: now one must pay to scuba dive or dance at a nightclub in the park (Beardsley, 2006). Within formal, fixed open places, there is much less opportunity for innovation and experimentation. Beardsley (2006) acknowledges that on the positive side, unofficial community gardens became accepted, and new bike paths, athletic facilities, and workshops for vocation training were added to the park to ensure it would be relevant and accessible to a variety of publics. Also, there are some elements of Duisburg-Nord that maintain the qualities of loose space. There is free access to the site at all times. Still, one must wonder about the connection between derelict space, creativity and subversion, and if it is possible to maintain the playfulness and possibility that arise in loose space even when sites are redeveloped.

Ignasi de Sola-Morales warned that architects often ruin *terrain vagues* by imposing order and limits, by violently transforming the uncivilized into the cultivated (2005). He wrote that designers seem to strive to dissolve the magic of the obsolete into the realism of efficacy. This was not the approach taken by Peter Latz, who did not want to cultivate or inflict order upon the site, and whose design still succeeded in a conventional planning context. None of the reused buildings were programmed for specific activities, there is no prescribed circulation path in the park, and diverse native and exotic plants are colonizing the site and beginning a process of natural succession. As Reed (2005) notes, “there is a certain irony to be found in a site that

once existed solely to function with the efficiency of industry now being turned over to the unpredictability of natural processes and unforeseen human activities” (26). After sunset, Duisburg-Nord, illuminated by the light installation, invites visitors to undertake nocturnal exploration tours (Weilacher, 2008).

The virtues of loose space arise largely from the qualities of possibility, diversity and disorder (Franck and Stevens, 2006). These qualities are the opposite of qualities of public space that many people value. The existence of loose space is continuously threatened by these and other interests. Calls for order and beautification may belie intentions to redevelop property and attract wealthier residents to an area (Franck and Stevens, 2006). For this reason, it can be helpful to weigh the risks and benefits of loose space. Loose space is characterized by indeterminacy; this, along with free access, opens the space to other possibilities: to activities that are spontaneous, that have no other place, or those that benefit from a relative lack of control and economic constraints. Freedom is a prerequisite of loose space for people to be able to pursue possibilities of their choice (Franck and Stevens, 2006). On the risk side, the physical dangers of open space are often overestimated and often in the design of contemporary environments such risks are too closely and too bluntly managed (Franck and Stevens, 2006). Planning can work with the notion of loose space in the sense of providing less programming, while still providing a infrastructural framework.

Transitional spaces such as post-industrial waterfronts will eventually find a new use. In the meantime, they might benefit from temporary use, particularly in the context of re-animation for the purposes of drawing citizens back into the space as active stewards and participants. The

range of temporary uses is vast, including theatre projects or concerts or recreational activities in abandoned buildings or on former industrial sites. For two years, Urban Catalyst researched the potential of temporary use and the apparent crisis of classical planning (Oswalt et al., 2006). The research was based on two hypotheses: that spontaneous, temporary uses can have positive long term effects; and that temporary uses can be successfully incorporated into the planning and management of cities (Oswalt et al., 2006). Their research showed that “temporary use became a vehicle that provided opportunities for new, unplanned activities, transforming banal and everyday spaces into breeding grounds for art music pop culture, economic development, tech innovation and startups” (Oswalt et al., 2006, 273). When planning tools such as traditional master plans fail, or when implementing them is too expensive, temporary use offers potential as a new tool for a strategic planning process.

Temporary uses often emerge in in-between spaces or gaps, on former industrial or infrastructural areas that have undergone change. Traditional development patterns struggle or fail to absorb urban residual sites if initial investment costs are too high due to ground pollution, building contamination or lack of an appropriate infrastructural context (Oswalt et al., 2006). All three of these conditions can be found in Toronto's Port Lands. These are only a few of the factors that may create a gap between a former use and a new, planned use. Within this gap, temporary use manifests itself. Although temporary, these uses leave traces and often influence further development of the site (Oswalt et al., 2006).

Temporary uses can contribute to the symbolic and programmatic redefinition of sites, mostly from former industrial use to postindustrial types of programs of culture, services, and

leisure (Oswalt et al., 2006). If successful, abandoned sites are “re-discovered” and made known to, and are eventually appreciated by, a wider public, examples suggest that these sites will generate a more organic, interesting, location-specific form of redevelopment – one which is actively fostered and stewarded by local citizens who have become re-attached to the place. Through temporary use, a former bus depot in Berlin-Treptow was converted into an arena with a large concert hall and event hall, and a cluster of uses has been established around it, partly as commercial development and partly as temporary use (a flea market, temporary pool and sauna, restaurant, youth club, offices for start-up companies) (Oswalt et al., 2006). Temporary uses make a strong impact on the cultural and social capital of cities, establishing new cultural and social practices and lifestyles, and contributing to development of new types of professionals (Oswalt et al., 2006).

In Amsterdam North, an 8.6 hectare dockland site is the home of a new development concept, the core of which is the initiation of temporary cultural uses (Oswalt et al., 2006). In the short term, these uses will help make the area known the public. The ultimate goal is to create a living, mixed-use neighbourhood. A 20,000 square meter hall and large outdoor areas of the former dockyard were made available for this purpose. The hall will have a theater, and offices and workshops for small firms, artists, traders, and craftsmen. (Oswalt et al., 2006). This is the sort of development that can help a transitional site develop organically and incrementally, when combined with other strategies of animation.

4.2 Ephemeral Landscapes

Figure 9: An ephemeral landscape reminiscent of the Port Lands in Toronto: Spillepeng and Malmö incineration plant.

Qviström's (2006) notion of ephemeral space can also be applied to transitional, post-industrial waterfronts. Qviström's research focuses on the blurry landscapes that appear at the rural-urban divide, and these share many traits with the edge landscape found in Toronto's Port Lands. Qviström (2006) uses the word "ephemeral" in two ways: in the temporal sense, a transient landscape; in another sense, an everyday landscape. "Ephemeral" means short-lived, transient, passing, fleeting, brief, momentary or temporary. The term "ephemeral landscape" captures the transitional character of edge landscapes. According to Paul Brassley (1998),

contemporary landscape research has a focus on permanent features, such as buildings, roads, canals, forests and field boundaries, while the momentary aspects of the landscapes are very seldom studied. It is precisely these transitional periods that deserve to be celebrated in contemporary planning. Instead, the urban fringe is often masked behind a green future; it is always about to be transformed, and therefore is ignored. As a consequence of this, the everyday landscape, which may contain both hazardous waste and places of great potential for recreation, is repeatedly overlooked (Qviström, 2006).

Qviström and Saltzman (2006) argue that landscapes are the result of competing interpretations and interests, and every activity and representation will either question or confirm the dominating ways of seeing and ways of acting within a landscape. These re-negotiations have a place and a time in the city's context. Therefore, an everyday perspective, studying the vernacular activities and everyday changes in a landscape, is fundamental for an understanding of landscape transformations. A focus on the ephemerality of landscapes is one way to bring forward an understanding of the transitory character of everyday places (Qviström and Saltzman, 2006) and with it, both an appreciation of and engagement by local citizens in the transformation of a place.

Vast areas at the urban fringe are often lying neglected, waiting for long-delayed projects to be realized. Similar to Franck and Stevens' discussion of loose space, Qviström explains that disordered place bring out the ambitions within planning to create order (2007). This can be seen in the desire to redevelop Toronto's Port Lands. The planning for progress and the "recycling" of places are part of modern society, and an intermediate phase of dereliction is therefore an

unavoidable characteristic of the modern city (Jakle and Wilson 1992). Sites are left in a state of suspension by the act of 'future planning'. Until the future plans for the site come to pass, the site lies fallow and underused. At this time, parts of zoning maps for the Port Lands are left blank. But, until an unknown date, there is no fixed plan for these voids.

Places at the city edge are generally ignored within planning for the reason that they will be transformed in the near future (Qvistrom, 2005). Planners primarily deal with 'before' and 'after', not 'in-between' (Oswalt et al., 2007). Instead of bringing forward the potential of temporary activities and transient places, an unknown future is promised (Qvistrom, 2005). This utopian way of thinking is embedded within the tradition of institutionalized land use planning, emphasizing future land-use rather than the present day situation (Schneekloth, 1998; Olwig, 2002). Therefore, planners tend to focus on an envisioned final form of urban development rather than the transitional landscapes that dominate the urban fringe. Until then, these areas are used to fulfill other needs (Doron, 2000).

Landscapes at the edge of the city comprise vast areas that 'lie fallow', awaiting future urban development. The Port Lands have been repeatedly described as 'stagnant.' During this time new landscape values, associated with the temporary character of the inner urban fringe, evolve. In these landscapes, hybrid places, or places out of order, appear. Ruins provide space for mundane stories, for temporary gardens or opportunities for urban wildlife to prosper (Qviström 2007; Shoard 2002; Woodward 2005). Abandoned buildings and "wastelands" offer informal playgrounds for teenagers, places for "urban explorers" and for transgressive activities (Qviström 2007; Kivell and Hatfield 1998; Edensor 2005; Willim 2005).

One of Qvistrom's case studies is Toftanas, an edge landscape. At the time he wrote about the case, the designation of the area for industrial purposes was being questioned, as Toftanas would soon be surrounded by residential areas (2006). Qvistrom explains that the industrial layout and the erasing of the local history cannot be undone. This case study has a great deal in common with the Port Lands of Toronto, which will soon be surrounded by dense mixed use neighbourhoods. In Toftanas, a partial adjustment of the detailed development plan is being discussed within the local authorities, supporting the establishment of shops instead of industries (Qviström 2006). Southern Toftanas might be turned into a commercial centre for the surrounding, existing and intended residential areas (Qviström 2006). A similar fate has been recommended for the Port Lands at different times.

In the negotiation between everyday activities and planning, the inner urban fringe is continually contested. Nature enthusiasts who use the Martin Goodman Trail and Leslie Spit in the Port Lands do not wish to see any sort of development in the area, for fear it will destroy wildlife habitats. People's use and appreciation of areas in transition and areas awaiting future transformation reveal values connected to the landscape. Seemingly ephemeral landscapes can in some cases turn out to be protected, thus being understood as permanent (Qvistrom, 2006). The human and non-human activities that thrive in such a landscape while awaiting the planned transformation have until now rarely been considered within planning. Values develop in landscapes stuck in a state of waiting. As in the Port Lands example, new values for recreation and wildlife have evolved. People claim spaces for their own use. Some of these have later been noticed and accepted within spatial planning, and the plans have been altered in order to protect

these values. This calls for an enhanced awareness of the impact that planning has while the plans are not realized. The interaction between planning, landscape changes and people's perception, use and valuation of the landscape is noteworthy, especially because conventional planning seems to struggle when it comes to handling ambiguous landscapes and the transitional aspect of places (Qviström 2006). From the point of view of the planner, such values can affect the interpretation and treatment of the landscape in question.

Figure 10: recreational use of the Spit.

When the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan was created, shifting landscape values were

recognized. The Master Plan incorporates cultural, ecological and financial directives for the future of Lake Ontario Park (2008). A key challenge of the Lake Ontario Park master planning process was to understand the diverse existing ecologies and uses of the site—from the rare stands of Eastern Cottonwoods to the community boating clubs and kiteboard launch sites protected by Tommy Thompson Park (the Spit) (Field Operations et al. 2008). Starting in the Fall of 2006, the Master Plan team has consulted with city agencies, residents and park users, as well as the wider public, to plan a park with different intensities of activity, with areas for both the human communities and the animal species that have long inhabited the site (2009). A significant challenge for the project was to promote the enhancement of public recreational landscapes while maintaining and improving the ecological quality of aquatic and terrestrial habitats, two goals that could be at odds if not sensitively handled. This was resolved by concentrating recreational activity in the Base Lands of the area instead of the Spit (Field Operations et al. 2008).

Many post-industrial landscapes have been developed with an eye for creating “gritty” places that only superficially evoke the site's past. In Qvistrom's case studies, the landscapes presented have been part of the inner fringe since the 1960s, and during this time former land uses have been erased in various planning documents and replaced by visions for future industries, roads, and residential as well as recreational areas. This is why animation is so important. By slowing down, and encouraging appreciation of, engagement in, and active stewardship by local citizens of the transitional, ephemeral landscapes that develop in the gap before new development, planners will have a better chance at encouraging the sorts of

development that are truly contextual and relevant to a city's diverse population.

4.3 [murmur]

The [murmur] project in Toronto aims to animate spaces through audio technology. [murmur] is a documentary oral history project that records stories and memories about specific geographic locations. In each of the locations there is a [murmur] sign with a telephone number on it. When someone calls the number with their cell phone, they hear a recorded story from another Toronto resident. Some stories suggest that the listener walk around, following a certain path through a place, while others allow a person to wander. Currently, nine Toronto neighbourhoods have [murmur] recordings, and each neighbourhood has many stories. The goal of [murmur] is to collect people's personal histories and anecdotes, the history told by voices that are often overlooked when the stories of cities are told. [murmur] looks for the intimate, neighbourhood-level voices that tell the day-to-day stories that make up a city. In this way, they are reminiscent of Qvistrom's notion of the ephemeral, and the project is just as transformative when it comes to thinking about transitional spaces. The project's creators speak of the project as a way to share history that may be destroyed when “spiritually full” buildings are torn down to make way for condo towers (Lourenco, 2003). These stories can change the way people think about a place and the city at large.

The project was conceived by Gabe Sawhney, Shawn Micallef and James Roussel (Underwood, 2003). The official public launch of the project was in July 2003, when 10 signs were installed in Toronto's Kensington Market. Micallef has said that Kensington Market was

chosen because its layers are still visible, and it is chaotic and not squeaky clean (Underwood, 2003). The Victorian infrastructure bears remnants of all the past influences, such as the tiles of the Star of David that show the neighbourhood's past with many Jewish storeowners. Later marks were made by the area's Portuguese, Caribbean and Southeast Asian residents (Underwood, 2003).

Figure 11: [murmur]

Figure 12: [murmur] in Kensington Market.

[murmur] 's inception was informed by a existing communication practices and technologies that combine site-specific work and wireless technologies (Wershler, 2008). Its creators cite [murmur] 's relative beginnings in the works of audio artist Janet Cardiff, Canadian and U.S. public radio, and their interest in riding around the city on a bicycle while navigating with a GPS unit (Wershler, 2008). Murmur's storytelling technique is a loose, casual method of sharing history. Each story, because it is based in a geographic place, is affecting, immediate and real (Lourenco, 2003). In this sense, it is similar to the National Film Board's acclaimed "Out My Window" series, another place-based multimedia collection of narratives. There is much

potential in the use of Web 2.0 interactive technologies to foster animation and engagement strategies, because these tools allow citizens to tell their own stories.

Alternative techniques of storytelling are a crucial element to reanimating transitional, post-industrial spaces, as seen in the case studies described above. Industrial ruins are disarticulated spaces, and language cannot fully capture their characteristics (Edensor, 2006). There are numerous scraps of stories that wait to be told. But any story-telling must be open-ended and improvisatory, full of non-sequiturs, irrelevances and inconsistencies, as in the [murmur] project. Many official city narratives seamlessly relate histories of places and people, recounting preferred forms of heritage for tourists and potential investors (Edensor, 2006). In contrast, these stories are loose and can trail away into silence or incoherence. Edensor writes that “clues about the people, their characteristics and the activities that formerly centered upon now-ruined spaces are multiple, yet often ambiguous or unintelligible, although these ghostly, enigmatic traces invite us to guess at their meanings and purposes, to make up extemporized narratives” (Edensor, 2006, 250). At Evergreen Brickworks, portraits of men who used to work at the brickworks are prominently displayed, watching over the kiln room. The inarticulacy of loose space, ephemeral space, might frustrate those who want to consume packaged narratives and decode smoothly encoded spaces, but these are an opportunity to escape predictable accounts of what is actually complex history, with multiple narratives and interpretations. This encounter with the past and the attempt to infer and deduce what happened reveal the impossibility of capturing it in an official fashion. This is truly the genius behind the [murmur] project. Everyday, even banal, stories by residents may tell one more about the workings of the city than its official history.

Chanced-upon fragments and traces map the erasure of memory with their incomplete nature; they also evoke “what in memory is lost when language intervenes—the sensation left by the unfindable” (Klein 1997: 10), revealing the limitations of narrating the past. Stories are always selective and partial although they masquerade as singular and authoritative, and this is glaringly the case with historical accounts (Edensor, 2006). Methods of animating transitional post-industrial spaces remind us of this, and our cities are richer for it.

5.

Recommendations for Toronto's Post-industrial Waterfront – The Port Lands

The best types of public space allow for the inclusion of multiple meanings and all levels of society (Rowe, 1997, 35).

5.1 Implications for Planning

The problems described in previous sections of this paper are not unique: there is a common history to most port cities. Waterfronts, with their exposed visibility, are stages for representing the city (Marshall, 2001). Different actors and interest groups are involved in the creation of these new urban images. As Western economies move away from manufacturing to more knowledge-based, creative economies, post-industrial waterfronts are spaces in transition (Lister, 2009). Therefore, there is all the more reason to focus on, study, and honour their transition. The land will be redeveloped eventually, this is for certain. Until then, there is no reason for planners to rely on lacklustre waterfront development “models” that do not seem to engage the culture, past or present, of the place where they are situated.

Among designers and planners, a great deal of attention is being paid to spaces considered interstitial (Schwarzer, 1998). Ellin (1999) states that this is apparent in the concern for designing along ecologically-differentiated areas such as along waterfronts. Marshall (2001) writes that the character of the postindustrial waterfront in the information age is not yet clear. One way to approach their eventual redevelopment is to view the waterfront as a zone of transition. Thus, designers and planners have to think about it in terms of continuity and context,

in historical, cultural and ecological terms. The landscape, uses, and meaning of the waterfront change over time in ways that reflect the interests and perceptions of those concerned with it. The “Toronto waterfront” is not a natural phenomenon, a clear line separating the land from Lake Ontario. It is a historical and social product, and an unfinished one (Cooper, 1999).

Currently, waterfront post-industrial sites in Toronto are not planned with the explicit (or arguably implicit) goal of providing an animated, meaningful space to the public. Only one of the planning documents pertaining to the Port Lands in Toronto, for instance, explicitly mention this goal for public space. The plans, such as *Unlocking the Port Lands*, refer, at most, to the need for what amounts to undefined place-making and a connection to the water. Conventional place-making attempts, usually involving “gateways” and public art, can be quite shallow, and only implemented at the end of redevelopment projects. These attempts can seem like an afterthought, with the sole purpose of attracting more visitors. Only the *Lake Ontario Park Master Plan* comes close to articulating the need for more meaningful public spaces along the waterfront. Because the *Plan* is based upon a solid citizen engagement framework, and incorporates transitional uses (such as bird-watching) and values of the public, the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan model is a good one to apply to developable sites within the Port Lands.

One major challenge of the master planning process was to understand and accommodate the diverse existing ecologies (rare Eastern Cottonwoods) and uses of the site (community boating clubs on the Spit) (Field Operations et al. 2008). The Master Plan team consulted with city agencies, residents and park users, as well as the wider public, to plan a park with areas for human communities and animal species that have long inhabited the site, and different intensities

of use to attempt to satisfy as many stakeholders as possible (all of whom had different values, ranging from conservation to a desire for more recreation) (Field Operations et al. 2008).

Figure 13: Leslie Spit.

Animation strategies vary, as seen in the examples of this paper, but they might involve the use of digital and social media, of studying the temporary uses of a site so that this can inform the eventual transformation of the site, and planning for less programming of a site so that users can engage with the space on their own terms. Planners will benefit from cultivating the experience of place because an engaged public will be involved in active stewardship and the sites will be relevant to them.

5.2 Recommendations

A general approach for Toronto's Port Lands would involve changing the way planners appreciate transitional spaces. Just as users of Leslie Spit were engaged in a master planning process that took into account their use patterns and values, a site in the Port Lands could be studied with the intent of understanding the varied ecologies and temporary uses that might be present.

Ideally, the processes by which parks emerge involve a social dimension, where the public grows and learns through the design process. As in the case of the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan, environmental interests have to be balanced with cultural desires. Such values can clash. The interactive process of exchange, feedback, and growth between invested constituencies (and their understanding of the scheme) as well as a design's ability to accommodate these conflicting wishes is a measure of its animation potential (Czerniak, 2007). When they are receptive to a diversity of perspectives, and responsive to local conditions, design processes are potentially powerful vehicles for shared learning by their participants, the kind that leads citizens to become active stewards (Lister, 2007). Citizens can learn a great deal from participating in engagement activities such as design charrettes, in which social and ecological choices and consequences are discussed and prioritized (Lister, 2007), and the eventual design of a site will be animated because of it.

Temporary users, such as those who began using the abandoned brickworks in Toronto, become pioneers, discovering a space and making it known through their temporary use initiatives. In many cases, temporary uses function only in the interim, eventually being replaced

by higher-value land uses (Oswalt et al., 2006). Before this happens, planners must recognize the inherent value in allowing spaces to be under-designed and loose so that users can interpret it as they wish.

Considerations for Planning in the Port Lands

Latz said that his design for Landscape Park Duisburg Nord was deliberately neutral, to give people the opportunity to interpret the land in their own way (Lubow, 2004). This technique would serve the Toronto waterfront well, as waterfronts are contested spaces with long histories. When space is kept “loose”, opportunities are rife for people to supply their own narrative. Edensor (2006) writes that loose space provides an opportunity for creative interpretation, fantastical imaginings and wild speculation (251). In these spaces, people can engage and imagine on their own terms, and create original, temporary uses that might later inform the redevelopment of the site. In transitional spaces like waterfronts, this is key.

Figure 14: Port Lands, Toronto

Letting things happen as organically as possible is also important because it means the site is more likely to be relevant to people. In the case of Duisburg Nord, scuba diving began after Latz engaged a professional diver to explore which underground tunnels could be used to channel rainwater. Local enthusiasts then volunteered to help clean the tunnels out. Once this was done, the amateur divers had the idea to use a gasometer tank for a dive club. Latz explained that now, nobody remembers how it started (Lubow, 2004).

Waterfront planning can be expensive. Both Latz and Haag used what was existing on their sites when constructing the parks, to save money and to maintain the character of the site.

In transitional places like waterfronts, new landscape values evolve over time. From the point of view of the planner, such values can affect the interpretation and treatment of the landscape in question. Qvistrom questions if it would be desirable or even possible to find ways to acknowledge the values that develop in these landscapes. This was successfully done in the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan (Field Operations et al. 2008) and could be achieved for the rest of the Port Lands as well. Observing how space is used and engaging people in a process to find out what their values are is essential for redevelopment in the waterfront.

Finally, storytelling is important to animation. Digital and social media techniques can be used to illuminate complex history, with multiple narratives and interpretations.

Animation is important. By slowing down, and encouraging appreciation of, engagement in, and active stewardship by local citizens of the transitional, ephemeral landscapes that develop in the gap before new development, planners will have a better chance at encouraging the sorts of development that are truly contextual and relevant to a city's diverse population. Planners have much to gain by animating transitional post-industrial waterfront sites in the Port Lands.

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