

Understanding Change: Tracing Transformative Interactions in a Large Commonhold-Type Housing Estate



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Conceptual and methodological framings

Approaching the research problem

- **We constantly change** our environment through interaction, communication and differentiation; and we **adapt** to these changes. [Berger & Luckmann (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality*]. The changing of our (urban) environment may be conceived as a changing of **ourselves**. [Harvey, David (2008) *The Right to the City*]
 - To control change means to maintain or, conversely, to challenge the stability of a given system or a given condition. The problem of change relates to **questions of power**. [Lefebvre, Henri (1970) *The Urban Revolution*]
- > **Social and political dimensions of change in the built environment**

Conceptual and methodological framings

Approaching the research problem

Housing estates as privileged sites of enquiry:

- Housing estates relate to the intrinsic web of social interactions and spatial practices of the everyday;
- ... as well as to the more abstract levels of planning thought, institutions and urban organisation.



Conceptual and methodological framings

Approaching the research problem

- Too narrowly-framed architectural forms of analysis in housing estates have produced bias, such as the myth of Pruitt-Igoe [Bristol, Katharine (1991) *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth*]



Conceptual and methodological framings

Approaching the research problem

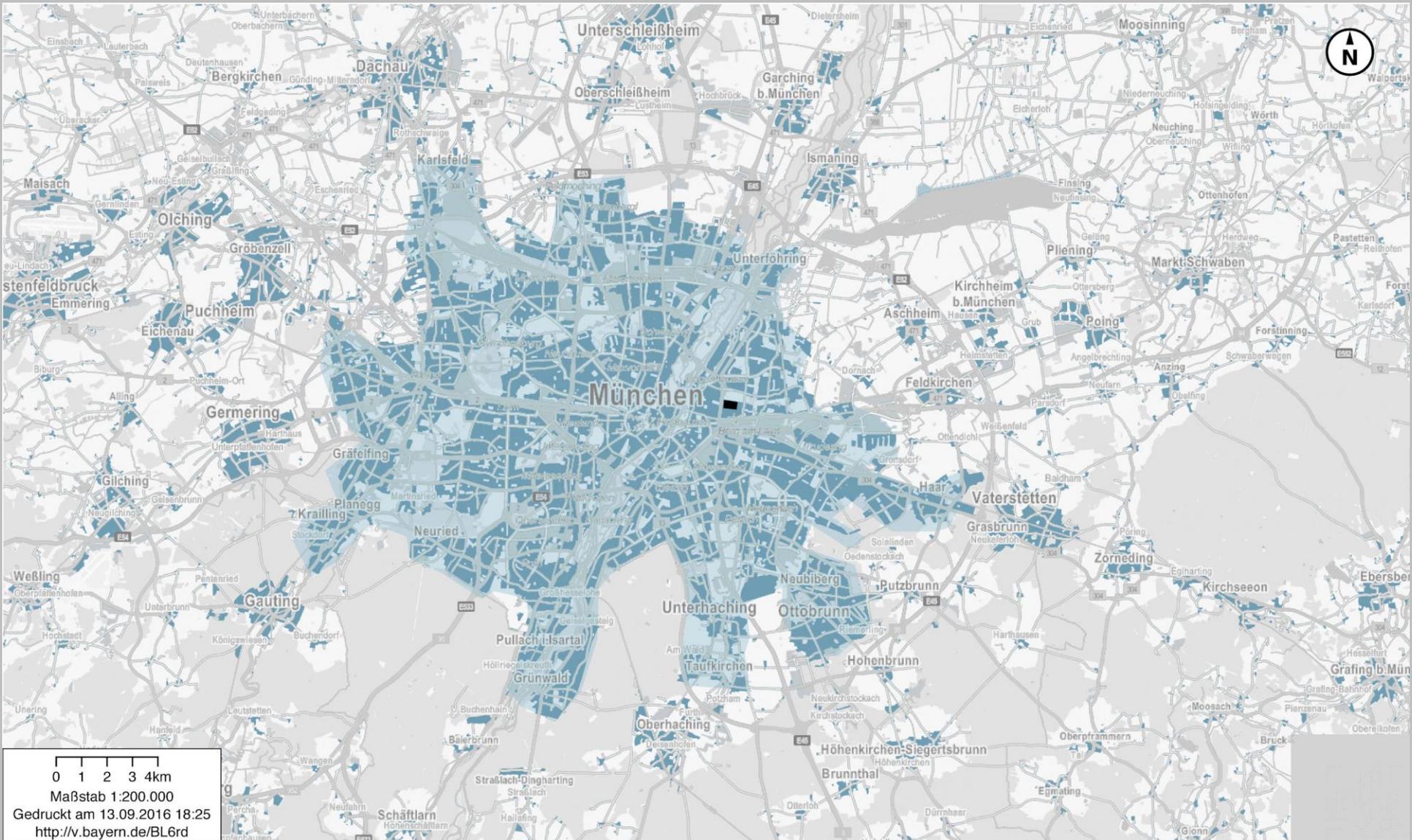
> **Extending the repertoire of architectural and urban analysis, through:**

- **Multi-scalar perspective:** making use of the estate's privileged position at the intersection of the everyday and the urban scale
- **Timeline perspective:** analysing decisions in their relatedness to each other; tracing sequential and rhythmical aspects of interactions; making visible alternatives; following controversies [Lefebvre, Henri (1991) Rhythmanalysis. Space, Time and Everyday Life]; [Yaneva, Albena (2012) Mapping Controversies in Architecture];
- **Arena/ social worlds perspective:** emphasising contingency and difference, as well as the presence of relevant actors "in the situation" [Clarke, Adele (2005) Situational Analysis]

> **Understanding the research problem as "situational process"**

The Housing Estate

Parkstadt Bogenhausen in Munich



0 1 2 3 4km

Maßstab 1:200.000

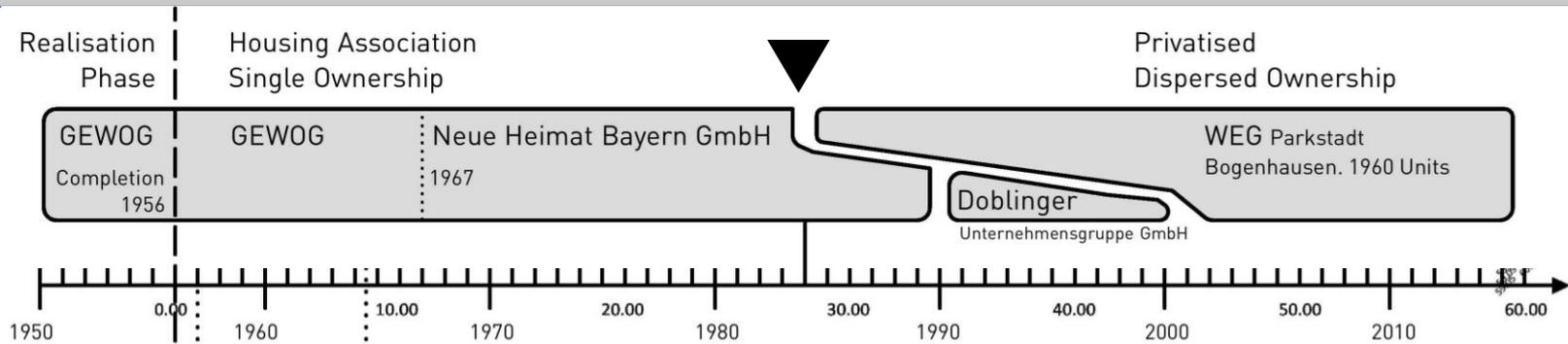
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<http://v.bayern.de/BL6rd>

The Housing Estate *Parkstadt Bogenhausen in Munich*



Changing ownership status



The Housing Estate: Commonhold-type Entity

blue:
commonhold entity
(excluding roads)



0 20 40 80m

Maßstab 1:5.000

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<http://v.bayern.de/7Hpv3>

Commonhold-type form of ownership according to WEG

Key characteristics

- **Commonhold-type property right:** self-contained spatial unit + share in collective property rights
- **Collective as legal body:** makes decisions in formal meetings; engages in contracts etc.
- WEG in Germany since 1951; commonhold in the UK since 2002



Photo: Aero Express Munich, late 1950ies



2013



Three hours during which members (owners)

- hear the **annual reports** of the administration and the advisory board
- **grant discharge** for budget implementation
- **be informed** about new issues, events, current maintenance plan
- **discuss and decide** on budgetary and other items submitted by **admin/advisory b.**
- Discuss and decide on items submitted by **individual members**



Tracing Transformative Interactions: Mappings

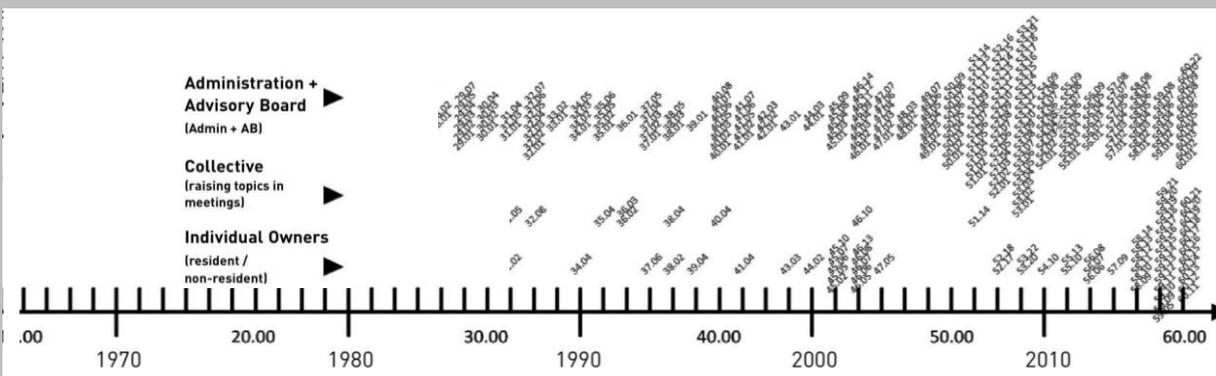
as produced in the case-study

- **Main body of material:** annual meeting minutes as formalised communications of the commonhold-type collective
- **Interrelated mappings:**
 - Mapping of **participants** (the situation of interaction)
 - Mapping the **situational process** (full timeline)
 - Mapping of **narrative sequences** (detail)

Main Body of Material: Formalised Communications

TIMELINE STUDY: ASSEMBLING AND CODING DATA							
DATA EXTRACTED FROM MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETINGS 1984 - 2016							
INDEX	DATE	ACTORS/INITIATORS	CHANGE STATUS	TYPE OF CHANGE	SPATIAL UNIT	VOLUME / SIZE	DESCRIPTION / CODING CYCLE 1
		RESIDENT INDIVIDUAL(S) RESIDENT COLLECTIVE/ WEG ADMINISTRATION/ ADVISORY BOARD HOUSING ASSOCIATION INVESTOR OTHER ACTORS	CHANGE APPROVED NOT APPROVED ADJUSTMENT/ DEFERRED CHANGE LEGALLY CONTESTED	SPATIAL / FUNCTIONAL / AESTH. UPKEEPING MANAGEMENT, RULES, LEGAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES	SINGLE UNIT(INCL. TERRACE/BALC.) SINGLE BUILDING(S) ESTATE, ALL UNITS, INFRASTRUCTURE OPEN AREAS	SMALL < 50000€ MEDIUM < 500000€ LARGE > 500000€ NOT APPLICABLE VNA	
28.01	07.05.84	1	1	1		1	Advisory board to have 7 members
28.02	07.05.84	1	1	1	1	1	Approval of general economic mar
29.01	30.07.85	1	1	1		1	New machine for maintenance of g
29.02	30.07.85	1	1	1	1	1	Ongoing Upkeeping. Approval com
29.03	30.07.85	1	1	1	1	1	Authorisation of administration to
29.04	30.07.85	1	1	1	1	1	Installing of intercom throughout e
29.05	30.07.85	1	1	1	1	1	Allowing individual installations of
29.06	30.07.85	1	1	1	1	1	Authorisation of administration to
29.07	30.07.85	1	1	1	1	1	Increasing charges for use launden
30.01	30.06.86	1	1	1	1	1	Increasing charges for use launden
30.02	30.06.86	1	1	1	1	1	Ongoing Upkeeping. Approval com
30.03	30.06.86	1	1	1	1	1	Allocation of construction-related
30.04	30.06.86	1	1	1	1	1	Allocation of construction-related

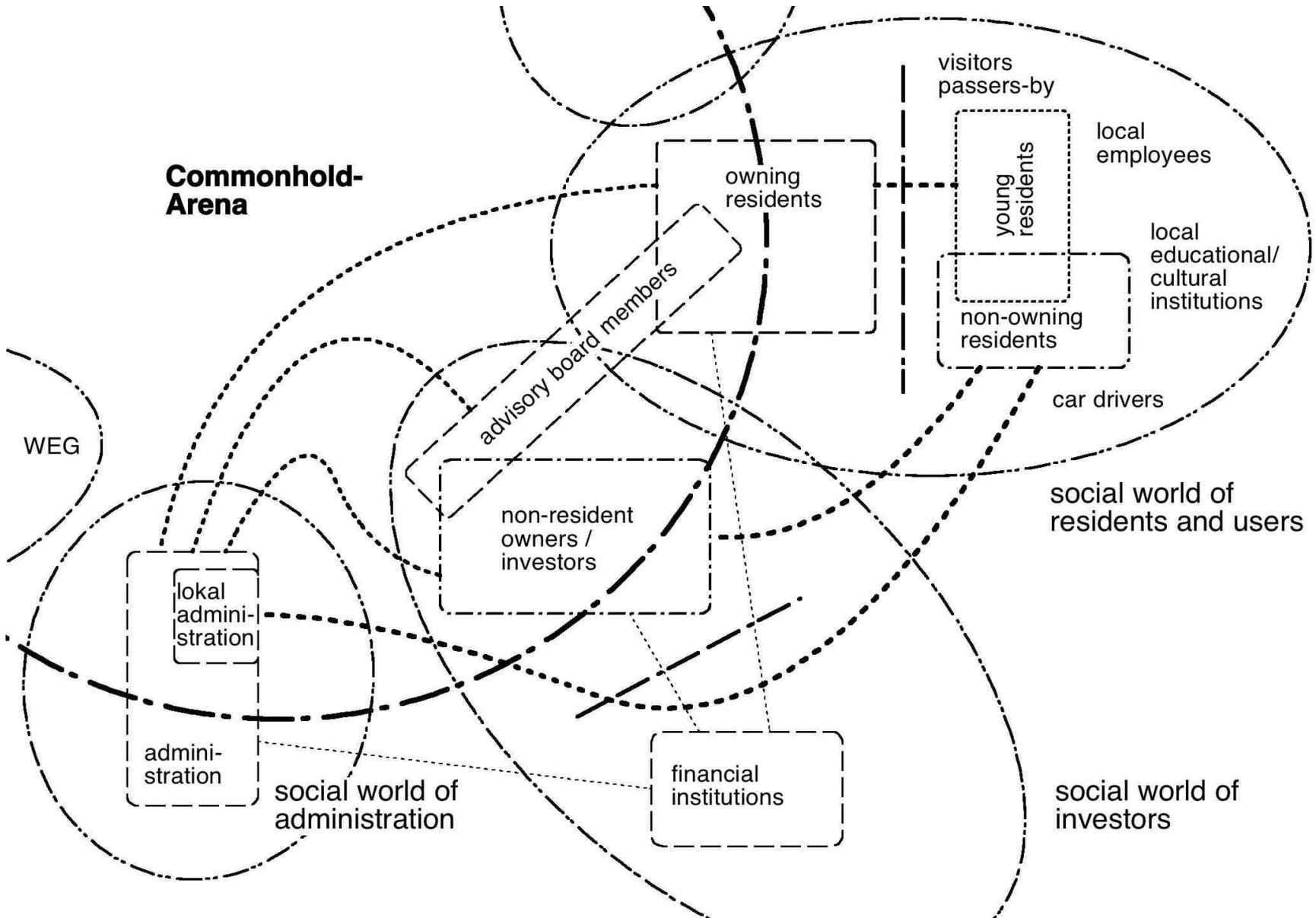
Coding Cycle 1:
assembling and
categorising of 284
collectively made decisions
(extracted from annual
meeting minutes 1984 –
2016)



Timeline: pattern of
single decisions

Participants in the Commonhold 'Arena' (the situation of interaction)

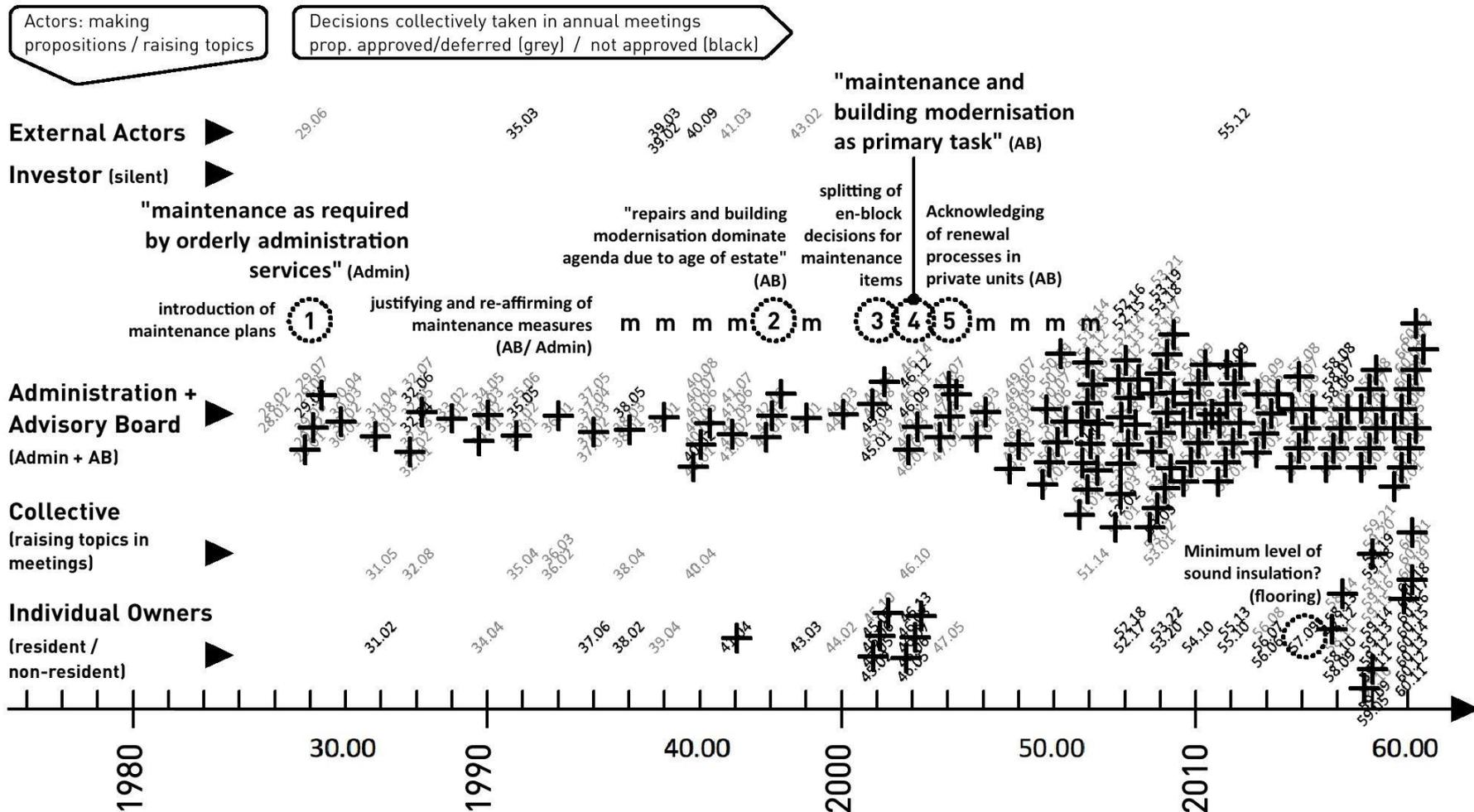
based on Social Worlds /Arenas model [Adele Clarke (2005) Situational Analysis]



Mapping of Narrative Sequences

Coding cycle 2; examples: 'Maintenance Project', 'Intercom', 'Silent Investor', 'Loitering', 'Decision making process'

Sequence "MAINTENANCE PROJECT" 1985 - 2016

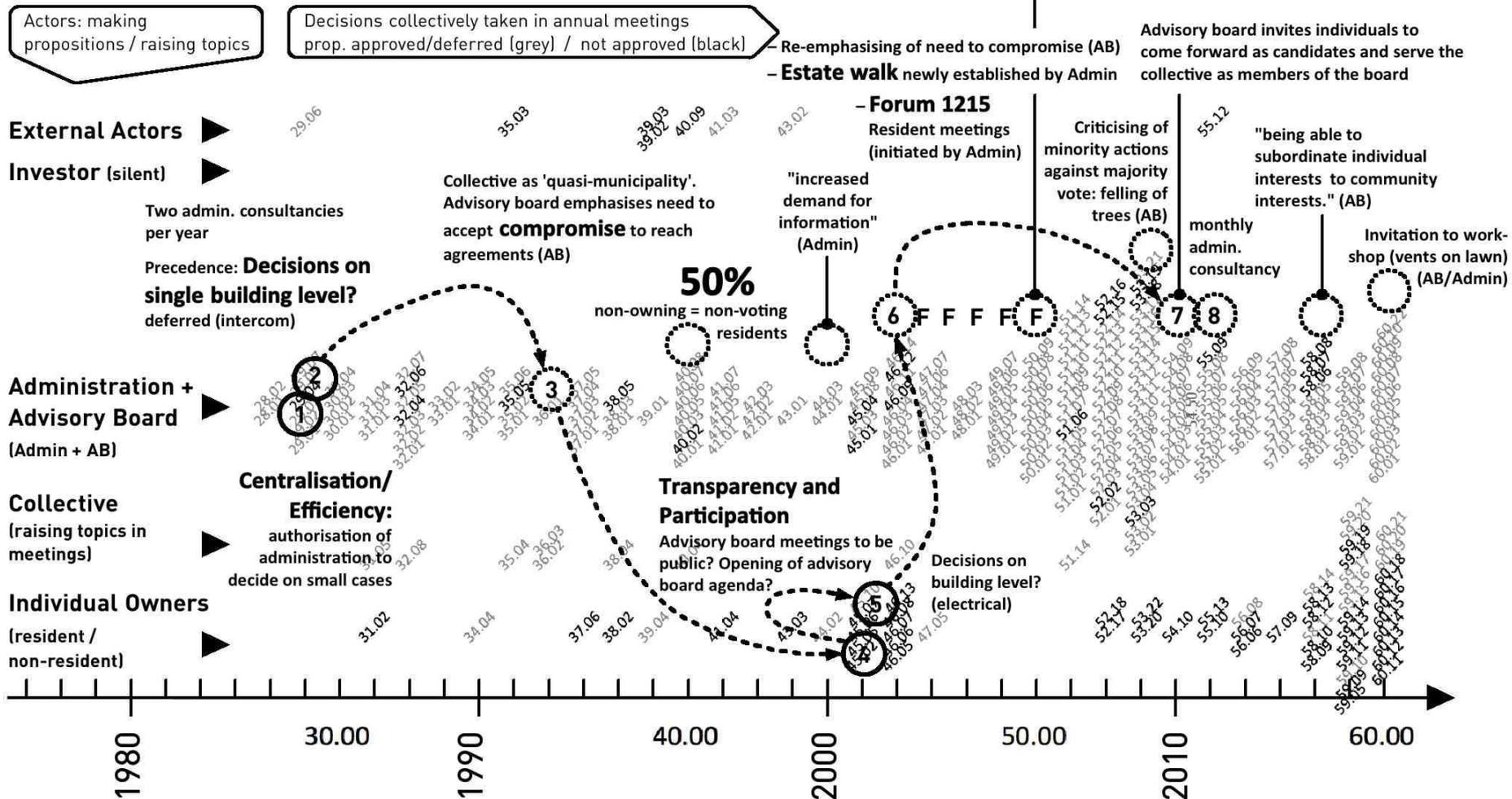


Tracing Transformative Interactions: Preliminary Findings

- The **maintenance project** seems to **dominate** the collective decision making process.
- Most **substantial changes** fall in the period of **single ownership**, prior to 1984.
- If substantial changes occur today, they are located in the **private domain** (micro level) rather than in the collective domain (meso level).
- Patterns of collective action seem to correspond to what Donald Schön conceptualises as **“dynamic conservatism”** in systems: changes and agents of change are admitted to a system as long as the **“stable state”** is not adversely affected. [Schön, Donald (1971) Beyond the Stable State]

A Role for Mapping in Participation?

Sequence "DECISION MAKING" 1985 - 2016



A Role for Mapping in Participation?

- The process of commonhold-type entities differs from standard processes/ concepts of participation
- Yet, we could use the method in situations in which encounter questions relating to **multiple scales, arenas/ social worlds** and events unfolding along a **timeline**
- If participation is defined as participating in decision-making and change*, the diagrams – as **mappings of decisions and of change** – engage with the very substance of participatory processes

* Stenberg, Jenny & Fryk, Lasse (2014) Interspace thinking, capacity-building and codesign, pp.14-20, in: Hadjiri, Karim (2014) Readings on contemporary housing research (Oikonet version 2)

Fernández Prajoux, Viviana (2014) Community Participation on public space, Oikonet Conference Barcelona, p.4

also: [Unger, Hella von (2014) Partizipative Forschung, pp.40, 47]

A Role for Mapping in Participation?

- **Empowerment/ capacity-building:**
 - making the mechanisms and behaviours we use to **control change** visible
 - acting as **memory device** supporting a process of **collective learning**
 - identifying **conditions of resistance** that reside in systems to open up new **paths towards change**
- **no specialist** knowledge needed: we can simply „do“ maps
- The collective **production of maps** constitutes an **act of change** in itself.