Innovation Ltd. Boundary work in deliberative governance in land use planning

Metze, T.A.P.

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“Urban planners and we architects aren’t the visible symbols of oppression, like the military or the police. We’re more sophisticated, more educated, and more socially conscious. We’re the soft cops” (Robert Goodman, After the Planners, 1973).

This chapter describes the results of the analysis of boundary work in Creative Competition in the Bijlmerpark. This innovative planning project ran from 1998 until 2001 and involved citizens of Amsterdam Southeast as the artistic designers and local experts in the redevelopment of the park (see attachment 3.1. for a timeline).

3.1. THE BIJLMERPARK IN THE SOUTHEAST OF AMSTERDAM

Collective spacious greens, roomy private apartments in numerous blocks of high-rise that were laid out in a honeycomb structure, and good connections to the central city (Hootsen, 2006, p. 14); in a nutshell those were the most important features of the 1965 urban plan by a group of designers led by G.S. Nassuth of the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department (Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening) for the city expansion in the southeast of Amsterdam (Luijten, 1997). The ideas of the Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne, the CIAM movement, of which the Swiss architect Le Corbusier was the leader, had inspired these planners to develop an area that could house the growing middle-class families in the Amsterdam area that wished to move outside the small homes in narrow streets in the inner city. Repetition, regularity, symmetry; the separation of functions; the use of open blocks; communal facilities; nature on a large scale; high-rise buildings and so on were the principles of this collective of architects (Mentzel, 1990, p. 369; Helleman & Wassenberg, 2004, p. 4). The Bijlmerpark was to be the jewel in the crown of the Bijlmermeer district. The park had to provide fresh air, collectively shared green fields, playing grounds, and flora and fauna for the residents of this area.

In 1970, two years after the completion of the last blocks of flats, the first critical report, the “Nota Matteman” appeared (Luijten, 1997). Many more followed, especially when the apartments remained partly empty; when the area attracted mostly lower class, immigrant families and Antillean families; and dilapidation of the area progressed. By the mid-1980s the housing corporation ‘Nieuw Amsterdam’ was at the edge of bankruptcy. In 1988 for the first time the district government and the housing corporation proposed a rigorous physical reconstruction. Earlier, smaller social cultural and economic interventions were implemented but hardly led to satisfying results (Helleman & Wassenberg, 2004, p.6-7). In 1986, a report on the future of the district, the “Nota de Toekomst de Bijlmermeer,” presented several scenarios for the future of the district (Luijten, 1997). These gave reason to the city council to create the Werkgroep Toekomst Bijlmermeer (Working Committee ‘Future of the Bijlmermeer’). Two years later, in 1990, the working committee presented their report in which they claimed that all small socio-economic and cultural interventions had had their effect. However, to be able to drastically change the image, the safety and the quality of living in this district, “physical reconstructions” were necessary. The Working Committee proposed to demolish 25 percent of the houses (Afdeling-SO/VH, 1990).
The city council accepted this proposal and it instigated a complex reconstruction process.
In 1992 the city council, the district council, and the housing corporation Nieuw Amsterdam,
with help from the Central Public Housing Fund (Centraal Fonds Volkshuisvesting),
agreed to start the reconstruction. This reconstruction began and still is taking place in two
will be demolished and 7450 houses will be rebuilt. The table below shows exact numbers
on demolishing, rebuilding, and renovation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demolishing</td>
<td>6500*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be built</td>
<td>7450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renovation</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale/Repositioning</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Space</td>
<td>Redevelopment of 400 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tearing down parking garages</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shopping centers: demolition and new</td>
<td>All three</td>
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Table 3.1. Total of the reconstruction in numbers (www.kei-centrum.nl)

Many eloquent studies and articles describe this thirty year process of ambitious, sometimes
described as “Utopian” planning in the mid-60’s (VPRO, 1998), the dilapidation that
followed, and the reconstruction in the 1990’s (see, for example Mentzel, 1989; 1990; Veghel
1999; Reijndorp, 1997; Wassenberg, 2002; Bruijne et al., 2002; Helleman & Wassenberg,
2004; Hootsen, 2006). In this chapter, I will focus on a small part of this redevelopment:
that of the Bijlmerpark. More particularly, in this chapter I will study the innovative part
of the planning for redevelopment of this park that fits the theoretical criteria of an experiment
with deliberative governance: Creative Competition in the Bijlmerpark.

First, I will give a short description of the planning process of the park since 1997 to explain
how it relates to the grant development of the Amsterdam Southeast district. This is to
understand why the district government initiated a participatory planning process, as the
people involved referred to the project with Creative Competition. Second, in this chapter
I will present the results of the analysis of boundary work in this participatory process.
It is studied in two stages: first, the drawing of the proposal, then the implementation
of the participatory trajectory. The study is at three research sites: interactions between
government and advisors; government and society; and government and government.

I studied the project Creative Competition to understand how deliberative governance
gained credibility. It also served as a pilot project to test and further develop the conceptual
framework of boundary work. At the end of this chapter I will draw lessons that will refine
the conceptual work before it is used to analyze the comparison of two cases in rural areas
of the Netherlands and the U.S.A.
With hindsight I can reconstruct two rounds of citizens’ participation in the Creative Competition project. The first round ran from March 1998 through July 1998 and it consisted of four public meetings that had a deliberative design inspired by the creative competition format. At these meetings, on average 50 participants participated in a process in which they formed five consortia that, with support of experts, went on to design five out of a total of 15 ideas presented for the park. At the first meeting, the consultant presented the rules of conduct for the deliberations and for the whole project and six residents already presented their ideas in the “speakers’ corner” (“op de zeeptijd”). At the second meeting, participants developed seven more ideas and presented those in the speakers’ corner. At this meeting, participants formed five consortia that further developed combinations of ideas presented at the first two meetings. At the end of the project, the consortium presented the finalized ideas at an exhibition and a public meeting at the park. This exhibition ran several weeks. At the last public meeting of this project, the consultant invited the district council to respond and select one winning plan (see attachment 3.3. for an overview of the planned meetings for Creative Competition I).

Civil servants of the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department (in Dutch: Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening (DRO)) bundled the results of this first round. In cooperation with the consultant and professor Teisman they created the “Bijlmerpark Working Book” (Werkboek Bijlmerpark). Later on the DRO transferred ifirst into a catalogue and later on it became the Preliminary Report (Startnotitie) which was the official end result of phase o of the PlaBeRum. At the end of the summer of 1998 the consortia discussed the Working Book together with representatives of the district council. At these extra meetings the district government decided to continue the project and de Stad bv organized a second round of Creative Competition.

The second round that ran from January–June 2000 was an improvised participatory round that the district government initiated after two special committee meetings of the district government in which both participants and council had expressed the desire to continue working in this participatory fashion. This second round consisted of three deliberative meetings: the work-conferences (werkonferenties). I estimate that the number of participants averaged 40. This estimation is based on interviews and the minutes of these three meetings. The first work-conference was attended by 29 people; the second one was poorly attended and had probably less than 20 participants (Linthout, 1999-2001); the last conference was video-taped and was attended by 60-100 people (Stad bv, 2000).38

At the first work-conference, participants gathered the “hitches, potencies, and desires” in plenary sessions as well as in five workshops organized around five themes. The themes were: (1) sport; (2) life-line, which dealt with the connections between the park and the shopping and leisure area of the Amsterdam Arena; (3) living and working; (4) green issues, water, ecology; and (5) connections that dealt with traffic and transport to and through the park (Verslag te Werkconferentie 2000, 2000). These ateliers resembled deliberative venues; however, the experts’ input and the presentation of expert knowledge was central. Residents, mostly participants from the previous round of Creative Competition were involved as local experts.

At the second work-conference the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department presented the categorized, integrated and elaborated elements from the first work-conference.
Participants commented on this integration and deliberated about the research results again in five thematic ateliers. They explored possibilities and feasibilities for the park for each theme (V2 24 Verslag 2e werkconferentie, 2000). At the last working-conference, the Bureau of Spatial Planning presented one integrating “concept” for the park and three “developmental models” (ontwikkelingsmodellen) (Verslag 3e werkconferentie, 2000).

So far I have sketched the context and scope of the participatory process Creative Competition in the Bijlmerpark. Now I will present the results of a detailed analysis of critical moments of boundary work.

**BOUNDARY WORK IN THE FIRST STAGE OF CREATIVE COMPETITION**

In February and March 1998 the civil servants of the Southeast district, together with the consultant from de Stad bv and professor Teisman from Erasmus University, drafted a proposal for this participatory process. The drafting of the proposal is what I consider the first stage. In this stage only interactions between government and advisors took place. From these interactions I constructed a pattern of critical moments of boundary work. First, the consultant and the professor demarcated a “new” from a “normal” way of decision making to gain credibility for the deliberative governance discourse. Second, the civil servants acted as gatekeepers and they demarcated “normal” government discourse to re-enact its credibility. However, this also made the deliberative governance discourse more credible. In response, the advisors introduced a boundary concept, in this case “feasibility,” that transcended the boundaries that the advisors and the civil servants had demarcated. This concept enabled a coalition to emerge between the two discourses and, therefore, between the advisors and civil servants. The coalition facilitated continuation of the project.

**“Normal” versus “New”**

In the proposal to the district government, the consultant of de Stad bv described a process in which consortia of citizens and non-governmental organizations were to be formed around creative ideas for the park. Both in the proposal and in an extra document for elected officials, the external consultant and professor Teisman explained the method more profoundly. The advisors, both the consultant and the professor, conducted boundary work to define and to gain credibility for the approach. They contrasted a “new” way of working to a “normal” way of policy formation. The new way was intended to maintain diversity of ideas whereas the in the normal way, in which government develops a single feasible plan, the “diversity of solutions” is lost (T1 1 Teisman, 1998; Stad bv, 1998; B1 12, 1998; V1 18 Bijeenkomst sZ0 de Stad bv, 1998).

The advisors argued that normal policy making procedures are not equipped for the more “complex policy issues caused by, among other things, European rules and regulations, developments in IT, more vocal citizens, and a crisis in presentation by political parties.” As we saw in the chapter on methods, I consider this type of blaming to be boundary work as well. It is a way to gain credibility for the new discourse. According to Teisman and Saris, there is a “multiplicity of problem definitions and of goal intertwinement” and they consider creative competition as an answer to all these challenges. To work with consortia is a way to “enrich decision-making on the basis of the logic of interactive actions” that allows for “a variety in problem definitions as well as in solutions” (Stad bv, 1998; B1 12, 1998). Other elements of the deliberative governance discourse that the advisors introduced in this first stage were “active involvement of citizens in consortia,” “competition between ideas,” “diversity of solutions,” “politicians as a jury,” and the “supportive role of the professional” (T1 1 Teisman, 1998; Stad bv, 1998; B1 12, 1998).

Hence, the external advisor and the professor argued against government discourse in the proposal. They demarcated “normal” policy making from the alternative they presented and they blamed changes in society for the failure or inefficiency of these normal procedures.

**Feasibility: fracture line or boundary concept?**

Civil servants and the elected officials of the district council did not accept all elements of the deliberative governance discourse. Two elements became subject to negotiations: the “consortia” and the “(open) planning procedure.” In addition, the civil servants, politicians and advisors discussed the meaning of “feasibility of plans.” In this first stage it was mostly two civil servants of the department of Spatial and Economic Development (Ruimtelijke en Economische Ontwikkeling) who protected the contested government discourse. They acted as a gatekeeper. In this initial stage, they attempted to keep the gate closed against what can be interpreted as an attempt by the advisors to accelerate the planning procedure, and they kept the gate closed for the advisors’ attempts to empower citizens.

In the draft proposal the advisors defined feasibility not only as “technically and financially” sound, but also as having “enough momentum” and “enough support of possible financiers” and “conforming to existing political conditions” (O1 Offerte, 1998). On top of that, the external advisor proposed that the consortia had to prove that their plans met these criteria of feasibility (O1 Offerte, 1998). This was a way to accelerate the planning procedure. The civil servants attempted to limit the creation of this type of feasibility in two ways.

First of all, the civil servants demanded the elimination of the section with the definition of feasible plans from the proposal. This was at the instigation of the responsible political member of the board of the district council that decided that the “acceleration” to develop “feasible” plans was not necessary (Interview-Verheijden, 2003; Interview-Hofstede, 2003). Or, as Verheijden stated in a fax to de Stad bv: “The assignment is explicitly limited to the phase of a preliminary report. The next phases (2 and 3) probably will be conducted through the normal procedures with a project organization that, with help of the preliminary report, will produce the phase 2 product” (F1 Fax, 1998).

In this excerpt, the civil servant stressed that Creative Competition deviates from normal planning procedures. It should be restricted to the first exploratory phase of the PLA BeRum. The advisors did not contest this argument and accepted the deletion from the draft proposal.

Hence, this is a successful attempt of the civil servants to protect normal planning procedures that are part of government discourse. As a consequence, a change toward deliberative governance discourse was limited. However, this demarcation of the planning procedure also enabled a continuation of the experimental participatory planning process. The gatekeepers limited the experimental way of working to the first planning phase and this constrained and enabled a gaining of credibility for deliberative governance.
A second way by which the civil servants constrained a shift to deliberative governance discourse was by limiting the professionalism of the citizens’ plans. In the draft proposal the advisors spoke of “professional support” to make the designs “more feasible” (O 1 Offerte, 1998). The civil servants demanded elimination of this passage with the argument that this was not part of the first step in the formal planning procedure. Subsequently, they argued that “government is not able to support these groups to visualize or calculate the plans, and there is just a small amount available to finance professional support to these consortia” (V1 18/19 Bijeenkomst sdZO de Stad bv, 1998).

Besides the objections of the district politicians to accelerate to the second phase of the planning procedures, there was a second — perhaps the main — reason why the civil servants did not want to develop feasible plans. They were afraid that Bijlmerpark Naturally would “win” after all. In a meeting to discuss the proposal they argued that they “have to watch out that Bijlmerpark Naturally will not be the center of attention. They have good connections and are very professional” (V1 18/19 Bijeenkomst sdZO de Stad bv, 1998). In response, the advisors encouraged the civil servants to have all consortia work toward feasible plans. As the advisors argued, it is better to have all other groups develop similar professional and feasible plans as Bijlmerpark Naturally might have, than to have but one professional plan (V1 18/19 Bijeenkomst sdZO de Stad bv, 1998). As a result of this discussion, the civil servants and the advisors agreed to have the consortia develop feasible plans with support of professionals. They agreed that the consortia could “professionally visualize” the plans, with some financial resources for the consortia (II.30000,-) to cover the costs and to “attract experts.” The civil servants and the consultant were going to help the consortia make “connections with government and businesses,” for example, with financiers and project developers (V1 18/19 Bijeenkomst sdZO de Stad bv, 1998).

Hence, participants could interpret the feasibility concept in several ways. It was a professional visualization of the plans, but it might also be considered a financially feasible plan. The consultant and civil servants did not discuss the meaning of feasibility at length. This illustrates that the concept was no longer a fracture line concept. It was multi-interpretable and it enabled a transcending of boundaries between government discourse — enacted in this stage as the demarcation of the exploration phase in the planning procedures — and deliberative governance discourse — in this case, meaning to accelerate the planning procedure and build plans that are financially sound and feasible in phase 0 of the PlaBeRum. Moreover, in the deliberative governance discourse that the consultant introduced, citizens were considered to be producers of professional plans. In the final and agreed upon offer, the deleted clause on feasibility was replaced by the sentence: “The consortia will try to make their solution as feasible and practicable as possible (O 1b Offerte aangepast, 1998).”

**Critical moments in stage one**

When I interpret these initial instances of boundary work conducted in the first stage of the Creative Competition project, I have to conclude that this stage was not an enactment of deliberative governance discourse. Rather, it was an attempt of the consultant and professor to form a change coalition and convince civil servants and district governors of the credibility of this discourse. To do this, the advisors first demarcated elements of the deliberative governance discourse and introduced citizens’ participation in consortia that were to develop feasible plans. The gatekeepers of normal government discourse, the civil servants, immediately restricted this. In the second draft of the proposal the consultant added a second interpretation of feasibility: next to technical and financial feasibility, democratic feasibility might be sought. In the discussions between the advisors and civil servants, the feasibility concept first drew out the fracture lines. It made it evident that the gatekeepers insisted that the formal planning procedure should be followed, and that there would be no professional support to make the plans more feasible. With hindsight, these demarcations can be understood as an attempt of the civil servants to reenact government discourse and to make sure that citizens cannot make their plans feasible. If the citizens’ ideas were not feasible at the end of the Creative Competition, it would be easier for the district government to dismiss or ignore the consortia plans, or to argue that more steps needed to be taken to develop the plans into (financially and technically) feasible plans. However, in this first stage the feasibility concept became a boundary concept. The advisors and civil servants could interpret it in different ways. Feasibility meant professional visualization; it also meant financially feasible. The inclusion of financiers and project developers as members of the consortia opened the door for citizens to develop financially feasible plans. This multi-interpretability enabled the formation of a change coalition and allowed for a continuation of the project. At the same time it constrained how much change toward a deliberative governance discourse was realized.

Figure 3.1 below demonstrates what elements of government discourse and deliberative governance discourse the advisors and civil servants demarcated and transcended in this first stage of Creative Competition. This figure also demonstrates how the advisors defined deliberative governance discourse, and what elements of government discourses they wanted to disrupt.

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**GOVERNMENT MEETS SOCIETY: BOUNDARY WORK IN THE SECOND STAGE**

Between the 16th of April and the 9th of July 1998 the consultant and civil servants organized four public meetings. At these meetings, participants presented ideas, formed consortia, and further visualized and discussed their plans with professionals such as youth workers, coaches of team sports, school officials, and at the last meeting with elected officials of the district. In this section I present the results of an analysis of deliberations of government with society. I reconstructed a pattern of critical moments of boundary work in these deliberations.
Demarcating citizens’ input from professionals
First of all, at the start of the meetings, especially at the first and second meetings, members of the change coalition demarcated the deliberative governance discourse from government discourse in a general way. For example, one of the civil servants stated that “this time we do not follow the normal trajectory” (V1 3 startbijeenkomst CCI, 1998). He did not explain what is normal and what was different, and the audience did not ask for an explanation. However, at all four public meetings, the consultant, politicians and civil servants did demarcate one specific element of deliberative governance discourse. The “input of citizens” had to be “central” (V1 2 verslag 2e bijeenkomst CCI, 1998). As the alderwoman explained, “professionals give support. Project developers or housing corporations can respond to ideas of citizens” (V1 2 verslag 2e bijeenkomst CCI, 1998). I interpreted this to mean that in government discourse input by citizens usually does not have the lead but that in this project it would have.

In response to this invitation at the first two meetings, the citizens did not immediately take their leading role for granted. For example, citizens expressed concern that their plans would not be able to compete with one professional plan that a landscape planning bureau already had developed for the park. It was only after the consultant promised that all citizens were going to be “provided with quality knowledge (kwaliteitskennis) to prevent unfair competition” (V1 3 startbijeenkomst CCI, 1998) that the citizens accepted this element of deliberative governance discourse.

I interpret the concept “quality knowledge” that the advisor introduced to be related to the boundary concept “feasibility” from the first stage. It was through this concept that civil servants, politicians, and other professionals were able to consider citizens as experts that drew up feasible plans.

Enactment of citizens as experts
After the first demarcations and citizens’ reflection on this element of deliberative governance discourse, participating citizens were convinced.79 They took up their new role and developed their ideas into plans.80 Most of the plans included the building of new houses in the park, with the exception of the design of Bijlmerpark Naturally.

At the third and fourth meeting the consultant no longer demarcated deliberative governance discourse. Participants also did not ask for explanation of the procedures and goals. Hence, for the time being, deliberative governance gained credibility. This is not only visible by the absence of contestation of the deliberative governance discourse, but also in content and process. First of all, the content: citizens developed their ideas further into designs that most often presented integrated ideas for the park. Most plans included ideas for sport facilities, leisure, nature, bike and foot paths, but also included housing and commerce. Some plans emphasized one of these themes but always integrated housing at least, and usually more functions as well. All plans included the building of new apartments, as this was a requirement, except for one: Bijlmerpark Naturally. In their initial plan Bijlmerpark Naturally reiterated their idea that a park should be kept just a park without any new housing. Although at the last meeting they had integrated some other functions, for example sports and culture, I could argue that, at least in content, they rejected the idea that housing and nature and environment needed to be combined in the plans.

Second, the process: all consortia accepted the deliberative governance discourse with regard to the procedures. They were ahead in the plan development and they asked for financial support. For example, the consortium of Bijlmerpark Naturally, with support of residents’ associations Kelbergen, Huntum, Hofgeest, and Hoogoord, wrote a letter in which they ask for 40,000 guilders to finance Copijn Landscaping (Tuin- en Landschapsarchitecten). The residents asked these professional landscapers “for a proposal for the facilitation of the further development of the vision for the Bijlmerpark” (Bi 13 brief, 1998).81 One other participant also wrote a letter to the district in which he reflected on the first or second meeting and stated that he left the meeting reassured. “The irritation that I had so far with the former governors are hopefully in the past with this good initiative. One word of regret: it is ridiculous that the government does not have money to maintain a park of 34 hectares whereas the Vondelpark can spend several grants” (Bi 16 brief, 1998).82 These responses and the fact that citizens continued to develop integrated plans indicate that citizens accepted their leading role. They had become part of the change coalition that was advocating the deliberative governance discourse. Even Bijlmerpark Naturally played with the possibilities offered in this process to convince others of their ideas. This can either be interpreted as strategic behavior of Bijlmerpark Naturally, who used this as a new channel to protest against building houses in the park, or it can also be understood as their adaptation to the deliberative governance discourse.

Boundary concept feasible plans
At the start of the third and fourth meeting, citizens’ input in the forefront, and politicians and professionals such as school teachers and youthworkers supported the consortia. At the third meeting, five members of the district council responded to the question of what they wanted to achieve with the new park. For example, a member of the labor party stated that “the Bijlmerpark is not functioning; it is isolated and is enclosed by avenues; . . . the park should become a well-used park”.83 In response to the same question a member of the Green Left argued that “we know that houses will be built in 1/3 of the park is going to be built for. The park should become a park again.”84 Finally, one of the politicians from a political party in the opposition, argued that “the park has to be multi-functional, building can be eliminated”85 (V1 1 verslag 3e bijeenkomst CCI, 1998).

As we can see, the responses of the political parties remained rather vague. They did not commit to one of the plans. They were divided about building houses in the park and they did not articulate what mattered most to their party in the redevelopment of this park. The civil servants of the district also remained silent at this meeting. In hindsight I can interpret this abstaining from substantial comments as a non-vocal demarcation of normal government discourse in which politicians do listen to the public but do not engage in a deliberation. Such deliberations or debates are preserved for official committee meetings and the meetings of the council. This third meeting could have served as an occasion for the consortia to judge if they had included the necessary components for a feasible design in their plans. However, the politicians did not put this information on the table. Moreover, these elected members of the district council were in absence from the deliberation. All participants accepted this. Hence, if these politicians had given more information about their preferences, the consortia could have used this third meeting to improve their plans and to make them more convincing to the politicians. Instead, the politicians only listened. As a result deliberations about the central conflict of houses versus trees in the park were avoided.
In contrast to the politicians, professionals from the area did respond to the plans with demarcations of their own subdiscourses. These professionals were more overt on what needed to be included in the citizens’ plans to get their support. For example, the youth-worker was impressed by “etnoville” but added that “youngsters should be involved in the further development of the plan” (V1 1 verslag 3e bijeenkomst CCI, 1998). Another example is that the Environmental Department (Millieu dienst) argued that “the most important environmental problem, the traffic on the Gooiseweg” should not be forgotten (V1 1 verslag 3e bijeenkomst CCI, 1998). Both are examples of suggestions to improve the plans in ways that would gain support of these professionals. It gave citizens the chance to argue why and how these issues are, or are not, being addressed in the plans. Thus, at the third meeting, it appeared as though the deliberative governance discourse was enacted. Politicians and professionals were to present their preferences as suggestions to improve the political and professional feasibility of the plans. However, the interesting contradiction was that the political parties remained vague and did not demarcate their political subdiscourse at this meeting at which they re-enacted government discourse. Other professionals did demarcate their subdiscourse and thus engaged in deliberations and enacted deliberative governance discourse.

**Feasible plan as a fracture line concept**

The consultant organized the fourth and last public meeting in a huge tent at the Kwakoe festival in the Bijlmerpark. At this meeting the consortia presented six final plans. All consortia, including Bijlmerpark Naturally, worked toward an integrated concept for the park. In their presentation Bijlmerpark Naturally demonstrated that they had listened to suggestions to make their plan more feasible and they “included more functions in the park design” and stressed that their plan aimed at a “safer (veilig) park.” Still, they did not include any housing (V1 20, 1998). The consortium that developed the “Mixed Plan” (Mengelplan) divided the park and redeveloped one part into a residential area and the other part into a park. They paid attention to the connection with the shopping center and to a connection to the national ecological main structure (Eco logical Hoofdstructuur) that aimed to connect all varieties of green spaces in the Netherlands. “Tivoli” was the plan designed as a multi-cultural park. This concept was linked to the multi-cultural background of the residents in this area. Just as in the Bijlmerpark Naturally-plan, no housing was provided. A fourth plan was that of Stonfutu, a group of Surinam women connected to Belliot, the alderwoman of the labor party. Their plan was not developed into a three-dimensional model but it included apartments being built. The fifth plan that a consortium presented was a plan to turn parts of the park into water and have house-boats on the water. Finally, the sport-consortium created a park with sports as the main theme: “Sports not only for teams and clubs, but also for individual athletes” (V1 20, 1998) (See attachment 3.5 for an overview of the plans). In their plans and presentation, all consortia addressed the political conditions and policy issues that the district council formulated at the start of the project, and that professionals stressed at the third meeting. The consortia presented “feasible” plans.

In a response to the presentations, the politicians turned their silent enactment of government discourse of the previous meeting into a vocal demarcation of government discourse. The elected officials proposed to combine the plans of the citizens into ONE plan. They did not choose one of the plans. As the Greens (de Groenen) argued, “all plans have something beautiful. A combination might be the best” (V1 20, 1998). Or, as Green Left (Groen Links) said, “we would like to ‘complete the initiatives.’ Green Left will pay attention to the environmental issues. The park should be maintained in ‘the shape of a compromise’” (V1 20, 1998). Subsequently, in their response, a second element of normal government discourse was enacted by some of the politicians: financial and technical feasibility. Or as one of the alderman of the district argued, “we first have to calculate if something like that [an association for park-maintenance] is financially feasible” (V1 20, 1998). At this last meeting, politicians and civil servants put government discourse back in place.

However, participants also re-enacted two elements of the deliberative governance discourse: citizens’ participation and the inclusion of thinking about park maintenance in the development of the park. At the fourth meeting, politicians expressed their appreciation for the citizens’ input; for example, the political party Livable Southeast (Leefbaar Zuidoost) said, “Tonight it has become clear that citizens are well equipped to deliver plans” (V1 20, 1998). Most of the elected officials including, as we have seen, an alderman of the Southeast district and the civil servants from the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department, appreciated the proposed solutions to reduce the costs and to optimize park maintenance in a public-private “maintenance association” (beheersmaatschappij). As the alderman of the central city argued: “The solutions brought forward in the plans, for example park management and a connection of investments to park maintenance, are, in themselves, fine,” even though he claimed that the financial feasibility had to be calculated (V1 20, 1998). Or, as one of the people in the audience suggested, “I am in favor of a maintenance association that combines the plans of the consortia, and in which the district council as well as the consortia participate” (V1 20, 1998). These suggestions show appreciation for one element of the deliberative governance discourse that combines park development and maintenance in the renewal of the park. In formal planning procedures these two are usually separated. Moreover, government is usually responsible for the park development and maintenance. The suggestion to have government share financial responsibility with the consortia is an enactment of deliberative governance discourse. In the improvised transference from the results of the participatory part to the formal decision-making settings of the district-council the district government and consultant maintained this change in government discourse (see below).

**Critical moments in deliberations between government and society**

The pattern of critical moments of boundary work in deliberations between government and society was as follows: first the change coalition demarcated the element of deliberative governance discourse, “citizens’ input,” from the element of government discourse, “professional input.” Second, citizens contested, reflected upon, and then accepted this demarcation and indeed, they drafted designs for the park. I interpreted these plans in themselves to be a boundary concept that participants interpreted from their subdiscourses, for example, a sports discourse, an environmental discourse, and so on. Third, the professional planners, teachers and community workers tested the plans. At this critical moment politicians at first did not engage in the deliberations and consortia did not receive information that would have enabled them to make their plans more feasible. The district politicians silently re-enacted government discourse. Professionals did engage in the deliberation and this helped the consortia to make the plans more feasible. At the last meeting, the district politicians vocally demarcated two elements of government discourse. They argued that it is only professional experts that can determine what a
feasible plan is, and they wanted one feasible plan to be further developed by professionals. The participants and the advisors accepted these demarcations of government discourse. At the same time the politicians expressed their desire to continue citizens’ participation, and to investigate the possibility of a public/private partnership (PPP) that included park maintenance in the park development.

To conclude: in the deliberations between government and society feasibility was a boundary concept that participants interpreted in different ways. First, the change coalition interpreted it as democratic, financial and technical feasibility that was to be established by experts, politicians and citizens; then it became feasibility that citizens with support of experts might be able to produce; and in the last meeting the elected officials defined feasibility again as something only experts could provide. This last interpretation demoted the active citizens to passive onlookers according to government discourse: they should be heard but their input can be dismissed because they are not experts. Figure 3.2 summarizes what elements of government discourse and deliberative governance discourse participants enacted in the second stage of Creative Competition.

Figure 3.2. Elements of government discourse (left), deliberative governance discourse (right), and boundary concepts (middle) as enacted in the second stage of Creative Competition

**IMPROVISING THE TRANSFER FROM THE EXPERIMENT TO FORMAL DECISION-MAKING**

After these public meetings, the consultant, with support of the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department, bundled the consortia plans into a Working Document (Werkboek). They redeveloped this into a “Catalogue” which is a format professional planners also use. In the catalogue, the urban planners and the consultant teased out similarities and differences in the consortia plans. In this way the results from the public meetings were “filtered” before they were absorbed in the normal and formal planning procedure (Edelenbos, 2001, p. 351).

Participants discussed the catalogue at a public meeting at the end of August, 1998. After this meeting, de Stad bv turned it into a Preliminary Report (Startnotitie) that included procedural proposals for the following planning step. In January, 1999, the Preliminary Report was discussed in two extra district council committee meetings. All members of the district council and over 60 interested parties and consortia members discussed this Preliminary Report (Uit1 1, 1999). At both meetings criteria for one plan were established and an agenda for the following planning stages was agreed upon. The following criteria were formulated: water quality, nuisances, connection to Gaasperplas, division of park into different areas, building, lifeline, connections. Some of these criteria would need further research. The committee of spatial planning made some adaptations and advised the council to commence with the next planning phase (V1 4, 1999; V1 5, 1999). This final Preliminary Report was the formal result of this step in the planning procedure.

On the 15th of June the district council decided to continue the planning process. At this meeting, the district council decided that 1/3rd of the park be destined for sports, 1/3rd for housing, and 1/3rd for renovation of the park. They also decided that the participatory approach had to be continued in the next step of the formal planning procedure: the drafting of a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten). They also agreed to explore the possibility of erecting a public-private association for the maintenance of the park.

As we will see, in this transition period government discourse and deliberative governance discourse co-existed. They were not integrated or aligned in boundary concepts. In the formal procedures government discourse prevailed, and in the interactions with citizens, the consultant, civil servants and politicians enacted deliberative governance discourse. In the transference from one formal planning phase to the other, deliberations between government and society continued in improvised participatory settings, except for the district council meeting at which the council made a formal decision.

**Demarcating government discourse: one expert plan**

Government discourse and deliberative governance discourse co-existed in this transition. Uncontested elements of the government discourse were, for example: the Working Document, the Catalogue that was turned into a Preliminary Report. Moreover, the formal procedures were also followed for committee meetings that advise a district council and for the district council that makes decisions. At the same time the consultants, civil servants, politicians and citizens enacted the following elements of deliberative governance discourse: the input of citizens was continued in one public meeting at the end of August and two extra committee meetings in January and February, 1999. A quote from a public meeting in August illustrates this co-existence of government and deliberative governance discourse:

“The meeting ends by concluding that the decision-making process is not so different from what used to be normal (gangbaar); the only difference is that hearings are organized in an alternative revolutionary approach” (V1 21, 1998).

Another example of the co-existence of discourses comes from one of the two extra meetings in January and February. The alderwoman who was responsible for Creative Competition demarcated government discourse. She claimed that the district council “take over this proposal of the external advisors not necessarily” (V1 4, 1999). She also emphasized that “the plans have to be explored and we [the council, (TM)] have to chose what we think is the best plan” (V1 4, 1999).“She demarcated government’s formal responsibility and she insisted on combining the plans. This became more evident at the second extra meeting in February when her party, the Labor Party, concluded that “Stontu’s plan, of what should be where, will be combined with routes (the connections through the park), and sport” (V1 4, 1999).”

Whereas political parties agreed with the demarcation of government discourse, some citizens contested it. Some of them rejected the decision of the district council to combine the consortia plans into one feasible plan. For example, at the first extra public meeting, the designers of Tivoli withdrew their plan. They disagreed with the production of one plan...
and did not want their plan “to be split up” (gesplitst worden) (V1 21, 1998). However, this contestation of government discourse had no consequences for the planning process. Government discourse remained dominant.

At the second meeting, the district council was no longer to choose one out of five plans. Participants discussed elements of the five plans (V1 4, 1999). Moreover, the district council wanted to have planning experts explore the technical and financial feasibility of these elements further. Even though, the consortia attempted to maintain their lead and offered to further investigate the “feasibility and controllability” of their plan, the council decided that it “wants to use the specific knowledge of each consortium but does not want to give up control of the overview” (het geheel uit handen geven) (V1 5, 1999). The council decided that “we have to start working more professionally with the help of expert support — for example, the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department that is able to conduct good studies” (V1 5, 1999) (my emphasis). I interpret the addition of “more” to “professional” as the district council’s interpretation of the participatory process as non-professional. As had been the case at the end of the four public meetings of the participatory round, the politicians demarcated the citizens’ input from that of experts. They rejected the possibility that the consortia could produce professional and feasible plans. This indicates that the drafting of one (feasible) plan still was part of dominant discourse. The district council as well as the consultant, the civil servants and citizens abandoned the governance element of “diversity of plans”.

### Demarcating deliberative governance discourse: citizens’ participation and PPP-park maintenance

In this transition period, the members of the district council, the advisors and citizens also enacted an element of deliberative governance discourse. At one of the meetings the district council claimed they wanted the “alternative revolutionary” (revolutioonair andere) approach of citizens’ participation to be continued (V1 4, 1999). And the council also concluded that they “have to think of a construction in which the consortia and residents can participate alongside the district government and experts” (V1 5, 1999). The district council made a commitment to a continuation of the participatory approach.

In the period after the extra committee meetings two things happened that supported this commitment. First, the civil servants of the district generated extra money for the participatory project from two national programs: Stimulation of Experiments with Housing (Stimulering Experimenten Volkshuisvesting) and Stimulation of Intensive Land Use (Stimulering Intensief Ruimtegebruik). Second, the report on the results of the two extra meetings (Uitkomsten) included a proposal to continue the participatory approach. The district government was going to include citizens advice as a sounding board (klinkbordgroep) (Uit 1, 1999).

This proposal was made public in two formal hearings (17 and 27 of May 1999). The first public hearing was organized to provide information and seven residents attended this meeting (V1 22, 1999). At the second public hearing, ten people asked for official time to comment on the proposal. It was at this meeting that participants reflected on the first round of Creative Competition and especially on the proposal to further explore the feasibility of the redevelopment of the Bijlmerpark into “a park of the 21st century, intensively used, surrounded by urban areas, with inviting safe and logical routes that connect the park to its surroundings” (Uit 1, 1999). Neither the civil servants nor politicians engaged in this conversation. At this meeting, Stichting Bijlmerpark Naturally pointed out that they had been involved in the maintenance of the park for several years. They argued that they were “surprised that groups participated that had never been heard of and that had never demonstrated any interest in the park” (V1 23, 1999). In a reply, one of the Stonfutu members (Dhr. Frerichs) argued that he earned his degree in 1990 from the Delft Technical University based on a plan that was called “Bijlmerdreef, boulevard of broken dreams.” The Bijlmerpark was part of this plan. “It is this plan that Stonfutu further developed” (V1 23, 1999). Also he argued that Bijlmerpark Naturally insisted on redevelopment of the complete area into a park, and that therefore a coalition between Bijlmerpark Natuurlijk and Stonfutu had been impossible (V1 23, 1999). Unfortunately, from the minutes of these meetings, I cannot conclude what the results of this conversation among participants were, nor how this discussion was reflected upon by council members. I can conclude that the advisor, in response, offered a way in which consortia participants could continue their participation. In this second round of Creative Competition they were no longer artistic designers but actors with local expertise. Their knowledge and expertise should be acknowledged (V1 23, 1999).

In December 1999 the district council gave the consultant the assignment for a second round of Creative Competition. This was right after the Ministry of Housing assigned the redevelopment of the Bijlmerpark as an exemplary project (voorbeeldstatus). This second round had to result in a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten).

### Critical moments of boundary work in the transition period

The transition period in itself was a critical moment of boundary work at which the struggle between government discourse and deliberative governance discourse continued. The two discourses co-existed. Government discourse about the steps in the planning procedures was dominant. The consultant felt the need to express that nothing really different was done. At the same time, the district council, the consultant and citizens enacted deliberative governance discourse when they concluded that citizens’ participation and public/private partnership in the maintenance of the park was to be continued. Moreover, the citizens should remain included as local experts to create feasible plans. This last element was stressed by the advisor and confirmed by several politicians. To think of the consortia as experts enabled their participation in the production of professional plans. Figure 3.3 summarizes the two elements of deliberative governance discourse that remained credible in the transition period.

![Figure 3.3. Government discourse (left), deliberative governance discourse (right), and boundary concepts (middle) as defined in transition stage of Creative Competition](image-url)
BOUNDARY WORK IN THE FORMULATION OF A PROPOSAL: PART II

After the transition period, the consultant was assigned to draft a second proposal. In a memo the civil servant suggested that the project:

"continue in this spirit [...] I also propose to ask that bureau Stad by hire a black projectmanager" who, as an employee of this bureau, can manage the process. I recommended planner H.L." (N1 6, 1999). In this same memo, the civil servant also proposed to ask the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department "to take care of the urban planning part" (N1 6, 1999). The consultant included these ideas. In early December 1999 the district council discussed a draft proposal by de Stad bv. In addition, the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department drafted a proposal. The consultants from de Stad bv wrote a proposal for the production of a "Plan of Conduct" (plan van aanpak); the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department drafted a proposal for a "Draft List of Guidelines" (ontwerp Nota van Uitgangspunten) as a part of the Plan of Conduct.

Demarcating deliberative governance discourse:
a strategy not a plan

An analysis of boundary work in the interactions between government and the consultant demonstrated that one element of the deliberative governance discourse was lost: both proposals no longer included the production of a variety of plans. The objective of the second round was "creativity and commitment of experts and stakeholders to the chosen themes" (O2, 1999). The consultant and the planners from the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department re-introduced deliberative governance discourse when they proposed to produce a "strategy." In this step, rather than the production of a blueprint, experts and citizens were to develop a strategy "for the transformation of the park into a city-park" (O2, 1999). The consultant explained how the components of this strategy in a Plan of Conduct made it different from the normal planning procedure that had to result in a List of Guidelines:

"This alteration of the name represents movement at three points [...] the ambition to give the park an additional benefit that is of taking into account the culture, the emancipation and the perspective of the Bijlmer residents. Secondly, an acceleration of the redevelopment [...]. Last but not least, the Plan of Conduct will contain proposals for a developmental structure that intertwines the wishes and the competences of the variety of parties, the district council, and the external parties" (O2, 1999).

The Amsterdam Urban Planning Department also included the idea of developing a strategy in their proposal. It said: "the List of Guidelines design is not an urban plan but more a developmental strategy, a document that points out the most essential choices and possibilities" (O2-2, 2000).

Multi-interpretable citizens’ participation

The consultant and the planners in their proposals interpreted citizens’ participation differently. The consultant wanted to include citizens’ local knowledge in the research of the urban planners, and in the production of a Plan of Conduct. The Amsterdam Urban Planning Department proposed to separate the two. They wanted to produce a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten) separate from citizens’ participation. They also separated decision making over the two plans: "the council first has to decide on the List of Guidelines before it is included in the Plan of Conduct" (O2-2, 2000). Both proposals for the next round of Creative Competition blurred what role citizens were to play in this second round. As we will see below, this blurring was continued at the second and third meeting, and participants contested it more severely at each meeting.

Protecting government discourse: committees and manager

This time the civil servants did not alter the proposed changes to the formal planning procedures. However, the civil servants did put in place the guardian of government discourse. They erected a steering committee and a project group of civil servants (ambtelijke begeleidingscommissie). Moreover, they attempted to instruct the project manager that the formal planning procedures had to be followed. As this manager explained in an interview, "The civil servants stressed that they needed a plan that fitted in the Plaberum-process" (Interview-Lutchman, 2004). According to this projectmanager, "The two civil servants of the district department of spatial and economic development talked to me about this point for two hours. They explained it to me. The Plaberum was inherited from the previous chair of the district and had to be honored" (Interview-Lutchman, 2004). The civil servants attempted to protect government discourse with the help of a steering committee project team and by having the project manager protect the formal planning procedures. Subsequently, the civil servants started regular meetings between the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department and the project group (E Mz–2, 2000). This reinforced a separation of the professional planners’ trajectory and the participatory trajectory.

Critical moments in drafting a second proposal

In comparison to the first proposal for the first round of Creative Competition, few critical moments of boundary work took place in the drafting of the proposals for the second round. The civil servants and district government accepted the intention to produce a Plan of Conduct. Moreover, they agreed that citizens’ desires and local knowledge were to be included in this second round of Creative Competition. At the start of the second round of Creative Competition the concepts of strategy and expertise were multi-interpretable (see figure 3.4.). However, the civil servants put in place a steering committee project team and instructed the project leader as gatekeepers of government discourse.

GOVERNMENT MEETS SOCIETY, PART II

The consultancy firm that convened the first round of Creative Competition also convened and facilitated the second round. They hired a black project manager to facilitate the
participation of citizens. The white project leader convened the meetings between the experts from the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department and the citizens. In this second round, no longer were the citizens in the lead. However, their local expertise had to be integrated with expert knowledge of the Planning Department. The consultants organized three tracks: a programmatic track, which meant discussions about what facilities and functions should be included in the park; research on land use; and a track in which “in a meeting of residents, researchers and experts, the results of land use research and the programmatic developments confront one another” (O2, 1999).412

The consultants, together with the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department, organized three working conferences.413 At the first meeting participants explored citizens’ desires. These were gathered both in plenary sessions and in five workshops as well (Verslag 1e Werkconferentie 2000, 2000). At the second meeting professional experts and local experts tested the feasibility of these desires. At this meeting, the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department first presented the research results. Then citizens and experts discussed these results in five thematic ateliers (V2 24 Verslag 2e werkconferentie, 2000). At the last meeting, the goal was to integrate the desires and the research results. At this conference, the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department first presented one integrated “concept” for the park that combined all themes, and three possible PPP “developmental models” (ontwikkelingsmodellen) for the Bijlmerpark (Verslag 3e werkconferentie, 2000). These were to be discussed in workshops. However, these workshops never took place, as the concept and developmental models caused conflict among participants. Below I present the results of the analysis of boundary work at these three meetings.

Boundary concepts: professional plans and expertise
At the first public meeting on the 20th of January, the consultant and the alderwoman stressed that this round had to result in “financially feasible” (financieel haalbare) and “professionally designed” (professioneel ontworpen) plans (V2 0, 2000). The alderwoman argued, “The process is getting more complex. There will be more parties involved: professionals of the central city that will conduct research, and the district council will be more important. Furthermore, the financial picture will be upfront” (V20, 2000).414 The citizens were no longer in the lead. The consultant argued that “the professionals are more important. The council makes decisions. However, the residents will be upfront as they are citizens were no longer in the lead. The consultant and the alderwoman sent a mixed message in their introduction: the urban planners will be more important, but the residents are still important. As had been the case in the transition period, government and deliberative governance discourse co-existed.

In response, the citizens contested their diminished role. A conversation in which citizens, the consultant and the district government reflected on what would happen in the next step evolved. In this reflective conversation the two discourses continued to co-exist. For example, one participant asked if “the tempo is not too high?” (V2 0, 2000).415 The answer was that “the audience in this round does not have to do much” (V2 0, 2000).416 Not much later in the conversation, another participant asked, “Will there only be professionals attending the work-ateliers?”417 The planners from the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department answered that they “know [that] private people are very knowledgeable” and they want to “use this knowledge” (V2 0, 2000).418

Hence, participants interpreted “professional plans” in a variety of ways. From a government discourse the alderwoman argued that professional planners would be more important to develop a professional and feasible plan. But, the Amsterdam Planning Department argued that citizens are knowledgeable and that their knowledge will be used also. As a result of this reflective conversation about a professional plan, citizens were invited to the workshops and the following work-conference as “external experts” (V2 0, 2000). However, the concepts of experts and expertise remained multi-interpretable. For example, on the 3rd of February 2000 the first conference was organized. At this meeting the participants actively gathered dreams and desires for the park. To convince participants that their contribution was valuable, the consultant argued that the Urban Planning Department “will take care of expert input by designers to integrate the desires and interests. [...] Residents, who are future users of the park and who have the most expertise, are cordially invited to participate in [two] work-ateliers” (V2 1, 2000). At the same meeting, the Amsterdam Planning Department presented four artistic designs for the park that were not related to any of the plans produced by the consortia in the first round. Subsequently, the planners presented themes that had been distilled from the citizens’ plans. But these were not explicitly connected to the consortia plans (V2 1, 2000). It was only in one of the subgroups that a professional planner mentioned the consortia plans. In all other subgroups, new desires of citizens and professionals, all of whom were experts, were gathered (V2 1, 2000). By acting in this way, the planners presented themselves as the leading experts of this round so they could dismiss all expert knowledge gathered before.

In the course of the project, the concept of expertise remained multi-interpretable. However, gradually the expertise of the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department became more dominant. At a second working conference they presented models for the park that they developed based on thematic workshops.419 These workshops in themselves are multi-interpretable as “expert” meetings, since planners and government listen to citizens because they are “knowledgeable” but at the same time the planners do not have to include citizens’ expertise in their plans. The planners — and government — remain the ones to decide what should or should not be included in the plans. This led to a conflict at the last public meeting.

Professional plan and expertise as fracture-line concepts
A couple of weeks after the thematic work-ateliers, the consultant organized a second public work-conference. This work-conference was poorly attended. Because of this, one of the district council members proposed to postpone this meeting (V2 23, 2000). A cartoon attached to the minutes of the conference illustrates this: a citizen asks where are the people? (V2 23, 2000). The suggestion to postpone was not followed. The consultant replied that “attendance up till now has been very good, and today there is a slight increase” (V2 23, 2000). One of the residents also argued that “the people who showed up cannot be sent home” (V2 23, 2000). The work-conference continued. An expert planner from the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department kicked off and presented the three models (Island, Strip and Ring-model). The planner stressed that these three models are not the final plan “Comments are welcome” (V2 23, 2000). Subsequently, participants of the thematic work-ateliers presented benefits and disadvantages of each of the three models (V2 23, 2000). This facilitated the discussion on the three models, and included other professionals and citizens in the deliberation. To enhance this deliberation the consultant
informed the participants once more that they do not “have to chose a model” but that their comments were to be integrated in the models before the last work-conference (V2 23, 2000).

The minutes of the conference consist mostly of the results of the meeting and not so much of the deliberations. They include the dilemmas the thematic groups presented, and critique of the three models in cartoons. These cartoons express the concerns of participants and some of their ideas: should there be more levels in the park; should there be more than one “island,” for example, a variety of sports islands; was there enough coherence in the ring-model; should there be a tower in the park; are there too many utilities being pressed into the park; are there enough trees left to look like a park (V2 23, 2000)? As these cartoons were the only expression of the deliberations I had access to, I can only guess what type of conversation evolved.

However, with hindsight I can conclude at least one thing: a fracture line between expert planners and the participating citizens had evolved. Expertise no longer was a boundary concept that connected them, but it illuminated the fracture lines between governance and government discourse. Moreover, government discourse won for the time being, and participants considered the professionals’ expertise more credible. I can conclude this for several reasons.

First of all, I understand the small number of participants to be an indication that they had not been convinced by the organizers claim of citizens’ inclusion as local experts. Second, even though the consultant encouraged participants to give comments, to criticize and to present ideas, the meeting continued to resemble the settings of public hearings. A work-conference would have meant a re-enactment of citizens as experts and a mutual search for models, and thus “ownership” (Bruin, 1998) for the models. This did not take place. A third reason to conclude expertise turned into a fracture line concept is that citizens started to act as opposing rather than cooperating participants. They also found other channels to express their concerns. This happened for the first time after the second work-conference. On the 17th of May one of the residents that had been actively involved as a facilitator in the previous meeting, was quoted in a newspaper article: “The next time I will participate, but then as a resident of the Bijlmermeer. It is my park. I do not want to be associated with the bad public hearing procedures” (Echo, 2000b). The chair of the district government was also quoted. She acknowledged that “this is a rather abstract story with technical concepts. I can understand that people get itchy about those [concepts], when it appears that they are not being involved” (Echo, 2000b). She did the opposite of what the project leader had attempted to do before: she did not approach citizens as experts but as lay-people that have difficulties in understanding what is going on. For the first time, she demarcated experts’ technical concepts and blamed those for the impossibility of satisfactory citizens’ participation.

A fourth reason to speak of a fracture line “expertise” concept is that it appeared to be difficult for the urban planners to combine the different types of expertise in the models. They had a hard time demonstrating how the consortia plans from the previous round were included in these models. They had been included as unintegrated themes. Fifth, the minutes of the meetings indicate that the planners’ expertise had become the dominant interpretation of the expertise concept. The minutes did include the criticism of participants on the expert models, but only in the form of cartoons. This can be understood as a reproduction of dominant government discourse in which criticism of these models could only been included with the help of the use of humor and irony (Forester, 2004; Eisterhold et al., 2006). The cartoons made it possible to express and include critical remarks without entering a conflict. At this point this enabled a continuation of the second part of Creative Competition. At this second meeting the integration of three tracks — research, programmatic work and citizens’ participation — in the boundary concept “expertise” started to fall apart. This continued at the last work-conference that turned into a conflict in which governmental actors and planners together were the winners. Government discourse regained its dominance.

**Dominant government discourse: professionals’ expertise**

The last work conference of round two of Creative Competition took place on the 25th of May. At this conference the urban planners presented the integration of three tracks. According to the chair of the district government these were “equally important” (*even belangrijk*) (V2-26, 2000b). The Planning Department developed three plans for the Bijlmerpark with additional “preferences and dilemmas” (*VO2*–1, 2000). The district council had to chose from these three plans (VO2–1, 2000). At this last public meeting, many people participated. Among them were many concerned citizens who had not participated before and who had been activated by the former project manager, Lutichman, and by organized citizens’ groups.

At the meeting the consultant explained that the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department was first going to present the three models. Second, the participants would comment on these models in subgroups and one of the questions to be answered would be if participants still recognized their own ideas in these models (V2 24, 2000). After the urban planners presented the three models, some of the participants started to protest that they did not recognize their own plans. As one of the participants stated, “What is left of our wishes?” Another participant said, “We do not recognize our input.” Yet another participant argued “The DRO keeps saying ‘we believe’ ” (V2 24, 2000). The planner answered that they had listened and learned from the citizens’ input. The project leader attempted to let the planner finish his presentation. The planner started to demarcate his professional planning subdiscourse to gain credibility for his presentation and argued that they had “analyzed” all the input and eleven dilemmas were the results of this analysis (Video Bijlmerpark, 2000).

At this crucial moment in the process, the planner acted as a technocrat and gained credibility for the departments’ arguments in references to professional expertise and method. The project leader contributed to this demarcation by not addressing the criticism of participants immediately. Citizens contested this demarcation in several ways. First of all, they started to criticize the procedures of the project and the project leader. One participant referred to a newspaper article on a similar project in Amsterdam-Noord that claimed that this project had a “neo-liberal approach, appears to be participatory but in reality everything is directed and decided up front. The top-dogs weigh and advise” (Video Bijlmerpark, 2000; V2 24, 2000).
Second, participants demanded more inclusion of citizens’ ideas in the models. One participant attempted to gain support for this claim by enacting an element of deliberative governance discourse by considering the citizens as the experts. The videotape of this meeting demonstrates that this woman was almost screaming that “her expertise as a citizen is not being respected” (Video Bijlmerpark, 2000). In response to this, the alderwoman drew on normal government discourse to calm down the audience, and to gain credibility for the plans. She said: “I have to admit, I do not see our scenarios reflected in the models. But, that is your stupidity and mine” (Video Bijlmerpark, 2000). Moreover, she argued that “these models are not the definitive version. You should not have sleepless nights over the Bijlmerpark, where you should dream. The type of housing is not yet decided, but that houses will be built is. […] Saris does not have the last say, it is the council that decides. Keep faith” (Echo, 2000a).

At this critical moment, the alderwoman could have demarcated differently, and could have adopted elements of the new deliberative governance discourse; for example, she could have claimed that the expertise of citizens had indeed not been respected in the plans. Instead, she enacted elements of dominant government discourse in which experts produce professional plans and the council decides on building in the park. Moreover, she blamed the project leader. Participants accepted this enactment of government discourse and applauded. The local newspaper Echo wrote on the front page: “Hannah Belliot saves the evening: Bijlmer residents critical of work-conference renewal of the Bijlmerpark” (Echo, 2000a). In this article it was also emphasized that the presentations of the experts had been too technical, “so that hardly anyone could still understand what it was all about” (Echo, 2000a). By the end of this last work-conference participants enacted government discourse: professional planners in a coalition with the council should determine what will happen to the park.

**Dominant government discourse: a plan, not a strategy**

In the aftermath of this public meeting, on the fifth of June the steering committee evaluated what went wrong and decided how to continue with the process (V2 s4, 2000). The alderwoman of the Labor Party as well as the consultant attempted to control the damage. A continuation of the participatory approach was out of the question. At this meeting it was decided that the consultant was to contact the consortia to talk to them bilaterally. Special attention needed to be paid to the residents that live at the fringes of the park (V2 s4, 2000). Moreover, the consultant finalized a Plan of Conduct (Plan van Aanpak).

When the consultant presented the Plan of Conduct, a new head of the district department of Spatial and Economic Development argued that this did not resemble a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten). The consultant had not fulfilled the assignment to come up with a product for the second step of the formal Plaberum. The department demarcated an element of government discourse: the formal planning procedures. In a response to the new head of the district department the consultant defended this Plan of Conduct. He wrote: “The trajectory has been discussed with you. For months you knew the examples that are being explored. The nature of the product as “a strategy” rather than an urban plan (stedebouwkundig plan) was agreed upon with your predecessor in the formulation of the assignment. Nothing has changed” (B3, 2000). In spring 2001 the consultant sent another letter, this time to yet another new head of the district Department of Spatial and Economic Development. In this letter the consultant drew a boundary around a professional designer’s subdiscourse to gain credibility for the Plan of Conduct:

“I believe I had reasons enough to wonder if we suffered from company-blindness (bedrijfsblindheid) and had become unable to judge well. Therefore, I asked Mr. Sijmons of bureau H+N+S to judge the plan of conduct. After an extensive study, he told me that the presentation could have been more clear but that he did not discover any caveats that would justify the denial of the label ‘List of Guidelines’ (Nota van Uitgangspunten) according to the Plaberum” (B3 1, 2001). The district government attempted to not pay the external advisor based on the argument that the Plan of Conduct failed as it did not fit the formal planning procedures. The consultant kept referring to the steering committee as a co-responsible party, and to the expertise of outside professionals that had argued this plan could be used as a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten). The district government decided to further develop the Plan of Conduct internally.

Early in 2001 civil servants discussed the three models (V3 2, 2001) and decided that elements of these models should be put together as the “program did not fit” (V3 2, 2001). This meant that the functions of the park were not put in the right place, or not put in place at all, according to the civil servants. The civil servants argued that “sports do not belong in a park” and that “sports should be north of the park and not in the south.” Moreover, one of them argued that the ambition should not be to develop a city park but to develop a sports park (V3 2, 2001). As a result of these discussions, the district government decided to write a ‘Final Plan of Conduct’ which was used as a condition in a competition between three urban designers. The district government enacted their government discourse. No more participation and deliberation was asked for outside normal public hearings.

**Critical moments in the second round of Creative Competition**

I constructed a pattern of critical moments of boundary work in the deliberations between government and society in this second round of Creative Competition. A first moment was the drafting of a proposal in which the consultant introduced a ‘strategy’ rather than a plan. Moreover, the consultant and others proposed to include the expert knowledge of citizens. They were to be considered the experts. Civil servants and politicians accepted these elements of deliberative governance discourse. Both “strategy” and “expertise” functioned as boundary concepts that enabled the continuation of the project. Both concepts were interpreted in two ways.

The district government and the local planners interpreted expertise as their professional planning expertise, and citizens’ contributions as desires and interests. The consultant interpreted citizens’ expertise as valuable knowledge of equal importance to the planners’ expertise. A similar difference in interpretation by the district government and the planners on one hand and that of the consultant occurred in the case of the “strategy” concept. The district government and the planners from the Amsterdam Urban Planning Department interpreted it to consist of three separate tracks: a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten), a participatory process, and a track in which government and project developers would explore possible public/private partnership. The consultant considered the Plan of Conduct to integrate the three tracks. The participatory process would be the place to integrate the three tracks and thus the three types of knowledge. This blurring enabled the start of the second phase of Creative Competition.
At a second critical moment, these different interpretations became eminent when at the deliberative meetings and at the end of the project, the boundary concept "expertise" and "strategy" became fracture line concepts. Even though the civil servants had acted as gatekeepers and protected the formal planning procedures through the instigation of a steering committee, and by instructing the new black project leader, they still needed to come forward with their interpretation of the concepts. At the end of the last public meeting, the alderwoman demarcated professionals' knowledge from citizens' stupidity. The audience accepted this demarcation, since she also blamed the consultant for the bad plans that included housing.

With regard to the “strategy” concept at the end of the project, the civil servants in meetings and letters demarcated the formal planning procedure in which they interpreted this strategy as not fulfilling the criteria of a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten). This discredited the Plan of Conduct. The advisor responded with a demarcation of expertise of a professional planner who had judged the quality of the plan. This resulted in a compromise in which the civil servants would reform the Plan of Conduct into a List of Guidelines (Nota van Uitgangspunten) and thereby facilitate a return to a normal situation in which government discourse is credible. Figure 3.5 illustrates this.

Figure 3.5. Government discourse (left), deliberative governance discourse (right), and boundary concepts (middle) at the end of Creative Competition part II

**3.3. CONCLUSIONS: BOUNDARY WORK IN CREATIVE COMPETITION**

My conclusions do not summarize in detail demarcated government and deliberative governance discourse of participants (see tables throughout the chapter); rather I will discuss the critical moments of boundary work. I will answer what elements of deliberative governance discourse became credible.

**CREDIBLE GOVERNMENT DISCOURSE: TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY WINS**

In the end, government discourse won in the case of Creative Competition in the Bijlmerpark. Despite the attempts of a change coalition to gain credibility for the deliberative governance discourse, none of the elements of this discourse survived the experiment. Several more conclusions can be drawn.

First, the analysis of boundary work in “Creative Competition” demonstrates that the consultant, the professor, the civil servants, the alderwoman, participating citizens, businesses and planners successfully disrupted government discourse for the time being. They easily accepted elements of deliberative governance that were directly related to a more horizontal form of decisionmaking: participation and cooperation of citizens in public/private partnerships for park maintenance. These procedural elements of the deliberative governance discourse lasted throughout the whole project and actors did not overtly contest or reflect upon these.
Second, the consultant and professor introduced several of what I understand to be boundary concepts. They stretched the meaning of “feasibility” and “expertise.” Actors interpreted these boundary concepts from both a government and a deliberative governance discourse perspective. This multi-interpretability at first enabled atemporary credibility of deliberative governance discourse. However, in the course of the experiment it drew out fracture lines between discourses.

Third, actors engaged in a discursive struggle about the two interpretations of the boundary concepts. This became the core struggle in this experiment with deliberative governance. Rather than fight about building houses or maintaining trees, the question was whether professionals had the expertise to make up a feasible plan, or if citizens had an equally important contribution to make with their local expertise. In this discursive struggle, the participants argued about the “quality” of citizens’ participation. In other words, the actors agreed that citizens had to participate. However, the analysis of boundary work demonstrated that actors engaged in a less visible but continuous struggle about what kind of contribution citizens could make.

Fourth, I conclude that this discursive struggle about the interpretation of expertise and feasibility was caused by the consultant’s attempt to stretch the boundary around a “learning” discourse. The consultant attempted to gain credibility for the deliberative governance discourse through the inclusion of citizens as experts. Demarcation of this learning discourse gained credibility for deliberative governance. However, the professional planners and the governmental actors contested and successfully rejected this stretching of a boundary around science discourse. Their interpretation of expertise and feasibility as professional expertise was accepted and they reenacted science discourse. Citizens did not protest being called ignorant. The learning discourse did not become credible.

This also leads to a fifth conclusion: even though I wanted to go beyond a study of demarcations of science, science discourse was to some extent present in this experiment. Participants demarcated it and attempted to stretch its boundary and turn it into a learning discourse.

**REFLEXIVE DESIGN: CONCLUSIONS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF TWO ONGOING CASES**

The analysis of boundary work in this pilot case both supports and refutes several theoretical premises. These have consequences for the conceptual work and research design of my dissertation.

First, the pilot case supports the idea that the analysis of boundary work adds a dimension to evaluations of experiments with deliberative governance. Next to an evaluation of procedural elements such as numbers of participants, the assembly of a change coalition facilitated the gaining of credibility for deliberative governance discourse but were also able to limit it. Second, this pilot case demonstrated that indeed demarcations and transcending of boundaries are closely connected. A boundary concept can become a fracture line concept. Whereas it first aligned elements of different discourses, it can start to illuminate differences. In the case of the Bijlmerpark, feasibility and strategy all turned into fracture line concepts. In this case, in the end all participants interpreted these related boundary concepts from a dominant government discourse. However, in theory, a fracture line concept might induce a reflective conversation. This may have happened in the two other projects that are part of my study.

Four conclusions from this pilot case lead me to reflect on my presuppositions. First, I underestimated the role of the gatekeepers to protect this dominant discourse. In the theory I mainly spoke of parrhesiastes that disrupt dominant discourse. In this case, the change coalition acted as parrhesiastes. However, the gatekeepers are equally important in the process of change. Moreover, gatekeepers can become part of the change coalition. For example, in the case of the Bijlmerpark the civil servants and the alderwoman acted as gatekeepers but also became part of the change coalition. The gatekeepers and the change coalition facilitated the gaining of credibility for deliberative governance discourse but were also able to limit it.

Second, to this point I did not pay much attention to a drawing of boundaries around subdiscourses. In this pilot case, I considered subdiscourses as elements of normal government discourse. These subdiscourses often come from policy sectors, scientific disciplines, and organizational subdiscourses, such as environmental, business or sports subdiscourse. In government discourse these subdiscourses constantly struggle for dominance. However, in deliberative governance discourse, these subdiscourses might merge in the deliberations. This is what we saw happen in the case of the Bijlmerpark: participants merged their subdiscourses in the plans for redevelopment. However, to make the plans more feasible, the change coalition organized a clash of subdiscourses at a meeting in which professionals were to express to the consortia what they thought were elements that needed to be included to make the plans more feasible. In deliberative governance theory, the clash of these subdiscourses is usually thought of as “deliberative breakdowns” (Fung, 2001), or accounted for as an uneasy relationship between strategic action and deliberative settings (Dodge, 2009; Warren, 1996). Here it seemed as though this facilitated clashes, improved the deliberative quality AND the quality of the plans. The demarcations by professionals enabled the citizens to draft more integrated and
more convincing, and even more feasible plans. In the analysis of the two ongoing cases in the next chapters, I will take consider the demarcations of subdiscourse as possible deliberative breakdowns, but also as a way to improve the quality of the outcome in content, for example, the plans and the visions of experiments with deliberative governance.

A third result from the pilot case is that I discovered a dominant discourse that seems to be more dominant than government, governance, or deliberative governance discourse: “expertise.” In the previous section, which asked which discourse won, I already argued that science as a discourse was dominant. In the next two cases I will pay more attention to the possibility that either learning discourse that alters science discourse or science discourse is more dominant.

Finally, the results from the pilot case made me reflect on the way I generated and constructed data. First, as I had foreseen in the research design, I did not have transcripts of all meetings, nor was I able to observe these meetings. Therefore, not all boundaries drawn and transcended could be studied in detail. I was more actively involved in the next two cases, and this will lead to a more comprehensive picture of boundary work in action. Second, I analytically distinguished three sites of interaction: between government and society, between government and businesses, and between government and advisors. In this pilot I found that stage one consisted of interactions only between government and advisors. Moreover, the site of interaction business and government was hardly present. I can draw at least two conclusions from this: first, in this project, alteration of interactions between government and businesses did not have a priority for the change coalition, and citizens’ participation was more important despite the fact that an outcome of the first round was that businesses needed to be included in the park maintenance. Second, I have demonstrated that the construction of these research sites can provide me with information about what elements of deliberative governance discourse have priority. In the case of the Bijlmerpark, the priority was interactions with citizens. Hence, from this moment onward, I will include this type of information in the results of the analysis of boundary work.