

Urban design deals with the creation of the physical public realm of human settlements within the public realm of decision-making. The objective in the opening chapter is thus not only with giving a broad definition to urban design but also with coming to some understanding of the nature of the public realm of the physical fabric of cities and the public realm of decision-making. There are many questions about what actually constitutes the physical public realm. The answers depend on prevailing political attitudes towards community and individual rights. The stand taken here is a broad one and with it in mind the nature of urban designing is described and explained in 'Chapter 2: Urban design processes and procedures'.

The nature of urban design varies considerably based on the process by which its various product types are implemented. Historically, many now much-admired urban design schemes were implemented through the use of autocratic power, political and/or financial. Some still are. Examples of both are included in this book. The principal concern here is, however, with urban design in democratic, capitalist societies. After his experiences with the evolving design of the World Trade Center site development in New York, Daniel Libeskind noted that design in democratic societies is 'complex . . . with many pressures and tensions . . . We are not living in Haussmann's Paris . . . We live in a pluralistic society' (Lubell, 2004). Actually Haussmann found many tensions in the redevelopment of Paris too (see Jordan, 1995).

The objective in this second chapter is to outline the steps involved in design: the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of potential designs on the drawing board, their implementation and the evaluation of how well they function in place. Function too is an ambiguous term. In any discourse on urban design there is thus also the need to take a stand on what 'function' means. It is defined here to include how the physical forms of cities work symbolically, as an aesthetic ensemble, and as a supporter of desired activity patterns. The physical fabric of cities is also a financial investment and those investing in it expect a financial return on their investments.

A fundamental question in both autocratic and democratic societies is: 'Who actually controls the development of an urban design product whatever it is?' This question leads to a series of others. 'Who defines the problem to be addressed and the opportunities to be seized?' 'Who designs the solutions?' No definitive single answer can be given to these questions. The chapter describes the possibilities. In the past I have argued for a strongly problem-oriented urban design process relying on a knowledge base of abstract descriptive and explanatory theory (see Lang, 1987, 1994). The criticism of this position has been that designers simply do not want to work that way nor will they (see Frascati, 1989). They will rely on precedents and generic solutions.

In the final chapter of this part of the book, 'Chapter 3: An evolving typology of urban design projects', the domain of urban design is mapped. Explicitly stated in the chapter is that it is primarily the processes of implementation and control that should differentiate amongst types of urban design projects. In the typology,