

# Place and Situated Deliberation in Participatory Planning

Matthias Korn

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# Context and Motivation

- prevalence and popularity of mobile location-aware technologies and services
  - use of geographic location to interact with the environment
  - possible actions and information are linked with these locations
- however, people ascribe different meanings to these locations
  - understanding locations people interact with as “places”
- application domain: participatory (urban) planning

How can we leverage the meaning that people associate with locations in the design of systems that take location to be central?



# Space / Place

(Harrison & Dourish, 1996; Dourish, 2006)

spaces...

- ... are the structure of the world
- ... are geographically located
- ... provide opportunities for practice
- ... exist through practices of design

places ...

- ... are spaces invested with meaning and understandings
- ... frame appropriate behavior
- ... are spaces that people put to use
- ... are valued and meaningful
- ... exist through practices of use



# Space and Place in Located Deliberation

- continuous cycle of space and place in urban planning
  - space is what we aim to influence and what eventually gets build
  - place is what we experience and hope will develop
  - deliberation *is* the social construction of space – quite literally
- places are flexible in the hands of different people, and contested and malleable over time
- transition from closed to public places



# Research Question

How can we facilitate participatory planning of spaces by supporting the use of place(ness) as a resource for citizens in located deliberation processes?



# Cases and Findings: Mobile Democracy

- explores the combined use of GIS and mobile technologies for participatory urban planning
- concept consists of two interconnected prototypes:
  - a smart phone prototype for in-situ reflection and action, i.e., while citizens are physically close to the planning object
  - a browser-based prototype for ex-situ reflection and action on proposed plans, i.e., when citizens are remote to the planning object



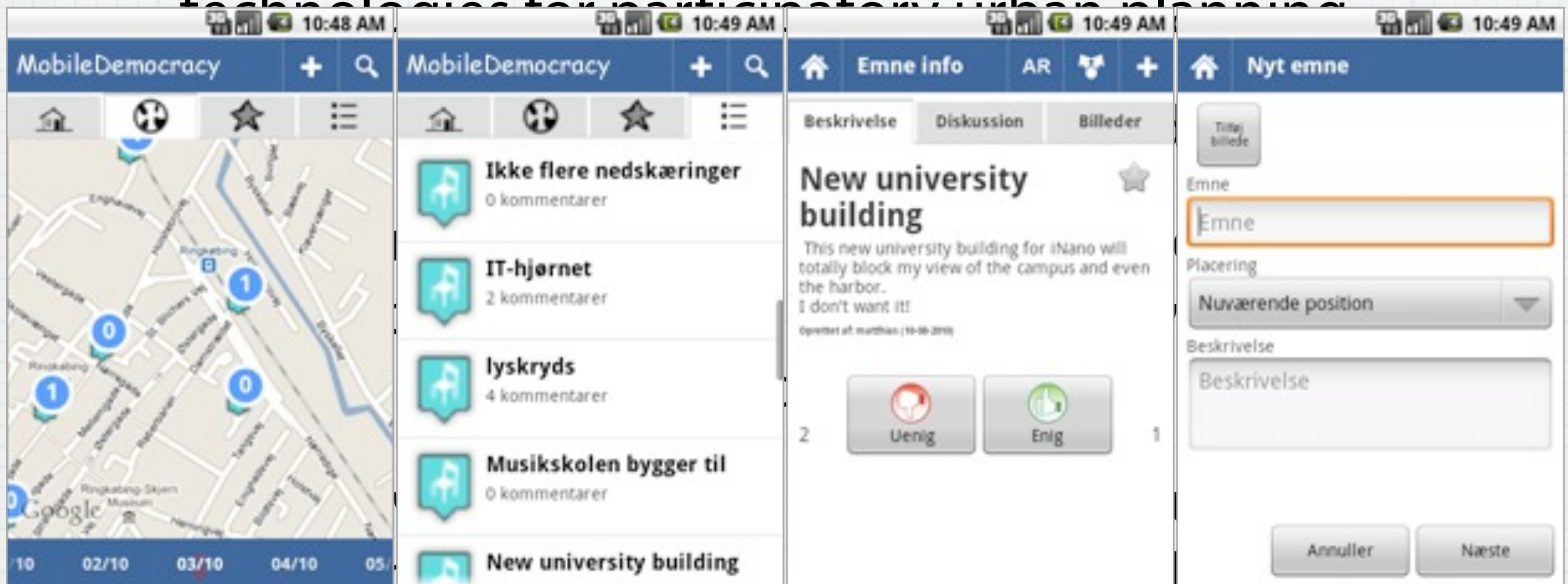
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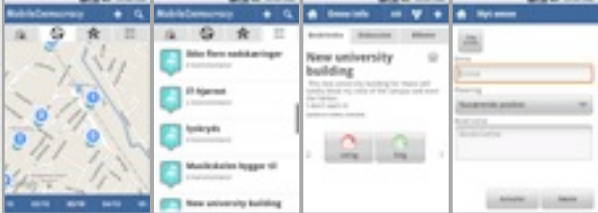
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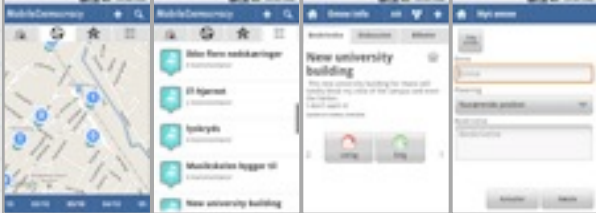




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# Cases and Findings: Mobile Democracy

The screenshot shows the mobilDemokrati web application in a browser window. The address bar displays the URL: `mini.egovplus.dk:8080/GeoAwareBackend/#!issuePage?id=69`. The page features a blue header with the mobilDemokrati logo and a search bar. Below the header, there is a 'Create topic' section with a list of topics, each with a house icon, a title, a date, and a comment count. The topics listed are:

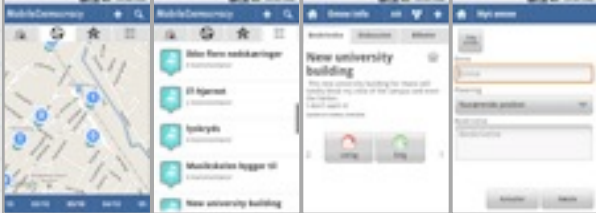
- Oprettelse af nyt punkt (Aug 25, 2010 | Number of comments: 0)
- fantasien (Aug 10, 2010 | Number of comments: 0)
- IT-hjørnet (Aug 10, 2010 | Number of comments: 3)
- udvidelse til boligområdet (Aug 10, 2010 | Number of comments: 2)
- Byggeri passer ikke ind (Aug 10, 2010 | Number of comments: 0)
- Udvidelse af Holmelunden (Aug 10, 2010 | Number of comments: 0)
- Nye omklædningsrum (Aug 10, 2010 | Number of comments: 0)
- Ny IKEA, nej tak (Aug 10, 2010 | Number of comments: 0)

Below the topics, there is a 'Categories' section with checkboxes for various topics:

- ☒ Byggeri
- ☒ Miljø
- ☒ Økonomi
- ☒ Børn
- ☒ Sport
- ☒ Erhverv
- ☒ Trafik
- ☒ Kultur
- ☒ Uddannelse

On the right side of the page, there is a detailed view of a topic titled 'For få pædagoger i Vasegården' (Created by: Morten (Aug 10, 2010)). It includes a description: 'Jeg synes det er en rigtig kedelig udvikling at kommunen vil spare penge ved at nedlægge pædagogstillinger på Vasegården. Institutionen er i forvejen presset med personale.' Below the description is an 'Add comment' button and a section for 'comments (1)'. The comment is from 'planlæ...' dated 'Aug 25, 2010 11:31:53 AM' with the text 'Det er jeg enig i'. At the bottom of the comment section are 'previous' and 'next' buttons, and a 'Page 1 of 1' indicator.





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# In-situ and Ex-situ Reflection and Action

## Public Deliberation in Municipal Planning: Supporting Action and Reflection with Mobile Technology

**Morten Bohøj**  
Alexandra Institute  
Aarhus, Denmark  
bohøj@cs.au.dk

**Nikolaj G. Borchorst, Susanne  
Bødker, Matthias Korn**  
Department of Computer Science  
Aarhus University  
{ngandrup, bodker, mkorn}@cs.au.dk

**Pär-Ola Zander**  
Department of Communication  
and Psychology  
Aalborg University  
poz@hum.aau.dk

### ABSTRACT

This paper reports on an exploratory participatory design process aimed at supporting citizen deliberation in municipal planning. It presents the main outcomes of this process in terms of selected prototypes and an approach to the use setting. We support and discuss different ways for citizens to act and reflect on proposed plans: in-situ, while physically close to the planning object, and ex-situ, when citizens are remote from this. The support of in-situ and ex-situ participation allows citizens to engage in continuous reflection-in and on-action as a collaborative activity with other citizens, hereby inspiring citizens to increase their democratic engagement.

### Keywords

Communities and e-governance, map-based discussion, geospatial annotation, public deliberation, reflection and action, situatedness, participatory design.

### INTRODUCTION

*Mobile Democracy again, this time using his desktop computer. He looks at his bookmarks to find the wastewater plant discussion. He sees that more citizens have commented and a municipal planner has argued that a new wastewater plant is needed, because the old one is no longer sufficient. Peter realizes that he has some potential allies among the other commentators. He decides to write a more elaborate discussion comment, listing disadvantages of placing the plant there and arguing for better locations. After a couple of days, he is contacted by another citizen and they decide to team up and write a more elaborate proposal for the planning debate."*

The above scenario describes the use of two interconnected prototypes developed in a case exploring public deliberation in municipal planning through mobile, location-aware technology. In this paper, we focus on the development of the two prototypes within the specific design case at hand. It soon became apparent that what was needed in order for



# Conclusion

- situated deliberation may improve discussions about place by demonstrating personal relevance and creating awareness
- placeness as a resource as one way of meaningfully connecting citizens to these locales



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 AARHUS  
UNIVERSITET

mkorn@cs.au.dk  
<http://cs.au.dk/~mkorn>