

GENTRIFICATION IN A POST-SOCIALIST TOWN: THE CASE OF THE SUPILINN DISTRICT, TARTU, ESTONIA

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Abstract

This article deals with the changes that have taken place in the Supilinn district in Tartu, Estonia due to the gentrification process. The gentrification process affects the cultural, social, economic, and physical environment of the area. People have been interested in this topic since the 1960s. Nowadays, there is also reason to discuss this issue in the context of Estonia and of the Supilinn district. Studying and understanding the processes that take place in the living environment, provides an opportunity to be more aware about them and to influence the development of these processes. This article provides an analysis of the conditions necessary for gentrification in the Supilinn district, describes the process of gentrification, and tries to assess the current developmental stage of the gentrification process.

Cities are shaped by their people. Every area has a unique look that is shaped not only by the physical environment, but also by the principles, values, and wishes of its residents. Local residents influence the image of the mental and the physical space of the area. What changes has the development of the Supilinn district caused in the population of the area, and how have the residents, in turn, changed the district?

Keywords: Estonia, gentrification, urban revitalization, post-socialist, historical wooden architecture, cultural value, social diversity, Supilinn.

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1. Understanding gentrification

In the urbanism literature the changing process of deprived neighborhoods into a popular and prosperous district is most often called gentrification. Its role in urban processes, causes and consequences has been debated since 1960s when sociologist Ruth Glass invented the term (Griffith, 1996; Atkinson, 2004; Brouillette, 2009). The term was applied to the phenomenon of upper middle class households purchasing properties in rundown working class neighborhoods. Gentrification may completely change the character of a neighborhood in a short time, transforming it from a neglected district to a trendy, upscale neighborhood (Griffith, 1996).

Research evidence suggests that gentrification has been a largely negative process resulting in the breaking-up and displacement of poorer communities (Anderson *et al.*, 2005; Atkinson, 2004). Other negative aspects are original residents' displacement, loss of affordable housing and consequent homelessness (Atkinson, 2000; 2004). Supporters of gentrification often clash with residents resisting change. Supporters are mostly private real estate development companies and government (Betancur, 2002).

On the positive side, the rehabilitation of the physical fabric of the housing is mentioned as well as the change of image of a neighborhood associated with renewal and further investment (Atkinson, 2004). Sometimes gentrification helps to avoid demolition of a historical district as new residents value the existing environment (Männik, 2008). In addition, increased property values, and thereby larger tax revenues and wider span of local services are seen as positive effects of gentrification (Atkinson, 2004).

There is some controversy in gentrification: many new, young and professional residents are very concerned about gentrification in the neighborhood; yet new, young professional residents are a major cause of gentrification, and the older residents who are most affected by gentrification are encouraged by the new, young residents and the energy they bring to the neighborhood (Koschmann and Laster, 2011). Often an underestimated result of gentrification is the change of the identity of a place. In the gentrification process the identity is often changed to the unrecognizable. Sometimes this is caused by unprofessional planners who do not know the neighborhood and its context enough (Kotval, 2005). The need to maintain place as a stable, secure and unique entity is one of the main topics discussed in this paper. Both physical and sociocultural aspects of the place have to be considered. The best way for building social capital and preserving community coherence is by community participation in decision making process (Crawford *et al.*, 2008).

While gentrification is perhaps better understood in the Western world, it is not a common phenomenon in post-Soviet countries. In Estonia, it is a relatively new development, and policy makers are not necessarily ready to deal with the unintended consequences. One small neighborhood in Tartu, the educational center of Estonia, is a classic case of this phenomenon. The neighborhood is called Supilinn, literally translated to 'Soup Town'.

This neighborhood makes for a good case study for two reasons. Firstly, it is a changing neighborhood that is feeling the pressures of growth and gentrification. Sec-

only, it is one of the first neighborhoods to form an organized neighborhood association, again a relatively new organizational structure in Estonia. Due to its professional leadership and neighborhood based membership, the Supilinn neighborhood society understands the pressures and phenomena of gentrification. They strive hard for community participation and cohesiveness. While signs and concerns for gentrification are evident, the Society is working actively to stem the displacement of residents and promote a common set of values. What differentiates Supilinn Selts and other societies is that the lifestyle in Supilinn has been especially embraced. Non-residents are also included as members because they care about preserving this unique community character. The president of the Republic of Estonia is also a member and he is a very active supporter of the concept of civil society. The residents and the Society see a constant need to concentrate on urban planning topics, since Supilinn faces continuing building pressure, despite the economic downturn.

2. Supilinn district case study 'I Live Here'

In addition to the physical conditions, the people who live there also play an important role in studying the gentrification process, and therefore, since the socioeconomic status of the people who live or used to live in the area affects the area and the developments that take place there, observations have to be made about both the people who contributed to the development of the area, and about those who currently live in the area.

Most of the Supilinn district has been part of Tartu city at least from 17th century (Hiob, 2012). Lea Teedema (Teedema, 2010), who has thoroughly studied the residents of the Supilinn district in the 18th and 19th centuries, has stated that in the mid-18th century landowners in the Supilinn district were mostly city government members, wealthy citizens, clerics or nobles. Land plots were mostly used for gardening and grazing. The owners of the land plots usually did not live there, instead, the renters did, and they were mostly non-German common people and craftsmen. During the 18th century land owners changed and by the end of the 18th century most of the landowners were commoners. The population record of 1793 indicates that about 100 male persons were counted in the Supilinn district, and most of them were working class Estonians. In 1807 most of the counted 250 residents were craftsmen and other workers. In the second half of the 19th century more buildings were added to the Supilinn district and the number of the residents grew, especially around 1860, and also during the 1870s to 1890s. The first all-Russian population census (1897) provides an overview of the professions of the area's residents (Berendsen and Maiste, 1999). The residents were still mostly commoners, workers, industrial workers, and servants. There were also many students and a few factory owners, professors of the university, and other elite members (Berendsen and Maiste, 2012).

Therefore, in the 19th century it was an area of residents who were mostly commoners and had affordable cheap apartments. People with similar social background constituted the majority of the population also during the 20th century. Most of the

historical buildings of the area that have been preserved until today can be dated back to the second half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century. The most common building type of that time was a two-story wooden tenement house with one or two central staircases. Most of the buildings were constructed in the 1870s to 1890s, and also at the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century (Siilivask, 2012).

The plans after World War I and especially since World War II, during the Soviet occupation (1944-1991), stated that the area should be demolished either partly or completely, and that a new modern district should be built in its place. The extent of demolition varied according to different plans. Luckily, these developments did not take place, and, therefore, there is little need to discuss these plans or their causes in connection with this topic. However, we can remark here that, because of the status as a renewable area, no major investments were made in existing infrastructure and housing.

In Estonia people started to pay attention to gentrification at the end of the 1990s. Those research projects dealt with the gentrification of Tallinn's old town, the Kadriorg district, and some other districts (Kurist, 2004). Previously, two studies have been completed on gentrification in the Supilinn district (Männik, 2003). It has been five years since the last Supilinn district project was compiled (Männik, 2008). When we look back at the processes that took place in the Supilinn district, we can see that the gentrification process has constantly developed (Nutt *et al.*, 2012), and it is still a topic that needs to be discussed. So far, mostly observations have been carried out (external visual observations were carried out in order to assess the state of the house restoration process¹), and, in the case of the Supilinn district, also in-depth interviewing was used. This particular article is based on the results of in-depth interviews and a structured questionnaire (Supilinn Society, 2011); these were carried out in 2011, and they allow evaluating the course and the current state of the gentrification process in the Supilinn district.

The survey of 2011 was conducted within the project called 'Using Participatory Planning Methods in the Supilinn Thematic Plan' by Supilinn Society, Estonian Planners' Association and Tartu City Government, and it was financed by National Foundation of Civil Society (KÜSK). The survey covered all residents in the Supilinn district. There were distributed 1,152 questionnaires on paper (two in every mailbox with possibility to ask for additional exemplars). There were ca. 1,250 adult residents in Supilinn according to official data. The number of returned questionnaires was 286; the youngest respondent was 16 years old and the oldest 85 years old. The majority of the respondents were between 25 and 45 years old, 59% were female and 41% male. A little more than half of the respondents had children in their household. The proportion of respondents with higher education was extraordinary high, 64%. The retired persons made up 7% and students 9%. Respondents were distributed evenly over the Supilinn district; there were respondents from all streets.

1 Property restoration is one of the indicators of gentrification.

The Supilinn district (Hiob and Nutt, 2010), which was once a slum area and was ordered to be demolished forty years ago, has now become a highly regarded residential area where housing prices compete with the city center (Kruuse, 2012). However, the lack of investments combined with continuous residency has had a significant effect on the gentrification process; the group of run-down, cheap houses was perfect for the gentrification process to start. Most of the contemporary area layout can be dated back to the period that preceded the demolition plans. The basic spatial development consisting almost exclusively of wooden houses took place from the 18th century until the second and the third decade of the 20th century, it was temporarily in almost a frozen state in the middle of the 20th century, and later new construction layers were added (Siilivask, 2012) making up about a quarter of the total number of the buildings (Hiob and Nutt, 2010). Among those layers are also the Soviet era buildings. Unfortunately, the few buildings from the earlier period (some 8.5%) have been demolished over the years. Nowadays, the valid planning documents give the plot owners the right to construct new buildings that would constitute 12.8% (Hiob and Nutt, 2010) of the total housing stock.

Since the demolition plans were not put into action people continued to live in the area, and, in addition to the local (permanent) residents, people whose financial situation prohibited them from having a place in one of the nicer neighborhoods moved to the cheap apartments of the Supilinn district. In addition to them, the district also housed petty criminals, homeless people without a regular income, and other disadvantaged persons. The unpopular area of 1970s and 1980s had in the last decades of Soviet era until the middle of 1990s an influx of the so-called pioneers (in the context of gentrification), and their arrival had a significant influence on the area. First wave of gentrification (starting) consisted of students, musicians, poets, and artists who chose to live in the cheap and comfortless, but authentic and human scale living quarters. The members of the first wave were not numerous, but they were well-known people. While the area was run-down and considered unsafe, it was also located near the city center and the real estate prices were low.

The creative movers regarded the Supilinn area as perfect place to express their wish for alternative lifestyle and artistic projects.

Already at the end of the Soviet period we dreamt about making a festival in Supilinn. It seemed as an Avant-Garde idea not realized anywhere else in Estonia before.²

The example of the pioneers was followed by young low income families with children who looked for reasonably priced housing. Considering the general unpopularity of the area (in 1998 over 60% of the residents of Tartu thought that the Supilinn district was unsuitable for living (Tartu City Government, 1998)), it is likely that most of the people who arrived in the district in the mid-1990s chose the area because of their financial limitations (Supilinn Society, 2011), while the renewed reputation cre-

2 Toomas Kalve, photograph; interview by Aliis Liin in 2011.

ated by the pioneers made the district acceptable as a living space. As one of the residents put it:

Having moved from a stone house to a wooden house, there is a big difference between them that needs to be mentioned. It is an economic choice not a conscious one (Supilinn Society, 2011).

There has been a constant growth in the popularity of the district. While a research project carried out in 2003 found that 50% of the respondents (citizens of Tartu) considered the Supilinn district to be an unsuitable living area, in 2008 only 25% of the respondents thought the same (Tartu City Government). Naturally, more newcomers regarded the attractiveness of the area as an important reason in the choice of living, as the real estate still had inexpensive prices:

It was a conscious choice, as the city center was the destination and the Supilinn district was my first preference so I would not depend on my car (Supilinn Society, 2011).

You can live in the city center but be surrounded by greenery (Supilinn Society, 2011).

Supilinn has a good living environment and it is well located (Supilinn Society, 2011).

It was my dream apartment-in terms of price and quality, location, a nice street; strategically well located, the city center, the river, the wild-uncivilized greenery (Supilinn Society, 2011).

Together these newcomers are considered as the second wave of gentrification (from the middle of 1990s until the middle of 2000s). The creative first wave and the young active newcomers had similar values, and, therefore, the conditions were perfect for working together. This cooperation resulted in the creation of the area's neighborhood society organization (Supilinn Society in 2002). The most active members of the society were those who have moved recently to the Supilinn district (the second wave) and wanted to preserve those values that had made them appreciate the area.

I go there and I know that the people from there are different, those who purposely go there are like me, the run-down thing intrigues (Supilinn Society, 2011).

The peaceful natural environment, there were no disturbing developments, the social environment, peaceful because it is not a central traffic area (Supilinn Society, 2011).

People with similar values quickly found common ground, came together, and began cooperating for their worldview in a more organized manner (Hiob and Nutt, 2012). Some quicker and more visible changes started to take place in the appearance of the streets at the end of the 1990s when the real estate market became more active due to the real estate restitution. The rightful owners regained their plots and houses, and since they did not live there, they sold them to interested persons or companies dealing with real estate. At the end of the 1990s about one hundred land plots had

private owners (Tartu City Government, 1998); however, in three years the number of land plots in private ownership doubled (in 2003, 225 land plots were privatized (Nutt and Hiob, 2012)). This created an economic situation that favored the further progress of gentrification due to the fact that low-priced real estate was available near the city center.

The economic boom, which reached its peak in the mid-2000s (2005-2008), sped up the changes that were taking place in the area. Banks placed cheap loans and a general renovating and building frenzy broke loose. Real estate companies benefited from building new houses and then selling them for as much profit as possible. From 1991 till 2012, 27 new houses were built in the Supilinn district, which made up 8.4% of the total number of the area's buildings (Hiob and Nutt, 2012). In addition to new houses, the real estate companies renovated also a number of old houses.

The number of detailed plans that were approved shows that there was a demand to build more. Since 1999, 36 detailed plans for Supilinn have been created. During the economic boom when real estate businessmen were active in the area, Supilinn Society had to become increasingly more involved in the hope of preserving the things it valued. As a result of increasing pressure applied by the real estate developers, changes started to take place in the Supilinn district. The run-down slum where one could take a shortcut through a hole in the fence to the local shop was regulated and fixed up. The unused wastelands characteristic to the district were increasingly turned into asphalt covered parking lots.

From the middle of 2000s these changes attracted new residents with different attitudes into the area – the third wave of gentrification arrived. Together with new people came different values that were evident in locked front doors and remote controlled gates. Old sheds and washing kitchens that had fallen out of use were considered unnecessary and demolished. The third wave of gentrifiers wished to reshape the area according to their desires and needs in sharp contrast with the previous newcomers who valued the area as it was.

Hence, it is not surprising that conflicts arose between the two groups with different values. The earlier residents, who had moved to the area because they appreciated the casual milieu, suddenly found themselves opposed to the new wave of residents who would rather see their neighborhood squeaky clean than casually unkempt. Previously Supilinn Society had been opposed to the city government decisions, but now, because of the arrival of the third wave, there was also an internal opposition. Supilinn Society advocated for slowing down the gentrification process by preferring cobble stone paving of the streets instead of smooth asphalt, promoting restrictions on new houses, and opposing new streets that would divide up city blocks. Despite the fact that in 2001, ignoring the residents' strong opposition of that time, the city government approved a Supilinn district general plan that promoted radical densification of housing by splitting up city blocks with new streets, Supilinn Society has managed to win popular support both among the residents and in city government for a more restricted development plan.

3. The current state of the gentrification process

We can conclude that in the Supilinn district, the necessary preconditions for the gentrification process to start and to develop further has existed and still exist. Supilinn was an old wooden house district that was in a relatively poor state, but favorably located in relation to the city of Tartu; it was right next to the city center, but also bordering to the countryside along the river Emajõgi. It was a district where the difference between real estate prices was noticeable, and the population was made up of poorer people, and a contingent of the creative occupations and university students, but little by little residents with different values started to arrive. Today, Supilinn is a highly valued residential area, and now the third wave of gentrifiers has arrived.

There used to be more rentals, rockers, bohemians, students; today there is the rich crowd (Supilinn Society, 2011).

In order to get a better understanding of the current residents of the Supilinn district, their wishes and their vision for the future, two opinion polls were carried out among the residents over the last couple of years – in 2010 (Hiob and Nutt, 2010) and 2011 (Supilinn Society, 2011). In the current article we use the results of the last survey from 2011.

The results of the opinion poll indicated that the residents highly value the living environment of the area. Almost all the residents of Supilinn (99% of the respondents³) like living in the Supilinn district, and most of the respondents (86%) would like to continue living in Supilinn during the next decade (Supilinn Society, 2011). However, even more surprisingly the residents show a strong sense of regional identity. 96% as

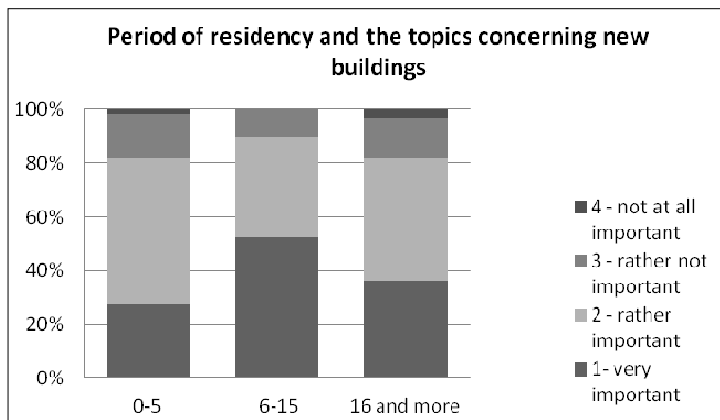


Figure 1: Answers to the question: How important are for you topics concerning new buildings?

Source: Opinion Poll in the 'Using Participatory Planning Methods in the Supilinn Thematic Plan', 2011

3 Yes, I definitely like (80%); I quite like (19%).

of all respondents⁴ identified themselves as citizens of Supilinn. This shows that the residents, no matter how long they have been living in the area, consider it to be their own. The area was highly liked by the long-time residents as well as by those who had just moved there; nevertheless, in regard to several issues their values turned out to be quite different.

The gentrification tendency is most clear when the respondents evaluate their financial situation – 40% of the people who moved to the area up to 15 years ago considered their financial position very good and good, and only 20% of those who lived there for 16 years or more rated it very good and good.

The differences between different newcomers appear when asking about the future development of the district. In this case, the second wave of gentrifiers (who moved into the area approximately in the period 1995-2005) distinguishes themselves as most concerned with the outlook of new buildings – more than half declared the appearance of new buildings as very important, while only a third of the longer-term residents and a quarter of the newer residents had the same opinion. The second wave is the only group where at least half of the people are satisfied with the pace of changes as they have taken place in last decades, and they are against faster changes, while older and newer residents are less opposed to faster changes.

The arrival of the third wave is indicated by the fact that the financial security of the latest newcomers is the highest – about 50% of the respondents who have recently moved to the area (in the last year) claim that their family's financial situation is very good or good.

Another tendency detected in the survey is that residents of the old houses (built until 1940) value higher the existing historical milieu and favor changes that respect the traditional ways. Residents of the old buildings consider the integration of the new buildings into the environment more important than the residents of the new buildings. Using traditional wooden constructions is considered to be important by 60% of all the respondents. However, when making observations about the opinions of the residents of the new and the old buildings separately, we can see that less than 40% of the residents of the new buildings are in favor of using full wooden constructions, but 70% of the residents of the old buildings consider it important. Here we see also a connection with different gentrifiers as three quarters of the second wave people have chosen to live in older houses, while 60% of the longer-term and newer residents live in older houses.

On the other hand, building new houses is more favored by people who themselves live in new houses. 70% of them think that new houses could be built in the Supilinn district, unlike the residents of older (built before 1940) buildings. Out of them, only a bit more than 40% are in favor of building new houses and more than 15% of them are definitely against that kind of development. There is also an important dif-

⁴ To some extent, I feel like a citizen of Supilinn (33%); I definitely feel like a citizen of Supilinn (64%).

ference in their attitudes towards the pace of change. Residents of the new buildings (built in 2001 or later) are in favor of faster changes (more than 30% of the respondents wish that changes would take place faster than before); however, residents of the old buildings (built before 1918) are more in favor of slower changes (30% of the respondents wish that changes would take place more slowly than before). Social interaction with other residents of Supilinn also has to do with the type of house a person lives in. Residents of the new buildings interact less than the residents of the old houses. As expected, this trend is also evident in the context of the time period a person has lived in the area – people who have lived there longer interact more.

Here we see that building new houses is a self-strengthening development that would result in arriving of people who prefer larger alterations. Therefore, the protection of old houses is important not only for the built up environment but also for the social composition of the neighborhood.

The different values of residents arrived in different periods is also exemplified in the answers to a question like 'Do children play in the streets?' – more than a third of people who arrived in the Supilinn district between 1995 and 2005 agree completely with that claim, while less than a quarter of more recent newcomers and a little more than 20% of most experienced residents agreed. The second wave people notice better the social and communal activities as playing children in the streets appears to be. There is a difference between the old and the new residents in general in the context of using street space. Fewer new residents (70%) think that it is acceptable for children to play in the streets, but most of the residents (85%) who moved there a long time ago think that the children should use the streets for playing.

The current stage of the gentrification process can also be evaluated on the basis of age-specific makeup of the area. The gender makeup of the area is similar to the rest of the city of Tartu – a few more women live in the area (54%) in comparison with men (46%). However, the age structure of the area's population differs from the age structure of the total population of Estonia and the city of Tartu. In comparison with other districts of Tartu, there are more small children in Supilinn (children aged 0-6; 3.8 % more than Tartu average) and less elderly people (7.2% are at least 65 years old; that is 7.5% less than the Tartu city average (Tartu City Government)). This is also approximately 17% (Statistics Estonia) lower in comparison with the average of the total population of Estonia. When looking at the population's age structure change over the past five years, it can be said that the population has become younger (Figure 2 and Figure 3) (Tartu City Government); this indicates that gentrification is progressing.

It can be concluded that in the Supilinn district three distinct groups of gentrifiers exist. The results of the opinion poll indicate the arrival of the third wave. The survey shows that the people who have moved to the area over the past few years have a different vision for the area and its future than the earlier residents (original inhabitants as well as the first and the second wave).

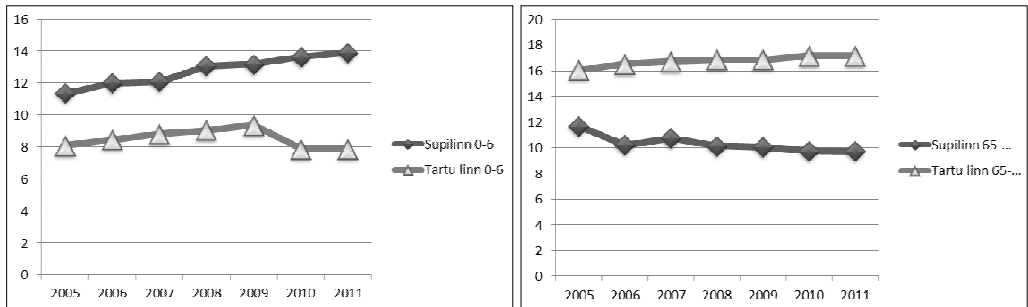


Figure 2 and Figure 3: Population's age structure in the Supilinn district and in the city of Tartu in 2005-2011

Source: Annual Statistical Overview of Tartu from 2005 through 2011

4. Summary

When we look at the aspects that contribute to gentrification in the Supilinn district, we see financial interests, which are evident in the differences between the potential and actual real estate prices and consumer interests, which are evident in the popularity of the Supilinn district as a residential area. There are plots that are located close to the city center and are potentially worth much more than their current prices, and people are interested in moving to the area. Investing in the area near the city center is financially rewarding because of the difference in real estate prices. Therefore, the conditions necessary for the gentrification process continue to exist in the Supilinn district.

There are two possible patterns of further development. The first possibility is that gentrification process is carried out at its full extent – the social and architectural multiplicity will be replaced by a homogenous, affluent population and new modern expensive housing and well developed streets. After a while, the district will become again less attractive as its charm and its reputation as a highly appreciated elite district will deteriorate. As the real estate prices will decline, the population will be replaced by residents with lower incomes and lower social status. Only the people, who, because of their financial situation, cannot afford anything but inexpensive dwellings, will move into the unpopular area. When taking into account the experiences elsewhere, the following developments could, after a while, lead to a new beginning of the gentrification process.

The second opportunity is that the gentrification process is inhibited, and social and cultural diversity is preserved. There are several possibilities for promoting the second scenario. The most obvious ones are to avoid demolishing old houses, there among sheds, and to minimize the new constructions. Moreover, all changes in the environment should take place as smoothly as possible to let the residents get used to the alternations, and thereby not to spoil their familiar surroundings. For preserving the traditional milieu the new constructions should be subordinated to the old ones – the new houses should be smaller in size, follow the old houses' form, and painted in modest colors, as well as the street pavement should use the traditional materials like cobble stone.

In addition to purely construction restrictions, there are also other possibilities to promote social diversity. There should be apartments for families with different needs – single people, couples and couples with children, households with car as well as without car, expensive and non-expensive, for self-owning and for rental etc. City government may keep the social diversity in the district by owning apartments for social housing for disadvantaged people. If all the named measures are consciously taken, it is possible that the social and architectural mix will be preserved in the Supilinn district for coming decades and possibly longer.

In other parts of the world, gentrification began in the 1960s, but in Estonia it started in the last decades of Soviet occupation that ended in 1991. In the areas that were advantageously located near the city center and had inexpensive run-down buildings, the conditions were set for gentrification to occur. The real estate boom, which resulted from the country's economic development, also had an enhancing effect on this process. In many districts in Estonia (Supilinn, Karlova, Kalamaja, Uus Maailm, Rääma, Kassisaba, and Pelgulinn) the necessary economic conditions for gentrification existed. Gentrification causes the intensity of land use to increase (plots are split and new houses are built), and run-down areas are fixed up, and these can be seen as positive effects. However, since there is a flip side to every coin, too much reorganization can significantly alter the milieu, and the valued environment may practically disappear.

Investments that are made in areas with valuable milieus are often seen as positive, since they help to save the cultural heritage from destruction. However, modification that borders destruction is actually inevitable, because total renovation is also a form of destruction. A positive effect is the raised awareness among the residents. This becomes evident as more frequently old, original windows are restored, and wooden rather than plastic windows are installed. The improved financial situation of the residents makes it possible to use high-quality wood, instead of cheap plastic. On the other hand, a good financial situation also allows one to replace things that actually do not need replacing when making repairs. Moreover, a good financial situation also creates the need for more amenities and conveniences such as more parking spaces and street paving, for better traffic conditions. The negative effects are evident in the architecture of the new buildings. The new houses are not adapted to the area, they are characterless, and are not connected to the Supilinn district.

This case study, while set in Estonia, is not unique to the country. Many post-Soviet countries and even other countries where real estate prices have skyrocketed in the last decade, face similar circumstances. While the speculators and real estate developers stand to make significant profits, the existing area residents tend to lose their cohesive settlement. Too often, the existing infrastructure, such as roads, water and sewer capacity, cannot keep up with the accelerated rate of growth. Old, comfortable values and habits are destroyed as new development forces changes in infrastructure and development patterns. The pioneers, who settled in the neighborhood due to necessity and affordability, and made great efforts to make the area livable and characteristic to

their own values and community preferences, see the influx of new generations who appreciate the cohesiveness and value. This phase is in fact necessarily to breathe life into old places. However, sheer speculation and development based on proximity to areas of greater market demand could destroy the value of these special places. This case study highlights two major lessons for other similar communities. The first is to understand, acknowledge and prepare to notice gentrification and change as it is happening in the area. There is much that can be done before the neighborhood is changed beyond recognition. The second is the value of neighborhood organization and participation. The area residents need to come together as a unified voice to avoid piecemeal changes to development patterns and community values. This unified voice, or neighborhood association, has the power to change development policy at a higher level. Furthermore, a unified neighborhood that understands its values, is able to articulate them and create solutions to maintain and enhance them are seen as proactive players. When community character and values are at stake, market forces alone should not determine the future.

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