

## GREG CLARK'S SUMMARY THE SYMPOSIUM DAY

### EIGHT THEMES FROM WATER EDGE

So, we discussed living with the water and we talked a lot about housing, about equity and about place making. Nobody will forget, for example, Jürgen's very interesting words on equity and what you need to really achieve that.

We talked about using the water. We talked a lot about cleaning the water, ceasing to pollute the water, the health of the water, the biodiversity of the water and how we can animate the water – spend more time with it, and allow the water, in a way, to animate us.

Then we talked about reconfiguring the water. There was a conversation about catalysts and assets and repurposing things that weren't being used fully at the moment. We had a great conversation about unintended consequences and anticipating risks. We also talked about the uses and abuses of gentrification, if you remember. That was interesting.

And then we had this conversation about resolving dilemmas in the waterfront where we talked about a huge range of dilemmas from genealogical to environmental, from political to financial, from dilemmas that are really to do with institutions, to different dilemmas of geography and function and all of those things.

I think there have been some common themes that have come out of all of this.

- **Leadership** has been a big theme. Having leadership that has vision, can work through cycles, can advocate, can generate some kind of consistency seems to be important.
- Public policies and the **capacity of public bodies** has been a big theme. The complexity of water edge development needs to be married with the capability of the public sector to deliver on these big challenging projects. Under pressure, leaders have to have the ability to deploy assets well and to think about them thoughtfully.
- The third big theme is **systems** – infrastructure systems, water systems, land-use systems and how we get systems that are, on the one hand, flexible but also connectable. Not systems that operate separately.
- **New technologies** are helping development, whether it is convergence technologies in the environmental space creating the circular economy, or whether it is digital technologies and how they're used to integrate smart systems, or whether it's communication technologies that enable a different kind of conversation to occur. That actually technologies are our friend in this area if we figure out which technologies to use and how to use them.

- **Experiments are important**; remembering that where there's a problem, create some freedom, create some space for the tactical urbanism, the citizen-led initiative, create opportunities for people to find solutions, to quest for solutions or paths forward, rather than thinking every problem is solved with a policy or a law or a regulation or a programme or a big strategy. So, creating the space for experimentation has been key.
- Imperative for success are good processes, **a better conversation**, creating a different way of talking about what has gone wrong, what are the challenges, what's the opportunity of the future, how can we turn constraint into possibility.
- **Financing and value systems** are needed where, on the one hand, we need a public finance system which captures value and recycles it, and on the other hand, we need systems where those who benefit pay, those who experience costs are somehow compensated for those costs. A much more sophisticated system of internalising and externalising cost and benefit value.
- Theme eight, has really been this point about **reconnecting with the DNA of water**; understanding this kind of deeper history, this deeper character, the deeper patterns of both value, behaviour, custom, culture, conversation and life; that once you connect with that, it somehow is enabling of having a picture which enables us to look forward both in an optimistic way but with a longer term perspective.