Negotiating Ownership and Management of Public Open Space: How the TEP Ménilmontant Community Challenges Paris' Top-Down Urbanism

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Abstract

Paris has increasingly sacrificed public open spaces in lower-income areas for social housing construction. Open spaces that remain in the city consist of traditionally manicured, municipality-managed, tourist-centric parks and gardens with strict norms and few permitted activities. However, at one public open space the city targeted for development and began building on, known as the TEP Ménilmontant, a community mobilized against the construction and informally occupied the site. This paper asks how the community occupation, management, and use of the TEP challenge Paris' current restricted approach to planning public space. As the TEP seeks longevity in the face of their precarious status on the land, this paper envisions how their permanence might be ensured without the typical co-optation, subjugation, and limitations community-managed spaces oft undergo. Through participant observation and interviews with the TEP's main volunteers and community members, I have found that the TEP is combatting Paris' development-first planning approach through its claim for permanence, collective decision-making, resource leveraging, mutual aid, and flexible land uses. Municipal officials in support of the TEP cite the surrounding area's density and the ecological need for green space as reasons against municipal development. I argue that the robust social infrastructure of the TEP asserts a more radical reason: the benefits of collective management and shaping of public space, which include the TEP's uniquely high social diversity and strong network of community care and commitment. This community strength is lost when spaces are eliminated or softened in their radical acts by municipalities that prioritize capitalist relations of land use. Therefore, Paris must create an opening in its planning framework, as no solution to adequately sustain the TEP project currently exists within it. This project proposes a new land designation of "Protected Community Space," which relinquishes decision-making power to the community without them having to

purchase the land, and does not detail physical land use specifications. “Protected Community Space” is an envisioned application of zoning for land management outside of capitalist relations.

Introduction

Long considered one of the world’s leading tourist destinations, millions of visitors flock to the iconic sites of Paris each year. While internationally renowned museums and cuisine heavily contribute to this draw, the public spaces of Paris remain the city’s most recognizable and frequented attractions. From its wide, tree-lined boulevards to monuments like the Eiffel Tour, Paris’ public space imposes a special impression on its visitors. Despite the city’s strong focus on tourism, millions of people also call Paris home. For them, the impacts of mass tourism often cause a hindrance in their daily lives, such as short-term rentals crowding out the housing market and municipal planning decisions prioritizing the tourism economy over more local needs. Parisians, especially those from marginalized communities or low-income backgrounds, struggle to create and manage space in a city that often seems designed for the people who only pass through it. Moreover, while Parisians may enjoy the city’s most popular parks and gardens like any tourist, the municipality heavily restricts behavior and activities on these sites. No one can play soccer on the central lawn of the Jardin du Luxembourg, for example, never mind plant their own tomatoes there. These rules and norms that operate in the vast majority of Parisian public spaces, heightened due to the municipality’s quest to uphold its global image and reputation, therefore obstruct residents’ ability to form a more tangible, deeply-rooted relationship with their city and community. On that account, we may ask whether the municipality recognizes this disconnect between resident and public space as a problem and whether there are open spaces in Paris that residents feel able and empowered to shape.

In other global cities competing for mass tourism, such as New York City, spaces like community gardens have historically fulfilled this role. In these cases, communities have appropriated vacant lots and transformed them into allotment or collective gardening spaces to efficiently meet their immediate food, green space, and community needs. Through these methods, community gardens have offered an opportunity for residents to directly shape the landscape of the city they live in. But with limited space and strong government oversight, Paris has severely lacked these types of spaces. Moreover, in the last few decades, the municipality has largely restricted community gardens to operating within its own municipal program (City of Paris 2022). This program requires that organizations and communities wishing to start a community garden do so only on sites identified by the municipality, which have been limited to sites planned for development, usually in the form of new-build social housing (Benjamin 2020). The restriction to sites slated for development therefore prohibits the longevity of the gardens, as they must commit to dissolving or moving by the time development begins. In short, the municipality is bounding communities' ability to shape their public open spaces to municipal timelines, principles, and plans. Additionally, they have created an intense competition between building new social housing and keeping public open spaces, greatly favoring development. Significantly, this competition is primarily occurring in the more working-class, lower-income neighborhoods of Paris that already have the highest rates of social housing in the city (APUR 2023; Benjamin 2020). Moreover, the municipality has insisted on pursuing new construction as its dominant method of expanding the social housing stock, over other forms such as enforcing rent control or requisitioning unoccupied housing for affordable housing (APUR 2023). This top-down municipal approach places immense restrictions on resident involvement in planning and shaping public open space, but not without resistance.

Nestled on the border of the 11th and 20th arrondissements, two traditionally working-class neighborhoods, is one site that mobilized against a municipal decision to develop a social housing project on longstanding public open space. The TEP Ménilmontant, which serves as the name of both the physical site and the community itself, consisted of public sports fields from the 1940s until the municipality targeted the site for development in the early 2010s. After nearly a decade of subsequent community mobilization, the TEP community informally took the site over in 2019 by physically blocking construction, forcing the municipality to temporarily suspend the project. The social and physical infrastructure of the TEP has vastly expanded since its initial occupation. However, the TEP's occupancy is still precarious, as the municipality remains the technical owner of the site and has repeatedly renewed development plans. I have chosen to focus on the TEP as a case study, as the literature on community-managed public open space in Paris has been limited to the temporary community gardens the city has controlled. Moreover, the TEP has evolved to take on far more roles and functions than most gardens in Paris and than those described in community gardening literature (Torres et al. 2018). These functions will be outlined and analyzed in depth in the results section. Using site visits, participant observation, and interviews with the TEP's main volunteers and other site goers, this paper asks how the community occupation, management, and use of the TEP radically challenge Paris' current limiting, capitalist approach to planning public space.

Through this research, I have found that the TEP is combatting this approach through its claim for permanence, collective decision-making, anti-capitalist resource leveraging, mutual aid networks, and flexible land uses. Additionally, through official statements and comments made during city council meeting minutes, I have found that the municipal opinions against development on the site continue to reflect a restrictive form of top-down urbanism, as officials

in support of the TEP either co-opt the mobilization for their anti-housing agenda or limit their reasons to ecologically-based ones. With the latter finding, I argue that the social infrastructure of the TEP insists on a more radical counter to development than that proposed by supportive municipal officials, namely that cities must foster, rather than inhibit, a community's ability to collectively manage and shape public open space. The TEP's exercise of this ability, at current risk of being thwarted or limited as it continues negotiations with the municipality over land ownership, has thus far resulted in a strong community commitment to the land they care for and to each other. It has also fostered uniquely high social, economic, generational, and racial diversity within the community itself. This paper further asks how we might imagine an alternative strategy for the TEP to sustain the power of their project. However, though the TEP serves as a case study of a grassroots planning initiative in which positive community benefits have ensued, it is vital to note that there are not inherent just intentions nor outcomes in all community-led acts of planning. Thus, though this paper argues that Paris should support avenues for projects like the TEP to be maintained, this need is more contingent on the TEP's collective, diverse, open, and equitable management and uses than on the fact that the project is a community-led resistance effort alone.

Background and Context

In order to introduce the trajectory of activism regarding the occupation of the TEP Ménilmontant, it is necessary to situate the site within the political history and context of its surrounding neighborhood. The TEP is located on the border of the 11th and 20th arrondissements, on the northeast side of Paris. Technically, it is within the border of the 11th

arrondissement, which as it stretches further south and central, becomes more commercial and higher income (APUR 2023).

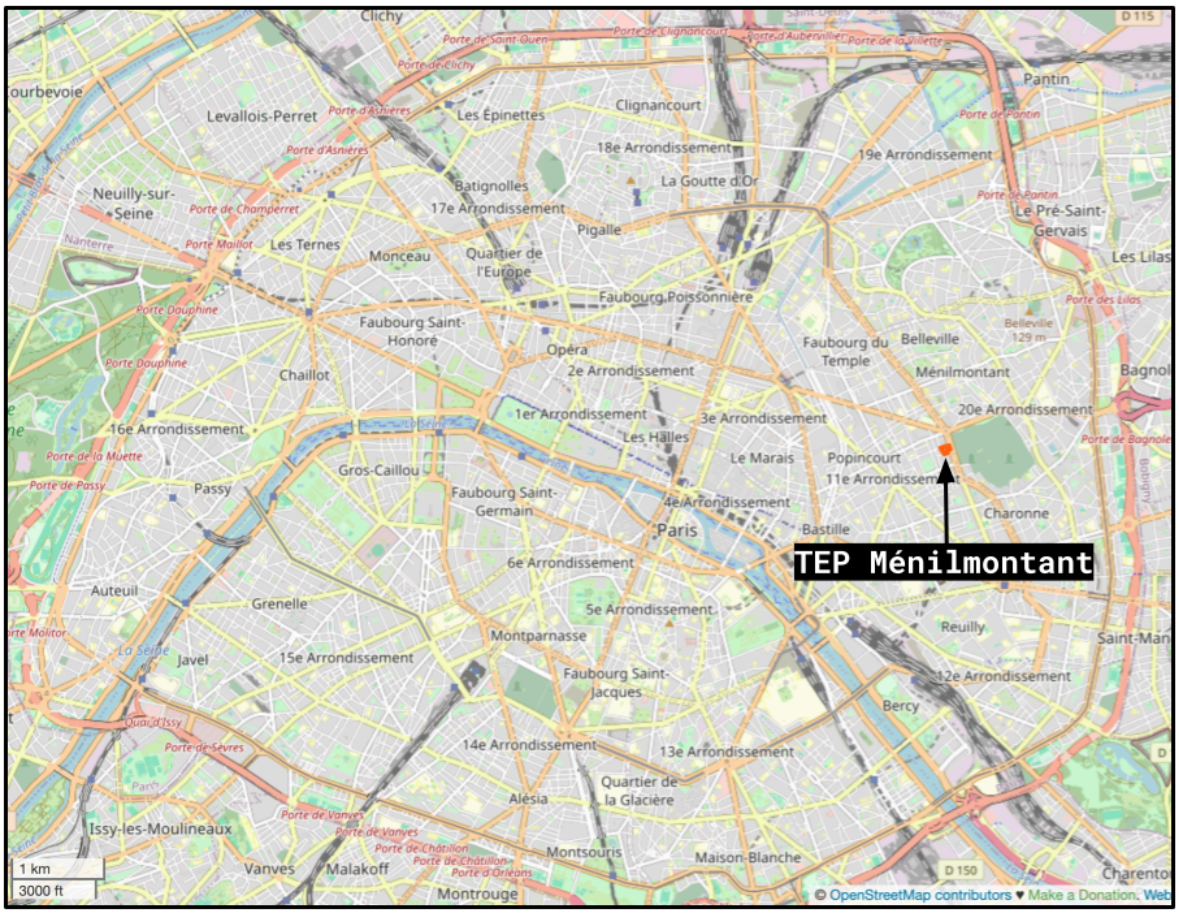


Figure 1. Street map of Paris. The TEP Ménilmontant is indicated by a red square and arrow with label. (OpenStreetMap 2023).

The neighborhood of the TEP is Ménilmontant, which has a well-known history as an area of working-class and immigrant activism. Though before its absorption into Paris in 1860, it primarily functioned as a vacation destination for wealthy Parisians, Ménilmontant became predominantly working-class during the era of Industrialization and has largely retained that demographic and identity. Ménilmontant's most notable event occurred during the 1871 Commune, a socialist and communard uprising in which citizens overthrew and ran the Parisian

government for over two months (Dodman 2021). The neighborhood served as an essential site of resistance against the French troops, and residents have proudly identified with this history and maintained the activist energy of the neighborhood through to the present. To this day, local establishments employ iconography harking back to the neighborhood's role in the Commune (Dodman 2021). Moreover, many of the major present-day protest routes traverse the Boulevard de Ménilmontant, the street in front of the TEP. In short, the traditional activist and working-class character of the neighborhood persists, even as its actual demographics and physical landscapes may be changing. As mentioned above, these changing landscapes are playing out through a competition for space, in which the municipality is targeting open spaces to build new housing developments in an attempt to address the housing crisis.

Throughout Paris, lower-income residents face rising housing costs, a shrinking housing stock, and the effects of gentrification, all resulting in an exodus for Paris' cheaper, but much more disconnected suburbs (Chocron 2022). For the purposes of this paper, gentrification is defined as the process in which a lower-income area with a dominant working-class population shifts demographic character as housing costs increase and wealthier people move in. Between 2002 and 2022, housing prices in Paris (combining purchases and rentals) increased by 211.9% (Marten-Pérolin 2022). According to the consumer price index, inflation within the same period was only 32% (Marten-Pérolin 2022). As of August 2023, Paris had the second-highest housing costs for tenants in Europe (Chocron 2023). These high costs and decreasing housing availability are leading to a declining population. According to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), between 2014 and 2020, Paris lost an average of 12,400 residents every year (Abran et al. 2022).

The national government and municipality's response to rising costs and moving residents has been to set high goals for ensuring social housing. In 2000, the national government passed the SRU Act, which requires municipalities above a certain population threshold to dedicate 25% of their housing stock to social housing by 2025 (Maaoui 2021).

Though Paris long failed to meet this goal, the municipality finally reached its threshold in 2023 with a ratio of 25.2% of housing units financed for social housing (APUR 2023). However, this share varies greatly by arrondissement, as the 20th has 40.6% of its housing stock dedicated to social housing while the 7th, for example, has only 2.3% (APUR 2023).

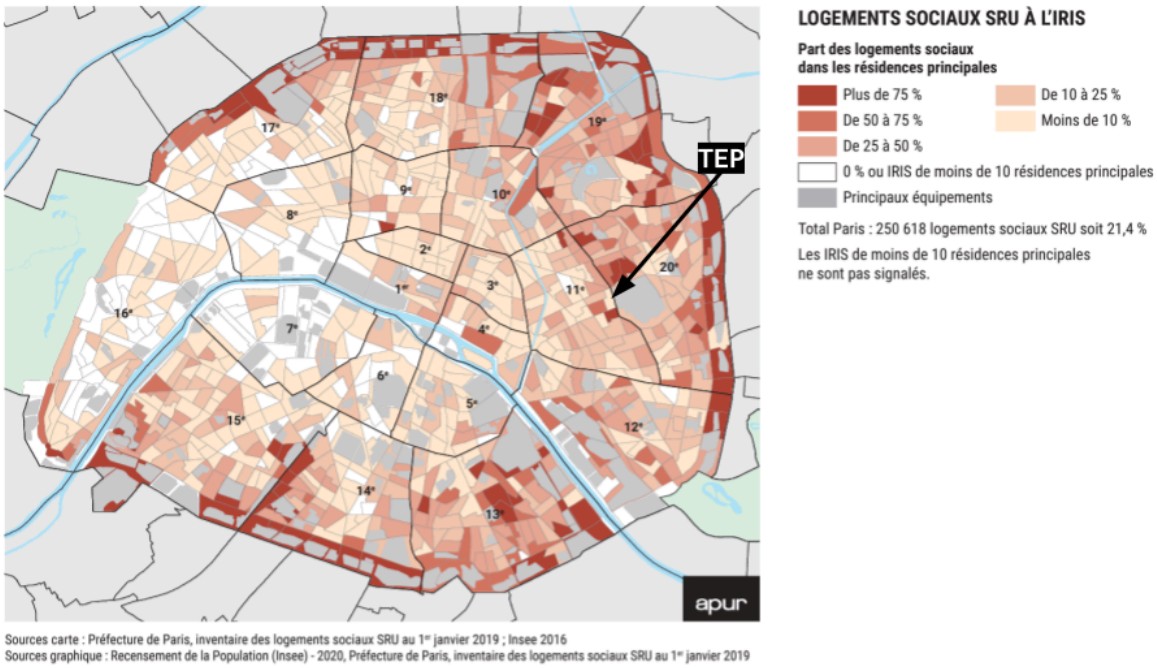


Figure 2. "SRU Social Housing in IRIS" - Percent of social housing in main residences, with the darkest red representing areas in which over 75% of units are social housing, and the white representing areas where 0% of units are social housing. The location of the TEP is indicated with an arrow. (APUR 2023).

Additionally, as evidenced by the continually rising housing costs outpacing inflation, it is clear that the municipality's efforts are not sufficient to meet housing needs. Notably, there is a

massive issue of non-compliance with rent control policies, in which both private and public landlords are exceeding the maximum allowed rent and finding loopholes in the municipality's policies (Chocron 2023). The lack of enforcement, coupled with a focus on new builds, has exacerbated housing affordability problems. Therefore, low-income residents and the municipality have different perspectives on how to resolve the crisis, with many residents pushing the municipality to focus more on rent control enforcement, dissolving short-term rentals, and increasing the affordability of the existing vacant stock than on new builds (Benjamin 2020). To the latter points, the municipality has recently put more focus on understanding the extent of unoccupied housing in the city. A December 2023 Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme (APUR) report, commissioned by First Deputy Mayor of Paris Emmanuel Grégoire, showed that the city had a net loss of 35,000 residences between 2011 and 2020 (APUR 2023). Though 37,000 residences were constructed, 72,000 were reported to be vacant, primarily due to those owning a second home in Paris and residing abroad. Moreover, though the municipality is beginning to place restrictions on AirBNBs, those only apply to official registrants with the municipality, and many don't legally declare their listing. APUR has reported a "very high rate of fraud" with AirBNBs in Paris, and an estimated 65,000 property discrepancy between those registered and those listed (APUR 2023). To address the unoccupied housing stock, which now comprises 20% of residential properties, the municipality has said they will continue to emphasize new builds, despite the limited availability of land, and will implement stricter taxes on second homes (APUR 2023).

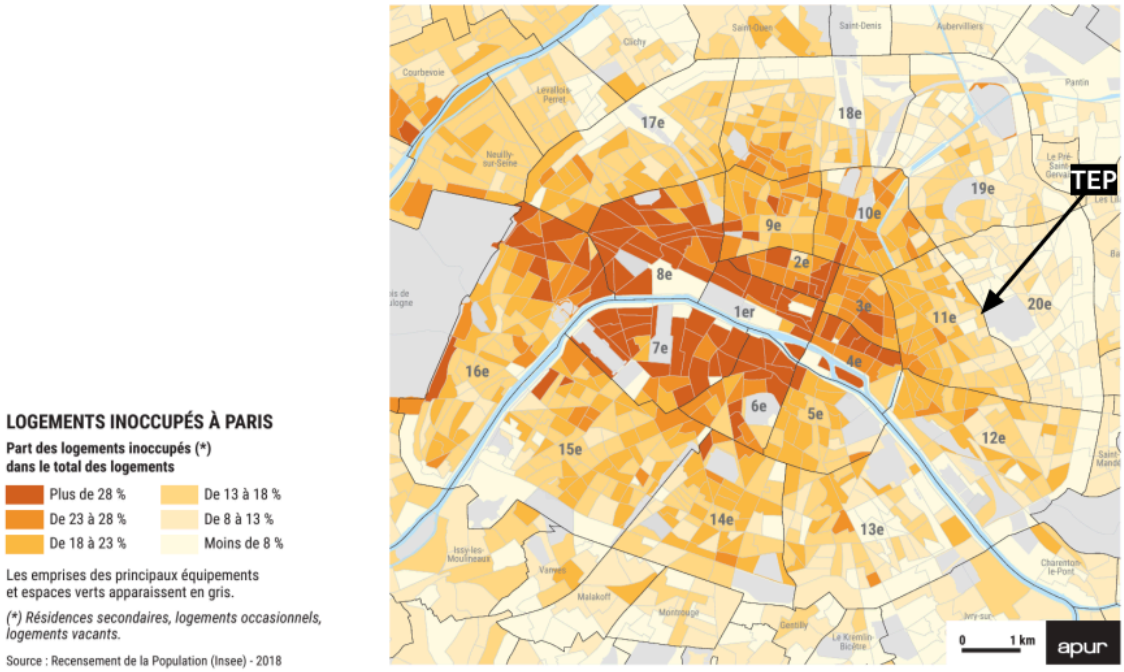


Figure 3. "Unoccupied Residences in Paris" - Percent of unoccupied residences out of total residences. The darkest orange shows areas where over 28% of residences are unoccupied, while the lightest yellow indicates areas where fewer than 8% of residences are unoccupied. "Unoccupied residences" include secondary residences, occasional accommodations, and vacant accommodations. The location of the TEP is indicated with an arrow (APUR 2023).

But their focus on an increase in taxation on unoccupied homes, rather than the prevention and requisition of them, is unlikely to be effective. Owners able to maintain multiple properties have been shown to meet the increasing costs, and may supplement by increasing the prices of their AirBNB rentals, for example (Thompson 2023). Moreover, the municipality's insistence on new builds, despite the vast existing stock, continues to bring resistance from residents.

Many of these asks come from Parisians living in social housing themselves or from those identifying as lower-income, but the municipality often mislabels dissenters to their development proposals as those akin to Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) residents, in an attempt to deflect criticism and soften calls for more radical housing policy (Culea-Hong 2021). This conflict rose to the fore during the municipality's plans for development at the TEP.

The TEP Ménilmontant

Since the 1940s, the TEP was known as such from its original name "Terrain d'éducation physique et sportive," denoting its identity as public sports fields. It is officially located at 49-53 Boulevard de Ménilmontant, within the 11th arrondissement of Paris. Across the street, on the other side of Boulevard de Ménilmontant, is the Père Lachaise Cemetery, which is located in the 20th arrondissement. For decades, the TEP served as a central community open space. The Père Lachaise cemetery is notably one of the only other public open spaces in this area, but as a cemetery, it is very strict about allowed behaviors and uses. In 2009, recognizing the importance of the site and its existing community draw, local youth organizations added allotment gardens in the greenspace surrounding the sports fields. But despite the community's clear connection to the space, as well as its enhanced value as one of the last remaining public open spaces in the area, the municipality began targeting the site for development in 2007 (Culea-Hong 2021). In 2011, former Mayor of Paris Bertrand Delanoë, in collaboration with housing developer Paris Habitat, officially proposed a nine-story housing complex for the site to address the city's need for affordable housing (Drago 2015). The designed complex consisted of 85 social housing units with a recycling center in its basement, and after recognition of the need for community consultation, added rooftop shared gardens and a gym (Paris Habitat 2021). But the community did not wish to solely be consultants on an already approved project. Rather, they expressed deep frustration at the elimination of one of their last remaining public spaces, the poor quality of the proposed development, and the lack of a more comprehensive housing policy that would legitimately address the crisis (Culea-Hong 2021). Primarily, they emphasized the importance of being able to flexibly use and shape the TEP. Using the site as an organizing space, the community activists—most avid TEP site goers—began mobilizing in 2012 against the project.

For four years, they held actions at the TEP, attempted to engage with the municipality in discourse, and worked to grow their coalition. Though demolition of the gardens and sports fields occurred starting in 2016, community activists persisted and employed a range of tactics to halt the development, including protests, public messaging, and speaking with council members. Through this organizing work, in which participants were trained in civil disobedience and occupation strategies, the strength of the community network of volunteers and residents grew. In May 2019, the project was officially suspended by both Paris Mayor Ann Hidalgo and the mayor of the 11th arrondissement, François Vaughlin (Hasse 2019). That month, the activists informally took over the site, despite a statement from Mayor Vaughlin that the proposal may return. Indeed, similar plans to develop the site have been reintroduced as recently as the summer of 2023 (Chaïeb 2023). But despite its precarity, the community at the TEP, now redefined as "Terre, Ecologie, Populaire" ("Land of Popular Ecology"), has built out a robust social and physical infrastructure at the site since May 2019. The purpose of this paper is to deeply explore this infrastructure and analyze its extent as a radical act against Paris' forced competition between housing and open space, in light of the uniqueness of the TEP's claim to permanence and the breadth of infrastructure itself.

Conceptual Framework

The TEP posits an exceptional case study to examine the rift in the planning framework that occurs when a community resists the impositions of capitalist planning by occupying a construction site, co-building a community project, and staking a claim for permanence. This exceptionalism is motivated by the limited range of literature regarding community-managed open space in Paris. The literature has largely focused on community gardens operating on

temporary timelines, through restrictions posed by the municipality, or on vacant, derelict land that is of no interest to city development plans. Moreover, given that community gardens in similar situations have been co-opted by other organizations, put under strict municipal regulation, or eliminated as an end to their precarity, the ongoing negotiations between the TEP and the municipality offer a profound opportunity to envision and propose an alternative strategy that would indefinitely sustain their collective management. Therefore, this paper primarily asks how the community occupation, management, and use of the TEP radically challenge Paris' current restrictive approach to planning public open space in order to understand what type of strategy is needed to maintain it. Through interviews with main volunteers and other site goers, as well as limited participant observation, I have found that the TEP is combatting the municipality's planning approach through its claim for permanence, collective decision-making, anti-capitalist resource leveraging, mutual aid, and flexible land uses. I argue that the benefits of the diverse social and physical infrastructure the TEP community has created assert a more radical reason for permanence than those given by municipal officials—which often remain in the framework of top-down decision-making—that the nature of the TEP's collective management and ability to shape public open space tangibly ought to be maintained. I further argue that maintaining this collective management, and potentially supporting similar management structures more broadly throughout the city, necessitates creating an opening in the urban planning paradigm. I propose that this opening takes shape through the creation of a new "Protected Community Space" designation. Rather than regulate specifications of land use, this designation would relinquish decision-making power over a public open space from the municipality to the community without a transaction, denote its community management, and support diverse and changing land uses.

Literature Review

Adequately understanding the extent to which the TEP Ménilmontant challenges Paris' community-marginalized approach to planning public open space requires situating this case study in several broader themes of urbanist literature. First, this review begins with an overview of the literature on community appropriation and occupation of municipal public space. This includes a discussion of prominent arguments made by leading public space scholars, including Lefebvre's articulation of citizens' "right to the city," the "death of public space" claim that arose in the 1990s, and the contemporary framework of "insurgent urbanism." The review then transitions into a discussion of how case studies and arguments on community occupation of public space in the literature have largely been limited to temporary or subsequently co-opted actions. In this paper, co-optation refers to the limiting of power of the original actors of a resistance tactic through the adoption of their space or action by a body with more political and/or financial power. Moreover, the majority of community occupied spaces are community gardens in their traditional form. Therefore, this review will move into a narrative of the history of community gardening, with particular attention to New York City. This is due to community gardens' roots in New York City, as well as to the prevalence of references to New York City in literature on community gardens in Paris and the relatively similar contexts of these two cities as major global tourist hubs. Thus, comparing the historical and potential municipal responses to community occupied spaces in these two cities creates a useful platform to envision future strategies for the TEP. Finally, this review covers the literature available on Parisian community occupied spaces—particularly community gardens. Through these themes, the TEP Ménilmontant emerges as a unique case study for research in contrast to existing scholarship,

which has often selected opposingly temporary, co-opted, or otherwise limited community occupied public spaces for study.

Community Occupation of Public Open Space

Public space, both historically and presently, has been widely regarded in the literature as the most important place for community collectivity and inclusivity in the urban realm (Hou 2010). Recent work posits "public spaces—sidewalks, streets, playgrounds, plazas, squares, parks, beaches, libraries, art museums, historic monuments, and more—" as "some of the most beloved, enjoyed, and cared about places. They are not just part of the physical fabric of the built environment, but vital for people to socialize, learn and play" (Low 2023). Moreover, scholars note that public space is an essential component of democracy and the resistance to exponential increase of private development (Henaff et al. 2001). But the literature is also largely in agreement that public space created through top-down planning with capitalist, neoliberal, and market-driven priorities restricts the community benefits it could foster. Therefore, urban studies scholars have long asserted the need for communities to make public space outside of, or in direct opposition to, this type of restrictive planning (Cilliers et al. 2014; Sandercock 1998). Most famously and frequently referenced, this assertion has been articulated through Lefebvre's idea of the "right to the city," a call for citizens to actualize their own claims on the creation of public space through radical and resistant tactics (Lefebvre 1968).

This call to act on and examine the "right to the city" exploded after concerns about the outright "death" of public space began surfacing in urban studies literature in the early 1990s. During this time, some scholars warned that increasing privatization of public space was further threatening the potential of citizen participation in city life and the possibilities for resistant

action (Sorkin 1992). Though most scholars argued quickly in response that public space was not undergoing complete elimination, they agreed to the clear threat of its co-optation and decline in flexibility to adapt to public mobilizations (Mitchell 1995).

Since the beginning of the 21st century, attention to the threat of co-opted or eliminated public space has given rise to case studies of "insurgent urbanism," or what could be considered a modern though albeit more applied framing of the "right to the city." Insurgent urbanism can be defined as "a mode of city making that is different from the institutionalized notion of urbanism and its association with master planning and policy making" and creates an intervention or appropriation of public space through radical acts (Hou 2010). Importantly, the literature on case studies that are defined as insurgent urbanism has almost entirely been limited to temporary actions and projects. Scholars argue that there are benefits to temporary collective action in public space, as the unpredictability of more mobile or temporary actions may pose a greater challenge to municipal and private forces attempting to quell collective action (Tarrow 1998). But mobile and temporary actions are often more likely to dissipate and less able to build and maintain a long-lasting social infrastructure that more deeply challenges the primary impetus for the initial action, namely capitalism and privatization in most cases (Kohn 2013). Moreover, within the literature on insurgent urbanism, specifically on community-occupied public spaces, the occupied site tends to be derelict or vacant land.

This is in stark contrast to the context of the TEP, in which the community took over a site actively undergoing construction. Furthermore, the rare projects that are not temporary have been formalized in at least one way: through a monetary transition of land ownership, direct subjugation under strict municipal regulations, or co-optation by a larger official organization (Groth et al. 2005; Hou 2010). There is a dearth of literature on projects that are currently

precariously occupying space and also looking for a strategy for permanence. Therefore, there are several gaps in the insurgent urbanism literature that studying the TEP addresses: lack of research on non-temporary projects, projects that arose out of direct resistance to development and then occupied a site, and projects that remain precarious and have not been formalized. Moreover, the TEP stands out as a case of a community-occupied public space whose main component is not a community garden, though it is an important part of their project. This review will now move into a deeper discussion of community gardens, however, as those are the dominant type of community occupied public spaces of similar case studies in the literature.

Community Gardening and Municipal Response to Land Occupation in NYC

There is a clear consensus within Western literature that the conception of guerilla and community gardening originated in the 1970s in New York City (Baudry 2012). As the city faced a grave fiscal crisis, many housing developments were either abandoned or destroyed, leaving thousands of vacant sites in otherwise dense areas (Staeheli et al. 2002). Though the city formally took ownership over these sites, for many decades they did not survey or manage them, leaving a window for spaces that fulfilled community needs, such as gardens, to materialize. The acts of ecological, social, and economic resistance realized through these original gardens proved powerful in building community after the dictatorial urban planning and renewal that had plagued NYC just a decade earlier, during the Robert Moses era (Baudry 2012).

But the capacity of these gardens to fly under the municipal radar soon deteriorated, as the Giuliani administration in the 1990s sought profits for the city through destroying the gardens and auctioning off the sites to developers (Staeheli et al. 2002). Though hundreds of gardens resisted such annihilation, many fell to real estate power operating through the municipal

government, while the rest, after extensive fighting for protection, were co-opted under larger organizations and land trusts (Staeheli et al. 2002). Though this incorporation ensured the survival of the gardens, it importantly relinquished much of their ability to shape their space, now finding themselves operating under the conditions of the municipal government and their parent organizations (Hou 2010). These conditions heavily restricted key operating functions of the gardens, such as accepted recreational activities, patron behavior, land uses, and opening hours.

In Staeheli et al.'s analysis of the trajectory of land ownership in community gardens, they emphasize the loss of community management through NYC's policy limitation of only allowing destruction or co-optation as the possible outcomes for community gardens. As the TEP has once avoided these outcomes, and aims to do so perpetually, it provides a unique case study on the possibilities of maintaining collective operation, as well as an opportunity to think through the role of the municipality in maintenance. Would an official land designation from the city, or direct protection under its guise, eliminate the diversity of the TEP project and their collective management? Moreover, though Baudry argues that community gardens tend to be a longer-lasting form of urban resistance compared to other methods of insurgent urbanism, this has not been the case in Paris due to its largely temporary and nomadic gardens. The TEP thus enters as an opportune case study to analyze the structure of their management at present and how this management may be maintained through different strategies.

Parisian Community Occupied Public Spaces

As stated, literature on community occupied public spaces in Paris has been greatly limited to studying community gardens. The trajectory of community gardens in Paris has been

marked by a transformation from “family gardens” of individual plots, as prevalent in the 20th century, to the 21st century’s largely nomadic (gardens that move from site to site) or temporary allotment and community gardens (Benjamin 2020; Demailly et al. 2017). Research on gardens in Paris ranges from comprehensive overviews of all existing spaces to focused case studies exemplifying the impacts of temporary gardening on the communities involved. In all cases, the authors emphasize the municipal government’s role in controlling and restricting the location, longevity, and use of community gardens in Paris. Demailly et al. state that in 2003, Paris implemented a program called *Main Verte*, in which non-profit organizations were allowed to start community gardens on vacant lots slated for development, so long as the organizations agreed to the destruction of the garden once development ensued (City of Paris 2022; Demailly et al. 2017). Though the organizations may request a subsequent lot, and the municipality will help assign one to them, the municipality is under no obligation to do so and need not maintain any “inventory” of available space for these nomadic gardens (Demailly et al. 2017). Benjamin focuses on a case study of a nomadic garden in Paris, the Goutte Verte, and argues that it operates as “an artificial form of top-down participatory urbanism” and ultimately does not address the root problems of the contrived competition between maintaining open space and the need for affordable housing in Paris (Benjamin 2020). Demailly et al. echo this sentiment, stating that this mode of community gardening is completely contingent on the will of the municipal government, strips the majority of agency away from the community, and leaves a major question of what may occur when there are no more vacant lots for garden associations to occupy (Demailly et al. 2017).

Though Demailly et al. claim that “no Parisian gardening social movement seems to have initiated any debate about alternative approaches,” this has since been made false by the TEP

(Demailly et al. 2017). As a site continuously negotiating its permanency with the municipal government, the TEP defies the greater landscape of nomadic community spaces in Paris by maintaining its claim to the land and seeking to maintain its powerful management of it.

The TEP's claim for permanence while maintaining the present structure of their project is also unique when compared to case studies of community occupied public spaces in other cities in Europe. First, these case studies focus on sites that as emphasized earlier, were derelict or vacant when occupied (Andres 2013; Groth et al. 2005; Le Xuan 2023). Moreover, the outcomes of the occupations of these sites have been limited to: paying rent to the municipality to formalize ownership over the site, becoming subject to strict municipal regulations, having to prove value to the municipality, co-optation by private forces or non-profit organizations, or elimination (Andres 2013; Groth et al. 2005; Le Xuan 2023). In response to these outcomes, scholars have articulated the need for a different strategy such as the possibility of "freeing zoning" or creating "free zones" (Groth et al. 2005). But proposals do not take the discussion further or explain what that might look like. Additionally, similarly framed "free zones" are an existing practice in some cities, but this zoning still often requires creating definitions and regulations of land use for sites designated as a unique zone. Therefore, the still precarious situation of the TEP opens an opportunity to think more deeply about a long-term strategy that maintains their project.

It is also important to note that community gardening as a traditional practice is heavily debated in the literature regarding its resistance to or participation in neoliberal urbanism, defined as urbanism in which municipalities prioritize capital and global competition over people and local needs. On the one hand, critical urban gardening, as some refer to it, acts as a resistance tactic to destructive global systems of capitalism, neoliberalism, and colonization, along with

resisting top-down urbanism that excludes community involvement (Certomà 2015). On the other hand, the literature notes that community gardens are often forced to operate under the terms of the municipal government or are swept up under larger organizations and land trusts, limiting the power of their "right to the city" (Ghose et al. 2014; Staeheli et al. 2002). The TEP has clung onto a realization of community gardening as a radical practice, breaking through the precedent outcomes of Parisian urban gardening and attempting to evade the pitfalls of community gardening that occurred in New York. Moreover, it is far too limiting to describe the TEP as only a community garden, as its actual garden is only a small part of its social and physical infrastructure. Though community gardens often take on more activities and roles than just a site for physical gardening, I later show that gardening is not even the TEP's primary function, and there is a severe lack of literature on community occupied public spaces that communities have developed in so varied and nuanced a way (Ghose et al. 2014; Torres et al. 2018).

Conclusion

As it actively negotiates its permanence and fulfills ever-increasing roles in community infrastructure, the TEP is challenging both precedent community space outcomes and Parisian top-down urban planning conceptions of how a community may shape, structure, and manage public open space. First, unlike the TEP, similar case studies occupied their sites when those spaces were vacant and not yet of interest to the municipality. Additionally, the TEP's seeking of longevity fills a gap in an insurgent urbanism literature that is heavily grounded in temporary actions. This claim for permanence thus offers an opportunity to strategize how it might be achieved without succumbing to the outcomes of other community occupied public spaces,

particularly the outcomes of municipal subjugation, co-optation, and elimination. Moreover, literature on community occupied public spaces that are not intentionally temporary has mainly focused on community gardens, especially through case studies in New York City, that have again largely resolved to either development or co-optation. Within the more specific context of Parisian community occupied public spaces, literature has concentrated on nomadic and temporary gardens through the *Main Verte* program, and the drawbacks this program poses by restricting community management and long-lasting impact. Consequently, studying the TEP expands on existing literature as its claims for permanence and maintained collective management, as well as its resulting breadth of social and physical infrastructure, far surpass the characteristics of most previously explored public open spaces.

Methods

As outlined in the review above, analyzing the TEP project addresses several important gaps in the literature on community-managed open spaces. However, despite its uniqueness, the ethnographic methods employed by the case studies referenced in the literature review are applicable to answer this paper's research question: how the community occupation, management, and use of the TEP challenge Paris' current methods of planning in an era of competition for space. Further, this paper asks the extent to which this challenge may be co-opted or diminished through the solutions available through the municipality. Moreover, this paper explores other possible strategies that could maintain their current project.

The single case study approach is also in line with precedent literature and offers multiple benefits for this research (Katz 2015; Yin 2009). Using a single case study provides space to go more in-depth about each operating measure, infrastructural component, and social practice of the TEP in relation to their context. I am able to provide more detailed descriptions and

interpretations of each (Yin 2009). It also allowed me to spend more time pursuing each of my ethnographic methods, as opposed to spreading time out in cross-case study comparison.

I primarily used the ethnographic methods of interviews and participant observation to address my research question and performed content analysis on my collected data. These ethnographic methods are also used in the literature on similar case studies (Andres 2013; Benjamin 2020; Ghose et al. 2015; Groth et al. 2005; Le Xuan 2023). This combination of methods proved key in attaining first-hand and nuanced perspectives on how the site is presently used and managed, from the voices of the most involved volunteers and sitegoers themselves. My first ethnographic observations were informally conducted over one week in February of 2023, before the official start of my research. These observations were made for a separate project and were my first interactions with the site. After these observations and the related project were completed, I selected the TEP as the subject of my thesis, and thus the case study to explore the above questions, due to the uniqueness of its history within Paris and present use. I attained funding through the Charles M. Gray Research Fellowship grant to return to the site in September of 2023 to conduct interviews and collect observational and photographic evidence.

Interviews

Between September 1st and September 7th, I held three structured interviews with the main volunteers of the site. These interviews were audio recorded in a combination of French, Spanish, and English. I later transcribed them all into English. To protect the identity of the volunteers due to the legal concern of their potential involvement in the initial occupation of the site and its continued informal use, no identifying information, such as names, was recorded, and

responses were combined to prevent attribution to a single volunteer.[1] I also held unstructured, non-recorded discussions with 15 other volunteers and sitegoers. These conversations will be described to the greatest extent possible from notes written from my perspective after they were held. For both the structured and unstructured interviews, verbal consent was obtained by the participants and all were made aware of the purpose of my research.

Participant Observation and Documentation

During my unstructured conversations with more casual volunteers and sitegoers, I was invited to participate in volunteer activities at the site, including helping to repair a fence, boardwalk, and signs. I was also allowed to review one person's Telegram app on their phone, which hosts all group chats with volunteers for communicating about the site. Additionally, I attended the beginning of one of their weekly decision-making meetings. Unstructured conversations continued throughout this work, and these experiences contributed greatly to my observations of the site's use and management. In addition to direct conversations with volunteers and sitegoers, I also used photos to document the physical infrastructure of the site. These photos do not include identifiable sitegoers. Additionally, I documented resources and materials available in the site's information center that are not available online, including a map of the site, the TEP's handbook for guiding principles and processes, and a mural of the site's history. I also gathered significant information on TEP programming through their social media postings on Facebook and Instagram.

[1] All information gathered through both structured and unstructured interviews, limited participant observation, and photographic documentation is stored in a secure Box drive to further protect the identities of those involved.

Traveling to the site and conducting these interviews required particular skills and preparation. First, I attained the basic level of cultural competency required to conduct these interviews by studying abroad in Paris for over four months (collectively) before my official research. Moreover, I attained an essential base knowledge of the TEP through my initial project on the site. These experiences and prior research, along with studying French and completing official IRB training, allowed me to appropriately conduct these interviews and interact with the site.

To fully answer my first research question, I supplemented the above information by cataloging newspaper articles, blog posts, social media posts, and comments written about the site to create a clearer timeline of the political struggle over the site and the opinions and organizational tactics occurring pre-site occupation in 2019.

My second question asks what type of strategy is needed to maintain the TEP project, and whether that strategy is presently offered by the existing urban planning framework. This required an understanding of both the directly proposed strategies by institutional actors and unproposed strategies that are nonetheless available through the municipality. Notably, I did not directly engage with or interview any institutional actors. This was an intentional decision to not disrupt the delicate negotiations and relationship between the TEP community and the municipality. Therefore, to achieve the perspectives of institutional actors, I obtained and organized official written statements from party leaders and municipal officials, as well as the architects and developers involved in the initial proposed housing development. I additionally identified, clipped, and transcribed relevant city council meetings in the years 2018 and 2019 that addressed and/or voted on the development conflict at the site. Content analysis of these written and oral statements served to outline the evolving positions of different parties in relation to the

TEP. Moreover, I used the Ville de Paris' 2023 Paris Land Use Plan[2] as a central piece of data in this research. Through content analysis of this plan and accompanying parcel documents for the TEP, I identified the relevant land designations available to open spaces in Paris and evaluated their respective regulations. My identification and synthesis of the opinions and policies provided through these sources generated the robust understanding of the municipal perspectives on the TEP as well as Paris' planning mechanisms needed to thoroughly address my research questions.

My use of ethnographic methods and documentary review as the primary methodologies for my research produces a few limitations. First, my total number of interviews was relatively small, particularly regarding my recorded, structured interviews with the main volunteers. The numerical extent of these interviews was limited by the length of my research trip and my inability to return for further interviews. Moreover, my interviews and conversations had a sampling bias. I primarily spoke with sitegoers and volunteers who were most comfortable speaking in English, though a mixture of languages was used. Additionally, as I engaged in some participant observation through volunteer work, I primarily spoke with volunteers as opposed to non-volunteers. As stated previously, this research is also limited by its choice to not engage with institutional actors. Though organization and analysis of written and oral statements have precedence in the literature as substantive methods, they are not able to reach the intimacy and detail of perspective often achieved through direct interviews.

[2] Recorded city council meetings, official municipal statements, land use plans, and parcel documents are all available on the City of Paris website.

Results & Discussion

The primary research question of this paper asks how the community occupation, management, and use of the TEP are challenging Parisian planning that has created a competition between public open space and housing development. Through analysis of participant observation and interviews with volunteers and community members of the TEP, I aim to show how the TEP operates as an alternative to a capitalist framework of public space planning and development. Moreover, I explore the TEP's practices of interdependent relations between humans and land as visionary acts that serve as both a radical present and an imagined future for the broader city.

The following results and analysis are presented in three primary sections: deeper findings of the occupation of the site and accompanying municipal responses during this trajectory, an overview of the management structures at the TEP, and descriptions of its physical and social use.[3] Each section is analyzed through the lens of resistance to the restrictions of the current Parisian urban planning framework. As it stands, the municipality retains all legal ownership over the site. Despite its new proposal to designate the site as a "Protected Green Space" through the Paris Local d'Urbanisme (PLU), the municipality is still at liberty to propose new developments on the site (Maire de Paris 2020). Therefore, the management and use of the TEP may not be protected under this designation. Moreover, this designation comes with specific land use regulations. As such, I explore the possibilities of creating a new land designation—entitled "Protected Community Space"—that attempts to better preserve the TEP's diverse uses and users.

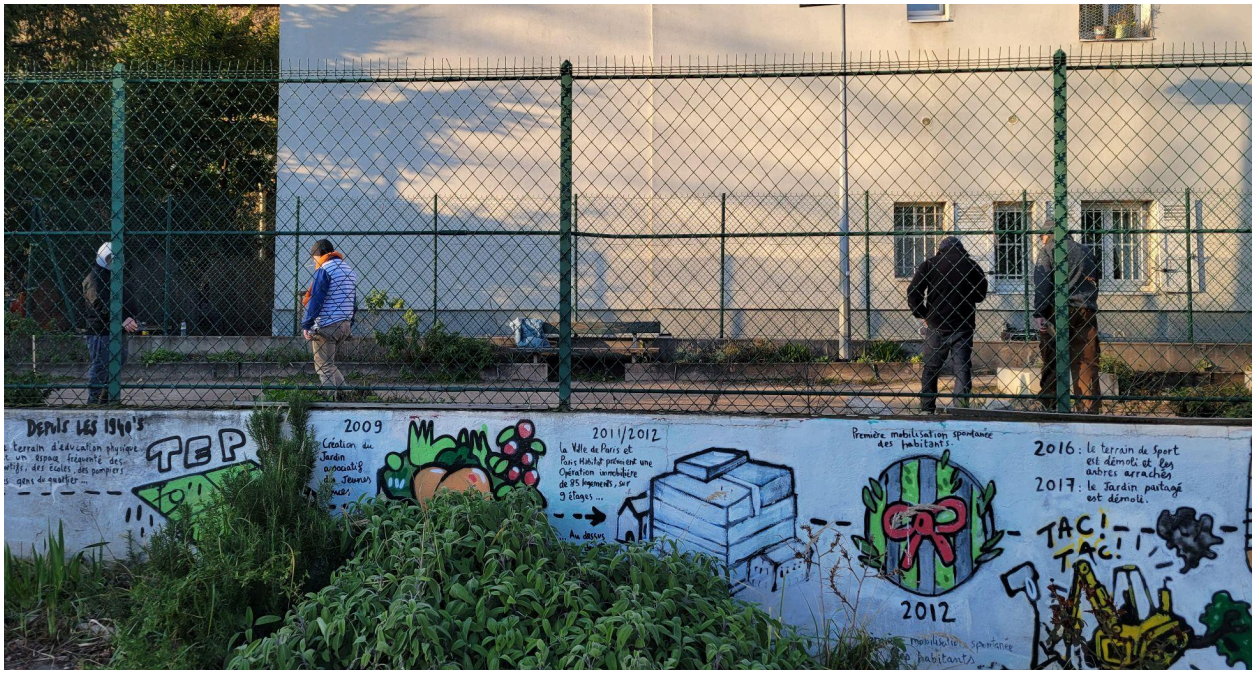
[3] As mentioned in the preceding Methods section, the data is heavily composed of quotes and information gleaned from interviews with those at the TEP. Notably, all testimonies from those interviewed at the TEP were recorded and presented anonymously, and have been combined as to not attribute a narrative to one identifiable person. Quotes from elected and municipal officials from public newspaper articles and publicly accessible city council meeting minutes and statements will be attributed to the true speaker.

Occupation

This paper provides a preliminary background on the history of the TEP Ménilmontant in the preceding Background and Context section. In this section, I intend to enrich that brief explanation with the first-hand perspectives of the TEP volunteers, municipal officials, and architects and developers of the housing project. First, I outline a timeline of the TEP from the first proposal of the housing project to the occupation of the site in May 2019.

Date	Action
2011	Mayor of Paris Bertrand Delanoë and developer Paris Habitat **officially propose** the nine-story social housing project.
2012	Mobilization of the local residents begins.
12/31/2014	Paris Habitat releases a contract notice for building on the TEP.
2016[4]	The municipality demolishes the sports fields.
2017	The municipality demolishes the existing community garden, known as the Jardin des Jeunes Pouces (Garden of Young Thumbs).
Spring and Summer 2018	The municipality permits a temporary techno concert company to use the space for parties six days of the week; not open to the public.[5]
Summer 2018	Coalition of organizations[6] file an appeal against the project; the appeal is rejected.
October 6th, 2018	Around 100 gather at the site to protest the development (Hasse 2018).
December 11th, 2018	The project is voted on again at the Conseil de Paris. They reject the development and align with the coalition's call to designate the site as a "Protected Green Space."
Early 2019	Despite the latest Conseil de Paris vote, the municipality begins construction.
January 19th, 2019	France Nature and the EELV[7] party send a letter to the municipality and Paris Habitat asking for postponement of the project due to threats to protected species.[8]
February 19th, 2019	Activists gather at the TEP to form a human chain to block the arrival of the construction equipment.
April 8th, 2019	Activists gather at the TEP to physically block an excavator from working.
May 5th, 2019	The local residents and coalition of organizations informally take over and occupy the TEP.
May 12th, 2019	Community members gather at the TEP to imagine its future.
May 29th, 2019	Mayor Anne Hidalgo officially pauses the project; 11th arrondissement mayor François Vaughlin states the project may return in another form (Hasse 2019).

[4] When the sports fields were demolished on the main level of the TEP, one volunteer claims that all that was left was a red jump square, which remains there today.
[5] One volunteer noted that while the techno music company was using the space, it caused major disruptions to the surrounding community. Additionally, they stated that two bodyguards stood at the entrance, "so if you were poor or not well dressed, you couldn't go in."
[6] The local and environmental organizations comprising the activist coalition included, at varying times and levels, the following organizations: Friends of the Earth Paris, SOS Paris, France Nature, Respiration Paris 15, LaChaise En Action. This coalition also included local residents and community members.
[7] The EELV (Europe Écologie les Verts) is the green party/party of ecologists in France. In English, they are known as Europe Ecology – The Greens.
[8] The letter states that proceeding with the project would violate environmental code, as exemptions were not made for the project in advance.



Figures 4, 5, & 6: Mural of an abridged version of the timeline of the TEP, along an inside wall on the site. Through this mural, it is clear that the activist trajectory of their organization and occupation of the site is of importance to the TEP community. Photos taken by the author on 2/15/2023.

Importantly, no development had been built on the site in all of official Parisian history when the housing project was first proposed. As one TEP volunteer noted, "you can see really old plans of Paris. Since always, it was an open space." Adding to its uniqueness, the TEP is the

last undeveloped site in the 11th arrondissement (Paquier 2019). But the city deemed the project necessary to boost the amount of social housing in the arrondissement, and this type of development is in line with the municipality's focus on new construction to meet targets. As stated prior, Paris has a current goal to have social rental housing comprise 30% of its public housing by 2030 (Apur 2023). Social housing is a program that subsidizes rent costs for low-income residents and aims to ensure their housing. As of September 2023, the 11th arrondissement had 14.9% social housing, while the arrondissement that the TEP neighbors, the 20th, had 40.6% social housing (Apur 2023). The mayor of the 11th arrondissement, François Vaughlin, stated that this project sought to reduce the number of people pushed out by high housing prices into the suburbs, or "banlieues," as they are commonly referred to. The developers of the project, Paris Habitat, also claimed that the land was "under-exploited," to which the architect Vincent Lavergne concurred noting that "when Paris has land, it must for economic and social reasons *make it as profitable as possible*" (Lavergne 2023) (emphasis added). Therefore, for the municipality and its developers, utilizing this open land for new construction and attaining the economic profit involved in that choice proved uncontroversial.

But the community at the TEP, then the "Terrains d'Éducation Physique," as well as other residents, immediately pushed back against the project. This prompted the developers and architects to start a consultation process with public meetings and participatory workshops to learn more about resident perspectives on the project and address some of their concerns. They paid particular attention to the coalition and the EELV's (ecology party) concerns over the reduction of green space through the project and thus revised the plans in several ways (Lavergne 2023). Importantly, throughout the trajectory of resistance to development, the EELV party worked closely with the environmental coalition and helped mobilize residents. David Belliard,

head of the environmental group at the Conseil de Paris and member of the EELV, was one of the most outspoken municipal officials against the development. Therefore, there was significant political pressure behind the coalition's demands that led to changes in the proposal. First, the developers added green spaces to the plan including a "planted promenade, shared gardens, and green terraces" (Paris Habitat 2021). Moreover, they designed a sports field/gymnasium to meet the recreational needs of residents.

In the context of these revised plans, media and the municipality labeled the residents who continued to push back against the project as "bobos," or the bohemian bourgeoisie, using ecological concerns as a cover to hide resentment towards an increase of low-income people in the neighborhood (Culea-Hong 2021). On some grounds, this claim was legitimate, as conservative parties were quick to co-opt the activist coalition fighting against the development for the very reason of preventing social housing (Chaïeb 2023).

But for the community members and organizations legitimately involved in the mobilization against the project, resistance to the proposal and its revisions came about for different reasons. First, the volunteers recall that the redesign for the project put the garden on the roof, which would have heavily limited its access and visibility. Moreover, the sports field was to be built underground, raising similar access concerns (Lavergne 2023). That sports field would have also operated like a gymnasium, in which participants would have to register their presence and use of equipment. Community members also expressed that the revisions did not follow through on all of the commitments made during the community consultation of the project. Therefore, despite stated efforts, the project did not attain the character of the original TEP space nor the future wants of the community: as one volunteer put it, the proposal "was not

really green, it was not really open, and the idea of adding more social housing in the 11th arrondissement is complex."

To that last point, the community members and volunteers made clear that they are not at all opposed to expanding social housing. But they note that statistics of social housing and particularly, Mr. Vaughlin's aims to increase the percentage of social housing in the 11th, are more complicated than they appear. For example, the TEP is directly adjacent to the 20th arrondissement, which has significantly higher rates of social housing. Moreover, there are differences in social housing density within the 11th itself. One volunteer gestured to the buildings surrounding the TEP while stating:

> The parts here, there, there, are full of social housing. It's more than the requirements you need in the law. And in the south of the arrondissement, it's less than the law. So when they decide to put social housing here it's not about mixing people. They put it in the places where there is already the most social housing.

A large portion of the volunteers and community members at the TEP live in the surrounding social housing themselves. They also noted that the city favors development projects such as new housing over more systemic changes to the housing system. One volunteer voiced that "there are a lot of places around [the 11th] arrondissement where there are empty spaces to dwell, already constructed. AirBNB, and people who have housing in another municipality and have a place here," have left swaths of the housing stock lying vacant for much of the year. That volunteer continued, stating that "in the newspaper, it sounds good to put a rich neighbor against poor people. But we are not that [rich]. And we are not against housing."

The final major contention that the community had with the project was the stripping of the last remaining open space in the neighborhood, both for ecological and social reasons.

According to the volunteers, the final proposal would have built on 90% of the site's 10,000m2 grounds. They cited the intense density of development within the arrondissement, and the increasing threat of consequences from the urban heat island effect as Paris further "concretes." They also recalled lamenting the possibility of losing a site that was adaptable and open for all to use, already had strong community ties, and provided a place of authentic diversity in an often segregated capital. That existing community network, supported by the EELV party and ecological organization coalition, made their resistance tactics stronger, larger, and more frequently deployed. Thus, even as development began, the community mobilized several times to physically block the construction. Referring to May of 2019, one volunteer states that:

> We decided to occupy the place. We opened the fence, and we were against the machine. Even as it was starting to dig. And since [the time] we stopped it, we are here taking care of the place.

But this occupation of the site has been altogether informal, as the municipality retains ownership over the parcel and its use (Ville de Paris 2023). Moreover, though the original project has been abandoned, other proposals for development on the site have arisen. As part of a 2020 mayoral campaign promise, Mayor Ann Hidalgo proposed a temporary shelter for unhoused immigrants for the site (Chaïeb 2023). As recently as July 2023, this proposal has resurfaced. The revival of this plan comes even after the site was proposed to receive "Protected Green Space" status from the draft PLU in June 2023. However, this designation is still subject to approval by the Conseil de Paris at the end of 2024, and as seen prior, the municipality may continue to posit the TEP as an exploitable space for housing (Maire de Paris 2020). Ian Brossat, current Senate member of the Communist Party and deputy mayor of housing and accommodation, was quoted in a July 2023 news article stating that "if you want there to be

fewer people outside, there must be more accommodation places, it's as simple as that. It is a plot which will be perpetuated as a public garden and at the same time, you have the possibility of creating these 30 [units for] accommodation" (Chaïeb 2023). When questioned about the potential of this proposal to take shape, the community members reiterated that they "are not against the fact that we need a lot of places to house them. We need places to house them. But at the same time, they cut all the budgets from the associations that house people." One volunteer continued, disclosing that they "are in contact with a lot of [housing associations] and they say, this year, they had to put a lot of people in the streets who they already housed because they do not have enough money. [The municipality] cut like 10% of the budget of these associations." Though the volunteers and community members highly doubt the mayor will follow through on this project, due to the value system of the TEP project some assured that "it's okay what happens," as one central tenant of the TEP itself is to be a resource to unhoused people.

Nonetheless, the TEP project seeks a way out of its present precarity. Though they believed they had achieved a level of security in the site through the draft PLU designation as a "Protected Green Space," the municipality still labels the site as one with high potential to fill social housing needs and may not hesitate to reintroduce or propose new plans. Therefore, due to the nature of the TEP project and the insistence of the municipality to pursue new housing developments, this research suggests there is not an appropriate resolve to protect the TEP within the existing urban planning framework. The radical embodiment of the TEP is further articulated in discussions of its management structure and practices.

Management

Analyzing the subtleties of the TEP management structure is pivotal both to understand its diverse uses and to outline the radical stakes of sustaining this project. First, the TEP project uses a non-hierarchical and collective management structure for the site. Notably, the dynamics of their management are not divulged on their social media or through news articles about the site. However, all participants in my conducted interviews were candid about their operations and procedures. Moreover, there is a handbook of procedures for the site inside of their central information and recreational shelter.

All volunteers are quick to state that there is no head leadership of the site and no designated lead volunteers.[9] They note that the site is completely open to all who wish to participate, and all are welcome to co-construct the TEP project no matter if they have been there one day or if they've been coming since before the proposed development in 2011. However, newcomers may not immediately be privy to the ins and outs of the volunteer structure. The TEP primarily uses Telegram group chats to coordinate responsibilities, asks, and abilities. In the general chat, TEP Vert, there are 155 people. One of the volunteers I spoke with went through their phone to show me the different groups that exist under the main TEP group, including one chat for communicating about the hens, one for compost, and one for construction, among others. The volunteers stated that there are around 40 people involved in at least one of the subgroups. In the main chat, volunteers are able to communicate issues, discuss tasks for a certain day, ask for help, and introduce project proposals. Issues not resolved in the chat and proposals are put on the agenda for the weekly meetings, which take place on Saturday evenings. Notably, using a social media app for primary communication needs may not be accessible to all, especially older

[9] However, there are only about five volunteers primarily responsible for external social media and general media communications. These volunteers have no official title, but are perceptibly the most involved volunteers and have been involved with the site since at least the initial occupation.

members of the TEP or those without a personal device. Though some information is available within the information center, this method of communication may serve as a limiting factor to participation.

The structure of the weekly meetings exemplifies the radically collective structure of the TEP project. As stated prior, the weekly meetings are open to anyone who wishes to join. Within these meetings, the agenda items are addressed, but additional ideas for events or projects for the space may be proposed as well. They use a consensus decision-making structure to approve ideas. Therefore, when there is any dissent, it will be worked through to find a resolution. As one volunteer stated:

> It's a public meeting, everyone can come. It's not about getting a majority; it's always if no one is against it, we do it. It's consensus. If you do not agree, you have to say why you do not agree, and we have to find a point of meeting until everyone is okay.

The TEP project thus moves beyond the structure of democracy to enact a more relational vision: consensus. This practice often requires tougher, deeper, longer conversations and relationship building. The volunteers often present at these meetings acknowledge that tensions undoubtedly arise in this process, but what is prioritized is that everyone has a legitimate stake and power in "co-constructing" the TEP project. Though these levels of power may not be wholly equal, as seniority may play a natural factor, both the intentions and determined processes align with this goal.

In creating such a non-hierarchical and collective space, reimaginings of community safety are also produced. The written handbook in the information center encourages verbal conflict resolution between community members. In the event of physical aggression, they again

promote collectivity, prompting one to ask for help from others to mitigate the situation. Finally, the handbook states that if one feels very unsafe, they must notify the TEP Telegram group, or ideally find a person in the group to communicate through if they are not yet part. The handbook also asserts that one should only call the police if the person causing harm is armed, stating, "do not call the police if the *collective can handle the situation alone*" (emphasis added).

These practices of safety are different from the institutionally policed and surveilled parks and gardens populating the rest of the capital, and many other cities such as New York City. Instead of policing, the TEP project calls for collective accountability to one another outside of carceral systems. This may produce discomfort and require hard work on behalf of all participants to have difficult conversations with one another, but is ultimately a radical act against the Parisian urban management paradigm that often polices behavior, people, and use in public space. Moreover, the TEP community has made it clear what the stakes are: they note that if a major, unresolved, or police-involved event occurred at the site, the municipality could use that as leverage against the site to dispossess the community. This concern further strengthens the argument that the TEP requires a new strategy to legitimately sustain their project without municipal threat.

Additionally, the collective and just underpinnings of this practice of community safety are reflected in the resulting use and social infrastructure of the TEP project.

Use

The various physical and social components of the TEP are a direct result of the collective management and care volunteers and community members have put into the site. Though the original, pre-development TEP was limited to sports fields and a small community

garden, the TEP of the present day boasts a plethora of flexible land uses and programming. These various land uses are key to understanding why the TEP does not fit within the current planning framework: its diverse uses do not neatly fall under one definition of a space, such as the obligations for a “Protected Green Space" or a “Protected Open Space,” outlined in the following “‘Protected Community Space’ Designation” section.

Moreover, as described in the narrative below, the social infrastructure that has been built through the project heightens the stakes of its longevity. Community members are creating intimate relationships with each other and with the land they are shaping, resulting in a uniquely socially diverse, locally oriented space that stands out in a tourist-heavy, often segregated global city.

Physical Infrastructure

Gesturing to the wooden structures spread across the site, one of the volunteers involved in much of their construction announced to me that “all of what you see is handmade.” After the occupation in May 2019, community members immediately began crowdsourcing materials to shape the present physical infrastructure of the TEP. Some materials were harvested from equipment that had not yet been destroyed at the old sports field, such as the metal benches and the still-existing shower. Most, however, come from facility scraps or individuals giving out free materials. For example, the volunteers are often actively looking online for people giving out free metals, textiles, and plywood. Additionally, the volunteers note that the community members at the TEP are connected to different industries, for example to the waste cycle, and they are sometimes able to retrieve materials through their jobs. Wood for the information center came both from online and leftover fire resistant wood from an exhibition. Highlighting the

TEP's role in diverting waste for their uses, one volunteer noted that "generally exhibitions use [the wood] for one event and then they throw it. We picked it up."

Figure 7: Picture of participants at the TEP sitting near the central information center. Photo taken by the author on 2/15/2023.

Those involved in the physical construction of the site note that they have built the TEP's infrastructure to be in line with the accessibility regulations and fire codes of the municipality. The entrance is wheelchair wide, and the paths, central grounds, and information center are all wheelchair accessible. Though no official municipal auditor has come to validate the specifications, as one must pay and must be the owner of the site to have that done, the community members note that the benefits of this intentional accessibility exist nonetheless.

Moreover, the variety of seating and structures serves to accommodate a wide range of abilities and ages. There are benches at different heights, log stools, tables, and chairs of various shapes. Shade structures also aim to provide heat relief and comfort. In all, the physical infrastructure at the TEP demonstrates how its collective and open management structure allows for diverse needs to be voiced and met. The diversity of structure and ongoing construction also reestablish the importance of the community's ability to flexibly adapt the space.

Figures 8 & 9: Shade structures and seating arrangements pictured throughout the TEP. Photos taken by the author on 9/05/2023.

Ecological Projects

The TEP project as a whole is an ecological project, but laden within are also micro relationships of reciprocity between humans and more-than-human others. First, the community had to quickly reconfigure the ground structure when they initially occupied the site, as the ground was intensely dense. One reason for this is that the street between the TEP and the Père Lachaise cemetery used to be the border of Paris, on which there was a wall. When the wall was taken down hundreds of years ago, much of the stone remained in the vicinity of the old border

and has been found in the ground of the TEP. The second, more recent reason for the impermeable ground is that the TEP was previously used as a space for waste dumping, in which trucks would drive in, mat, and thus densify the soil. To address this density of the soil, the volunteers had to slant the new sports fields to drain water into the garden area, which is markedly below the height of the sports field. Additionally, they created holes throughout the grounds for water to be collected in case of heavy rains. Through these changes, they have been able to successfully reinstate the collective garden, plant an orchard of trees constituting a mini "forest," and create opportunities for future ecological projects. Moreover, one of the most notable parts of the site is its highly complex composting system.

The proposal to add a composting system was born out of the collective planning process, and is one of the most symbolic components of the site, as the volunteers note that they are "making earth" through this process of regeneration. In the beginning, the soil from the compost made it possible to revegetate the entire site after construction killed any remaining plants and trees. Now, the compost is a key piece of infrastructure not just for the TEP, but for the neighborhood as a whole. Hundreds of households collect food scraps to deposit at the TEP compost, which is open 24/7. It includes four metal bins to collect the initial deposits, and six wooden bins (with rodent-resistant finish) to hold waste after potential contaminants have been sorted out. Once in the wooden bins, the compost goes through a long process before it is used to replenish the garden and orchard. The compost begins in bin 1 and then is transferred to each subsequent bin every two or three days. This requires an extensive amount of work on behalf of the volunteers. As reported by my interlocutors, the compost Telegram group is one of the most active. But again, the volunteers are very much open to all who wish to learn about the compost

or participate, even just for a short time, and hold weekly information sessions to teach willing learners about the process.

Figures 10 & 11: The first picture shows the six wooden boxes with metal framing used to turn over the soil. A mural can be seen behind the compost. The second photo depicts the four metal canisters used to collect scraps directly from community members, with signs outlining guidelines for materials that are compostable. Photos taken by the author on 9/05/2023.

Their growing orchard, in the back half of the site, is also a popular space. Every year they plant 500 new trees, with the small saplings protected by a handmade "fence" of rope and wooden planks. Within the forest are numerous winding paths, gathering spaces, and wooden benches. Small children run through chasing each other with sticks, elders gather for discussions, and teens share a smoke. In both the forest area and "wild" garden (jardin sauvage) there are grape, peach, almond, and fig trees. One community member noted that the only "big" tree is one on the other side of the fence between the TEP and a neighboring church, because it was not disturbed by the destruction of the former sports field. Since trees had been growing at the TEP since the sports fields opened in the 1940s, those destroyed were quite mature. But the "big" tree still provides shade for the benches below on the TEP's side.

Figures 12 & 13: Winding paths and open seating areas are pictured from within the mini "forest." Photos taken by the author on 9/04/2023.

Figures 14 & 15: The popular hen house is pictured, along with a roaming hen. All of the hens can be seen freely exploring the site. They provide eggs for the TEP community. Photos taken by the author on 9/02/2023.

Figure 16: "Wild" garden at the TEP with a small rope fence to protect the growth. During my participant observation volunteer work, I helped repair the pictured boardwalk. Photo taken by the author on 9/05/2023.

Figures 17 & 18: Community vegetable garden area. Photos taken by the author on 2/15/2023.

With all of their practices, there is a dominant principle that nothing is consumed unnecessarily and nothing is wasted. Cycles of reciprocity move through the TEP constantly. For example, after I finished helping some volunteers repair the fence for the new saplings, one volunteer offered myself and another community member around my age some apple crumble: made from the apples at the TEP, cooked in the TEP kitchen, eaten with the TEP community, and leftovers discarded in the TEP compost. Not only was this a strong act of care for a person they had just met (myself), but it was also highly demonstrative of the ecological future the TEP project is creating.

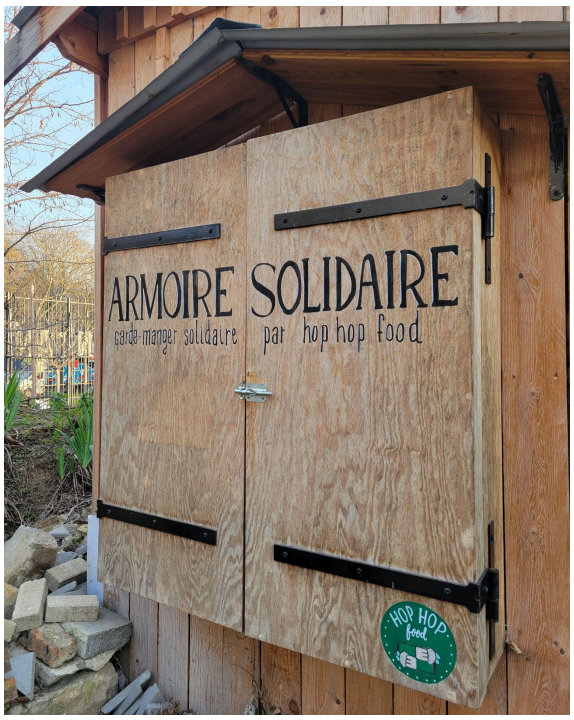
Free Programming and Mutual Aid

Beyond primarily ecological components of the TEP, its roots as a recreational community space have only strengthened since the occupation of the site. Every week, they post a schedule of free classes taught by volunteers on their social media and physically at the site itself. These classes often include boxing, soccer, yoga, qi gong, and tai chi, but can change week to week. Furthermore, the structured classes are supplemented by their reinstated sports fields and equipment, which are available to all at any time. The sports fields have goals for soccer, a net for volleyball and badminton, and ping-pong tables donated by a local organization. There are also available yoga mats, punching bags, and a dance bar. The variety of activities used in the size of the space creates a dynamic, active atmosphere as intergenerational groups of participants relish in their favorite sports.

Figure 19: Sports fields and ping pong tables pictured in relation to the central information center. Photo taken by the author on 9/05/2023.

But the TEP programming includes significantly more than recreational activities. They have also created a highly robust network of mutual aid and resources, which especially supports lower-income and marginalized community members. This includes offering free haircuts, free childcare, free cooking classes, free vegetable gardening lessons, and free French lessons on a weekly basis. One community member I spoke with noted that the primary reason they come to the TEP is that it is a free space for their children to play without immense supervision needed. Additionally, that community member explained that they were unable to buy many children's toys and books for their house due to their low income, and greatly appreciate all of the toys and books the TEP offers. There is also a solidarity pantry, which is often used in combination with their open-access kitchen. As several volunteers noted, many lower-income and unhoused

community members use these resources and the opportunity to both find food and cook it at the same site. The TEP also hosts frequent events to provide fresh meals for anyone who needs them. The bathroom and shower, shade structures, and seating are also key infrastructural pieces to supporting unhoused community members. Moreover, as mentioned prior, the TEP's community-based conflict resolution works to ensure that the site is safe for those whose existences are often over-policed in and sometimes violently removed from other public spaces in Paris. The core TEP volunteers are also in contact with many housing organizations and other community organizers to assist in connecting those who may seek further assistance with useful tools.



Figures 20 & 21: Solidarity pantry and facilities, including the kitchen, bathroom, workshop, garden supply closet, sports materials closet, and kids activity room. Photos taken by the author on 2/15/2023.

All of these resources, such as the toys and books for children and the materials available in the kitchen, have been donated by community members or volunteers, or collected for free from organizations or individuals online seeking to dispose of their items. Food for the solidarity pantry is stocked from a combination of donations and unsold products collected from stores.

Figure 22: Interior of the central information center, featuring tables, board games and other materials, and information about the TEP. Photo taken by the author on 9/02/2023.

As the collective decision-making and proposal processes encourage, the TEP also hosts irregular events and projects at the site. For example, shortly after the week of my research, the TEP hosted an event entitled “Nos Querian Enterrar, Pero Eramos Semillas,” which involved

"dialogue and workshops about art and fabric as tools of resistance and memory in Colombia" with multiple Colombian art collectives and activist organizations (Teje France 2023). They also often host visits from schools and conduct art workshops such as linocut making with various organizations.

Community Ties

This extensive programming and social infrastructure thus results in strong community connections and near-familial relationships. As I conducted my interviews and briefly volunteered, many of those I spoke with expressed great familiarity with one another. Even as we would pass a seemingly disconnected group, one of my interviewees would wave, start a conversation, or otherwise engage. During one conversation with a young adult near my age, he revealed one of the core volunteers I interviewed was "like a father to [him]." He had been coming to the TEP before the first development proposal, and since the occupation, has used the site as a prime hang-out spot for his friend group. But the community connections beyond his immediate friend group have demonstratively deepened as well. This type of intergenerational relationship is not merely anecdotal. Throughout my time at the site, it was not uncommon to see groups of teenagers playing with young children, elders speaking with young adults, and middle-aged volunteers interacting with their multi-generational families. The accessibility of the site is paramount to supporting these relationships, as those using walkers, canes, and wheelchairs are able to participate just as those in strollers or beginning to crawl are. One of my volunteers summed up these elements, stating that:

> It's an important place for people next to here, it's an important place for homeless people, it's an important place for old people without family. It's an important place for people who are learning to walk.

The age and economic diversity is bolstered by racial and cultural diversity as well, an overall rarity in a highly segregated Paris. As another one of the community members I spoke with noted:

> It's one of the few places in Paris where there is cultural and social mixing. A lot of places in Paris are quite homogeneous. And here is one of the few places where it's actually a socially and culturally mixed place. Yeah, it's very special.

People are brought to the TEP for all kinds of different reasons. For some of the first volunteers, they had deep interests in particular components of the TEP, such as the compost or the woodworking involved, and thus have dedicated themselves to creating a large capacity for that work. For others, they have been coming to the TEP since it was a sports field and have sought to retain and grow the community they first found in that space. And though the community mostly consists of people who live in the neighborhood, some even in the social housing units next door, others have begun coming to the TEP from other neighborhoods, especially from farther north in the 20th and 19th arrondissements, due to its growing reputation for "special" social and physical infrastructure. No matter the reason for their initial visit, the community members and volunteers at the TEP emphasize that it is a project like no other in Paris, and one in which they have found a strong sense of community and place that they are able to shape to their collective needs and wants.

"Protected Community Space" Designation

The project's collective management, anti-capitalist, harm-reductive, and regenerative practices, and flexible land uses are critical bases for these strengths. They are also the components of the TEP that operate the most outside of Parisian urban planning and policy. Therefore, the merit of these strengths and the sense of place they have brought to the community warrant a strategy that sustains the TEP's current practices. The "Protected Green Space" and "Protected Open Space" designations are the most applicable designations for the TEP in the PLU at present. The "Protected Green Space" designation states that modifications to a plot are only allowed if the change does not reduce the green surface of the open ground, preserves or replaces planted areas, restores statutory surface area of the plot, or "maintains or improves the general unity of the EVP" (Ville de Paris 2023). These changes are thus subject to municipal checks and approvals, and are limited in regards to how the TEP is currently shaping their land with a continuously changing mixture of ecological projects and physical infrastructure such as constructed centers, a kitchen, and recreational rooms. Under the "Protected Green Space" designation, they may be limited in their ability to adapt their infrastructure to community needs. Similar restrictions are imposed through a "Protected Open Space" designation, as only minor changes are allowed to be made to the space on the condition that they are "justified by an improvement in their configuration or built environment," that they "respect and enhance the traditional characteristics of the fabric of the local area," and that infrastructure changes are proportionate to their surroundings, among others (Ville de Paris 2023). Most importantly, these designations limit changes to a space, subject these changes to municipal acceptance, and delay implementation of each infrastructural change if they are found appropriate at all. The TEP's process of community proposals for diverse infrastructure changes,

collective decision-making on those proposals, and collective implementation of them in a grassroots and quickly attentive manner is thus concerningly risked under the regulations of these designations.

As stated, some members of the TEP, but more notably the outside members of the EELV party, have fought for years to at least certify the TEP as a "Protected Green Space." Under the draft Bioclimatic PLU written in June 2023, the TEP would receive such a designation. However, this still has to be approved by the Conseil de Paris at the end of 2024. Moreover, as recently as July 2023, there has been renewed political and media attention towards Mayor Anne Hidalgo's plans to put a temporary housing shelter on the TEP (Chaïeb 2023). This possibility highlights the central Parisian administration's continued interest in the site as a usable, developable space for housing.

This risk would continue even under the "Protected Green Space" designation, because the TEP can have this designation and also remain an ideal space for housing development as denoted on its parcel document. Additionally, it is important to note that not all TEP community members are satisfied with receiving this designation. While the party leaders in primary support of the TEP, particularly those from the EELV, see its benefit as a green space for the community and have argued for it as such in city council meetings, this claim is highly limiting of the work the TEP project is doing and has been criticized by institutional actors in favor of the development, such as 11th arrondissement mayor François Vaughlin. Vaughlin, along with former Deputy Mayor of Urbanism and Architecture Jean-Louis Misska, have rejected the argument that the TEP is a necessary green space, citing the large Père Lachaise cemetery across the street. But a cemetery is by no means doing what the TEP is doing. In fact, the Père Lachaise is in many ways representative of the typical glorified public, green, open spaces in Paris. It

closes in the early evening, it is highly manicured, and there are firm rules and regulations on behavior and use. What the TEP brings to the community is something entirely different: it is an open space that they are freely and collectively managing, constantly adapting to their proposed projects, and caringly creating for all to use in diverse ways. Thus, in the eyes of the community members at the TEP, the site is not just a green space. Why then, are some seeking "Protected Green Space" designation?

The EELV party, as stated, is in favor of this resolution because it will theoretically provide protection, at least momentarily, and will grant the TEP some form of official recognition from the municipality. But as stated above, the designation comes with strict regulations for modifying the space, especially in the case of a change that would alter the current amount of green landscaping on the TEP. While the TEP is an ecological project in several ways, and has numerous areas of varying vegetational density, it is not *all* that the TEP is, and these regulations could serve to limit how they are able to change their land uses and/or the projects they pursue. Moreover, if the TEP breaks these restrictions, the municipality may use that as leverage to revoke their protected status or impose greater restrictions. The "Protected Green Space" and "Protected Open Space" designations silo the TEP into either a purely ecological or purely non-infrastructural space. Some of the community members are keenly aware of these tensions and thus are still trying to engage with the municipality to create an alternative strategy.

The community members see the TEP as a project: an ongoing project of collective process, of shaping space, and of making community. For them, the TEP goes beyond the physical environment and infrastructure they have cultivated and created. The physical and spatial components are important, undoubtedly, as the TEP practices an interdependent

relationship of care with the Earth. But the bureaucratic specificities of the physical site are not. It is the social infrastructure that is of greatest value. Therefore, as the community members of the TEP seek to find a way out of their precarity, of their continual subjection to municipal decisions, what type of strategy might best serve their needs and perspectives? I argue that the current solutions offered by the municipality's planning framework will not protect the TEP project in the way the community members intend, nor will those solutions protect the TEP project as is. As such, I propose a new type of zoning designation that breaks out of the normative Parisian planning framework of designating and enforcing specific land *uses.* This new designation, "Protected Community Space," would not impose specifications for how public open space is used or changed, thus allowing projects such as the TEP to continue their adaptive and diverse practices. Moreover, it would put the site entirely under the management of the TEP, without paying the municipality for a transfer of land ownership, and without being beholden to their restrictions. "Protected Community Space" preserves and supports a deliberative, collaborative community shaping of space for diverse uses and users.

Zoning for just community management, rather than use, radically disrupts the conventional wisdom of who within a city should have the ultimate power in shaping space. It asks us to revalue what we consider to be supreme knowledge of placemaking, directing respect towards the communities who live in and work with this site's land most intimately. But it also serves as an enactable mechanism to more immediately preserve the power of the TEP project, fitting into the greater framework of "zoning" as a system. As mentioned in the literature above, the TEP is an engaging project in comparison to other acts of insurgent urbanism due to its presently successful fight against impermanence and co-optation. This success has also brought equally unique diversity and strength of its social and physical infrastructure. Therefore, devising

a strategy with an intentional protection of their collective ability to plan and shape space is essential to sustaining the power of their community project.

There are concerns with this type of proposal. First, the TEP is a highly unique and demanding project. The volunteers have to be, but are, incredibly dedicated to the vision and enactment of their work. Other communities seeking the same protection may not have as large a network of support to sustain their project as the TEP does. Moreover, due to the structure of zoning, there is a lingering question of who would ultimately decide the communities to receive this designation. Future research should explore how this type of land management designation could be "claimed" by the community as opposed to "granted" by the municipality, most likely through the lens of activist and land sovereignty literature. Additionally, as mentioned prior, not all grassroots, community-led and managed projects have positive intentions and outcomes. Striking a balance between ensuring community involvement in shaping public space and holding the makers of that space accountable to just practices is a difficult but important task to stay attentive to.

Nonetheless, whether a "Protected Community Space" designation appropriately fits the future strategy needed by the TEP or not, the TEP project invites placemakers, planners, and communities to re-envision alternatives to planning our cities, and especially to understandings of who should be shaping them. The TEP's radical acts invoke greater possibilities and demand the expansion of physical and social infrastructure that operate outside of — and begin to dismantle the harms imposed by — capitalist, neoliberal, and carceral urban planning paradigms.

Conclusion

This paper has analyzed how the TEP project is challenging the ways urban space is designed, used, and managed in Paris. In opposition to the public parks and gardens Paris' current approach to open-space planning creates, which please the expectations of tourists but do little to engage the creativity and playfulness of its formal residents, the TEP project has made a statement for the necessity of public open space in cities that is made for and by exactly those residents. I argue that its greatest impacts have arisen through their ingrained radical values: anti-capitalist resource use, regenerative ecological practices, commitment to mutual aid, abolitionist visions of safety, and a duty of equitable care for all who participate. These values have thus been reflected in the physical infrastructure, as land uses and materials for programming are flexibly adapted to meet changing needs. Their use of space in this manner is also outside of Paris' strict rules and regulations on how public space should operate and how it can be modified. But these values have created a strong social infrastructure, a collective of care, and an incredibly diverse community that should not be taken lightly.

There is a growing sentiment in professional planning that diversity, intergenerational use, playfulness, regeneration, and accessibility are all values to be achieved in public space (Low 2023). There is also a wide acknowledgment that these traits do not come easily. While there are many methods of supporting these goals through traditional planning mechanisms, it is still difficult to ensure them.

But the TEP has managed to embed these values into their project, and the benefits are keenly reflected by its community members and volunteers. And they've done it without any official planning at all. The TEP, as a community, has taken stock of what their community needs

and put in the work and the care and the love to meet those needs in the most sustainable way they can.

As I argue through my proposal of a "Protected Community Space" designation, the options to protect the TEP currently offered by the municipality are not sufficient to ensure a sustaining of the power of their collective management and flexible land use. They continue to impose restrictions that may risk the strength of the present TEP infrastructure. Most importantly, the land designations currently available assume that the private *owner* of the land is the legitimate manager, keeping the ultimate assumed authority with the municipality. Internationally, public open spaces face this hierarchical paradox. Public spaces are at once *public,* but yet there are very few if any spaces in most cities where the *public* has the opportunity to make the place themselves. Many members of the public are also policed out of public spaces. And when communities want to assert management themselves, even as diverse collectives, they are thwarted. Thus, though a strategy in the realm of a "Protected Community Space" designation remains to be tested, implemented, and evaluated, it nonetheless raises an important question: how can we integrate public spaces in cities that communities are able to "co-construct?" That operate outside of relations of land that are profit-driven, restrictive, and segregating? That recognize that communities are agentic and creative and caring and loving? The aim of a "Protected Community Space" is to propose an enactable first step in ensuring these spaces are available in cities. It's a limited approach, however, to keep the success of the TEP within a specific designation. Though it reshapes how designations are applied, accounting for land management instead of use, it does little to dismantle the capitalism and neoliberalism at the root of Parisian planning's approach to addressing lack of space within the city. However, it is a more immediate strategy the TEP can take on. Further research should also examine how other

spaces and communities in Paris may benefit from this designation, and should strive to evaluate the future strategy of the TEP in any case.

The collectivity of care at the TEP, as both a community and a physical space, is a compelling case to contend with. The TEP is intentionally resisting the impulses of Parisian planning to prioritize new housing development over public space and to neglect to take residents' involvement in urban-making seriously. In a city so focused on tourism and global competition, this is an even more powerful act. Yet despite its mobilization against these municipal planning practices, it still seeks some type of involvement and protection from the municipality. Thus, the case of the TEP is a call for a shift in urban planning. It demands planning to acknowledge how beneficial collective, diverse, anti-capitalist, and abolitionist management and shaping of space can be—and that communities should be at the forefront of making these changes happen.

Appendix

Sample Interview Questions

1. How long have you been involved with the site?
2. What is your role at the site?
3. Do you think this site is important to the greater neighborhood and community? Why or why not?
4. What kinds of services or activities would you like to see offered here?
5. How does the site function as a community-run site? Is it able to be viable on volunteer and mutual aid work alone?

6. What relationship does the TEP currently have with the government, specifically the current mayor of the 11th arrondissement?
7. Are you aware of any development plans that have been proposed for the site since 2019?
8. What relationship does the TEP have with other organizations or businesses in the neighborhood?
9. What do you see as the long-term vision or plan for the space?
10. Do you adapt the TEP space to the changing needs of the community? How?
11. How often do you come to the TEP?
12. What kinds of activities do you engage in here?
13. Which services do you utilize here?
14. How has the TEP adapted over the time you have been here?
15. What kind of community do you find at the TEP?
16. Have you faced any stigmatization or pushback from the government, developers, or other communities for using the site and preventing development from coming here?
17. How do the volunteers make decisions about the TEP?
18. What is your response to proposed housing developments on the TEP site?
19. How do you see the role of community members in urban planning?

Recruitment Script

Hello, my name is Sofia Johansson. I am a BA student at the University of Chicago in the Environmental and Urban Studies Department. I am conducting research for my undergraduate thesis about the TEP Ménilmontant and the urban planning response to the community claim to and management of the space. Participation in this research involves completing an interview about your experience in the space, the TEP's role in the greater community, and the relationship between the city and the TEP. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. You must be 18 years old. You will not receive compensation. If you have any questions or would like to

participate in the research, I can be reached by phone at (608) 443 - 6910, or by email at sijohansson@uchicago.edu.

Verbal Consent Form

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Purpose: We are researchers at the University of Chicago doing a research study about how the community uses the TEP Ménilmontant and the urban planning response to the site. The majority of the research will be conducted by collecting and analyzing online articles, planning documents, local policies, and relevant social media content. Additionally, this research involves a series of interviews with the main stakeholders of the project and participants of the TEP. Interviews with TEP participants will center on their experiences with the site, how they feel the site fits into the broader community and neighborhood, and how they use the site.

Procedures and Time Required: You will be asked to participate in one 30-minute interview in person. With your permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded.

Financial Information: Participation in this study will involve no cost to you. You will not be paid for participating in this study.

Risks and Benefits: Due to the precarity of the site and the history of the site's non-legal activities, information divulged about participation in illegal activities may pose a risk to you, in addition to the risks of everyday life. Taking part in this research study may not benefit you personally, but we may learn new things that could help others.

Confidentiality: No personal information about participants will be recorded. Information from the interview content will be recorded and stored in UChicago Box with password protection. If deemed necessary, testimonies of multiple participants will be combined so as not to attribute a single narrative to a single individual. If you decide to withdraw from this study, any data already collected will be destroyed. The information collected as part of this research will not be used or shared for future research studies.

Contacts & Questions:
If you have questions or concerns about the study, you can contact Sofia Johansson at sijohansson@uchicago.edu or +1 (608) 443-6910.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, feel you have been harmed, or wish to discuss other study-related concerns with someone who is not part of the

research team, you can contact the University of Chicago Social & Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (IRB): phone (773) 702-2915, email sbs-irb@uchicago.edu.

Consent:
Participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate or withdrawing from the research will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. You will be provided a copy of this form. [Verbal confirmation will be obtained with the question: "Do you agree to participate?" Verbal with audio recording, "Do you agree to participate? Do you agree to be recorded?"]

With your permission, this interview will be recorded for the sole purpose of transcription into the secured data set. The audio recording will not be shared outside of the research team. These elements are optional. Please voice your agreement or disagreement to the choices presented:

The recordings taken as part of this research can be used for internal research purposes only.

Yes _____ No _____

The photos taken as part of this research can be included in publications and presentations related to this research.

Yes _____ No _____

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