Amsterdam Docklands

Using Historic Preservation and Design to Attract and Middle-Class Households

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Early History

➢ Harbor area was constructed in the late 19th century to allow for increasing trade with the Dutch Each Indies

➢ Area consists of the extension of the Oostelijke Handelskade, east of the center of Amsterdam, and four "islands" (peninsulas)

➢ During the first part of 20th century, harbor expanded to allow passenger traffic to East Indies

➢ At its height Docklands housed 17,000 people, among the highest densities in the Netherlands.

➢ After WWII harbor activity moved to the Western Docklands and Eastern Docklands fell into disuse.

➢ For some years, Eastern Docklands became an area for artists, squatters and city nomads, living in old buses, caravans, huts and dens.

Changing Regeneration Strategies

➤ In 1975 city council earmarked Eastern Docklands for residential purposes.

➤ City chose to build at a high density because of huge infrastructure costs

➤ The first part of the District—the Abbatoir site– was built as social rented housing.

➤ As a result of turnabout in city council in 1986 'building for the neighborhood' became 'building for the market'

Attracting and Holding Middle-Class Families

➢ Current focus is on halting the exodus of upper-income families from Amsterdam while promoting social mixing

➢ High quality design used as an allure

➢ Goal is to preserve harbor basins

➢ For each island an independent urban designer was selected

➢ The area is attractive to trendy and well-to-do urbanites some of whom are media professionals
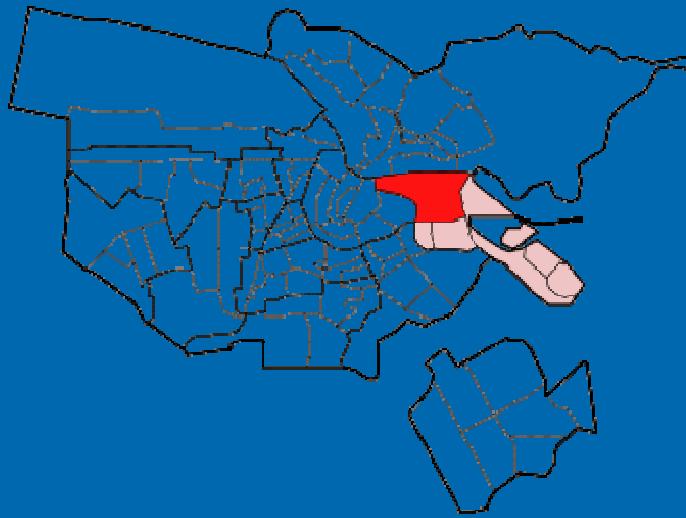
Stadsdeel Zeeburg
Buurt 33 Oostelijk Havengebied

Location of Eastern Docklands (Oostelijk Havengebied)
in Amsterdam
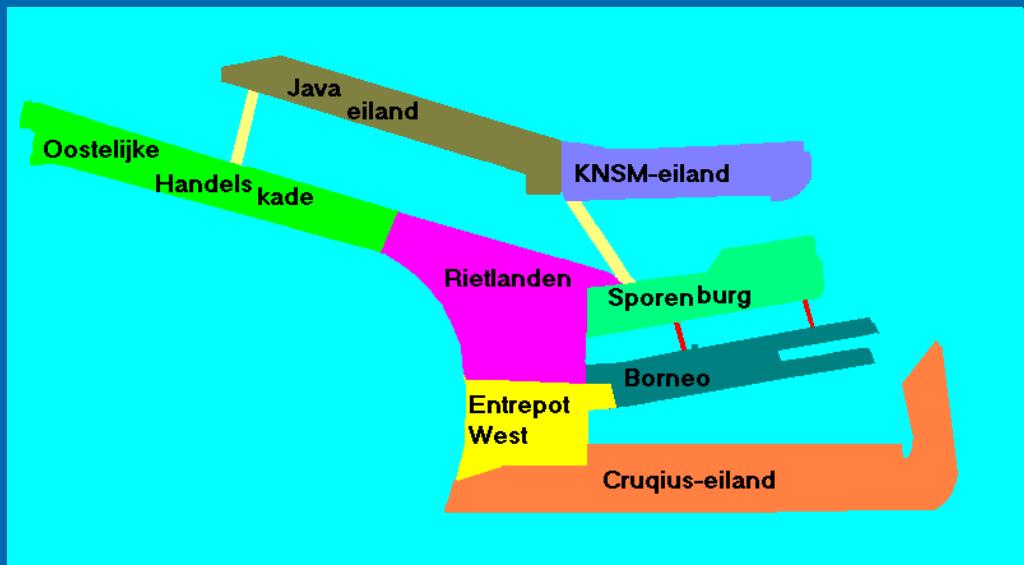
Eastern Docklands' "Islands" (peninsulas) detailed map

Eastern Docklands as an active port versus today

Lloyd's Hotel was constructed in 1921 as temporary housing for emigrants to Latin America, many of whom were from Eastern Europe. Later used as a prison by the Germans and then as an Amsterdam prison for underage convicts. It is now an upscale 120 hotel with many unique features.

A captain's house restored as middle-class ownership housing

The Abbattoir site, redeveloped in the 1970s, focused exclusively on social rented housing.

An artificial island of vegetation in the harbor, likely created by squatters decades ago.

Warehouse conversions to housing on Cruqius Island

Each of these ownership homes on Borneo Island is distinctive. Most have sunroofs. Why is the car parked at an angle?

Pedestrian bridge between Java and Sporenburg. Not recommended for the elderly, disabled or "tipsy."

"Meteorites"—high density developments–
(clockwise): Emerald Empire, Piraeus,
Barcelona.

Over the objections of residents who wanted to preserve some green space for recreation, the council of the Zeeburg district has given green light for the construction of "The Fountainhead," another "meteorite." Is this yet another example of NIMBYism or does the city need the housing to attract more middle-class families?
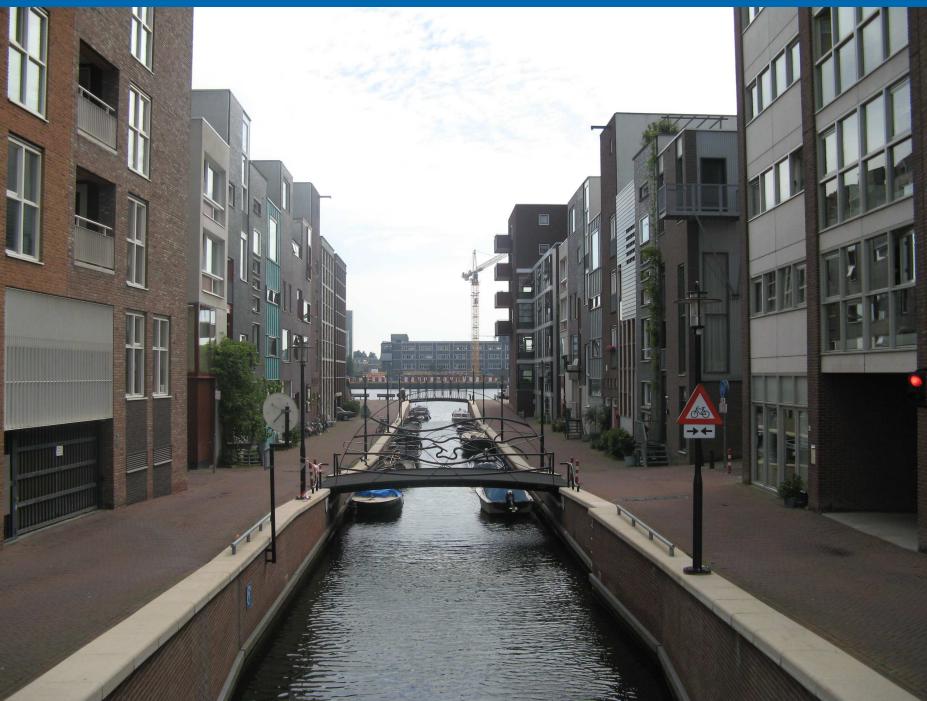
The canals cut across the width of Java Island making the landscape more interesting. Note the distinctive building designs and the high incidence of boat ownership.

The attention to detail on the canal bridges is quite impressive.
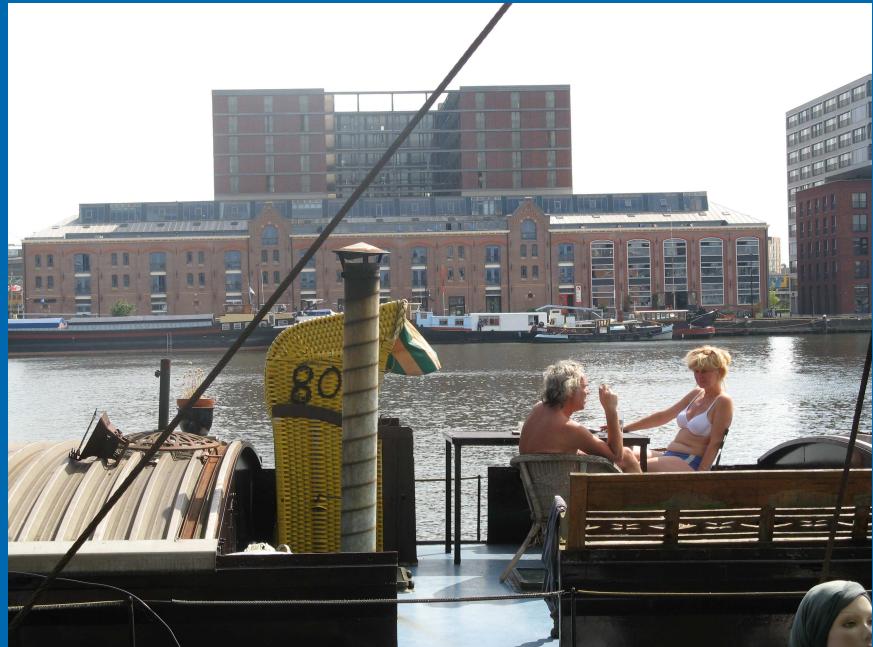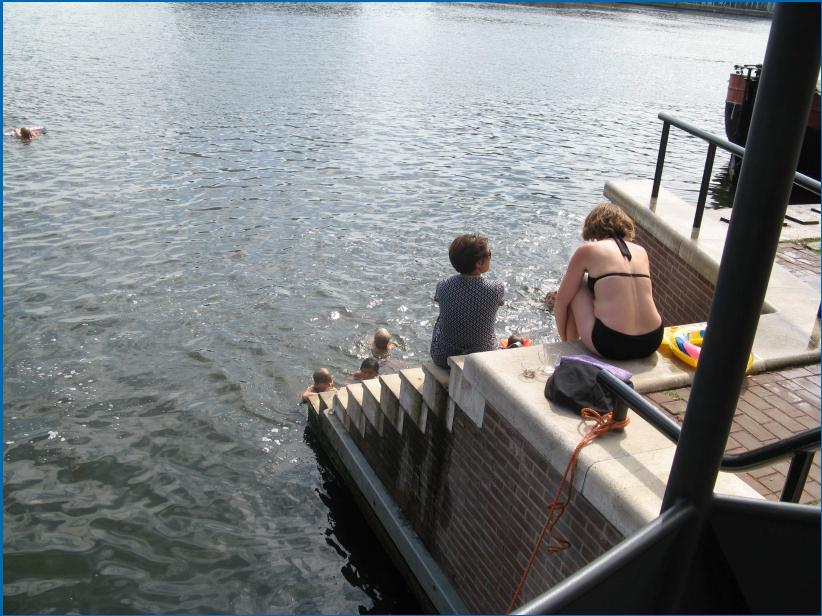
A water oriented life style appeals to lifeguard moms, barge lovers and hip mannequins.

Developers, designers, and politicians seek to preserve the connection to Amsterdam Dockland's past; a "Tall Ships" event was to be held in Amsterdam harbor in August, 2010. http://english.sail2010.nl/ To the right is the warehouse (how housing) for the Amsterdam to Rotterdam shipping line.

Conclusions

➢ Amsterdam's Eastern Docklands can be judged a success.

➢ The city has used cutting-edge design and historic preservation to attract and hold middle-class families.

➢ Because of limited greenspace for gardens families with children need to look elsewhere such as the Almere New Town.