

Special Edition

DeCoCon



25 years Neighborhood Mediation
Netherlands

30 years CoCon

20-24 juni 2022



The celebration of 25 years of Neighborhood Mediation Rotterdam and 30 years of CoCon was the focus of attention in the week of June 20, 2022.



Guest of Honor Darlene Weide, executive director of Community Boards, the longest-running non-profit conflict resolution center in the United States and **source of inspiration for Neighborhood Mediation in the Netherlands**, was in Rotterdam for a weeklong visit. Together we visited various organizations in Rotterdam and exchanged experiences and ideas about tackling neighborhood disputes, investing in harmonious neighborhoods and facilitating residents in their role in this.

We were guests at **the Huurders Platform Lombardijen (HPL)**, in Pirandellostraat 43, where we started Neighborhood Mediation 25 years ago with, among others, Annie Freriks and Juan Jonas, the first mediators in Rotterdam! Thanks to Danielle Groot (secretary) and Cees Broers (chairman), who made time especially for us.



In the **Vreewijkhuis**, at Dreef 83A, we met Aimée Neeleman (policy advisor staff housing) and Cheyenne Sof (housing consultant) for social housing corporation **Havensteder**.

We also visited social housing corporation **Woonstad** at the Rochussenstraat 21 and spoke with Ruth van Bree (housing consultant) and Johan Hagenus (team leader Social Management). We look forward to strengthen and expand our collaboration on tackling residential disputes with more and closer attention for the residents.





Our visit at the **INHolland University of Applied Sciences** at Posthumalaan 90, included an extensive tour of the beautiful building while talking to students and teachers about the study programs which include mediation and conflict resolution. We also had a look at the Legal Aid Shop where students under the supervision of experienced teachers, provide legal aid. We look forward to a unique collaboration in the near future.



Darlene enjoyed the tour of the Legal Aid Shop and the beautiful building of the INHolland University of Applied Sciences. New connections were made and valuable experiences shared.

Finally it was time for the (postponed) anniversary event of 25 years Neighborhood Mediation Rotterdam. **The icing on the 'event week cake'**.



SAMEN VOORUIT
25 jaar Buurtbemiddeling Rotterdam
Een feestelijke mijlpaal

DONDERDAG 23 juni
ONTVANGST: 18:30 - 19.00
PROGRAMMA: 19.00 - 22.00
BIBLIOTHEEK THEATER
Hoogstraat 110
3031 PV Rotterdam

EEN BLIK op toen, NU & DE TOEKOMST
ROTTERDAM Buurtbemiddeling

SPECIALE GAST UIT VS DARLENE WEIDE
Uitveeend directeur San Francisco Community Boards

Deelnemen via de livestream kan ook.
Na aanmelding wordt de link de dag ervoor gestuurd.
Aanmeldingen graag uiterlijk donderdag 16 juni via: info@bbroto.nl
www.bibliotheekoflivestream

The evening was all about **Samen Vooruit (moving forward together)**. **Fica Djohani, director of CoCon**: "What challenges do we face with Neighborhood Mediation? Do we need to rethink the current working method and principles? These are challenges and questions that concern all partners in the chain approach of residential disputes and which require cooperation, coordination, and even more than we already do, breaking down barriers between authorities."

Alderman Karremans: 'on to the next 25 years of neighborhood mediation'



The video message at the beginning of the evening from **Alderman Vincent Karremans**, was much appreciated. His closing words 'on to the next 25 years' made a nice context for further orientation on how to approach neighborhood disputes in the coming years.

We hope that the Alderman will find time later this year for a 'live meeting' with our advisors from the Neighborhood Dispute Adviceline and our mediators from Neighborhood Mediation.



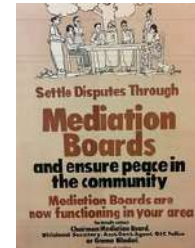
The celebration of 25 years of neighborhood mediation in Rotterdam and 30 years of CoCon took place on 23 June in the atmospheric theater of the Rotterdam central library.

The anniversary was a hybrid event which allowed the public to watch and participate not only from within the theater but also from home or at other locations via a live stream. The event was translated live into English for people abroad.

Evita de Roode was the moderator and ensured an evening full of interaction between the speakers, panel members and the public in the theater as well as online.



After the opening speech by Fica Djohani, **Darlene Weide, executive director of the Community Boards**, presented a picture of the history of the Community Boards and the challenges they now face.



"Diversity adds to the richness of communities"

Challenges and Adapting to Change

- Sustaining a model in a culture that values the "new" and the "latest"
- Foundations have changed their funding priorities and protocols especially during economic downturns
- A lot of competition for philanthropic dollars
- Opportunities are about where resources are while maintaining the heart and soul of the work and avoiding mission drift
- COVID's impact- developing an online mediation model
- Communities are changing. Constant movement in and out of the City
- Sustaining passionate volunteers
- More public and private mediators and organizations competing doing the work



Interview with Fica and Darlene by Evita de Roode, moderator of the evening.





We planted a seed, which is the beginning of something to blossom

Darlene Weide

The collaboration between CoCon and The Community Boards was officially announced with **the unveiling of The Golden Swan logo**, a confluence of The Golden Gate Bridge and the Erasmus Bridge better known as The Swan.



Karin van Dreven (Woonbron) great concern: The distrust in society and organisations.



Karin van Dreven

(director of Woonbron) expressed via a screen great appreciation to the mediators and team coaches for the great work they do.

In society, a misunderstanding often becomes a conflict which escalates and people are no longer able to see a positive image of each other, but look at each other with distrust, without an eye for the motives and interests of another. It is wonderful that you are here to re-establish communication and hopefully build mutual understanding.

My major concern: the distrust in society, organizations, housing associations and in each other. My question: why are we not able to restore trust in each other.

Panel discussion

Panel discussion participants: **Jenny Vermeeren** - board member Woonstad, **Jur Verbeek** – stadsmarinier (officer in a problem neighborhood who monitors safety and quality of life) and author of the soon to be published book 'a safe village, a safe city, a safe country', **Ricardo Verheij**, from young troublemaker to CoCon Team Coach, **Jurandy Martien**, former youth neighborhood mediator and former CoCon employee for JOLO youth neighborhood mediation and neighborhood mediation, **Ria Severijns**, former neighborhood mediator and now advisor for the Neighborhood Dispute Adviceline.



STATEMENT 1

We should not see neighborhood disputes as an inconvenient problem, but also and above all as an opportunity for social harmony.

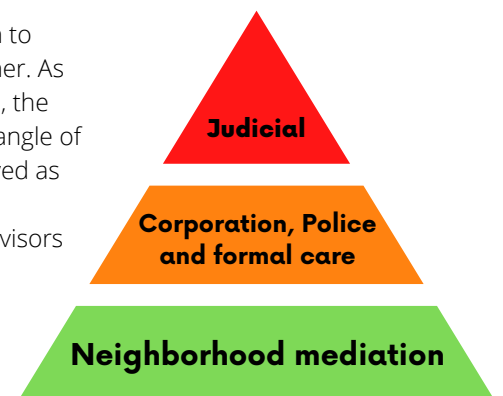
Ricardo: Everyone has their own values and norms, because of a neighborhood dispute, you start to talk with one another, you get a 'look behind the scenes' and mutual understanding may develop.

Ria: Everyone wants to live comfortably, people don't go to live at a location with the intend to experience neighborhood disputes. Conflict is about searching for the common interest.

Jenny: Woonstad wants to contribute to making Rotterdam a bit more beautiful, which can be physical, but also social. You want to prevent neighborhood disputes, but if neighbors start talking to each other because of it, then that is great.



Jur: It all comes down to listening to one another. As far as I am concerned, the first plateau of the triangle of Fica should be deployed as much and as long as possible, so by the advisors and the mediators.



Jurandy: I was approached by the youth worker for JOLO (Youth Neighborhood Mediation). At JOLO I started to understand the essence of communication.



Panel discussion

STATEMENT 2

The current chain approach to neighborhood disputes puts too much pressure on the volunteers and the willingness of residents.



Ria: AWR (advisors) and BBR (mediators) seem to be a separate entity in the chain approach of neighborhood disputes. We are able to do more. Advocate for more commonality and coordination in assessing the right trajectory and what AWR and BBR can add to the approach.

Jur: The chain approach in Rotterdam is rather well organized, but the question is how do the chain partners manage to find each other.



Ricardo: The local police officer used to be visible, as were other professionals. After many cutbacks the connection with the neighborhood got lost.



Jenny: The approach to neighborhood disputes starts with a proper intake to analyze the problem, whether simple disputes or too complex, so that community mediation will get the right cases. The very first question for most stakeholders remains: 'What have you done yourself?'. People are foremost responsible for their own behaviour.



Audience

The guests at the event on 23 June in the Library Theater formed a diverse group of all 'stakeholders of Neighborhood Mediation' over the years. (Youth) neighborhood mediators and CoCon employees from then and now, advisors, network partners, referrers, family and friends.



A driven, enthusiastic and creative Evita guided us through the evening and managed to involve the audience in the theater and online via the livestream.

Richard Lugten

Project Director Bureau Rise

We need more people who approach young people directly and let them know that they see and believe in the potential of these young people.



Jacomien Glasbergen

Neighborhood mediator Barendrecht

I tend to go a step further, in consultation with the team coach.

JOLO contributed to my personal development and JOLO made you socially involved. Young people are the future but I often see that they are not included in decisions and choices. If you don't include them, you are missing the point.



Firat Kocak

Former JOLO youth neighborhood mediator



Hossni el Chamlal

Former CoCon employee JOLO and Neighborhood Mediation

Young people have busy lives: school, work, internships. It takes a lot of time and creativity to get them involved in the neighborhood. Success depends primarily on knowing how to appeal to young people.



Herma Oosterhof

CoCon team coach for Neighborhood Dispute mediators and Adviceline advisors

Herma calls attention for neighborhood disputes involving students.



After the panel discussion, **Kiki Schippers** came on screen with a song that she had written especially for the mediators to highlight 25 years of Neighborhood Mediation.

At the end of the evening, **Chris Noorland** (advisor) and **Leila Cabell** (mediator) were presented with the 25-year Neighborhood Mediation anniversary gift by **Jenny Vermeeren** on behalf of the clients, **the municipality of Rotterdam**, the **social housing corporations Havensteder, Vestia, Woonbron** and **Woonstad** for all volunteers of the Neighborhood Dispute Adviceline and neighborhood mediation. Jenny herself received an anniversary gift for the clients.



We look back on an inspiring and successful anniversary week. The wish and the importance of even more cooperation and coordination between the chain partners in tackling neighborhood disputes was shared by everyone. Attention to involving young people has been emphasized several times.

A great outcome that we will certainly continue to build on.

Fica Djohani





SPECIALE GAST UIT VS DARLENE WEIDE
 Uitvoerend directeur San Francisco Community Boards
 Na aanmelding de dag ervoor
 Aanmelding donderdag 16 info@bbro10.o.v.v. bibliotheek



communityboards
Building Community Through Conflict Resolution

ROTTERDAM 25 jaar Buurtbemiddeling

BARENDRECHT 10 jaar Buurtbemiddeling

BUURT BEMIDDELING 5 jaar HOEKSCHER WAARD

BUURT BEMIDDELING 5 jaar GOEREE-OVERFLAKKEE

COCON 30 jaar

BUURT BEMIDDELING 25 JAAR IN DEERL



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