CITY MARKETING IN GREECE: THE POST-OLYMPIC USE OF HELLINIKON FORMER AIRPORT SITE

Sotirios Milionis
Address: 17, Pavlou Mela, Maroussi 15125, Greece
e-mail: sotirismilionis@yahoo.gr

Abstract:

Despite the appearance of a significant number of publications on the topic of city marketing theory in the last twenty years, there is still a huge gap in the literature with regard to its application in practice. This article aimed to bridge that gap by investigating the role of city marketing in planning the sustainable post Olympic use of Hellinikon former airport site in Athens, Greece. It was found that certain elements of the city marketing theory were attempted to be employed in the design process, however project implementation was seriously hindered as a result of the involvement of various stakeholders with differing and conflicting agendas.

Keywords: City Marketing, Hellinikon, Post-Olympic use, planning, real estate

Introduction

This article aims to bridge the gap between city marketing theory and practice by investigating the role, if any, of city marketing in planning the sustainable post Olympic use of sports facilities. The case study of the Hellinikon Olympic complex in Athens will be employed. First, an overview of the city marketing process will be presented. Then, a detailed analysis of the planning process for the Hellinikon former airport site will follow. Based on the theoretical model of the city marketing process on the one hand and on the detailed analysis of the Hellinikon planning process on the other, an attempt to identify marketing elements in that particular case will be made. Consequently, the extent to which city marketing has been applied in the specific context will be assessed. Finally, general conclusions will be drawn with regard to the course the planning process has taken, as a result of the involvement of various stakeholders.

Methodology and data

As already mentioned in the introduction, a comparison between the theoretical model of city marketing on the one hand and its application in practice on the other will be made. To accomplish this, first an overview of the city marketing process will need to be produced. Towards that end, an analysis concerning the concept of city marketing and its theoretical framework will be made through critical reviewing of the relevant literature. Then, a model of the process of city marketing will be the outcome of the synthesis that will follow. As regards to examining its (possible) application in practice, the planning process for the Hellinikon former airport site will be employed. This will be based on a detailed analysis of all major planning attempts as expressed in research documents commissioned on behalf of central government agencies (such as the Organization for the Regulatory Planning and the Environmental Protection of Athens, the Hellenic Public Real Estate Corporation and the Local Union of Municipalities and Town Councils of Attica - T.E.D.K.N.A.) to independent researchers and planning practitioners. The purpose is to identify (if possible) some of the key elements of the city marketing model within the Hellinikon planning process so as to assess the degree by which city marketing is (or was) attempted to be implemented in Greece.

The City Marketing Process

Introductory Remarks

To begin with, what needs to be stressed is that any attempt to describe a model of the city marketing process will always be dependent on different interpretations of its meaning. Therefore, it seems first of all crucial to establish a basis on which the analysis of the process is going to be built upon. The

first step towards this aim is to provide an indication of the substance of city marketing by means of analyses of various definitions referring to the concept.

Definitions of City Marketing

Various definitions provided by urban scholars such as Page [22], Krantz and Schatzl [20], Ashworth and Voogd [2], Corsico [9], Borchert and Buursink [8], Van den Berg [7], Sforzi [27], Gaido [11] as regards "city marketing", "place marketing", "market planning" have demonstrated a range of interpretations. The extent to which they converge or diverge has provided a basis for their categorization into three broad and roughly defined levels/categories: First, city marketing might be regarded as merely place promotion, best expressed by the phrase "selling what we have got" (pseudo marketing). Second, it can include a process of identification of the needs of potential users and the consequent transformation of the urban product in accordance with these requirements, so that the objective of local economic development is realized. However, it must be noted that only the needs that can be interpreted in terms of profit making will be considered, which also implies that only the groups expressing those needs will be taken into account. This attitude towards urban marketing has mainly been imported from the US experience and differs considerably from the Dutch interpretation, which constitutes the third level of urban marketing. This level refers to the use of urban marketing as a tool of urban management in general, not just as a tool for improving economic performance. It includes the acknowledgements of all people's needs, irrespectively of whether these may be translated in economic terms, and expands itself to areas of societal welfare. The most recent approach to city marketing has been introduced under the term "*city branding*" by Kavaratzis and Ashworth [17]. They argue that the transition from city marketing to city branding has been facilitated not only by the extensive use and consequent success of branding commercial products, but also by the rapidly developed concept of corporate branding mentioned by Balmer [4] and Balmer & Greyser [5]. City branding focuses on people's perception of cities. It aims to influence such perceptions in a way deemed favorable to the present circumstances and future needs of the place. According to Greenberg [12] people's perception is construed not only by the city's material and geographical dimension, but also by the social imagination and through changing modes of cultural representation. It is thus evident that 'city branding' is nothing more than old wine in new bottles. It is merely an improved version of the first, primitive level of marketing (best expressed with the phrase 'selling what we have got'). It is therefore, a big step backwards for city marketing.

The Model

The most comprehensive view of the place marketing process is provided by Ashworth and Voogd [1], who have adapted a large number of commercial marketing techniques to the urban context. According to them, the process of urban marketing contains four stages. These stages can help explain the interaction of the three main elements involved in any marketing process, namely consumers, market, producers. In other words, the way in which the market brings together 'populations and resources…so that the needs of the former are satisfied by the products derived from the latter' is affected, influenced, and manipulated by the operation of place marketing processes whose stages include the following:

Market Analysis

Market analysis in the context of cities, concerns the analysis of the existing urban facilities/organizational structures (supply side) and the examination of the characteristics, market behavior and needs of consumers (demand side) with the purpose of determining which marketing strategy is appropriate. For market analysis to be performed, certain tools from traditional marketing are employed, the most influential of whom are presented in the following paragraphs.

Product Positioning-Strategic Positioning

The commodification of the functions of the city and their positioning with reference to the existing competition, constitute a phase within the stage of market analysis called product positioning. However, a process of product repositioning is possible when an analysis of the characteristics, market

behavior, needs of users as customers takes place, because then the appropriateness of the urban product to these groups and the need for adaptation on the supply side will become evident.

Auditing the Market
The analysis of the demand and the supply side is part of auditing the market. Ashworth and Voogd [1] mention that it 'implies a systematic analysis of the market position of a city in relation to both the external environment and the internal environment', an opinion shared by Page [22] as well. Smyth [28] defines the term *'market position'* as determining where a city is broadly going to compete in the market.

External Audit
Jensen [16] observes that the external audit refers to the supply side and deals with issues that cannot be influenced by urban authorities as well as other factors that affect urban policies but are not affected by it[t]. As Ashworth and Voogd [1] note, 'through external audit, insights into the opportunities, problems or threats will be gained in relation to actual or potential competitors' so that possible directions for marketing strategies and goals can be derived.

Internal Audit
It refers to the demand side and provides an overview of strengths and weaknesses of the urban product by examining/analyzing issues that can be influenced by urban policy. This guides policies for shaping urban facilities so as to accord with the requirements of potential users. They also suggest that full internal audit requires knowledge about various submarkets which necessitates a process of market segmentation.

Forms of Market Segmentation
It involves the segmentation of the market into various subgroups, which have different demands for the same urban product. Ashworth and Voogd [1] argue that there are three ways of doing market segmentation, that is undifferentiated marketing (no segmentation), differentiated marketing by having several segments and developing tailored marketing plans for each, and concentrated marketing, targeting only one segment of the population. As Page [22] argues, market segmentation serves the purpose of identifying the target market. This also requires knowledge of the market behavior of users and of the consumer decision-making process.

The ways in which market segmentation can be performed, are always dependent on the employment of certain characteristics deemed crucial for the categorization of the demand side into various subgroups. As Ashworth and Voogd [1] stress, what is important in this process of market segmentation is to determine what are the characteristics which can best describe and express the consumption behavior of the user of the urban product.

The Consumer Decision-Making Process
Once the behavioral pattern of selected targeted audiences is identified, an attempt to influence it must take place. This attempt has to be based on a detailed knowledge of the criteria by which the consumer decision-making process is shaped. These criteria are monetary, time specific, place specific, sensory, psychic.

Competition-Potency Analysis
Again, Ashworth and Voogd [1] argue that, as part of market analysis, a competition and potency analysis is required to establish how the city's product compares to that of other cities. They note that potency analysis measures the potency or attractiveness of a certain place for a certain target group by establishing a set of criteria (e.g. qualities of site, land costs, transport infrastructure) and examining how this place responds to them. This will provide an objective view of the quality of the urban product through the analysis of certain attributes that are considered to be important in this evaluation. After this objective view of the attractiveness of the urban product is established, a subjective view on the same issue based on the opinion of one or more of the target groups (competition analysis) is

pursued. Potency analysis will provide evidence of the actual quality of the urban product and competition analysis will indicate its perceived quality by various target groups. These two aspects of the urban product do not always correspond; therefore sometimes product development has to take place so as to improve the actual quality of the urban product when its image (perceived quality) is optimistic. On the other hand, when the image of the place is neither optimistic, nor reflecting the actual situation, then promotion has to be called for. The third possible situation, which is the most convenient, is when the actual and the perceived quality of the urban are both positive.

Formulation of Goals and Planning Strategies

According to Krantz and Schatzl [20], Ashworth and Voogd [1], Page [22] they comprise: expansion or diversification strategy, consolidation or defensive strategy, quality strategy, reduction strategy.

The Expansion or Diversification Strategy

The expansion strategy is aimed to identify new markets for existing urban services and is also accompanied by simultaneous expansion of the entire range of services provided by the local authority. As for diversification, new targeted markets for a new set of services will be sought for. This implies the reshaping of the urban product so as to accord with the needs of the new users to be targeted through the marketing campaign.

The Consolidation-Defensive Strategy

It concerns the maintenance of the existing range of services for current customers and the analysis of developments that endanger stability.

The Reduction Strategy

This form of strategy entails the reduction of the range of services provided by local authorities and it is used with the purpose of avoiding negative effects deriving from over urbanization phenomena such as environmental pollution and traffic congestion.

The Quality Strategy

In this case, effort is placed upon improving the quality of services/facilities for the same customers/consumers without expanding or diversifying them.

The Strategic Objectives

Each of the aforementioned strategies aims to achieve a combination of the three following objectives, namely: developmental, expressed by the establishment of new activities, organizational, comprising the integration of different urban policies, and promotional by involving the supply of selected information about a city's products to potential users.

The Place Marketing Mix

It is a combination of measures needed to achieve the objectives pursued by the marketing strategy. Ashworth [1] stresses that in the context of cities these include a combination of the following instruments "promotional measures, spatial-functional measures, organizational measures and financial measures". Kotler's [19] different opinion on the same issue includes the manipulation of the four key variables used extensively in commercial marketing namely, product formulation, price, promotion and place (the so-called four P's). Kotler's approach however, seems to be dismissed by Krantz and Schatzl [20] who suggest that "decisions regarding these traditional areas tend to be disjointed." Therefore, the following analysis of the place marketing mix will be based on the perspective provided by Ashworth and Voogd.

Promotion

First of all, what needs to be stressed is that promotion is merely a part of a comprehensive marketing process. The most accurate definition of promotion is provided by Schmoll [25] as 'all the communication measures designed to create awareness of, interest in, and a favorable image for, existing or new facilities or services with the aim of attracting customers to them.' As far as the subject of promotion is concerned, Ashworth and Voogd [2] note that it 'maybe the selling of a

selected package of facilities or the selling of a place as a whole through images composed of various attributes associated with it.' (pp. 39-52).

The successful application of promotional strategies requires the adoption of tools such as advertising and public relations.

Advertising the City

It is the instrument used to promote the outward directed interests of the city's policy. Ward [29], Griffiths [13] and Page [22] suggest that the tools used in advertising include print and other media advertising, direct mail, selective publicity, special events, slogans and diagrams, brochures, videos, websites, newspapers, magazines, television, themes, image positioning and visual symbols. Kim and Short [18] as well as Hall [14] note that advertising can be conducted through distribution of information via tourist offices, libraries, commercial information services, responses to postal enquiries, poster advertising, press advertisement, the employment of recognizable logos. Griffiths [13] stresses that behind those common themes in promotional materials, the renaming of places can also be considered as an indirect form of advertising for the reason that it is an effort to remove negative images of a locality and replace them by more positive ones. Nevertheless, some of the most important advertising tools are triggered by event-based promotional strategies. Ward [29] acknowledges the role of sports events as being generating the interest of the media to change more general perceptions of the city.

Regarding the actors involved in place advertising, this is done by advertising and public relations agencies hired/funded by most of the actors engaged in place marketing in general namely, local economic development and tourism officers.

Public Relations

Meffert's [21] definition of public relations refers to the "planned and systematic attempt to build up mutual understanding and trust between an institution and the public through a process of information exchange, consultation provision and democratic participation" (p. 493). All in all, public relations can help get local authority projects accepted at an early stage by means of measures able to build trust and achieve consensus.

Kotler, Haider and Rein [19] reveal the outward focus of PR. They define it as "the effort to build good relations with the organizations publics". The content of PR in this case is aimed outwards in order to assist in the launch of new products, in influencing specific target groups, in defending places that have encountered public problems and in reconstructing the image of a place.

As for the tools of PR, they include press relations, event publicity and lobbying all of which are explicitly outward oriented. The advantages of PR in relation to advertising as mentioned by Kotler, Haider and Rein are that PR are highly credible and more authentic because they communicate the message in the form of news instead of being just a sales directed activity. This also makes them indirect and therefore more capable of reaching target groups who might avoid advertisements. PR are also much less costly than advertisements because there are no payments made for space or time obtained in the media but for a staff to develop and circulate stories and manage certain events. Should these stories and events be interesting enough for the media (e.g. Olympic Games, International EXPOs, Trade Fairs etc) they stimulate publicity worth of millions of dollars in equivalent advertising. Finally, they have a much higher capability of market penetration than advertisements because of their indirect and more credible character.

Overall, there is a clear distinction between the Dutch-German interpretation of the role of PR and the US-British equivalent in city marketing. The former assumes an inward directed focus targeting on consensus-building and reconciling conflicting interests within the locality, whereas the latter is outward directed aiming at influencing target groups outside the locality with the purpose of reinventing it and consequently "selling it"[1]. The Dutch - German approach of the role of PR has clear implications for overall urban management while the US - British one concerns itself in purely economic development terms. However, there is no reason why these two approaches cannot be combined together. PR can very well serve this dual role by employing the relevant tools mentioned

---

[1] It should be noted, however, that this in no way implies mere selling as what is to be sold in this case is firstly shaped according to the needs of selected target groups.

earlier in each approach. The result will be a more encompassing use of PR, able to produce more and better outcomes.

Spatial-Functional-Landscape Measures
Griffiths [13] makes a categorization between event-based strategies and landscape strategies. Within the category of event-based strategies special reference must be made to spectacles because of the massive impact they have on the commercialization of places, in image creation, and in increased competitiveness. As Ward [29] notes they aim to attract external investment especially through tourism. He also suggests that special events generate the interest of the media to change more general perceptions of the city (image reconstruction). The promotion of culture and leisure activities assumes a central role in this effort of image improvement. Sports events especially can have the additional effect of strengthening social cohesion and civic pride because of their popular dimension. Therefore, they are more easily acceptable by locals. This in turn implies consensus building and higher speeds of design and implementation. Some of the effects of sports events are the attraction of large masses of sports tourism in hosting cities and the extensive TV coverage which ensure large publicity.

Olympic Games especially serve as magnets for mobile investment and tourism. Image enhancement and international business awareness of the hosting city are achieved through publicity stimulated by this type of event. The advantages of such strategies are that they can act indirectly as advertising agents themselves for the city, being at the same time able to reconstruct the city, mobilize endogenous potential, improve the city's image, identify the inhabitants with their city, attract public-private investment, improve environmental care, rationalize production and consumption, as Krantz and Schatzl [20] and Cuadrado and Rubalcaba [10] argue.

In more practical terms, benefits will first accrue to the building sector and induced by multiplier effects to commerce and private services that profit from building investment. Investments in equipment are also distributed over machinery construction, electrical industry and commerce. All these benefits are supposed to take place in the preparatory phase of a large-scale event. During the implementation phase, another series of benefits are expected. They mainly refer to benefits deriving from tourist investment in very well known sectors such as restaurants, hotel trade, foodstuffs, commerce, leisure, and cultural services. As far as the long-term economic development effects are concerned, three main areas have been identified namely: establishing an area as a location specializing in a particular type of event, positive employment effects and attraction of future investment as a result of the improved traffic/ electronic infrastructure and environmental quality.

There are however, some negative effects regarding the hosting of Olympic Games. Expenditure risks deriving from incorrect estimates of costs and mistakes in the implementation phase coupled with organizational difficulties stemming from the peculiarity of the political/administrative system are some risk factors. Moreover, lack of appropriate use of the established infrastructure after the end of the Games will jeopardize long-term economic development benefits.

Landscape strategies, as Griffiths [13] argues, involve largely urban design statements such as high-profile flagship buildings designed by famous architects. He argues that these buildings are used with the purpose of hosting high culture uses as for example, opera houses, galleries, and museums. These uses are able to fulfill some of the demands for high culture stemming from higher income people. In more general terms, these uses are also able to cater for a new lifestyle reflecting the renewed image of the city. Image building has also been pursued through the construction of various elements of physical design such as airports, bridges, communication towers, skyscraper office towers.

Lower scale interventions (in terms of investment) in the built environment also aim to the same kind of effects (image building) but on a smaller scale. They concern the labeling and repackaging of neighborhoods and districts with the assistance of special programs such as inner city revitalization schemes.

Inner city revitalization schemes, albeit less impressive than flagship development projects, can have a very substantial effect on the improvement of actual living conditions in the respective area. While image improvement is a common characteristic of both flagship projects and small-scale neighborhood initiatives, the latter have an additional (and more) tangible effect which is far more important than the previous one. The changes in land uses brought about can terminally reconstruct the actual area, not just its image. This is how real improvement can take place. Flamboyant architectural statements will be appreciated only in the context of more substantial interventions; otherwise their effect will be just

like putting lipstick on a gorilla. The example of the arts and cultural districts can combine both the aforementioned elements in an integrated way. They contain according to Griffiths, 'a number of new or refurbished high art venues such as theatres, opera houses, art galleries, museums together with a selection of bars and high price restaurants. They are situated in locations with a history of social marginality which local authorities need to get rid of'. Their target group is high rank professionals and managers rather than middle-income families. Moving on to a different type of landscape strategies, Griffiths acknowledges the role of festival market places. He stresses that they are located in historic (usually waterfront) areas and include small mid-to-upscale retail shops, street entertainment and proximity to other popular attractions.

The common characteristic of landscape strategies is that they all serve the purpose of establishing and maintaining the notion of the '24-hour city'.

Organizational-Financial Measures

Ward [29] suggests that success lies on a spirit of deep co-operation between the public and private sectors in the whole process of reconstructing cities. Partnerships have a direct and an indirect role. The first rests on bringing about new investments through tax abatements, subsidies and the second is to provide a sign of the degree of local friendliness to external business investors. He further distinguishes between two forms of partnerships: business-led partnerships and centrally legitimated initiatives such as UDCs and Enterprise Zones. The latter aims to make the derelict areas of inner cities more attractive to private investors, usually with the provision of subsidies or tax incentives. The role of public sector in partnerships is focused on promotional planning regimes, site preparation, and negotiation with developers. Private sector's role is to provide the revenue. This comes from a mixture of membership subscriptions, corporate sponsorship, advertising income and sales and assistance in kind.

Elaboration-Evaluation

This refers to the implementation of the place marketing mix. The above heading would otherwise be named implementation-evaluation; however this final stage of the place marketing process is actually an iterative process hence, after each iteration, the various steps become more detailed and more operational, as Ashworth and Voogd [1] suggest. The first step called 'search for direction' could initially be just the launching of an idea, while in following rounds it could involve the tasks of "auditing" in order to reveal the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the authority conducting city marketing. This step results in a "plan" which is the immediate step. This could be at the beginning just a statement of the intention to write a report or project plan on a designated issue in following rounds. Next, communication and information activities constitute the third step which aims to ensure support for the plan formulated in the previous step. Two options can be found in this stage. First, there may not be enough support for the proposed plan, therefore alternative directions need to be considered. This implies that the whole process must return to the very first step. Second, the required support has been gained (through promotion) therefore the next step can follow. This refers to the financial feasibility of the proposals. In the first iteration, this step will not be of considerable importance, however the more iterations there have been, the more important it will become. It also includes the investigation of organizational structures (such as public-private partnerships with other agencies). The last step in this process called "actions" may initially include organizational and budgetary measures taken to support plan making and research in the next iteration. Following rounds may include the start of planning implementation or the start of actual building activities.

An overview of the entire city marketing process is presented in the following flow chart.

Figure 1: The city marketing process model

As derived from the chart shown above, the spatial/landscape measures are but one of the elements of the place marketing mix which in turn is just a part of the entire place marketing process. A subset of

such measures is easily identified in any given case of hosting Olympic Games (mainly in the form of sports and transport infrastructure) and hence in the Hellinikon old airport case. This however, does not necessarily mean that such measures are part of a wider city marketing process. To determine this, will require to identify what other elements of the process have been applied (if any) either in the context of the entire city or within the context of the specific area, given that place marketing can be used in various spatial scales such as the city as a whole, for a specific attribute of the city or for a particular area within the city. This will be the scope of the following analysis which will focus on the planning process for the former airport area.

Planning for the Hellinikon area
Athens Hellinikon airport was constructed in 1939 and has been the city's only airport for more than sixty years. Its relocation from Hellinikon to Spata took place in March 2001. Consequently, a 580Ha coastal area eight kilometers far from the city center and within city limits was freed.

Its availability and proper management will determine to a large extent its effect on creating the open spaces and green areas which are so much lacking in Athens. A research program for the future utilization of the former Hellinikon airport site was assigned in 1995 to the Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development of the National Technical University of Athens by the then Ministry of the Environment, Planning and Public Works via its relegated authority, the Organization for the Regulatory Planning and the Environmental Protection of Athens. The program's aim was to come up with specific guidelines for the airport's future use as a large scale metropolitan park. The recreation aspect was planned to be implemented through the design of a multifunctional recreation park for all Athenians. Research requirements included the formulation of proposals for attaining the following objectives: the creation of sports, of recreational and cultural facilities, the improvement of the wider area's social equipment, fund raising for project implementation through entrepreneurship, the creation of a project management and implementation scheme in collaboration with local governments, the integration of all necessary actions into a comprehensive plan that will not allow for piecemeal development.

Central to this was the requirement for the design of a business center that could make possible the self-financing of the project. The research, supervised by Wassenhoven [30], [31], was initially divided in three phases, however only two were ever implemented, in 1996 and 1999 respectively.

The first phase included an analysis of the airport area and its wider area of influence, an assessment of past urban regeneration practices from abroad, as well as older proposals regarding the area in question.

The aim of phase two was to come up with alternative developmental scenarios. Its outcome was four preliminary scenarios of development whose feasibility was assessed. These were:

Theme parks: Thematic recreation at the city - sea interface comprising theme parks, museums, exhibition halls, leisure facilities.

Arts and letters: Creation of cultural pole comprising an opera house and concert hall, a conservatoire, a dance school, art laboratories, a library, a book centre, facilities for national and egional art organizations.

Conference and exhibition centre and temporary facilities for an international
EXPO comprising a convention hall, international exhibition facilities, the Attica museum, a virtual reality centre, an aquarium, a cinema centre, a business centre, a telecom centre.

Aeronautics and telecommunication and space technology comprising an aeronautics centre, an air transport museum, an image centre, an informatics centre, an exhibition hall, and leisure facilities

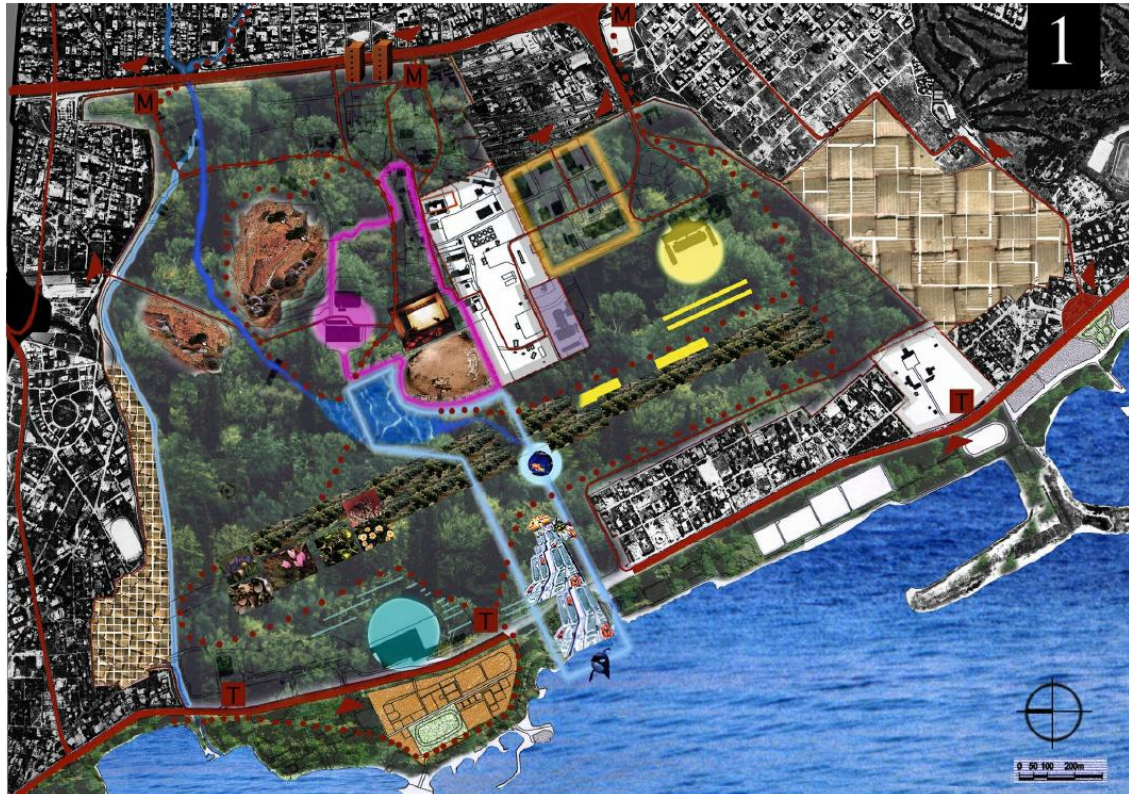The following figures display their most important aspects.

Figure 2: Theme parks scenario.
Source: Wassenhoven, 2007a.

In this scenario, the "virtual reality theme park" with a belvedere demarcated with fuchsia color as well as the "water-recreation park" demarcated with blue color within which a lake and an aquarium are included, have a dominant position. An exhibition center is placed in the old east terminal (yellow circle) and right next to it a business center demarcated with beige color is also placed. The national book center is located in the turquoise circle shown at the bottom of the picture. Finally, office buildings in the easternmost part of the picture, next to Vouliagmenis Avenue, are depicted in brown color.

Figure 3: Arts and letters scenario - cultural pole
Source: Wassenhoven, 2007a.

The arts complex (light red circle) and the image center (fuchsia circle) are the dominant entities in this scenario. The lake is connected to the aquarium (little blue ring) through a stream of water abutting in the sea. Next to the lake a belvedere is planned. An exhibition center is placed in the old east terminal (yellow circle) and right next to it a business center (rectangular area depicted with yellow color) is also placed. The Letter complex depicted with turquoise color is located at the bottom of the picture. As in the previous scenario, office buildings in the easternmost part of the area, next to Vouliagmenis Avenue, are depicted in brown color.

Figure 4: Conference and exhibition centre and temporary facilities for an international
EXPO scenario
Source: Wassenhoven, 2007a**.**

The exhibition center shown by the yellow circle serves as the core for the proposed international
EXPO and constitutes the centerpiece of this scenario. Next to it the yellow rectangular areas are
locations of temporary supplementary exhibition facilities. Right next to them, along the former
runway, outdoor exhibition spaces are located reaching as far as the aquarium (little blue ring).
From that point on, thematic and geometric gardens develop ending up to the new Athens
Museum (purple color). The virtual reality Center (fuchsia color) is located in the eastern side of
the lake connected through the aquarium to the sea. A belvedere is planned right next to the lake.
The business center is located next to the exhibition center (yellow rectangular) and the national
book center is depicted in dark orange color in the north. The turquoise circle delimits the area
where the convention center is planned.
As in previous scenarios, office buildings in the easternmost part of the area, next to
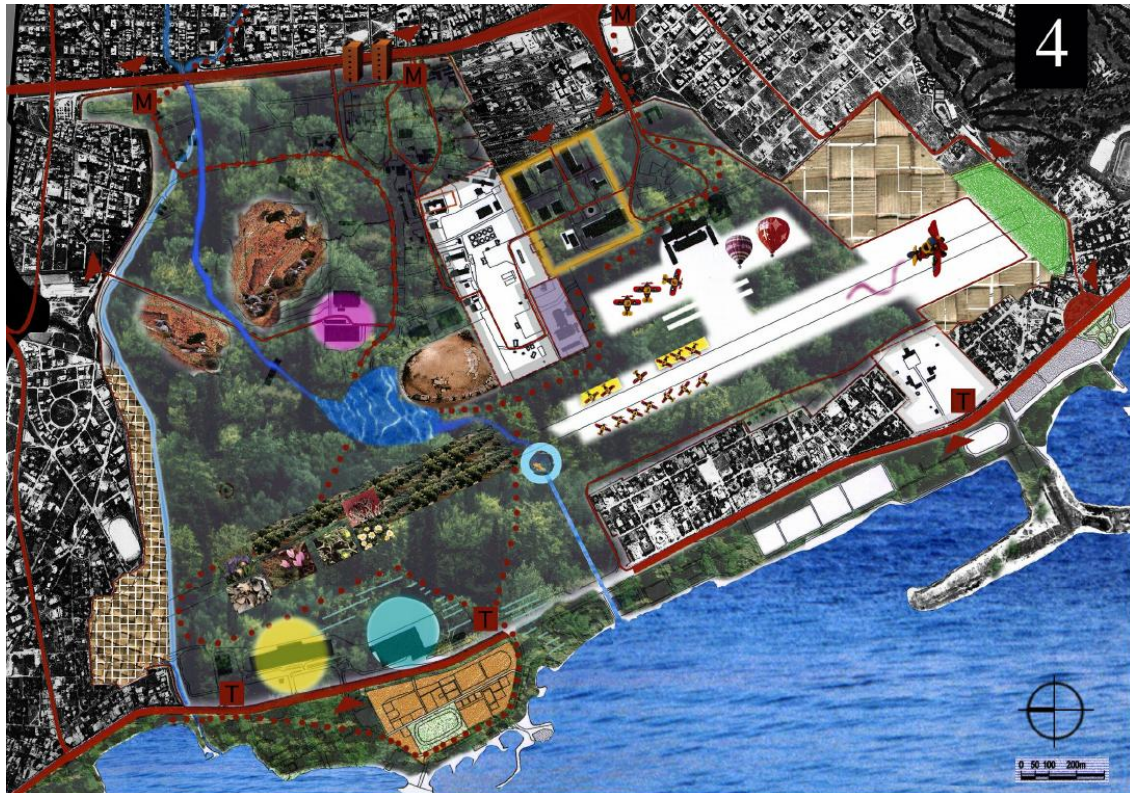Vouliagmenis Avenue, are depicted in brown color.

Figure 5: Aeronautics, telecommunication and space technology scenario
Source: Wassenhoven, 2007a**.**

The dominant element of this scenario is the preservation and use of a certain part of the runway for activities related to aviation such as hot air balloons, model aircrafts and aero clubs providing flight training lessons. A virtual reality center depicted in fuchsia color is also planned on the east side of the lake. The business center is located next to the east terminal (yellow rectangular). A national book center (turquoise circle) and a convention center (yellow circle) are located at the northwest.

Within the planning framework for the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, and due to the delays occurred during the Olympic preparation period that could jeopardize the hosting of the event, it was decided in 2000, that an Olympic complex would be created in the old airport area. This idea was incorporated in Wassenhoven's [32] complementary program of 2001 that included proposals for the area and its connection with Agios Kosmas beach and Floisvos waterfront. This led to the formulation of a master plan for the area as shown below.
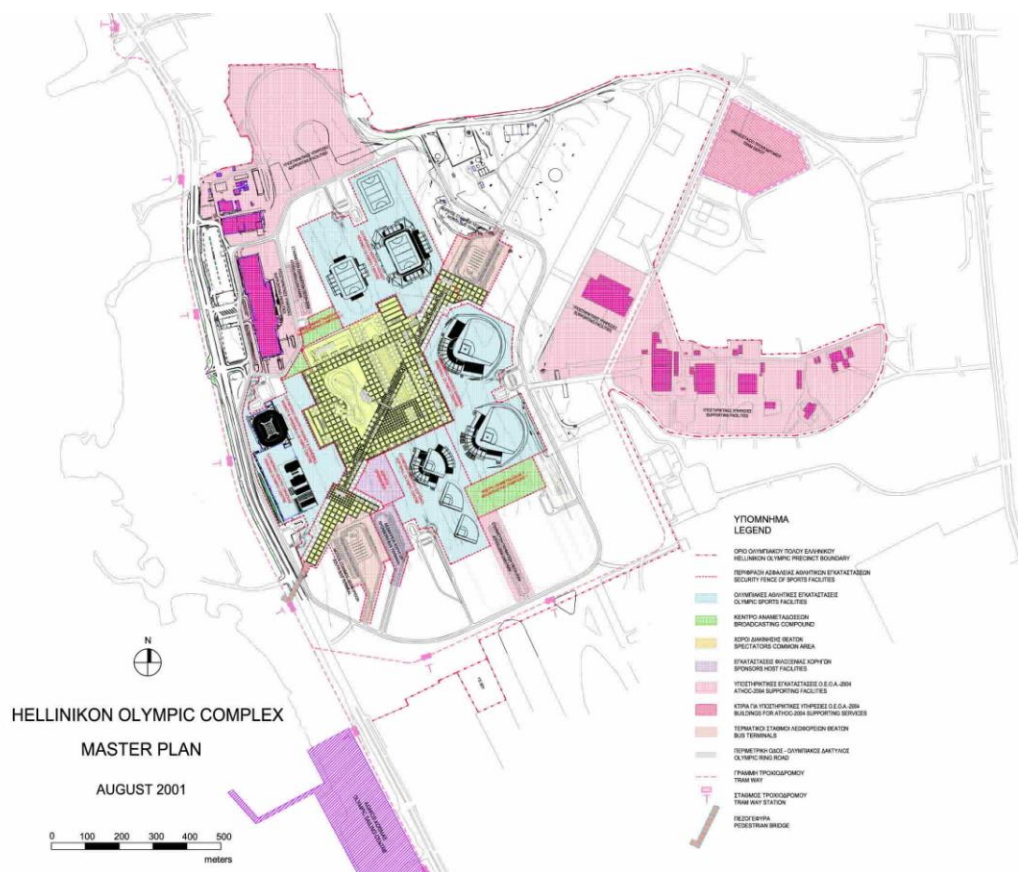
Figure 6: Detailed account of all Olympic facilities installed in Hellinikon
Source: ATHOCOG 2004 [3]

The location of Olympic venues and other infrastructure projects in the Hellinikon former airport site (light railway depot, power distribution station, anti-flood projects), were legislated via joint ministerial decisions issued in 2001. Moreover, a garbage transfer station was located in the area via law legislated in 2004. Furthermore, seventeen hectares were allotted to the Hellenic Tourism Development Corporation so that a convention center would be built in the area. There are several other constructions with different use each established in the area, such as a meteorological station, two churches, a health center, a center for the disabled, the civil aviation authority's offices, water and fuel tanks, the Olympic catering building, a bus depot, a fire station, the Athens area control center of the civil aviation authority, former hangars.

A press release issued on April 2003 by the then prime minister's press office dictated specific guidelines for the post - Olympic use of the area, according to which, the metropolitan park would cover an area of 400Ha within which recreation, cultural, sports facilities would be installed along with a multipurpose convention-exhibition center. The remaining 100Ha would be dedicated for commercial development so as to finance the park as well as some of the city's most derelict areas.

The outcome of the two-phase research program and the 2001 complementary program were used as the basis for an international architectural competition for the post Olympic development of the former airport area that took place in 2003. One hundred and fifty nine competitors participated and the winner was (2004) the Serero and Fernandez Architects in conjunction with the Philippe Coignet Office of Landscape morphology [26].

Figure 7: The Serero-Fernandez award winning proposal
Source: Serero 2005

Finally, the Hellinikon Olympic complex was built in the northern section of the former airport of Athens (Figure 8). The basketball and fencing center covers an area of 10.9Ha and the facilities were staged in the old hangars which were remodeled for that purpose. The baseball, softball and hokey center cover an area of 2.3 Ha consisting of open air facilities. Only one of them was to remain after the Games ended, however, all three courts are still (2010) in place. In addition, the Olympic canoe-kayak-slalom center (5,000 seats) was built in the Hellinikon site covering an area of 28.7 Ha. It is leased for thirty years and is destined to become a water park.

Figure 8: Location of the Hellinikon Olympic complex (white area) within the entire former airport site.
Source:http://www.in.gr/news/reviews/image.asp?lngReviewID=534200&lngImageGalleryID=535764&lngPage=2

A special legal framework for the future use of all Olympic facilities was formulated and enacted via Law as soon as the Games were over [15]. Especially as regards the Hellinikon airport site, apart from the uses allowed for hosting the Games the following functions and uses are allowed per category of venue:

Within basketball and fencing venues, cultural events, exhibitions, commercial shops and food courts are allowed. Within baseball, softball and hokey venues, athletic uses, cultural events and assemblage public domains are allowed. Within the existing installations of the canoe-kayak-slalom venue, shops selling or renting sports gear and assemblage public domains are permitted, while in the surrounding area a theme (sports) park and a hydro park are also permitted. Hellenic Olympic Properties S.A., a management authority established exactly for the purpose of securing the post Olympic use of most of the Olympic properties (including that of the former airport site) was also legislated via the same legal framework.

In 2006, the Serero-Hernandez office was assigned by the Ministry of Planning, Environment and Public Works, to formulate an updated version of their initial award-winning proposal. This was submitted one year later, in August 2007. In the meantime, and specifically in January 2007 a research program named 'Completion and updating of the research project 'Development of the Hellinikon Airport site' was assigned by the Athens Organization to the Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development of the National Technical University of Athens. It was an updated version of the older two phase program conducted in 1996 and 1999 respectively, and it was also divided into two phases [33], [34]. The first dealt with the updating of the old research program while the second aimed to examine issues related to the founding of the site's management agency (such as necessary institutional arrangements) as well as further studies and actions deemed necessary for the completion of the project. The four scenarios mentioned in the initial research program remained, albeit in an updated manner. The program ran in parallel to the Serero-Hernandez updated proposal that had been requested by the Ministry.

In November of the same year, an altered version of the Serero-Hernandez updated proposal was released by the Ministry and was given to the Hellenic Public Real Estate Corporation for

consultation. This new version was in turn assessed by Pollalis [23], [24] (on behalf of the Corporation who commissioned him for that task) both in planning and financial feasibility terms. Major flaws were identified, such as the lack of a business plan for the area in question, of an estimation of construction and maintenance costs for public buildings, of a market research for land values in the vicinity, of research for self-financing models and corresponding development phases, of traffic loads before and after the proposed development, of an accessibility study for both public and private premises, of an environmental impact assessment before and after the proposed development, of specific information regarding the availability of water for irrigation, of a study and of a cost estimate for organizing and founding the "Green Fund" and finally of the project's impact in the entire Attica basin. The ministry's proposal was quite different than the original award winning proposal of the Serero & Fernandez Architects. Furthermore, it confined itself to purely planning and construction building issues for the area concerned while environmental aspects were considered in an abstract and general way. As Pollalis put it, the basic idea was missing. Overall planning for the area consisted of delinked, fragmentary projects with no cohesiveness. Another shortcoming was the lack of a feasibility study that could determine the sustainability of the Ministry's proposals put forward. In this respect, Pollalis stressed that it is not financially feasible to transform the entire area into a metropolitan park, despite the widespread rhetoric developed about such a necessity. He argued that maintenance costs and issues of security are bound to render such an effort impossible. However, this is not the only argument he employed to justify his thesis. More specifically, he noted that the area is located outside the city center, and in spite of a metro station in the vicinity, accessibility is rather low. He suggests that Athens needs green spaces distributed in various underprivileged parts of the city rather than a disproportionately large regional park. Moreover, he proposes that mount Hymettus (being bare of any type of vegetation) be developed as a green space instead of Hellinikon. The adjacent municipal authorities although insisting on specific uses for the area, yet have not adjusted their own urban fabric to the needs deriving from such uses. Finally, he notes that the possibility of creating a large park in the area may facilitate the establishment of undesirable land uses such as night clubs in the area.

The Local Union of Municipalities and Town Councils of Attica (T.E.D.K.N.A.) on behalf of Alimos, Argiroupolis, Glyfada and Hellinikon municipalities, commissioned to the Urban Environment Laboratory of the National Technical University of Athens a research programme named 'Basic Principles for the Planning of a Metropolitan Park in the Former Hellinikon Airport Site'. The first phase of this programme, supervised by Bellavillas [6], was released in June 2010 while the second phase is still (January 2011) pending. The outcome of the first phase can be briefly summarized in the following proposals:

- Fence extirpation and immediate removal of all prefabricated squatter exhibition facilities located in the courtyard of the airport site.
- Cancellation of the land selling programme regarding specific plots for sale
- Abandonment of the highly costly scheme for the building up of new areas
- Cancellation of transport infrastructure plans in the vicinity
- Gradual implementation of low cost 'green' projects
- Gradual re-use of existing constructions through concessions. The income accrued is to be dedicated solely for the purpose of creating, operating and maintaining the park.
- Formulation of a business plan and a feasibility study.

Results and discussion
Several proposals have been put forward officially throughout the entire plan making period as illustrated in previous paragraphs, not to mention individual interventions from various agents[2] expressed in public meetings, symposia or other occasions.

---

[2] These includ the Civil Aviation Authority, planning professionals, the Technical Chambers of Greece, the four adjacent municipalities, the UIA, the Greek Association of Urban and Regional Planners, organized local pressure groups, T.E.D.K.N.A. and academics.

However, as regards the application of marketing approaches in the Hellinikon case, it is only the EXPO (third) scenario mentioned in the research program conducted by the Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development that stands out. According to that research, the hosting of an international exhibition would be the best starting point for the Hellinikon metropolitan park operation. To undertake the task of organizing such an event would also provide the impetus for the implementation of the entire metropolitan park project. Moreover, it pinpoints that staging an EXPO will not only be compatible to the park's overall use as a place of culture and recreation, but more importantly, it can serve to establish its status on a national and international scale. It was argued that it would literally put Hellinikon on the map of national and international interest, hence boost its development. Furthermore, it was suggested that organizing an EXPO could become the cornerstone of a promotional effort for the entire city to a world wide scale. After all, an international exhibition's primary aim is to promote the host country. Wassenhoven [33] specifically highlights the fact that major international events such as the Olympics or the EXPO's are marketing tools for a place, a city or an entire country.

Therefore, the promotional element is evident in this planning approach as a basic element of a marketing approach in public sector urban planning. It concerns not only the area in question, but also the city and the entire country. Apart from the promotional objectives mentioned in city marketing literature which are also identified in this planning proposal, organizational efficiency objectives are also included. The aforementioned proposal specifically mentions that the staging of an EXPO will facilitate the creation of the park due to the fact that its creation will be directly linked to the hosting of the proposed EXPO. Thus, deadlines will have to be set and met, organizing committees will have to be established and funding will have to be secured. Hence, overall organizing capacity will improve. Therefore, within the framework of hosting a major international event, such as an EXPO, all four elements of the place marketing mix can be found; promotion (due to the nature of the event itself), spatial measures (metropolitan park creation and landscaping), organizational measures (EXPO organizing committee) and financial measures (funding for the EXPO).

As far as the strategy adopted, out of the four strategies mentioned in the literature, the diversification strategy seems to gain prevalence in this case. The Hellinikon airport site is an area where a business center along with a museum, a theme park, a virtual reality center and possibly a Music Center were proposed. This proposal aims to bridge social and cultural activities with entrepreneurial activities especially within the field of high class business services. All activities mentioned above, can be regarded in marketing terms as a new set of services designed for new targeted markets (entrepreneurs – business center, visitors – museum, park, virtual reality center, new residents – apartments). The identification of the strategy adopted in this case also reveals the market analysis element described in the city marketing process. The fact that, in this case, specific market segments have been targeted means that a primary form of market segmentation has also been performed. Whether differentiated marketing or concentrated marketing has been applied, this is an issue that can be looked at from two different perspectives. If the primary aim of market segmentation has been the identification of the target group which would ensure the financial feasibility of the entire project, then concentrated segmentation has been performed. In the Hellinikon airport site case, this target group would undoubtedly be the entrepreneurs. On the other hand, if all market segments are treated equally regardless of their economic impact, then differentiated marketing is applied. Despite the fact that it is not quite clear which one of the two approaches has been followed in this case, nevertheless the fact that a basic prerequisite was for the project to be self sustained, leads us to believe that concentrated marketing is implicitly the most probable form of market segmentation for Hellinikon. After all, the development of a business center is displayed in all four alternative developmental scenarios.

As far as product positioning is concerned, within the EXPO scenario Wassenhoven [33] mentions that "the creation of an exhibition center in Hellinikon airport site is expected to have exceptionally favorable conditions for its operation given that exhibition centers are increasingly developing throughout the world". In marketing terms, this can be regarded as an incomplete

form of product positioning, for although it refers to the commodification of the area in question as advocated in the literature, at the same time fails to relate to the existing competition which would allow for the positioning to take place.

At this point, it is necessary to highlight that despite the fact that all aforementioned remarks are not explicitly mentioned in the research supervised by Wassenhoven; nevertheless they are easily identified and derived when looked at from a marketing perspective.

Urban effects

It is quite clear that there is a huge gap between plan formulation and plan implementation regarding the Hellinikon former airport site redevelopment. The poor initial planning for the 2004 Games resulted in the cursory creation of an Olympic complex within the Hellinikon former airport site so as to meet pressing deadlines which otherwise, might not have been met. This was coupled with the construction of some permanent facilities that were unnecessary given the low popularity of the sports hosted in them (softball and baseball). Most of sports facilities in that area, permanent and temporary, were stockaded for security reasons, however fences remained after the Games were over, creating thus enclosed areas. These developments created a de facto situation completely unfavorable to any kind of comprehensive redevelopment, much less to the creation of a metropolitan park. In addition, most sports installations have been underutilized, if utilized at all. Moreover, according to Bellavillas [6], within the former east terminal area, major squatter exhibition facilities have appeared, whereas the terminal itself designed by famous architect Eero Saarinen has been abandoned by its management authority, that is, the Hellenic Tourism Development Co. Furthermore, the coastal zone, which is also included in the design of the metropolitan park, has been reportedly occupied by squatter night clubs.

Since the spring of 2007, Agios Kosmas' marina, located right next to Hellinikon, was allotted by Olympic Properties SA, the management authority of Olympic venues, to a private developer who plans to build a 60,000 m^2 mall and a cinema complex. Both of the aforementioned plans lay outside the area in question, but are close enough to affect it in terms of competition.

Moreover, in January 2007 Olympic properties SA allotted to a private developer the canoe-kayak-slalom facility for thirty years, so that a water park would be built along with the necessary parking space to support its operation. The facility is located within the Hellinikon area. However, the developer who undertook the task of transforming it into a theme park has ceased to pay the rent to the management authority (Olympic Properties S.A.) due to the state's failure to issue the building permits necessary for the transformation. Consequently, the dispute that has arisen between Olympic Properties S.A. and the developer in relation to this issue will have to be resolved through arbitration. In 2008, both the Athens Bar Association and Hellinikon Municipality have resorted to the Council of State asking for the cancellation of the joint ministerial decision by which the environmental terms for the above mentioned transformation were approved. They argue that there is no study for the creation of the water park in the area and that its implementation will degrade the overall design of the Hellinikon metropolitan park. The development process is for the time being (2010) monitored by the Athens Organization however a special governing body will take charge in the future.

In addition, reality has surpassed plans that were formulated long ago, thus rendering them outdated. The National Book Center was finally decided to be built in the old horse race track instead of the Hellinikon site; the convention center will finally be located in the former Faliron Olympic complex, and all three open air sports courts remained even though only one of them was to remain according to the initial plans.

Concluding remarks

It is evident that there has been a long (in a fifteen year time span) series of studies concerning the future use of the former airport site, yet none of them was ever attempted to be implemented.

Pressures from various interest groups such as municipal authorities, central government politicians, local pressure groups, academics, established agencies (Olympic Properties S.A., Hellenic Tourism Development Corporation), private developers each one of them with a different agenda in mind, have hindered any serious effort for formulating a definite and comprehensive development plan. On the contrary, there is indication that piecemeal development is starting to take place, putting thus the area's developmental prospects at risk.

Furthermore, it is found that out of the various studies and research projects formulated throughout the entire period, only one has (implicitly) adopted marketing elements in plan formulation, namely the one formulated by the Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development of the National Technical University of Athens, within which the EXPO scenario was included. In this scenario, besides promotion, which can be identified even in primitive forms of marketing (such as pseudo marketing), all other three elements of the city marketing mix were identified; spatial/organizational/financial measures. As for planning strategies, the diversification strategy was adopted within the framework of the city marketing process. New sets of services were proposed for new targeted markets. There is also strong evidence that market segmentation was also performed in the form of concentrated marketing. Finally, an incomplete form of product positioning took place through an attempt to commodify the area by transforming it into an exhibition site; however no relations were established with regard to the existing competition.

All in all, the Hellinikon case provides an excellent opportunity for applying city marketing principles in practice, especially principles deriving from the Dutch-German approach that could match supply and demand not for the purpose of profit making but for achieving wider developmental objectives (including environmental protection and consensus building). It seems however, that the cacophony stemming from the involvement of various stakeholders who compete with each other to further their own personal agenda will pose a serious threat to ever implementing the long awaited redevelopment.

References
1. Ashworth, G. J. & Voogd, H. (1990). *Selling the City: Marketing Approaches in Public Sector Urban Planning.* Belhaven Press, London.
2. Ashworth, G.J. & Voogd, H. (1994). "Marketing and place promotion". In Gold, J.R. & Ward, S.V. (eds), *Place promotion: The use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. John Wiley and Sons Ltd, Chichester.
3. Athens Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (2001). *Hellinikon Master Plan*, CD-ROM edition (in Greek).
4. Balmer, J.M.T. (2001). Corporate Identity, Corporate Branding and Corporate Marketing: Seeing through the Fog. *European Journal of Marketing 35*, pp. 248–291.
5. Balmer, J.M.T. & Greyser, S.A. (eds.) (2003). *Revealing the Corporation: Perspectives on Identity, Image, Reputation, Corporate Branding and Corporate-level Marketing*. London: Routledge.
6. Bellavillas, N. (2010). Basic Principles for the Planning of a Metropolitan Park in the Former Hellinikon Airport Site. Urban Environment Laboratory, School of Architecture, National Technical University of Athens and Local Union of Municipalities and Town Councils of Attica research programme. First phase report, June 2010 (in Greek).
7. Berg, Leo van den. & Meer, J. Van der. (1994). "Urban marketing in the Netherlands. An overview of its results". In Corsico, F. & Ave, G. (eds). *Marketing Urbano International Conference*. Edizioni Torino Incontra.
8. Borchert, J. G. & Buursink, J. (1987). *Citymarketing en geografie.* Amsterdam/Nijmegen 1987: Knag/Geografisch en Planologisch Instituut Katholieke Universiteit.
9. Corsico, F. & Ave, G. (1994) (eds). *Marketing Urbano International Conference.* Edizioni Torino Incontra.
10. Cuadrado Roura, J.R. & Rubalcaba Bermejo, L. (1998). Specialization and Competition in Urban European Cities: a New Approach through Fairs and Exhibitions, *Regional Studies*, No. 39, pp. 133-147.

11. Gaido, L. (1994). "Urban Marketing Methodology: the Competitive Positioning of the City". In Corsico, F. & Ave, G. (eds.) *Marketing Urbano International Conference.* Edizioni Torino Incontra.
12. Greenberg, M. (2000). Branding Cities: A Social History of the Urban Lifestyle Magazine. *Urban Affairs Review,* vol. 36, No. 2, November 2000, pp.228-263.
13. Griffiths, R. (1998). "Making Sameness: Place Marketing and the New Urban Entrepreneurialism". In: Oatley, N. *Cities, Economic Competition and Urban Policy.* London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
14. Hall, T. (1998). *Urban Geography.* Routledge: London and New York.
15. Hellenic Government Gazette, (2005). Government Gazette Issue No (ΦΕΚ) 131Α'/06-06-05 (in Greek).
16. Jensen-Butler, C. Shachar, A. & van Weesep, J. (eds.) (1997). *European Cities in Competition*, European Science Foundation, Aldershot: Ashgate.
17. Kavaratzis, M. & Ashworth, G.J. (2005). City Branding: an Effective Assertion of Identity or a Transitory Marketing Trick? *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, vol. 96, no 5, pp.506-514.
18. Kim, Y-H & Short, R.J. (1998). "Urban Crises / Urban representations: Selling the City in Difficult Times". In Hall, T. & Hubbard, P. *The Entrepreneurial City: Geographies of Politics, Regime and Representation*. Chichester: Wiley.
19. Kotler, P. Haider, D. H. & Rein, I. (1993). *Marketing Places: Attracting Investment Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States and Nations.* New York, Free Press.
20. Krantz, M. & Schatzl, L. (1997). "Marketing the City". In Jensen-Butler, C. Shachar, A. & van Weesep, J. (eds.) *European Cities in Competition*. European Science Foundation, Aldershot: Ashgate.
21. Meffert, H. (1991). *Marketing: Grundlagen der Absatzpolitik*, 7. *überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage*, Wiesbaden.
22. Page, S. (1995). *Urban Tourism.* Routledge.
23. Pollalis, S. (2008a). *Feasibility study of the YPEHODE planning proposal for the development of the former Hellinikon airport site*, 6 June 2008. Prof. S. Pollalis and Associates (in Greek).
24. Pollalis, S. (2008b). *Assessment of the YPEHODE planning proposal for the development of the former Hellinikon airport site and presentation of new proposals*. 20 June 2008, Prof. S. Pollalis and Associates (in Greek).
25. Schmoll, G.A. (1977). *Tourism promotion.* London. Tourism International Press, p.8.
26. Serero, D. (2005). Prospective Landscapes: Hellinikon Metropolitan Park. *Topos, International Review of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design,* vol. 51, pp.27-31.
27. Sforzi, F. (1994). "City marketing and local development". In Corsico, F. and Ave, G. (eds). *Marketing Urbano International Conference*. Edizioni Torino Incontra.
28. Smyth, H. (1993). *Marketing the City: The Role of Flagship Developments in Urban Regeneration.* E&FN Spon.
29. Ward, S. V. (1998). *Selling Places: The Marketing and Promotion of Towns and Cities 1850-2000.* E&FN Spon.
30. Wassenhoven, L. (1996). *Development of the Hellinikon Airport site*. National Technical University of Athens, Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development, First phase report (in Greek).
31. Wassenhoven, L. (1999). *Development of the Hellinikon Airport site*. National Technical University of Athens, Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development, Second phase report (in Greek).
32. Wassenhoven, L. (2001). *Investigating the potential for the development of Olympic venues within the western part of the Hellinikon airport site and the waterfront area of Agios Kosmas - Palaion Faliron coastal zone regeneration up to Floisvos.* National Technical University of Athens Research Programme, Athens 2001 (in Greek).
33. Wassenhoven, L. (2007a). *Completion and updating of research project 'Development of the Hellinikon Airport site'*, National Technical University of Athens, Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development, First phase report 2007 (in Greek).

34. Wassenhoven, L. (2007b). *Completion and updating of research project 'Development of the Hellinikon Airport site'*. National Technical University of Athens, Laboratory of Spatial Planning and Urban Development, Second phase report 2007 (in Greek)