

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

11.337J / 4.247J Urban Design Policy and Action  
Spring 2007

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.

### Exercise #3: “Property Rights: An Example”

**Objectives:** This exercise is intended to have you focus on the allocation and enforcement of *property rights* as a tool of government action. It asks you to provide a concise account of examples of the use of property rights by government to achieve an urban design policy.

**Assignment:** From the literature or your experience, select an example of government use of *property rights* as a tool to implement an urban design policy or plan. Describe this example concisely making clear the government’s role in implementation, and appraise the match between the policy/plan and the outcome in terms of both the ‘fit’ of outcome to policy and the contribution that a property rights approach has made to achieving the outcome (or to the failure to realize the intended outcome).

As you do this exercise, please also keep in mind the ideas presented in the readings about property rights, particularly the Pearce reading.

Be very brief in your description; our emphasis is to build a wide a dossier of good examples with appropriate commentary rather than to dig too deeply at this point. Two pages would be sufficient; fewer would probably be insufficient.

*This is probably the most difficult tool to illustrate through an example. Thus, you may find yourself relying more on the examples in the readings than on personal experience. Property rights are often described as a “bundle of sticks,” each one representing a separate property right. Keep this metaphor in mind and look for an example in which a new property right is created by slicing one of the sticks in half or adding a new stick to the bunch.*