



„Model Project for making the most of EU Fund for Sustainable Housing and Inclusion of disadvantaged groups in Pécs”



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THE GYÖRGY SETTLEMENT OF PÉCS

Planning accessible and sustainable housing
Evaluation of the Student Designs Competition

Date of evaluation: June 6, 2013, Pécs, Hungary

Jury members: Márta Márczis | UNDP | chief technical advisor of the project
Katalin Utasi | Hungarian Maltese Charity Service | project partner
Dr. Zoltán Tóth | PTE PMMIK | university professor
Dr. Ders Csaba | City of Pécs | chief city architect

Summary of Evaluation - Dr. Ders Csaba

The dilemma of the development of the György settlement is not only a moral duty for the city of Pécs, but is also the most complex and difficult of professional challenges; one which could meet with success only supported by a long-term systematic learning process. Further, the task requires not only the mobilization of more academic and professional knowledge, but the harmonic cooperation, and what is more, the establishment of unified knowledge, in these settlements.

This competition represents the first step of this long learning process, with which we tried to present a certain case-study situation for the students of architecture, whereby this complexity is made sensible. In this way, our goal was to stimulate a different perception of their role as architects, and prompt them towards wider professional horizons.

In many aspects, the role of architecture and the architect appears very differently in such a task, for the proper understanding of which one needs to get used to the uncertainly accompanying the stepping out of the canons of traditional understandings. It is also necessary to have a sense for the vulnerability from which the necessary openness to these issues is derived, and which could lead to the becoming of architects and architecture sensitive to social and economic phenomena.

On the one hand, here architecture is not the goal, but rather a tool for social inclusion. The understanding of this role, however, is not possible, given the traditional concept and the way it has been developed and applied, and based on the legally formalized architectural norm system. It is then much more important to get familiarized with the situation of the community of the György settlement and the conditions for its social inclusion. However, this type of local knowledge, stemming not only from cultural reasons, but also the situation of people living on the periphery, is not easily accessible or conceivable through the normative and generally formal rules and practices of architecture today.

This is why an especially important focus point in the process of our evaluations was the question of whether, and in which ways, the planning team attempted and was able to grasp the informal, everyday reality of the György settlement community, and the extent to which they were able to consider and apply the planning tools of physical environment for forging and enhancing social inclusion.

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The knowledge of the community is also especially important because it represents the point from which the accessibility and sustainability of the physical infrastructure could be understood and analyzed. For instance, we could not apply such architectural tools which are not financially tenable and which could not be utilized and sustained from the own resources of the targeted community. Similarly important, however, is to understand the life cycles of these families as thoroughly as possible, since our task is to rationalize and make possible this very functioning, and to institutionalize its conditions, using the tools of physical environment. This is why another important evaluation point was the extent to which the competing team could establish the bases of a more effective life cycle with the help of the norm system of the physical environment; and similarly, to what extent the team was able to adapt the utilized tools to the materials and cultural resources of the György settlement community.

Naturally, here we refer not only to the different scales of the integration of communities, but also to the different scales of planning for an integrated approach. Indeed, in a community sense, the integration of the György settlement into its wider environment, the increase of the social capital of the community, the functioning of neighborliness and neighborly relationships within the community, and the functioning of families and basic social units, all present a simultaneous question. The successful social integration combines the harmonization of all of these social and physical scales. This is why another definite evaluation point was whether and how successfully the competing team was able to grasp these social scales, and what adequate urban planning, building organization and architectural answers they could develop; similarly, to what extent the considerations associated with the different scales were able to be intertwined and combined in the integrated plan.

Mutual comments from the jury panel

III. Prize

Ms. Renáta Fogas, Mr. Zoltán Dányi Tibor, and Mr. Péter Paári

Among all competitors, this proposal was unique in the answer it gave to community needs and the clear and logical planning and organization of public spaces. This approach surely supports the establishment of a dynamic community life, and through it, the creation of a dynamic community. However, the plan presents difficulties in implementation, in the way these functions could find place in the square of György settlement in the next stage of planning. The absence of such a public square in the settlement contradicts the adequate language of urban organization with which the team has formulated the revival of the György settlement.

Equally good was the clear view of the challenge of life and economic sustenance, and following this, how the team tried to ground the goals of the program, and which it then conceptualized in a well-functioning architectural and internal architectural plan. There was a good-spirited element of a transitional hallway connecting the two sides of houses, which simultaneously serves functional, building structural and physical goals. However, a drawback to planning lies in the lack of understanding of the lifecycle of residents, and lack of its conscious incorporation into the sustainability concept of the plan. Stemming from this omission, the application of sustainability tools was ad-hoc and incomplete.

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In summary, the plan approaches the question of the Györgytelep settlement through a well-developed and consistent process that starts from the targeted neighborhood of Györgytelep as a whole and logically narrows down to the design of the building structures and the interiors.

II. Prize

Ms. Kata Mészáros, Ms. Anna Borbély Fruzsina, Mr. Ákos Gyergyák (and Mr. Péter Zilahi as consultant)

In a systematic and consequential fashion, the plan attempts to think through the process of life rhythms and residential dynamics, and the cooperation of the targeted actors in its realization. Building on this frame, it tries to develop a theoretical sustainability system, which the team then skillfully translates into architectural, building organization and interior architectural scales. The passive utilization of sun energy, the conscious re-usage of rainwater, the method and role of heating, all turn into important elements of the organizational layout and building design. However, this consciousness seems to fade a little in the planning of the György settlement, which brings a debatable result into the urban organization character and conceptualization of buildings.

I. Prize

Ms. Erika Vörös, Mr. Gábor Bazsali, Mr. Domonkos Szilágyi

This is the team which demonstrated clearest understanding of the accessibility and sustainability questions, and the proposal which was most successfully able to translate these principles into the different scales of planning, and to establish harmony among them.

The reinterpretation of the area along the main East-West axis simultaneously creates an attractive public space for the György settlement community, and at the same time defines an attractive entry point for those arriving into the settlement. This new community space could simultaneously become the tool for community building, as well as for community integration. The planning team then skillfully breaks down this basic structure to the scales of smaller communities and families, creating the possibility of different levels of socialization with these interwoven spaces. The team conceptualizes these spaces in an adequate urban planning and architectural language.

This sustainable design concept is also well- based on the family level, on the one hand laying out the principles of permaculture, while on the other, providing a deep analysis of families’ life cycles. Similarly consistent is the building construction concept, which takes into account both the financial limits for realization of the development, and the excessive operation. It mediates the latter by including the possibility for the development of the emerging physical environment, also relying on the local community’s own resources as well.

It is the jury’ unanimous decision that this is the proposal which grasps the challenges of the development of György settlement in the most extensive and sensitive mode.

For more information please see a more comprehensive commentary in Hungarian:

<http://epiteszforum.hu/pecs-gyorgy-telep-tervezz-elerheto-es-fenntarthato-lakast>

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