

## Public presentations at the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia

The Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia offers free public presentations on topical issues in the profession in Slovenia and internationally. The presentations are announced in newspapers and on the website [www.uirs.si](http://www.uirs.si), and also by e-mail by signing up at [predavanja@uirs.si](mailto:predavanja@uirs.si). Please write to the same address for any additional information. An archive of past presentations with abstracts is available at [http://www.uirs.si/dogodki\\_predavanja.asp](http://www.uirs.si/dogodki_predavanja.asp).

### Overview of presentations from May 2011 to April 2012

21 June 2011

#### Cycling as a mode of urban mobility

*Urban sustainability and socio-ecological significance in the contemporary world: A brief approach to the case of Ljubljana*

**Speakers:** Luis Morales, Pablo de Olavide University, Sevilla, Spain

The current urbanisation and motorisation processes across the world are affecting society, the economy, and the environment, at both the local and global levels, and are responsible for immense consumption of energy. Global change caused by human activities is adding to the context of uncertainty and disruptions. A severe energy crisis is expected in a few decades due to a breakdown in oil supplies. Strategies of promoting cycling and walking, and restricting motorised mobility, will become critical in order to successfully address these challenges. In addition to energy

savings, promoting a slower-paced city can be achieved, which will contribute to a more liveable, vibrant and safer city, as well as to more social interactions, democratisation of mobility and general improvement of the quality of urban spaces. Cyclist mobility improves the stability and complexity of the urban system and therefore its sustainability levels. This presentation by Luis Morales, Pablo de Olavide University, Seville, an environmental consultant with a background in urban sustainability, focused on promoting cycling as a necessary urban strategy to achieve success



when facing the energy crisis. A review of cyclist mobility in Ljubljana was supplemented with some suggestions for improving cycling infrastructure in the city.

25 October 2011

#### Spatial concept of the Centre of Moste

*Reurbanisation of the Ljubljana suburb along Zaloška Cesta*

**Speaker:** Maja Kovačič, Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Moderator:** Mojca Šašek Divjak, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

In the competition with city centres and shopping centres on the outskirts of cities, local urban centres are losing their appeal for businesses as well as residents and visitors. In this process, which is typical for the majority of European cities, suburbs are losing their

functional and spatial recognisability. The responsible city policymakers are aware of this problem and are using various approaches to help strengthen local centres and suburban areas again. In her presentations, the architect Maja Kovačič presented the architectural and



urban planning approach to revitalising the area along Ljubljana's eastern radial road and Moste, the area's local centre. She developed this approach in her bachelor's thesis. Special potential for this area lies in the Ljubljanica River; with the establishment of suitable connections, it may significantly contribute to forming a recognisable physiognomy

of the social, cultural, and economic centre of Moste. The present nature of this area is highly transitional and unarticulated; however, based on spatial analyses and an assessment of the current condition, the author recommends an urban-planning concept that would improve the quality of this condition. She recommends that connections to

the city be established and other measures for improving the quality of life in the Moste residential area be taken, and that Moste also receive its own recognisable local centre.

17 November 2011

### Place making

*A contextual approach*

**Speakers:** Charles Gardner, Matrix Partnership, London, UK

**Moderator:** Matej Nikšič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

In recent years there has been a general trend towards more fractured and disjointed urban environments. Charles Gardner, a director at the UK-based urban design company Matrix Partnership, referred to his international experience to advocate a "Contextual

Approach to Place-Making". Drawing on his background as a landscape architect and using a range of practical examples, he explained how close regard to the context of individual locations, together with a strong emphasis on teamwork, can provide the impetus



for addressing many negative influences and for creating unique and delightful urban environments.

6 December 2011

### Slovenian urban planning

*A critical view of spatial planning in recent decades*

**Speaker:** Vladimir Braco Mušič

**Moderator:** Breda Mihelič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The architect and urban planner Vladimir Braco Mušič, one of the most well-known experts in Slovenian urban planning, took a closer look at past decades of urban planning in Slovenia and critically contextualized it within the frameworks of global urban-planning development. By reflecting on the work and the role of some central institutions in spatial planning, he emphasised some topics in the recent past that have had a significant influence on today's state of affairs. He discussed the importance of a methodological approach to spatial planning and urban design, the effects

on legislation, the organisation of line ministries, and the government's role; he also discussed the theses for the "Foundations of Urbanisation and Spatial Planning Policies" and the beginning stages of dealing with environmental issues and landscape evaluation. He presented these topics with examples, such as the Maribor-South project, the Ruski Car neighbourhood in Ljubljana, the design competition project for a tourist centre in Montenegro, and the Split 3 project in Croatia. He called for closer cooperation between research and education and between various teaching in-



stitutions in the sense of multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinarity of work, and he also shared his vision for the future of central institutions in spatial planning in Slovenia. Among other things, he emphasised the importance of developing a central library and archives of Slovenian urban planning.

17 January 2012

### Areas with high population density

*Criteria for sustainable planning and construction*

**Speaker:** Luka Mladenovič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Moderator:** Mojca Šašek Divjak, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Planning densely populated urban areas poses a special challenge to urban-planning experts because there is a gap between the theoretical view of density as a positive characteristic of the built environment and the actual design of the areas, which often offer lower quality of life. In his doctoral dissertation, Luka Mladenovič of the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia discussed the complexity of the concept of density and its impacts on

the quality of life in the built environment. He established that planners often do not have an overview of all the impacts that construction entails for the environment. As a result, the planning process does not establish mechanisms for treating and evaluating them, and this creates environments that offer a lower quality of life to its residents and other users than could be achieved by means of careful planning. Mladenovič presented a system of criteria for a more



comprehensive treatment of the impacts that high-density urban areas have on the environment, especially on the quality of life in urban space. This system enables a more successful transfer of the sustainable development concept into planning practice. Its implementation requires some changes to the planning process, which Mladenovič also presented.

14 February 2012

### The London Olympics: *Going for green*

*Documentary film and presentation of the Slovenian pavilion*

**Opening address:** Andrew Page, Embassy of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Speakers:** Edvard Blažko, SoNo architectures, Ajdovščina and Marko Lukić, Lumar IG, Maribor, Slovenia

**Moderator:** Matej Nikšič, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The film *Going for green* tells the story of building the London Olympic Park. This park is the largest and most extensive project in the UK to date. It is unique because architects and urban planners have embedded sustainability in its planning from the start. Innovative solutions were applied in construction, and new standards were set up in architectural design and environmental preservation. People's mentality changed as well. The image of East London has transformed dramatically in the past few years. Once a polluted and run-down part of London, it is now a world-class venue, a model of sustainable living and

a positive legacy for future generations. Andrew Page, the British ambassador to Slovenia, introduced the film and highlighted the importance of the Olympic Games for the City of London and the UK. After the projection, there was a presentation of the House of Slovenia in London project. The pavilion was designed by SoNo Arhitekti and implemented by Lumar IG. The pavilion will be the centre of Slovenian activities in Olympic London. Edvard Blažko, the architect, presented the installation and the design of the pavilion with regard to the characteristics of the location and function. Marko Lukić, the director

of Lumar IG, presented the technical characteristics of the pavilion in relation to the aspects of passive and low-energy construction. The realisation of the object is very specific because it will later be moved to another location with unknown climate conditions.



3 April 2012

### Public urban spaces and urban spaces open to the public

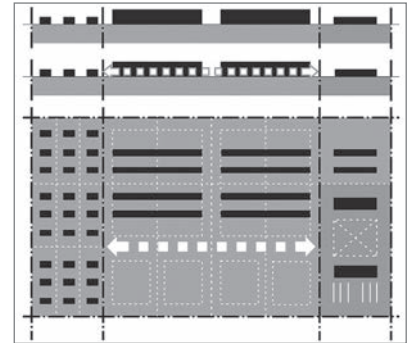
*New solutions for a modern city*

**Speaker:** Liljana Jankovič Grobelšek

**Moderator:** Ilka Čerpes, Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The public space network is the urban space, in which we mostly carry out measures to improve people's quality of life, health and safety. In addition to public spaces, in her doctoral dissertation Liljana Jankovič Grobelšek from Acer Novo Mesto also discussed private spaces open to the public in cities. In practice and in legislation, such spaces are a completely unestablished category

in Slovenia. They are linked with the public space network and complement it. For this reason, they offer an opportunity to quantitatively and qualitatively add to the public space, and the potential of this space is considered insufficiently used. Jankovič outlined the urban-planning guidelines as possible urban-planning strategies and tools that can contribute to a quantitatively richer



and a higher-quality network of public spaces and private spaces open to the public. Urban planning guidelines can immediately begin to be implemented and carried out in practice on the basis of applicable legislation; opportunities to put these guidelines into practice and gradually include them in legislation were presented.

24 April 2012

### Urban planning in flood-risk areas

*The case of Bangkok 2011: Did deficient urban design, planning and management turn a natural calamity into a man-made disaster?*

**Speaker:** Koen De Wandeler, De Hogeschool voor Wetenschap & Kunst, Sint-Lucas Architectuur, Brussels, Belgium, and King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, School of Architecture and Design, Bangkok, Thailand

**Moderator:** Naja Marot, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Unusually heavy rainfall during the monsoon season of 2011 created massive surges of floodwater that were only just prevented from submerging the economic heart of Bangkok. Diverting the natural water flow to the eastern and western suburbs, however, caused a major flood crisis in the entire periphery of the Thai capital. It substantially disrupted the distribution of goods and provision of services, caused extensive damage and seriously affected the livelihood of many middle- and lower-income households. Experts in water management were quick to point out that human interference

over the past decades had undermined the fragile ecology of the Thai Central Plain. Noteworthy factors included deforestation, the damming and diversion of natural waterways, and also urbanisation and urban sprawl leading to the conversion of man-made canals into roads and overbuilding in catchment areas. Drawing on two decades of living and researching urban issues in Bangkok, Koen De Wandeler, a lecturer at the Sint-Lucas School of Architecture in Brussels and head of the Urban Management Track of the Graduate Programme at the School of Architecture and Design (King Mongkut's



University of Technology Thonburi) in Bangkok, examined the debates that have emerged since the floods receded. Is there or has there ever been a vision for the growth of this magnificent city? What efforts have been made to develop and enforce urban planning? How is the municipal administration organised and what partnerships are mobilised to direct the daily management and crisis management of this urban mammoth? The presentations concluded by opening discussions with a number of suggestions for how urban design, planning and management could have contributed to alleviating the flood crisis.

Figure sources: Matej Nikšič, K. Vodnik, Matrix, Maribor-South project, COBE, London2012.com, Liljana Jankovič Grobelšek, Reuters

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