

dential environment. Successful undertaking of a long-term rehabilitation of a housing estate is only feasible in collaboration with the people who live and work in a particular area. It is necessary to ensure their active participation in all steps of the renewal process, from ascertaining advantages and disadvantages of the neighbourhood to producing a vision and a strategy of the renewal. This includes also the determination of priorities and steps to be followed in the implementation of the renewal programme. But it is also about asserting the democratic right of the tenants to take part in deciding about the way and quality of life in their environment.

For the purpose of constructively involving the tenants into the neighbourhood rehabilitation process it is necessary to introduce a system of community planning and provide for their education primarily through the organisation of the urban planning workshops and design consultations.

The tenants get involved into the process of rehabilitation, maintenance and management through *the tenants' association* or via *the Management Board of the Neighbourhood*. Considering the »fragmented« management in our residential neighbourhoods, establishing a *Neighbourhood Management Board* to co-ordinate the rehabilitation and individual maintenance and management measures would be a suitable organisational form of the tenants' participation

The system of *community planning* is implemented by means of the *planning for real* methodology. Under the guidance of the planning experts, »planning for real« usually takes place as a two-day event. An important expedient for this work is a sizeable model, a plastic representation of the neighbourhood, which enables the tenants to actively participate in the planning exercise by presenting their views about the development of the neighbourhood as a whole or about the desired developments of particular locations (options available from the list of possible solutions). This event is followed by a series of housing workshops (urban planning and design workshops) which treat the characteristic areas of the neighbourhood with the purpose of detailed checking and defining the housing views and wishes as to the development of the physical environment and immediate residential environment respectively. It is necessary to prepare a report on the course of the workshop for each one of the treated areas, which in conclusion presents in a graphical way the abstract of the tenants' suggestions. This material is then used as groundwork for the preparation of the urban planning documentation and programme & design guidelines needed for arrangements and negotiations with potential investors.

Modern times require modern approaches to planning housing areas. The old »bulldozing« manners of planning neighbourhoods where views and wishes of the tenants didn't matter at all, are no longer acceptable, they don't work any more. In the researched area the tenants managed to obstruct the planned building operations even though the project envisaged solving the parking problem which generated the greatest dissatisfaction among the tenants. A mass rejection of erecting supplemental homes in the housing estate, clearly showed by the polling, is an additional message to the authorities that the tenants no longer agree to interventions into their environment which are dictated from outside without their consent. We find that some of the solutions proposed in the plans of the Municipality of Ljubljana might even be quite suitable. We have to

realise the urban space is limited and therefore very expensive. It should be used very rationally. Increasing housing density, wherever it is possible (and of course in accordance with suitable standards), is an instrument of land use planning which cannot be completely given up. The fundamental problem with us is that we tackle such projects in a wrong way. Lessons learned at Savsko naselje admonish us that some things urgently need to be changed. In connection with the right to participate in decision making a lady at the workshop so expressed her opinion: »As we are in the European Union now, owners have to be asked about constructions and alterations«. It may sound ingenuous, but the point is that people are ever more aware of their rights and expect corresponding systemic shifts if for no other reason than the EU membership. Times have changed, people's interests have changed, their awareness has changed, and their expectations have changed. The planning practice must change too, and adapt to new times. »Dialogue«, is the magic word.

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Note:

[1] Most residents do not acknowledge their area to be a part of Savsko naselje, but they are not concordant as to what the real name of the neighbourhood is. The prevailing conviction among the residents is that the area is named »Local community Boris Ziherl«.

For sources and literature turn to page 15.

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Drago KOS

Participatory urban renewal

1. The starting points of participatory urban renewal

The first problem of urban renewal is undoubtedly the question of methodology. The subject is hard to handle because of strong and interwoven social, capital and political interests. Many experiences are available, mostly foreign, but their practical applicability is locally specific and limited. The most comprehensive approach is desired, but this soon exceeds financial and other implementation possibilities. So each time anew a question needs to be asked: where and how to start, and most importantly, how to maintain adequate openness of procedures. Precedential decisions that would in advance block changes and additions occurring throughout the procedures because of the unpredictable life situations should be avoided in the renewal process.

Namely, if we are planning the renewal of an entire housing estate rather than just individual buildings, then it is highly likely that it won't be possible to predict all social dimensions. Reductionism must therefore be inevitably built into the outset of the renewal process. Consequently a thorough consideration of concept matters and basic goals of the renewal and ways of its fulfilment is necessary. Those carrying out this task should structure this complex subject in the way that would make it possible to select a broad spectre of questions, triggered by the renovation activities, throughout the duration of the process itself. At the same time it is necessary to clearly foresee the extent of planning and implementation interventions in the life flows of the town or its part. Clearly even a well premeditated project can't predict in advance answers to all the questions, but a well-planned and thorough layout of renewal, which respects the hierarchy of problems, can greatly reduce contingencies that may occur during renewal.

Experience shows that renewal interventions into a »living« space are risky even when prepared according to the highest professional standards. Rational professional reasoning and argumentation have certain weight within professional circles. But communication with other directly or indirectly involved groups reveals that professional rational argumentation is often not sufficient or inefficient. Since renewal intervenes in private property it is understandable that the basic set-on problem is mistrust in the bearer of renewal. Because of this, special attention needs to be given to relations and communications with those groups that are actually most motivated for or against renewal. Communicational activity perceives egalitarian involvement of all concerned in the execution of the renewal from the outset, including the initial conceptual plan. Because of the »social relevance and relativity« of professional standards the approach to the renewal should therefore be as open and flexible, regarding its organisation, as possible. Measures taken for the establishment of a broad communicational debating field are among the most important expert starting points. There should be no fear that this may open the project to interference by incompetent groups since the motivation of those directly involved through private property or dwelling relations greatly exceeds all other possible participants in the debate and the renewal process itself.

From the methodological aspect interdisciplinary co-operation of different specialists is undoubtedly one of the bigger problems. This often noted but never really adequately solved problem originates from the basic and general problem of functioning in modern differentiated societies where establishment of a »trans-system« dialogue is very difficult. Not only is it difficult to establish co-ordinated co-operation, but even communicating among different professions (Wilke, 1993). Inevitably urban renewal as an interdisciplinary project cannot ignore these problems – on the contrary, establishment of unconstrained communication relations is one of the key starting points. This may well be one of the key reasons why in Slovenia there are relatively few experiences with renewal projects. Some renewal of old historic cores has been more or less successfully and comprehensively carried out in Piran, Ljubljana, Maribor, Škofja loka, Ptuj, Slovenske Konjice etc. But there are practically no experiences when it comes to renewal of »newer« city areas constructed in the period of the most intensive urbanisation in the period after the Second World War. Because of privatisation of the housing fund, shortcomings in management and maintenance and especially because of strong

suburbanisation tendencies, these urban areas are at a turning point. As yet the crisis isn't bad enough to trigger immediate renewal, but at the same time the negative tendencies are notable enough to stress the need for imminent planned prevention of negative development in »big socialist housing estates«.

2. Problem structuring

In the sociological meaning renewal is sometimes understood as mere »gentrification«: »penetration« of the middle class/group into space that has for different reasons lost its value, been abandoned or segregated, a space where lower social and economical categories have prevailed (see e.g. Smit, Williams 1986). However renewal isn't just a gentrification attempt to introduce »normal« social pluralism. Renewed space should in the socio-demographic sense become as varied, rich and colourful as possible. For this reason, besides socio-demographic analyses, analyses of family destinies, relocation chains, history analyses etc. are interesting as well.

Thus the central question, when it comes to the sociological point of view, is social and interest structure of the involved social groups. It is sensible to consider the differences between different groups of old settlers and new social groups brought into the estate by the renewal. The latter addresses one of the most entrenched socio - spatial problems, the dichotomy: domestic-foreign, original-non-original, endogenous-exogenous etc. Identification and analysis of social spaces is therefore very important in the preparation phase. It needs to be stressed that socio-spatial identity can be still strongly present even in spaces that otherwise appear rather »abandoned«, but nevertheless retain symbolic and identification importance for certain social categories. If this is not established in the analytical phase we may, during the executive phase, encounter some complex surprises which may develop into serious social conflicts.

Because of this it is useful to conduct an analysis of »historical sediments«, meaning the identification of former significance of a certain space that may still be very much alive or at least latent and could be over-proportionally revoked by reckless or ignorant intervention. Identification of this, more or less hidden, relation with the space also offers very useful information and content starting points for renewal. It is therefore important that we include the inhabitants as early as the process of goals planning, at the outset of the analytical phase. Likewise it needs to be considered that inflexible, orthodox insisting on former significance of a certain space could be very unrealistic and conflicting. The dilemma how to balance renewal that is the addition of new significance in relation to the maintenance of the old one (conservation) is inevitably intensified especially in historically »dense« spaces.

The »expanded« socio-demographic analysis therefore helps us to:

- a) Research social and motivation capital,
- b) Discover potential »hot spots« or conflict points of the envisaged program,
- c) Identify old and new contents of space, which we attempt to influence by renewal,
- d) Contextually rather than just formally include desires and expectations of inhabitants and others, interested in the program.

3. Legitimising renewal goals

The goal of urban nucleus renewal should be co-ordinated, i.e. agreed upon, thus ensuring poly-function enriching of the space. *New urbanism* principles are encouraging the interlacing of contents in space, but one of the key preconditions is legitimisation of variety. Space zoning as an urbanistic principle can no longer be taken for granted, even though it clearly won't ever disappear completely. Poly-functionality facilitates easier and more diverse combinations of new contents in urban space. Due to this principle the organisation of urban space simultaneously becomes more demanding and complex with legitimacy standards growing notably higher. Consensus is most likely a perfect utopia; even the acceptance of renewal goals by the majority principle is often to high a criterion in the initial phase. For this reason it is important that the defined goals of renewal are simple and clear, which are followed by an attempt at communicative argumentation, i.e. legitimisation, whereby greatest possible support of all involved is acquired. As opposed to the execution of renewal, when all the variety of interests and views on concrete renewal goals is displayed, it is much easier to reach an agreement on general goals of renewal, such as:

- a) Maintenance and consolidation of social identity of the renewed space,
- b) Maintenance and increasing of living value/quality,
- c) Revitalisation (optimisation) of population structure,
- d) Maintenance and development of social ties.

Probably the most important measure in achieving legitimacy of renewal projects is to assure social fairness. Also, when dealing with interests of different social groups, the gap between principles and practise soon becomes evident. Even though space as the integration factor loses its role, thorough intervention into entrenched socio-spatial relations is still very risky. Dwelling space still acts as an integrator and will probably never entirely lose this function. We can therefore second the thesis that renewal should increase the social integration capacity of certain space, but it is also necessary to simultaneously include the »disintegrating«, separating function of space, whereby space is the obstacle that enables isolation and exclusion from the multitude of coincidental influences (more in: Mlinar, Z., 1994). Quality renewal should therefore respect two seemingly contrasting measures: a) integration, connecting, socialising and b) individuation or differentiation and isolation.

Providing social security in the process of renewal is therefore a vital precondition for legitimisation of renewal. In this regard the long timespan needed for renewal can be a big problem. Reserve housing fund needs to be assured and inevitable economical impacts during and after the renewal taken into consideration. In short, the establishment of reproduction capacity (social, economical) of space is one of the key goals of renewal. A similarly demanding measure is also the prevention of large diminishment of housing quality during renewal. Co-participation of inhabitants is at the same time a method and goal of renewal. Even though some »experts« regard this as an unnecessary complication and inflation of complexity, co-operation of the inhabitants is one of the measures of success for renewal that isn't concentrated only on renewal of the physical environment.

4. Preparation of a detailed renewal plan

Execution of renewal is undoubtedly easier if it follows an extensive preparation-analytical phase. Since every concrete project is unique and unrepeatable it is of prime importance to stress some principles:

- Flexibility, i.e. simultaneous reactions: the execution of renewal can't be planned in the smallest detail so adaptability to new facts emerging during the renewal is necessary,
- Time dynamics: phase conclusions are important; long-lasting renewal should be conducted in phases that enable relatively quick social inclusion of individual already processed areas,
- Interactive communicative information: during long lasting and extensive renewal projects informing alone often doesn't suffice, but an interpretation of envisaged ideas and, as already stressed, involvement of »lay« suggestions is also needed;
- Participation of involved inhabitants in decision-making: contextual interactive communication is already the first phase of inhabitants' participation in decision-making, but it makes sense to institutionalise such processes.

Attention also needs to be given to general social circumstances that influence (un)comprehensive execution of renewal. Besides the »historical« absence of renewal tradition in Slovenia, low residential mobility, unorganised property market, complications related to ownership of functional land, weak economical basis for execution of extensive complex renewal processes, unwillingness to participate in the renewal of communal space and communal equipment and limited practical experience in carrying out complex participatory renewal projects all represent additional problems for renewal projects. Therefore, while it may be apparent that profound sociological studies may at first glance increase the complexity and circumstances of the renewal, it is also rather clear that without such broad approach, any renewal project will be doomed to intolerable and unrealistic reductionism.

5. Experimental testing of participation

Consistent with the conclusion that legitimisation of intervention in space is becoming more and more demanding, when it comes to renewal projects that are in this regard especially sensitive, it is sensible to include into planning procedures persons that are directly involved from the very beginning. Due to the »uniqueness« of each individual renewal project, the modus of inclusion is certainly an open question, mostly since it is risky to use already devised and maybe even tried out models of public participation. It is undoubtedly sensible to consider previous experiences but it is recommendable to »experimentally« try or at least test in advance the concrete modus of co-operation and participation of involved individuals and groups. Experimental approach is particularly recommendable in areas:

- a) Where there weren't many experiences with involvement of inhabitants in renewal projects and
- b) In cases when we undertake non-standard renewal projects.

To verify the ideas about the ways of involving inhabitants in renewal of part of »Savsko Naselje« in Ljubljana ^[1] by research was therefore rather sensible for both reasons. In Slovenia no experiences have been gained so far regarding the renewal of »newer« estates that were built in the second half of the former century, besides the fact that, as already mentioned, projects supported by participation are very rare. The approach by research was also justified because the renewal works for Savsko naselje were to become an exemplary model for the renewal of many other housing environments with similar structure in Ljubljana.

A public opinion poll inherently represents a sort of a communicative approach. It gives a great portion of inhabitants the possibility to express in a standardised manner their opinion and view points about the renewal project. But this sort of communication has also its limitations ^[2]; most of all it cannot replace direct interactive reasoning. Moreover the establishment of direct communication channels between researchers (experts), investors (MOL) and those most directly involved (estate«s inhabitants) was actually one of the starting goals of the renewal project. Consistently with the view that when it comes to interactive participation of inhabitants in renewal foreign models cannot be used without verification we decided to organise several urbanistic workshops ^[3] where all the key players would present and exchange their views on planned renewal of the estate.

The basic informative material for the workshop, were:

- Findings of the public opinion poll about the attitude of inhabitants towards possible renewal; ^[4]
- Findings from the estate«s urban-morphological analyses of urban-architectural design, green surfaces, traffic organisation and typology of housing objects ^[5] and
- Presentation of examples of »good practice«, i.e. examples of successful renewal projects carried out by the method of participatory urban renewal in England ^[6].

6. Course of the urbanistic workshop

The first goal of the workshop was to familiarise the inhabitants as well as possible investors with the technical-structural condition of the housing fund and with findings of the representative opinion poll about the attitude of inhabitants towards their estate and suggested renewal. But the basic goal was to initiate participatory, that is co-decisional planning and undertaking of renewal. Such approach to renewal is undoubtedly a demanding task even in countries with richer renewal traditions. In our post-self management transitional circumstances the inclusion of people into spatial projects is even harder. That is why one of the key goals of the workshop was to check the degree of willingness to participate in such interactive project activity.

The workshop could therefore enable more realistic appraisal of views gathered by the representative public opinion poll. Anonymous measurement of opinions and views alone doesn«t suffice to verify feasibility of the participatory model of renewal, but it is reasonable to »measure« their range and acceptability through public debate and confrontation with other views. An important goal of the workshop was also the checking of ability for conducting rational and argumentative public debates about different options concerning renewal. Considering previous experiences and the results of public opinion research we presumed that the key initial

obstacle is low degree of confidence in city (urbanistic) institutions. The results of the public opinion poll were most dramatic in this very point, which are consistent with planning and organisational experiences in the Municipality of Ljubljana and Slovenian society in general. Many indicators confirm the premise that non-confidence is the greatest obstacle to creating a productive debating relation between the main players in spatial organisation and planning ^[7] and that this increasingly influences the low operational capacity of the city authority. That's why the actual goal of the workshop was the establishment of foundations for creation of the needed degree of confidence between the key performers in the renewal project.

Although participation at the workshop was open to all the dwellers of the estate, the desired attendees were the more active inhabitants, i.e. people with housing committee duties etc. In fact, even the response to invitations was part of the experiment and indicator of inhabitants« responsiveness to public relaying of information about the planned renewal. In this aspect the workshop was undoubtedly successful. Attendance was quite satisfactory, meaning that the »critical mass« of fifty inhabitants was assembled – an audience large enough to be representative yet not too big to prevent anybody wanting to actively participate from actually doing so. On the first day about sixty people including the researchers took part. Older inhabitants, living in the estate for a longer time, prevailed. The next day attendance was slightly lower, but we can presume that by attending alone the inhabitants demonstrated their willingness to actively participate in the debates about renewal of their estate. However attendance by representatives of the city was rather unsatisfactory. Since only one was present and didn«t take part in the discussions, the planned three-party make up of the participants (inhabitants, experts and representatives of the city) narrowed down to a two-way debate between the inhabitants and researchers. This fact most likely influenced the course of the events, since the participating experts weren«t constrained by old misgivings and conflicts. Thus, the discussion was probably less controversial, but it may also have been less representative.

Initial information about findings was presented by researchers from UI RS and CPS IDV/FDV. Even though the attending inhabitants followed the presentations attentively there was an apparent gap between the expert sociological and urbanistic discourse and the common sense reasoning of inhabitants. Right at the start it became evident that the inhabitants were alarmed by marked sites on the presentation maps symbolising locations where planners envisaged concrete development. Even though it was stressed during presentations that these were just ideas and therefore only possible locations of larger renewal interventions that were only to be discussed at the workshop, the excitement was so intensive that it »relaxed« into rough, even offensive accusations. The researchers presenting ideas for possible future renewal became the lightning rod and for some inhabitants even the responsible persons for all the past and disturbing transgressions. Complaints and accusations about complications with the Land Cadastre of functional land for a while moment completely blocked the discussion about renewal. Some hard words were heard before the atmosphere cooled down sufficiently for the moderator to redirect the debate into the desired direction. This initial complication is on one side an expression of the low discourse culture, but also a rather clear indicator of the degree of inhabitants« mistrust towards anybody involved in one way or

another with the organisation, planning or renovation of the urban residential space.

In continuation the debate became more concentrated on renewal, even though it couldn't completely avoid more or less sensible digressions. Nevertheless, the key problems that renewal should address or solve were outlined. In the first place was the enlargement of spatial use, which is relatively low according to the urbanistic calculation for the broader city centre area. Here expert measurements collided with the common sense logic, which found it hard to comprehend how densening can result in increase of residential space quality. In this context it was especially hard to justify the spatially relatively lavish organisation of the neighbouring area between Kocbekova and Linhartova Street.^[9]

As expected the estate's traffic organisation was also given a lot of attention. In fact most of participants regarded it as the key and almost the only problem. But as a rule, contemplation about solutions stopped on the boundaries of individual interests, i.e. the sufficient number of parking spaces for everyone. Better solutions, such as the construction of a parking garage were not rejected, but neither strongly supported, since everybody assumed it could be done if it would be supported by financial participation. Reflections about financially more complex questions are nevertheless too demanding for this type of debate, besides being probably the most sensitive subjects that would demand especially subtle and in-depth presentation.

This was confirmed in continuation of the discussion when some ideas about how the inhabitants (property owners) could by construction of additional floor of their relatively low (P+4) housing blocks assure funds for renovation of buildings and the estate as a whole. This kind of reasoning is apparently rather alien to the people and additional information, good examples and consideration of all previously stated, mostly the rise of confidence in all operational executors of such investment models, would be needed for possible implementation of such ideas.

Primarily the inhabitants should be motivated for renewal. The public opinion poll as well as workshop debates demonstrated that the inhabitants have not yet registered the need, let alone the urgency of renewal. Even a sort of »micro local patriotism« was noted, a belief that their estate is quite solid, and compared to the neighbouring Zupančičeva jama, even a rather exemplary residential environment. At this point we are of course in the field of prestige evaluations, nostalgia and aesthetics, so evaluations by outside expert are difficult and most of all hardly legitimate.

We can therefore regard this high self-evaluation mostly as a defensive stance of the estate's inhabitants that presumably doesn't yet need renewal. This reasoning is short term while also in basic conflict with the notion of timely prevention of degradation of residential areas in the city and therefore represents a notable obstacle for the implementation of the participatory renewal model. It also indicates the »domestication« of relatively low quality, technical, environmental and aesthetic standards.

Even though the debate was at some points unpleasant, there were many repeating performative statements and the researchers were at the onset received as adversaries who would like to impose something onto the inhabitants or even deceive them, from the communicational point of view the

workshop was successful. After three solid hours of debate the ice was broken. The initial tense and overheated atmosphere that would not allow presentation of arguments gradually changed into constructive discussion. The formerly very reserved inhabitants started to suggest their own proposals about renewal intervention. Thus on the first day the workshop came closer to the idea of »new open urbanism«, i.e. transparent organisation and planning of the urban environment involving participation on equal terms of inhabitants or those groups that are most directly involved in a concrete project. According to this renewal model very problematic legitimisation of renewal projects designed solely on the drawing boards and supported by anonymous profit seekers (read: »developers«), eases significantly

It was confirmed that people initially have difficulties in expressing their desires and have little knowledge of what is actually possible. The next day, starting with this premise, professor Thompson presented English renewal experiences. Based on the development of our own workshop we could supplement this thesis with the experience that people learn relatively fast and that investment of efforts in the preparation phase of the participatory renewal project can meet fruition. Once people comprehend that social capital has certain market value and individual owners learn how to manage the communal property, renewal projects may gain new dynamics. But they will very probably encounter non-cooperative competition amongst those interest groups that are finding the present disorganisation and ignorance regarding possibilities of marketing real and social capital in urban environment a good hunting ground.

The presentation of English renewal experience on the second day of the workshop was concluded by some rather concrete ideas how to initiate and carry out renewal. Since comprehensive planning is highly improbable, it is sensible to plan by phases and variations. In the initial stage renewal should be started with notable investment by the city. This way the representatives of public interest, i.e. city authorities would set an example and in reality demonstrate the seriousness of this renewal mode. Apparently starting with parking and traffic, as the most outstanding problem of the estate, is a good idea. Responses to some of the other problems or locally exposed opinions should follow, such as overhauling children's playgrounds, better connection of the estate to the open space along Linhartova Street, enabling more open and poly-functional use of communal spaces such as kindergartens, school and research institutions, etc. Even though the estate isn't very big it would be reasonable to establish smaller sub units of the estate, according to architectural - urbanistic fragmentation and social dynamics. This is important from the symbolic and identification aspect as well as the pragmatics of particular renewal phases. But undoubtedly the key goal of the first renewal phase should be gaining and strengthening confidence, whereby trust should be established in at least 80% of the directly involved inhabitant, thus ensuring the project's vitality.

Regarding complications with Land Cadastre registration of property those in charge of renewal could gain confidence by thorough analysis of existing property and legal problems, especially in regard to borders between functional and communal (municipal) land on one hand and private land on other. It would also make sense to organise legal aid for solving individual problems and also clearing doubts regarding communal property – legal difficulties.

After clearing the property – legal labyrinth it would make sense to prepare a »management plan«, i.e. plan of management of communal property lands. It would be commendable, very educational and motivating to conduct a property value estimate (structural-technical value of objects) in light of the assumption that:

- a) Comprehensive renewal is carried out,
- b) The estate ages inertly, i.e. renewal isn't carried out

At the same time it would be sensible to identify and connect possible, that is all individual property owners as well as bigger »players« (e.g. construction firms, city institutions, other potential investors).

Amongst other preparatory operations a local agency that would co-ordinate the execution of »open renewal« should be established. The agency should represent the interests of inhabitants. That presumes the organisation of inhabitants on the level of the entire estate or on the level of a smaller part where the renewal should be started. For this reason it is sensible to divide the estate into smaller units and create adequate »activity groups« on that basis. In this framework it may be useful to consider a connection with »Zupančičeva jama« that could result in a synergetic effect. The agency would involve outer experts (architects, landscape architects, sociologists, etc.) but also the inhabitants themselves would need to be represented accordingly. The city should give the agency a clear mandate, i.e. sufficient time and clear financial framework for its activity. The basic goal of such an agency is to legitimise and direct the optimal model of renewal that is consistent and flexible in manoeuvring between minimal and maximal renewal options. Since long term comprehensive planning isn't realistic and therefore not sensible, the obligation of the agency would be continuous maintaining of communications between the principal movers of the renewal, i.e. between:

- a) inhabitants that are partially also investors and
- b) executors of the renewal.

Considering the content the agency should take care of revealing problems, projections of ideal solutions and practical realisation of solutions.

7. Conclusion

The workshop revealed that the initial anxiety, caused by low level of confidence among potential partners in the long term renewal process, can be overcome by proper approach. The rise in willingness to actively participate during the workshop confirmed that the theoretical outlines of participatory renewal are good enough for this model to actually function. This very important experience suggests a conclusion that troubles at the onset of such renewal projects aren't as overwhelming as they appear at first sight, therefore we have at our disposal adequate knowledge on how to renew urban estates. If ideas about undertaking renewal aren't a problem and if, after the initial communication problems, inhabitants of the relevant estate accept these ideas and are prepared to actively participate, the causes for non-functioning of the renewal must be sought for elsewhere. The workshop about possibilities of the renewal of the part of Savsko naselje estate in Ljubljana has provided an indirect answer even to this question. The actual answer is the silence following questions addressed at the city institutions. Apparently renewal cannot be started since motivation at that level isn't strong enough. In fact it is so

weak that it doesn't go further than passive support. But when the process should actually be started, the ideas, interests and energies connected and some initial capital should be contributed it turns out there is no adequate institutional support. We therefore find ourselves at an even lower point than we were at the outset. When the next attempt to motivate the inhabitants for timely renewal and create communicative relations between the principal project movers the task of overcoming mistrust towards municipal institutions will undoubtedly be even harder.

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Explanatory note:

The project was carried out by researchers of the Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia (responsible R. Sendi) and Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Social Sciences, Centre for Spatial Sociology (responsible D. Kos)

Notes

- [1] Renewal should involve the area defined by Kocbekova Street in the north, Topniška Street in the east, Vilharjeva Street in the south and Neuberger Street in the east. The estate was built in the second half of the nineteesixties and is chronologically tied to the larger Savsko naselje, but is physically as well as mentally, clearly established and separated from it by the four-lane Topniška Street.
- [2] For more see Uhan (1998), Štebe (1996), Kos (2002).
- [3] The urbanistic workshop was carried out on the premises of the Institute of agriculture, June 9.–10., 2004.
- [4] More in F. Trček in this edition.
- [5] More in R. Sendi in this edition.
- [6] An English town planner was invited to attend the workshop on the basis of his experiences with renewal projects that were designed and executed in interactive communication with the involved inhabitants.
- [7] For more see Toš et al.
- [8] The exact number of participants could not be determined since some of them were coming and leaving during the workshop itself.
- [9] In the discussion this area was marked as the »Alley of Giants« by the participants; by doing so they convincingly expressed their surprise over the grandiose or »low-density« layout.

For sources and literature turn to page 23.

Translated by Aleksander Jankovič Potočnik.