

CONSULTING

NEWSLETTER 2021/1

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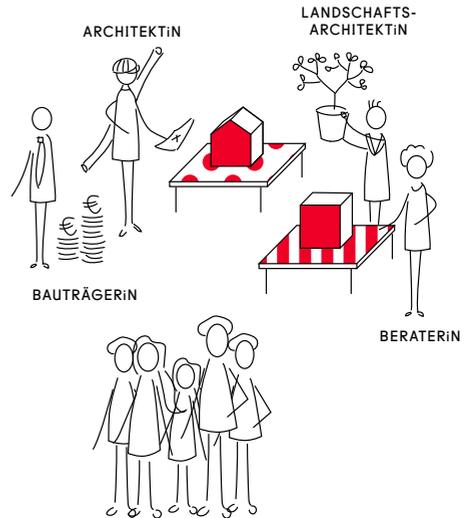
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Vienna, Austria

Higher qualities for private developments?

Vienna's subsidized affordable housing program has gained worldwide interest due to its groundbreaking developer's competitions based on the "four pillar system". Ironically, this has led to a situation where subsidized affordable housing, although cheaper, has been achieving much higher qualities in terms of planning, ecology, and social sustainability than the private sector. The new coalition government of Social Democrats and Liberals elected in fall 2020 has now announced in its coalition program for the next 5 years that private developments will have to go through the same jury who will judge them along the same sets of criteria, i.e. the four pillar system. Details of such a new law should be worked out soon. It remains to be seen, in our opinion, how private developers can be forced to submit to such an obligatory external evaluation process without the usual "rewards" as building land and subsidies.



Lisbon, Portugal

City renting empty Airbnb apartments



The Portuguese capital has long struggled against the increasing number of apartments rented out to tourists, estimating the number of such centrally located dwellings which got lost to the normal housing market, by some 22,000 units. Now, with the pandemic reducing tourism, many of these apartments are not used at all. The City of Lisbon has therefore started a process to reintroduce such apartments into the housing market, addressing mostly low-income

house seekers on the city's list for social housing. As Mayor Fernando Medina explains the City is now forcing owners to rent out such dwellings to social housing tenants at a price below the market rent. Better a lower rent income than nothing, as Medina argues.

For more info see for example: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/25/world/europe/airbnb-lisbon-housing.html>

Zurich, Switzerland

Zurich: Triple Zero Building



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Umar (standing for Urban Mining And recycling), a pilot project erected at ETH (Swiss University of technology) in Zurich-Dübendorf by German architects Bechmann and Sobek claims to be the first triple zero building: zero energy, zero emissions, zero waste. After its life span 98 percent of its material will be recyclable, and a large part of its own construction materials has been won from demolished buildings – such as the

beautiful copper elements of the façade. Building costs of totally recyclable buildings are still 15 percent higher as compared to traditional buildings but with European CO2 taxes to be expected in the near future the difference in costs will decrease, as Bechmann says.

For more info see:
<http://nest-umar.net/portfolio/umar/>

City of Refugees

Gallery Aedes / Berlin with University of Houston College of Architecture and Design

Of the 7,8 billion people on the planet about 70 million are now refugees or asylum seekers, their number still growing. Many of them live in tents or disastrous makeshift settlements. Prof. Peter J. Zweig and Gail P. Borden offer a provocative approach to the discussion of solutions: four imaginary cities were designed as prototypes for the accommodation of migrants providing the most necessary immediate facilities as well as long-term opportunities for their self-empowerment. The four designs were exhibited at Gallery Aedes, Berlin, from October 200 to January 7, 2021. What about the financing of such cities for refugees? By reallocating a minor portion of defence spending – less than one-quarter of one percent of the military budget – a City of Refugees can be funded. For example, we propose that the construction of one submarine be delayed for one year to build out one entire, says Prof. Zweig.



© Zweig + Borden

For more info see:
<https://www.aedes-arc.de/cms/aedes/en/programm?id=19669521>

Recommended Reading

Rafael Herrin-Ferri

All the Queen's Houses

The New York Borough of Queens has long been viewed as an example of the integrative powers of US society. It is here where in the 17th century the US freedom of religion was founded, while it housed two World Expos in the 20th century. Today it offers living space for one million people from all over the world. Since 2013 the architect Rafael Herrin-Ferri has been portraying the urban area in photographs which depict not only the variety of its housing but also the different lifestyles of its

multi-cultural society where international building traditions mix with the American context creating a unique urban landscape. This may be seen as an inspiration for contemporary housing solutions and open planning.

Rafael Herrin-Ferri: *All the Queen's Housing. An Architectural Portrait of New York's Largest and Most Diverse Borough.* Berlin (Jovis) 2020, ISBN 078-3-86859-656-4, English only.



Rob McFarland, Georg Spitaler,
Ingo Zechner (ed.)

Das Rote Wien. Schlüssel- texte der zweiten Wiener Moderne 1919-1934

Red Vienna with its 1920s revolutionary public housing policies has been inspiring housing and urban planning in many parts of the world till today. Most scholars, however, have not had the possibility to study its basic theoretical concepts in the original. Here now, some 280 texts - with short commentaries have been assembled presenting the theoretical foundation of a “new society” based on solidarity and democracy. It includes texts by well known scientists, writers, or planners as Alfred Adler, Theodor W. Adorno, Sigmund Freud, Josef Frank, Karl Kraus, Ödön von Horvath, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Wilhelm Reich, Joseph Roth, Arthur Schnitzler, Franz Werfel, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Stefan Zweig, just to name a few. These names, many of them Jewish, explain why pre-fascist Vienna in the 1920s became a laboratory of modernism that is worth re-discovering (if only in its original German) in an age of egotistic neo-liberalism.

Recommended Reading



Rob McFarland, Georg Spitaler,
Ingo Zechner (ed.): *Das Rote Wien.*
Schlüsseltexte der zweiten Wiener
Moderne 1919-1934, Berlin/Bos-
ton (De Gruyter) 2020, ISBN 978-
3-11-064003-8, German only.

Recommended Reading

Put People First. Report from the International Bauforum 2019



Hamburg Bauforum 2019, the 7th in its prestigious events, placed the topic of “Magistralen” (throughfares) on its agenda. International planning teams developed scripts for Hamburg’s main thoroughfares left and right of the river Elbe. Where are the potentials for inner-city development, for more quality of living in public spaces? And what chances does the strongly changing mobility offer? “Put people first” shows how these Magistralen may be turned into arteries of a city which meet pedestrians a cyclist at eye level. The book assembles texts and large images of 14 teams worth studying for any future planning along main thoroughfares.

Dirk Meyhöfer/Behörde für Stadtentwicklung und Wohnen (ed.): Put People First. Bericht vom internationalen Bauforum 2017/ report From the International Bauforum 2019, ISBN 978-3-86859-658-8.