

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS THE ESSENCE OF THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT MATTER – CASE STUDY

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Abstract. In the face of contemporary urban problems such as the chaotic development of communication and build-up and residential area, reducing to amount of public places, recreational and greens spaces, the city is facing the choice of methods to deal with these problems. It's the end of an era, when the city authorities authoritatively take decisions. Residents have the ability to unite, decide how space around their home should look like and putting these visions into reality.

Key words: social participation, sustainable urban landscape development, Green Adrenaline

CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS OF CITIES

Do cities develop in a sustainable way?

What are the consequences of a consumerist approach to public space in the cities?

Why a city should be sustainable?

How the city should follow progress to develop way sustainable way?

What are the ways to optimize the use of urban landscape resources?

Quality of life in the city consecutively becomes worse. Despite the many policies and strategies aimed to protect urban landscape, principles of the city functioning change unfavorably. Functional and spatial relationships are changing imperceptibly. As users, we notice how suddenly, regardless of our will are taken decisions that do not go in accordance with the provisions of legislative proposals.

The modern city, standing in the face of dynamic development, taking benefit from opportunities of quick sale of valuable lands. There is no time to commercialize and revaluation of degraded areas and brownfields. Creating plans for the revitalization of such areas is a very time- and cost-consuming. The offer for sale always less attractive than that under the banner of “Wrocław – Krzyki – with a view of the park”, resulting that attractive public spaces are becoming built-up areas full of blocks and car parks which are usually fenced. This results

that over the last 10 years we are observing dramatically increasing alienation of Polish settlements.

The effect of passing round fenced areas necessity, is the relegation of inhabitants from friendly public spaces in the direction of the streets. Isolation of settlements themselves causes isolation of parks and squares, deserting them, removing them in oblivion and convicting to degradation. Rapid build-up areas expansion causes reducing the amount of recreational areas. This, however, only social and spatial issues. Environmental issues should be added here as equally important, related to the reduction of the amount of green areas, deforesting, small trees species planting, built-up space with changing water management and microclimate not only of the exact area, but in a consequence of the whole city. If you interpret the system of green city, a network of parks, squares, avenues, promenades and rivers with accompanying greenery as a skeleton, which allows the city to keep specific shape, not spreading out, optimizing communication and its performance, it begs a comparison that modern cities suffer from osteoporosis – weakening of the spatial structure.

Condition of the city depends on the natural environment. Benefits which it brings called ecosystem services, such as clean drinking water, clean air, water management and flood hazard related, corridors to ensure balance in the structure of the ecosystem, uplift quality of life in the city, reduce the costs of municipal services, develop local economy [Berghöfer 2011].

Negative changes in urban development are not without a reason. Residents too rarely use the democratic system to decide about surrounding reality. The fulfillment of civil obligation ends on voting during the election to spend next four years passively observe the changes, regardless of satisfaction from authorities decisions. Our society is capable of performing acts of solidarity in the face of the floods, young generations can connect on freedom, what makes people gathered in the streets to protest on ACTA. These facts testify to the high potential to be a civil society. However, still period of communism lingers, when the initiative came from the State, and people had to adapt.

Agreeing with Elżbieta Przesmycką that the phenomenon of inhabitants isolation. The population no longer inhabits the cities but only uses it. This happens because we want to live away from the others, but taking from the benefits of city centre, in the same time [Przesmycka 2007].

Besides the fact that people are not interested in making relationship with neighbours, it is essential that more entertainment provide us modern technologies that can be used in the own home. Integration with the locals is too little attractive to spend one's valuable time. The result of such thinking is alienation, a further reduction of the sense of security. It consequently causes the desire to protect privacy. Fencing space, monitoring, creating ghettos and later on greater alienation. Meanwhile question, whether not a better "bodyguard" is a neighbor that hears noise in our house during our absence, should be asked. A neighbor, which will call police, hearing the noise on the street. Only the group of friends

of neighbors can jointly resist the aggressive group of people on courtyards, which are to serve the elderly, young people, mothers with children.

So what is missing in today's cities to be sustainable? Protection of valuable sites and civil society, with all its consequences. What can be done to reverse the situation? Make the city develop in a sustainable way with attention to nature and respect for its inhabitants. What is, so the role of authorities and NGOs? Give people opportunity to organize themselves, to care about surrounding space, by integrating and creating a community.

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AS ONE OF THE WAYS TO DEAL WITH URBAN PROBLEMS

Function and shape of the space for one's society can't be created without taking in consideration its will? Public consultation is only a small part of the social participation. Interviews with selected residents showed that the consultations is a sequence of wishes and the implementation of the tasks series of disappointment, when peoples dreams cannot be satisfied. fishing rod rather than small fish, should be given to residents. Let's give them to hand tools, so they can experience that the desire does not always coincide with the possibilities, so the final solution is the best possible alternative. Let's make residents feel responsible for the places they are living in, by taking part in neighborhood revitalization, together with their neighbours, from the beginning: taking part in the project, public consultations, correction, regulations, agreements, and then constructing. Later they together will take care of the place, they will use it and save for the next generations. Then it is not needed to explain that what is created, requires care and costs. Activities such as „Ogród Wszystkich Dzieci – The Garden of All Children” under Agnieszka Czachowska supervision [Czachowska 2012], or La place du Géant in Saint-Etienne created with the participation of CollectifETC, achieved such a success.

To make peoples' acquaintance to each other, while working together for public benefit, in order to improve the aesthetics of the settlements, the social initiative "Green Adrenaline" was raised. Project inspired by happenings such as Guerilla Gardening, or Parking Day, though with the ambition to have no temporary effects, but permanent, relating people who are together creating and responsible for their surroundings.

Social participation is the practice applied to avoid conflicts, or facilitate their resolution at the beginning of the investment process [Kronenberg 2012]. Surprising for the project organizers, is common problem of property owners objection to improve surrounding aesthetics. Such actions seems to be unnecessary expense in comparison to basic needs. In the face of such attitudes, even more desirable is the presence of external funds and inhabitants work, what reduce costs.

THE "GREEN ADRENALINE – ZIELONA ADRENALINA" PROJECT – METHODS APPLICATION

Project title "Green Adrenaline. Zielona Adrenalina" is the idea of encouraging the local community to intensify activities, contributing own energy and work for urban environment and aesthetics, and above all social relationships, improvement.

The project idea met with the recognition of Sendzimir Foundation during the Small Grants Competition and as a result received funding. In addition, property manager – Housing Cooperative Wrocław-Południe, was found. It undertook to help in carrying out the action, and also invested part of costs. Required was cooperation with the scientific expert milieu, as well as companies, facilitating action organizers at each stage of the works.

The event idea was to design, by the inhabitants, squares in close proximity to their homes and later on implementation of the projects. The places of the project were four squares on various settlements of Wrocław, so that the project could take as many willing people. The selection criteria was the potential to be a public space, proximity large amounts of residential blocks, degradation or another problem to be solved. Involved people could count on professionals assistance, landscape architects, employees and doctoral students of the Institute of Landscape Architecture at Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences. In the effect project participants are the promoters of the idea to improve the quality of life in neighbourhoods. The rank-and-file initiative has a chance for longer existence.

Project objectives:

- Education of sustainable development among the inhabitants of settlements.,
- Implementation of cooperation of NGO's, scientists, an organizational unit and businesses.
- Integrating local community in joint action to improve the environment, living conditions, and consequently the quality of life in neighbourhoods arisen in the 60's-80's of the twentieth century.
- Encouraging social participation to improve local environment conditions.
- Raising local public awareness of belonging to the place.
- Support local communities in solving real social, economic and environmental problems.
- Improving aesthetics, not only through the facade modernization (which is common now), but also by revitalizing exterior – places of social inclusion
- Make "blocks" will no longer be ghettos.
- Promoting planting native species, resilient to urban conditions.

Project tasks. The project was carried out within the five essential tasks:

1. Organization of campaign.
2. Design workshop.

3. Workshops for children during trade fairs Live and Life in Wrocław – Hala Stulecia.

4. Gardening.

5. Evaluation.

Organization of campaign. Campaign was prepared with professionals' support. Specific graphic template and logo was prepared (Fig. 1). In confines of the campaign, directly to 11,000 leaflets to residents of Housing Cooperative Wrocław-Południe was forwarded, also a blog and social website on Facebook was created, in order to promote events on the Internet. Information about Green Adrenaline also appeared in public media: Gazeta Wrocławska, Gazeta Południowa, Radio Wrocław, TVP Info, Moje Miasto Wrocław and TTV.



Fig. 1. Green Adrenaline logo

Ryc. 1. Logo Zielonej Adrenaliny

Finally the project was attended by 40 local residents and 15 volunteers.

Design workshop. On 13th of April 2012 workshop part of the project was organized, in which 32 people took part. Its purpose was the education in sustainable development, preparation for the implementation of the project and design of the exact square accomplishment.

Problems that appear on the settlements, their causes and effects: reduced security, communication problems, problems with parking as well as places available for the purposes of relaxation and recreation, the problem of cutting trees, appropriating public space to personal use, ugliness and dirt were taken into consideration. Basing on examples from the life, above-mentioned issues have been discussed and remedial methods were proposed (responsible person: Monika Pec-Święcicka). To familiarize participant with the idea of the project, similar events in the country and abroad were shown, in order to indicate the role and strength of the local action (responsible person: Liliana Zielińska). Before the first stage of the design the basic rules of landscape composition were presented (the person responsible: Anna Pochwała).

At this point the project participants got acquainted with maps and site situation, created the functional concepts of squares, directions, orientation, height, color palette, functionality and final shape.

To raise attitude of the participants on the essence of the protection of the urban environment, the climate and habitat of Wrocław was discussed. Also plant species characteristic for our region with all their attributes were presented. (person responsible: Małgorzata Piszczek). Issue of the role of birds in the city, ways to protect them and to create the environment of their life was performed, as well (responsible person: Justin Jaworek-Sztejn).

At this point began the next phase of the design work. Residents get together plants, previously prepared in the catalogues of native species or non-invasive species resistant to urban conditions. Even after mentioned lecture participants, choosing plants, took into consideration cases like time of flowering, colouring, shape of the leaves. That confirms the need to prepare groups of plants relevant to our terms and conditions by professionals (Fig. 2, 3).



Fig. 2. Lecture during design workshop. M. Mokrzan

Ryc. 2. Wykład podczas warsztatów projektowych. M. Mokrzan



Fig. 3. Working on design. M. Mokrzan

Ryc. 3. Praca nad projektem. M. Mokrzan

Workshops for children. Trade fairs Live and Life in Wrocław – Hala Stulecia. Green Adrenaline was expanded over action with local inhabitants. Educational workshops for children on 14th and 15th of April 2012 took place. In the framework of Trade fairs Live and Life in Wrocław in Hala Stulecia. The aim of the workshop was to show children what behavior should be avoided, and which promote to act sustainability. During workshops children recognized ornamental plants of these characteristic for our conditions, learned to segregate garbage, described and colored comics pages related to the themes of pro-environmental cases, learned to plant seedling.

For completed task, children received stamps in the Passport of Green Adrenaline, after collecting 4 stamps they received the prize. The participants of the workshop were children 3–12 years of age (Fig. 4, 5, 6).



Fig. 4. Drawing comics

Ryc. 4. Rysowanie komiksów



Fig. 5. Planting seedling

Ryc. 5. Sadzenie siewek



Fig. 6. Wastes segregation

Ryc. 6. Segregacja odpadów

Gardening. On 21st of April 2012, in the practical part of project, residents met at designated locations: ul. Stysia, ul. Pabianicka, ul. Hubska, ul. Krynicka. Gathered groups of people fulfilled their work in accordance with the previously prepared projects. First the ground was raked, place for planting of each species was traced, seedlings were placed in target locations, holes were dig, fertile soil put and plants were planted. Work was crown with diplomas and integrating picnic (Fig. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12).



Fig. 7. Tools. L. Zielińska

Ryc. 7. Narzędzia. L. Zielińska



Fig. 8. Preparing square. J. Jaworek-Sztejn

Ryc. 8. Przygotowanie placu. J. Jaworek-Sztejn

Table 1. The results of the questionnaire carried out at the end of the project, among the people participating the event

Tabela 1. Wyniki ankiety przeprowadzonej na zakończenie projektu wśród uczestniczących w spotkaniu

The most effective media	Poster	15
	Leaflet	11
	Newspaper	5
	Internet	6
	Other	4
Among the persons who participated in design workshop was of the opinion that:	Lectures were interesting	11/17
	Designing part was useful	14/17
The action could affect inhabitants intergration	Definitely yes	16
	Rather yes	11
	Rather no	4
	Definitely no	0
Participants felt that the action may contribute to improve the appearance of courtyards	Definitely yes	14
	Rather yes	17
	Rather no	0
	Definitely no	0
Willingness to continue involvement in caring of the square	Definitely yes	5
	Rather yes	9
	Rather no	7
	Definitely no	0
Participants have demonstrated willingness to participate in a similar action in the future	Definitely yes	6
	Rather yes	10
	Rather no	3
	Definitely no	0
The cases that participants liked the most	Organization, preparing	
	Integration of younger and older	
	Artwork, square composition	
	Neighbour cooperation	
	Workshop	
The cases that participants seek the most	Atmosphere	
	Residents engagement	
	Evergreen shrubs	

Evaluation. The project has been summarized in the questionnaire, which gave information on the given project. Shows where the greatest emphasis in social actions need to be put, to achieve success and later people's involvement. The project showed which media is the most effective in gathering people, what is valuable information because on the number of participants depends on later success.



Fig. 9. Preparing square. J. Jaworek-Sztejn
Ryc. 9. Przygotowanie placu. J. Jaworek-Sztejn



Fig. 10. Preparing square. M. Mokrzan
Ryc. 10. Przygotowanie placu. M. Mokrzan



Fig. 11. Preparing ground. M. Mokrzan
Ryc. 11. Przygotowanie podłoża. M. Mokrzan



Fig. 12. Watering square can be fun. M. Mokrzan
Ryc. 12. Przyjemność podlewania. M. Mokrzan

For research 31 polls were considered. Participation in the survey was voluntary. Provision of data depend on the will of the person filling it. Sharing data would serve the contact for information purposes concerning the Green Adrenaline. The workshop participated 32 people, but only 17 of them fill surveys.

SUMMARY

After half a year of work carried out, results of the performed action can be presented. The project is under continuous interest. The residents are waiting for the next stages. On three of the four squares are persons who provide the necessary work or inform property manager about works need to be done. Personally, as far as they have strength, they weed the area, however, it is to hard work for so few people. However, this indicates the need for greater involvement of the inhabitants. This pilot action, showed what tools must be applied to increase this involvement. Undoubtedly this is the direct contact with the residents. Where managed to recruit local leaders, the effect of the work carried out is easy to recognize.

On one of the sites do there are no people involved in the care of squares, but residents knowing that square was performing in deed of society, do not allow to destroy it. Attempt to weed, read by locals as an act of vandalism, was met with instant reaction by a group of persons. This is of vital importance in the face of prevailing pathological and infrastructure demolishing behaviors in this area.

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Streszczenie. W obliczu współczesnych problemów miast, takich jak chaotyczny rozwój komunikacji, monofunkcyjnych terenów osiedlowych i przemysłowych, redukcji ilości przestrzeni publicznych, w tym terenów rekreacyjnych i terenów zieleni, miasta stoją przed wyborem metod kształtowania miejskiego krajobrazu. Kończy się era, w której władarze autorytarnie podejmowali decyzje o kształcie miasta podporządkowanego komunikacji samochodowej i interesom prywatnym. Mieszkańcy mają możliwości jednoczenia się, by przesądzić o tym, jak będzie wyglądała przestrzeń publiczna. Narzędzia, które daje nam partycypacja społeczna, włączają mieszkańca w proces inwestycyjny nie tylko na etapie konsultacji społecznych, ale i w fazie realizacji projektu, dając mu możliwość decydowania, zaspakajania potrzeb i poprawy jakości życia.

Słowa kluczowe: partycypacja społeczna, Zielona Adrenalina, Guerilla Gardening, zrównoważony krajobraz miast



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