

## Open Space for Social Housing – between Social Benefit and Marketing Asset?

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### 1 ABSTRACT

The liberal reorientation of the Vienna governance structure in the 1990s also brought about a fundamental change in urban planning (cf. Novy et al., 2001) and in the housing policy. The involvement of private sector stakeholders caused a shift towards market considerations in the housing sector. Exploitation logics took precedence.

Ever since the 1920s, decent, affordable housing was provided in the tradition of public-funded, municipal housing schemes, owned by the city. At the outset, these traditional municipal residential buildings boasted of generous open spaces that played important social functions and were part of the supply and maintenance facilities in the buildings.

Upon reorganisation of the housing sector in Vienna, execution and planning processes were confronted with new challenges that are at the fault line between market and exploitation needs of private commercial stakeholders and quality requirements imposed by the public sector as the provider of funding. The research project ‘freiWERT’<sup>1</sup> examined the role which open spaces play in the marketing and exploitation process of housing complexes and how a high quality of open spaces could be ensured in new housing developments.

The interdisciplinary team of landscape architecture of the Vienna University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences and urban sociology of the Vienna University of Technology analysed and evaluated the actual open space qualities of selected Viennese case studies from a design and socio-spatial perspective. These results were juxtaposed with the image generated in the course of the marketing process. Having regard to the decision-making processes in the planning and construction phases, it was possible to show the reasons for deviations and discrepancies.

The results permit us to draw the conclusion that the quality and the provision of open spaces as part of housing complexes are essential elements in the marketing of subsidised housing. However, in the further course of the process, this standing is significantly reduced by inadequate quality assurance and lacking prioritisation. The fact that open spaces in housing complexes only indirectly generate revenue is a relevant factor in the decision-making processes. Hence, measures for ensuring social and open-space related quality despite its limited ability to generate revenue have to be taken into account when carrying out construction projects and must be raised in the strategic-political debate and anchored in governance structures.

### 2 OPEN SPACES IN SOCIAL HOUSING PROJECTS IN VIENNA

#### 2.1 Historical review

The exemplary social housing developments in Vienna are mostly associated with the achievements of the housing policies during the interwar period. ‘Red Vienna’ laid the foundations for the provision of social housing by means of a large-scale housing programme for the construction of 64,000 apartments in the period from 1919 to 1934. At that time, these major construction projects commissioned by the City also served to counteract the crisis in the construction industry (cf. Eigner, page 74 et seq.). The architecture department of the City of Vienna, the municipal construction authority, was soon not able to handle the ambitious construction programme by itself, and resorted to freelance architects (cf. Blau 1999, 147). One quarter of the buildings were planned by the city's own architects in the municipal construction authority; leading external architects were commissioned to design the remaining three quarters of the buildings (cf. Bernard 1999, 21). Numerous architects of these residential buildings were students of Otto Wagner (cf.

<sup>1</sup> Lička, L., Dlabaja, C., Grimm-Pretner, D., Papst, S., Rode, P., Witthöft, G. Wüick, R.: *freiWERT – Examination of the quality and value of open spaces in inner-city new building projects and presentation of innovative solutions, financed as part of the House of the Future of the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology, Vienna 2012.*

Krippner 2004), such as Karl Ehn, the author of the most famous example, the 'Karl-Marx-Hof'. They were also responsible creating the open spaces of the complexes. In many cases, green courtyards were provided. In the 'New Vienna Building Regulations', which entered into force in 1930, a minimum light incidence was prescribed for the first time for living areas; this in turn required larger open spaces (cf. Weihsmann 2004, 128 et seqq.). In the professional debate about the proper concept and structure of the housing programme, ranging from proposals for residential settlements inspired by the English garden city movement and urban multi-storey flats, priority was eventually given to so-called "superblocks", in other words, large compact urban residential structures. Frequent urban residential solutions consisted of more or less closed perimeter blocks with garden courtyards. Their design was often fairly simple, functional and made do with limited resources. Open spaces served as playgrounds, for recreational purposes and as symbols of social progress (ibid.). The execution of the construction works, and most likely the landscaping of the open spaces in particular, was carried out by the municipal garden authority (cf. Kratochwjle 1931).

The construction density was generally lower than with contemporary residential developments. The built up area of the Karl Marx Hof, for example, accounts for 31 %. 'The total surface of the garden space as such amounts to 24,187 m<sup>2</sup>.' (Kratochwjle 1931, 52). The floor space ratio was 1.35 (Kleindienst 1989, 10 et seq.). According to Viennese municipal policy, the green spaces and open spaces were generally an important aspect of the infrastructure provided for inhabitants (cf. Kratochwjle 1925). Hence, also in the case of 'The establishment of municipal housing complexes [...] consideration was given to hygienic living conditions and gardening requirements or requirements of urban landscaping. In the case of new buildings, as a rule only 50 % of the site surface was built on, and the remainder was earmarked for garden spaces in courtyard form.' (Weihsmann 2002, 39). The gardens were established on naturally developed soil, without subterranean constructions.

With a few exceptions, the architects were also responsible for the basic design of the open spaces as part of the housing complex. In annual programmes, the construction programme including social infrastructure and the supply facility were drafted in cooperation with various municipal departments and politically adopted by the city council before the planning was undertaken in the various individual construction projects. The municipal planning authority was closely involved in the realisation of the projects, during the planning stage as well as a supervising authority, even though the actual planning was done by freelance architects (cf. Blau 1999, 147). Compliance with the requirements for the structure and organisation of open spaces to ensure light, air and multiple usability was monitored by the municipal construction department during the entire development process, from the first drawing through to the detailed plans (1999 Blau ibid.). Drawings including perspectives (1:200) and execution plans (1:100 to 1:1) had to be submitted with a detailed description of the design of the façades and all external and inside architectural details as well as a model (in wood or cardboard 1:360) and plans and detailed drawings of the landscape design of the entire complex (Blau 1999). The architects were also commissioned to carry out the artistic supervision of works. Much of the construction materials came from municipal businesses, and the construction companies were commissioned by the municipal planning authority as well (Blau 1999).

The gardens in the courtyards enhanced the value of the apartments overlooking the courtyards and improved conditions for supervising children from the apartment. 'Enhancing the quality of apartments overlooking the courtyard which previously were feared [due to the bad light conditions and lack of social contact — Authors' note] resulted mainly from the garden design and the creation of playgrounds for children and rest and relaxation areas for adults.' (Weihsmann 2002, 39).

A balance between the public green spaces as recreational areas and the gardens of the municipal housing complex was created in two directions: Landscape architect Fritz Kratochwjle, head of the municipal landscape authority, wrote in 1931: "No major municipal housing complex now lacks a garden, playgrounds or a paddling pool. These facilities naturally provide significant relief for public facilities, since the children of the families who live there do not need to make use of such facilities or even play on the street." (Kratochwjle 1931, 58). On the other hand, the 'large garden areas' of, e.g. the Karl Marx Hof were accessible to the inhabitants of the surrounding settlements as well and [offered] sufficient space for rest and recreation for everyone. In addition to planting trees, flowerbeds were created as well, for perennials and summer flowers, lending the complex colour and movement.' (Kratochwjle 1931, 52).

In the time when social housing was established in Vienna, the responsibility for planning, programme, execution and supervision were thus concentrated at the municipality itself and very closely linked with the socio-political programme. Furthermore, a direct interaction was established between public policy regarding green spaces and providing open spaces for housing complexes.

## 2.2 Reorientation of the housing policy

The housing policy of the City of Vienna underwent structural and strategic reorientation since the 1980s. The reason for this lies in a crisis of the fordist economic model, which manifested itself in Vienna in the form of an internal market-oriented system with corporatist and clientelist networks. The reorientation started already in 1982 on a national level with a deregulation of tenancy law, which led, in conjunction with other measures, to recommodification of housing. As of the 1990s, the increased presence of private-sector developers and housing companies is apparent. (cf. Novy et al: 2001, 136).

At the same time, these trends also became evident in the market for small-scale rehabilitation and new construction: As of the 1980s, a significantly increased presence of private-sector stakeholders has emerged, whose activities concentrated primarily on development projects with a strong emphasis on structural infill and rehabilitation activities. The result of these activities is apparent in the concentration of the owner structure and in the proliferation of condominium. In the case of the actually realised projects, the focus was on increasing the usable space and on increasing the rent and sales prices by creating high-quality residential and office space. In the open space, the privately used share was pushed — e.g. terraces, balconies or private gardens — as these were directly value-enhancing features (cf. Grimm-Pretner / Rode 2002).

The urban development project 'Donau City' may serve as a model for large-scale new construction projects. This example illustrates a change or reorientation of the corporatist network: The municipality no longer acted as an active stakeholder, but transferred instead the operative component to the development company, WED (Vienna development corporation for the Donau area), whose owners have clear links to the social democratic movement. The ensuing public-private partnership could be directly or indirectly controlled by the municipality and was to operate for profit at the same time (cf. Novy et al 2001: 133). This change in paradigms — the retreat of the municipality as an active stakeholder from the construction sector (the last municipal housing complex was constructed in 2004) while strengthening at the same time private-sector institutions and networks connected to the municipality or its funds through ownership structures — seems to have taken place in the subsidised housing sector as well. The corporatist elements of the previous regime were thus developed and adapted under the auspices of a municipality acting as an entrepreneur — a process of outsourcing and privatisation while maintaining direct or indirect control through the ownership structure.

These changes in the structure of stakeholders also required changes in the urban planning department as a formalised regulatory authority. Up to that time, the public or semi-public stakeholders were the main recipients of urban development measures as well as of land destination plans and land use plans as far as the social housing sector was concerned. New governance forms had to be established in order to regulate the interaction between private and public stakeholders. The institutional setting comprises the Expert Advisory Board (reorganised in 1987 as part of the amendment of the building regulation code and endowed with new areas of responsibility), the Land Advisory Board (Grundstücksbeirat — established in 1989) as well as of the two decentralised planning institutions, the Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur — established in 1982 as the Vienna Business Promotion Fund, WWFF) and the Housing Fund (Wohnfonds: established in 1984 as the Vienna Land Procurement and Urban Renewal Fund — Wiener Bodenbereitstellungs- und Stadterneuerungsfonds). Its objectives are to manage the real estate assets and to organise the cooperation between the urban planning department and the private-sector real estate developers (cf. Novy et al: 2001, 138). The Land Advisory Board as well as developer competitions (since 1995 — cf. Knoll 2009) were established for quality assurance. Until 2008, regard was laid to the three columns (architecture, ecology and economy) for the purpose of evaluating the submitted projects, in which cases the open spaces as part of the housing complex mainly served ecological purposes or, in matters of maintenance, formed part of the economic considerations. In 2009, the fourth column of social sustainability introduced an open list of criteria, where barrier-free and anxiety-free design, everyday practicality, multiple use and integration options are being discussed especially in regard to open spaces as part of the housing complex. Once the Land Advisory Board or the jury of a developer competition has granted approval of a project or acknowledged its eligibility for funding, the submission to the building inspection department during the

design or submission planning (M 1:200 – M 1:100) represents the next supervisory level. In this stage, the focus is primarily on technical issues; in regard to open spaces, this means compliance with the provisions stipulated in the Building Regulations (site topography, guardrails, subterranean structures, playgrounds for small children, sealed surfaces, etc.). A final verification step only takes place after completion of the construction works, following acceptance by the building inspection department or review by the Housing Fund. At this stage, open spaces play a subordinate role.

In a study undertaken on behalf of the Housing Fund, Knoll / Moser (2009) reviewed if the plans for the open spaces of housing development projects submitted to the Land Advisory Board and acknowledged by that body as basis for funding have been implemented in fact. For 60 projects, the descriptions submitted to the Land Advisory Council were compared to the actually implemented project. 12 projects (amounting to roughly 20 %) were found to have a very high level of open space quality (cf. Knoll / Moser 2009). These projects were published on the homepage of the Housing Fund, while the assessment of the remaining 48 projects does not appear. In these cases, the requirements of the Land Advisory Board were not completely met. This may require significant action in terms of quality assurance and quality control.

In summary it can be said that the Viennese public housing policy has been a field for interaction between public and private stakeholders since the 1980s. In this period, a retreat of the public sector as an active stakeholder can be observed in the production process as well as in municipal real estate policy. This structural change is in line with the overall approach of an entrepreneurial city, which regulates the process of creating subsidised housing by means of decentralised and external institutions. This occurred against the backdrop of the interplay between exploitation-oriented interests of private sector developers and quality demands of the public sector. In this situation, the realisation of high structural density is in conflict with an adequate supply of open space. In the development of quality assurance instruments, increased attention to differentiated qualities and functions of the open space is apparent. Private sector stakeholders have also recognised the value of open spaces (for private use) in marketing their projects.

However, it remains unclear how the conflict of the built density and adequate supply of open space is to be dealt with, to which extent also open spaces for common use are to be taken into consideration in the housing projects and how open space as part of a housing complex is to take the role of a social space. The question to which extent the realised open spaces correlate to the marketing images and resident satisfaction was examined in this research project.

### **3 EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF OPEN SPACES**

The selected case studies reflect the types of residential buildings currently constructed in Vienna. The integrated design and social space analysis reveals the correlations between structural and functional conditions on the one hand, and social conditions on the other. These analysis results are included in the Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE). The production processes of open spaces are illustrated in a process and policy analysis, evaluating the strategic positioning of the construction projects within the company as well as the effective public presentation of the company and the construction project. As primary data, landscape architectural surveys of the open spaces in the settlement, planning documents and meeting minutes from different phases of the planning and execution process, interviews with the commissioned landscape architects and the developer's project managers, marketing documents of the housing developers as well as questionnaires, discussions and documented inspection visits with the residents of the apartment buildings were used.

The results of the research dimensions are brought together by representing the design-analytical and use-related evaluation of the POE as the result of the process of creating the open spaces.

### **4 RESULTS**

In the following section, the evaluation results of two case studies examined as part of the FreiWERT project will be presented. They reflect tendencies of the contemporary practice of creating and quality of housing-related open spaces in subsidised housing in Vienna.

## 4.1 Housing complex on Breitenfurter Straße, 1230 Vienna

### 4.1.1 Brief description

The housing complex located in the southern Viennese district of Liesing was built by MIGRA GmbH,<sup>2</sup> Gemeinnützige Bau- und Siedlungsgesellschaft (non-profit construction and housing company) and Wiener Heim Wohnbau GmbH in the period from 2003 to 2005. The decision to purchase was taken on the basis of a schematic urban development analysis as well as a first calculation of the expected floor space by the developer, which presented binding parameters for the planners and project developers in the course of the entire project. The construction of the residential complex was funded in part through the housing subsidy WWFSG 89,<sup>3</sup> in part with funding obtained on the open market in cooperation between the two developers without a tender procedure.

For overall planning, a hand-drawn sketch from the acquisition phase served as a guideline, defining the built form, the achievable floor space, the integration of existing trees and the requirement for noise protection. Planning and construction meetings organised by the developer were a key element ensuring cost and quality control. In doing so, general quality and furnishing standards were defined for the open space. 45 % of the land area of 10,451 m<sup>2</sup> were built up with multi-storey buildings comprising 158 apartments and a floor space ratio of 1.5. The complex consists of four-storey buildings on the street that are integrated in the perimeter block construction style of the Breitenfurter Straße, two recessed central-core high-rise blocks with six storeys each as well as three detached rows of buildings with six storeys each at the core of the block. The rear buildings follow the concept of a ‘stacked rowhouse complex’ and are designed in such a way that each residential unit has its own open space for private use and the site is used optimally.

The open space is zoned into private spaces, common spaces and transitional spaces as well as with two playgrounds for children. 70 % of the open space is earmarked for common use, which are separated from the terrace gardens for private use between the rows of houses by hornbeam hedges. Prohibition signs prevent walking or playing on most parts of the lawns. The design makes do with few elements and materials. Land development facilities and the legally required infant playgrounds are functionally arranged, yet not integrated in form, position and dimension into the spatial concept. The simple landscaping concept consists of existing trees, shrubs, lawns and hedges.



Fig. 1: Function and zoning of the residential complex on Breitenfurter Straße

<sup>2</sup> The Fund for the Advice and Support of Immigrants was founded by the City of Vienna and the social partners, and holds a 45 % stake in MIGRA GmbH. 25 % are held by ARWAG Holding AG, which is in this way, as well as through personal connections, closely linked to MIGRA GmbH.

<sup>3</sup> The Act promoting the construction of new residential buildings and rehabilitating residential buildings as well as granting residential subsidies (Vienna Residential Building Promotion and Residential Building Rehabilitation Act — WWFSG 89) governs the funding of housing and requires that the overall construction costs be reasonable, the development costs be economically feasible and that the prices for rental apartments or condominiums are reasonable (cf. WWFSG 89 in the applicable version).

#### 4.1.2 Results of multilevel analysis

The analysis of the open spaces and social environment comes to a similar conclusion: With the exception of spaces reserved for private use, the quality of the open spaces is rated mediocre to poor. The process and policy analysis reflects a contradictory consideration of the open space in the course of the construction process.

**Design of open spaces** In the perception of the residents, the aesthetic composition recedes into the background, and an analysis of the design shows that not much attention was paid to it and that the design focused primarily on urban planning considerations regulated in the building code. In the planning process, the landscape design of the area played a subordinate role: No professional landscape architectural planning was commissioned, instead, this service was provided by the architect. As a result of delayed decisions in the planning process (i.a. in order to expand the built-up area in the ground floor), lack of planning content (e.g. topographic planning, insufficient information in the site foreman's plan) and lacking technical expertise, the open spaces were not developed in a clear and consistent manner. Certain decisions were not discussed and agreed in the proper planning and execution meetings, but instead directly on site with the executing contractors (e.g. layout pattern of tile flagging, detailed topographic planning). The process analysis reveals a certain disregard for the professional contribution of landscape architects, expressed in part directly in the decisions, but also by simply not dealing with specific issues. Thus the project ended up with merely a minimum standard of open spaces.

For marketing purposes, open spaces play a significant role in the presentation of the project. The slogan of 'stacked rowhouse complex' evokes the image of owning a home with a garden. Since the built-up volume (three to five storeys) and the construction type (rows of buildings) do not correspond to the image evoked, the open spaces play a key role in creating and transporting the image. Though the limited landscape architectural design and lack of prioritisation of open space contradict the part these spaces play in the marketing and exploitation process, they reflect the current market approach and need to recoup expenses, thus requiring a maximum of floor space and a reduction of costs that are not directly recoverable such as expenses for qualitative open spaces..

**Open spaces for private use:** The open spaces for private use are considered by residents to be of particular importance and are used for recreational purposes. In the 'stacked rowhouse complex', the private open spaces have been conceived from the outset for peaceful relaxation and recreation and are presented as such for marketing purposes.

The images generated as part of the marketing process correspond to the 'urban village' concept, furnished with various types of open spaces for private use (own gardens, loggias, roof terraces) and promising a combination of secluded private dwelling in suburbia with urban quality of life. The illustration of functional borders (chain link fencing) in the renderings give an impression of a privately-owned home with a garden. This emphasis on private open spaces as part of the marketing strategy is reflected in the project concept, but was lost during the planning and execution process and reduced in size and furnishing as part of decisions to cut costs.

**Common open spaces:** The quality of the open spaces for common use is rated as low by the design analysis. Undifferentiated design, a lack of meeting points and retreats, recreational facilities limited to standardized infant playgrounds as well as restrictions of use by prohibitions characterise the open spaces earmarked for common use. Most residents consider these open spaces to be mere visual effects, and active use mainly concentrates on the public recreational areas in the vicinity — Wienerberg and the Liesing brook — while use of the courtyards is very limited. The overall recreational offer in the vicinity was an important aspect already in the early stages of the project and for establishing the image for marketing purposes. Residents appreciate the existing trees on the property. The existing trees were already taken into account during the acquisition phase and integrated from the start into the project planning. In the project management, the design, furnishing and use of the open spaces for common use were inadequately reflected. Quality standards for the open spaces were rather vague. To prevent conflict, the use of common spaces has been actively reduced. In the planning phases, the decision was taken to erect a fence to separate the construction sites; the maintenance phase is characterised by prohibition signs and a lack of means of residents to participate in the decision-making process or to make changes. Some attempts to appropriate the gardens are still visible in scarce plantings. However, they were merely tolerated if not restricted by the housing administration.

The low use and acceptance rate is in conflict with the marketing strategy, which focuses on widespread use in particular of the common spaces. The renderings for marketing purposes highlight the common areas in a very prominent fashion and show many people using these facilities.

## 4.2 Housing complex on Troststraße, 1100 Vienna

### 4.2.1 Brief description

The housing complex in the Viennese municipal district of Favoriten was planned in 2002 to 2004 by a consortium of architects in collaboration with a landscape architect as part of a property developer competition on behalf of a non-profit housing and construction company, GESIBA Gemeinnützige Siedlungs- und Bau AG.<sup>4</sup> Entitled a 'multigenerational residence', the project focused on assisted living facilities for senior citizens, which was the topic of the competition together with the theme of 'planning housing for everyday life and gender neutral'. GESIBA acquired the property from the Vienna Land Procurement and Urban Renewal Fund. The housing complex was built with funding from the housing subsidy WWFSG 89 (see supra).

The competition brief defined the key strategic decisions for the course of the project: Visual and audio contact between the apartments and the open spaces, the creation of private outdoor areas and terraces for common use, as much sunlit areas in the courtyard as possible, a varied range of offers for the different needs and ecological quality. The assessment of the jury highlighted the concept for developing the property and the design of the open spaces and established specific parameters for the construction and furnishing of the open spaces (for example, a furnishable design of the private spaces was required). Continuity in the construction process was to be ensured by a smooth transition from the project manager to the construction manager and by regular consultations between the landscape architect and the architects. Nevertheless, the expert planners had to respond repeatedly to changes that occurred partly even in the execution phase.

Covering an area of 4,655 m<sup>2</sup>, with 64 % of the property was built-up with five to nine-storey buildings, which resulted in a total of 140 apartments and 42 senior citizen apartments at a floor space ratio of 2.59. In line with the urban structure of the surrounding area, the buildings were constructed as a perimeter block development and includes a central open space at the inside of the block.

The open space is divided into areas for private use, for common use, transitional areas, an infant playground and recreational areas. Approximately 90,6 % of the open spaces are classified as areas for common uses and spans across nearly the entire inner courtyard. Two apartments have a private terrace garden in the inner courtyard, the other private open spaces are balconies. The spatial structure is provided using the topography. The courtyard is clearly visible and divided into different segments. The shapes and materials create a discrete and consistent overall appearance. The landscaping design underlines the functional and spatial sequence of the segments.

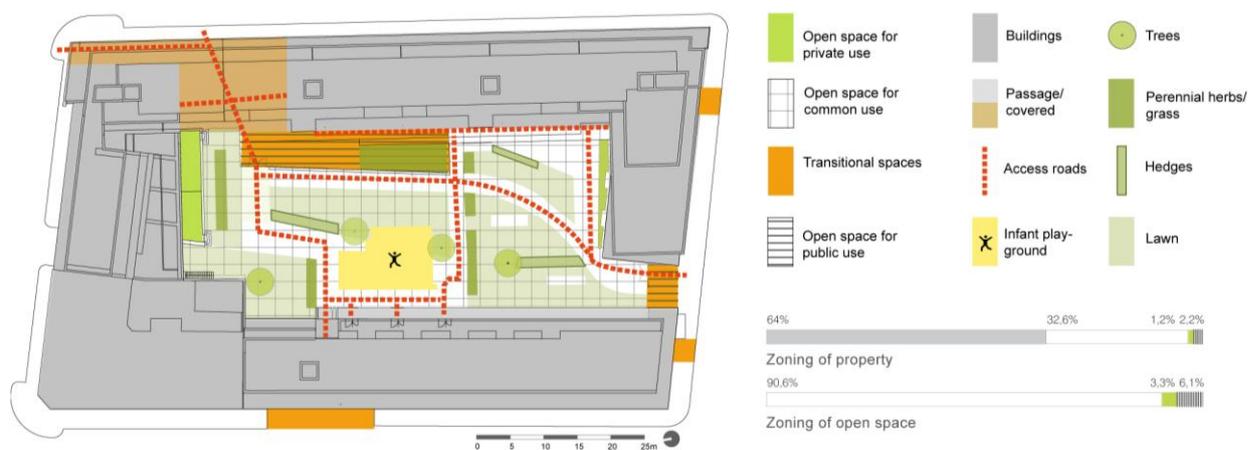


Fig. 2: Function and zoning of the housing complex on Troststraße

<sup>4</sup> GESIBA Gemeinnützige Siedlungs- u Bau AG is managed on behalf of the City of Vienna by Wien Holding GmbH, which holds 99.97 % of the shares in GESIBA AG.

#### 4.2.2 Results of multilevel analysis

The open space and social environment analysis for this housing complex arrives at a similar conclusion: The quality of the open spaces — with the exception of areas for private use — is rated mediocre to poor despite the ambitious open space design. The conclusions are very much related to the lack of space, to the walls needed for the sloping terrain and to conflicts of uses. The process and policy analysis shows that open spaces played a subordinate role during the construction process.

**Design of open spaces** The open space in the housing complex is characterised by a high density of buildings and is classified as mediocre. The courtyard situation on the narrow construction site is dominated, but at the same time protected, by the high buildings. The design analysis assesses the spatial structure overall as positive. Many residents consider the design of the open spaces to be aesthetically attractive, even though the parents of small children tend to feel that the topography and concrete borders pose a risk and do not consider the open spaces to be inviting. In the planning process, the open space concept submitted to the competition was adapted, according to the landscape architect, to the actual conditions on site and to reduced quality demands. Especially the subordinate role of the common area and poor execution and maintenance weakened the result.

For marketing purposes, the emphasis was especially on reducing floor space in favour for a sun-filled courtyard. This strategic decision has contributed significantly to winning the competition. In the early stages of marketing, the dovetailing of the ground floor uses with the open spaces was emphasised; yet in the course of the project, this aspect was lost due to changes in the use of those areas and related access.

**Open spaces for private use:** The open spaces for private use are considered to be positive, both from a design and a socio-spatial perspective. The balconies are adequately dimensioned and overlook the courtyard. For many residents, these private step-out facilities are an important feature. Parents can communicate with their children from this vantage point, and especially elderly residents are able to avoid conflicts in the common areas. At the same time, the use of these private areas is restricted by the soundscape in the courtyard.

In marketing materials, the open spaces for private use were mentioned in addition to the common outdoor areas, but were not emphasised.

**Common open spaces:** The open space for common use is too small for the large number of residents and is overall deemed to be mediocre. Though an orderly spatial structure and a variety of use options are offered on the limited area available, there are only few opportunities inviting an extended stay. At the same time, a high level of social control and acoustic incidence restrict the usability of the courtyard. 30 % of the residents — mostly children and their parents — use the common area on a regular basis. In general, the courtyard is not perceived by residents to be an intergeneration communication area. During the construction process unforeseen expenses in civil engineering imposed pressure to reduce costs in the landscape architectural features and necessitated changes in the post-tender stages. This had an impact especially on the quality of the materials and the design.

In marketing the housing complex, special focus was on the open space intended for common use. A clear structure, social control, variety of usages, peace and tranquillity, were emphasised in the project descriptions as well as illustrations. The intention was to provide as many different options for using the open space as possible to appeal to different user groups. The social character of the shared housing concept was emphasised and suggested conflict-free coexistence between the residents. The marketing materials used the verbal image of 'peaceful coexistence' in the 'tranquil recreational and leisure area' of the courtyard. This image contrasts with the assessment of residents who note the conflict potentials of using the common spaces in particular.

## 5 DETERMINATION OF FIELDS OF ACTION

By capitalising the Viennese real estate sector, the activities of the private sector stakeholders have increased. Since the 1980s, a new regime of regulation in the form of an 'entrepreneurial city' was created through the establishment of funding institutions and the setting up of advisory boards and quality assurance instruments. In the reorientation process, corporatist elements were incorporated and transformed into the new regime. For example, the structural and political proximity of some non-profit property developers with the City of Vienna is striking. The entrepreneurial city is manifested in the area of subsidised housing by

outsourcing the operative business to stakeholders acting as private sector companies while establishing at the same time a control system through shareholdings and means to participate indirectly in the decision-making processes.

Due to the outsourcing of the construction process, the aspect of exploitation and marketing has become more important, resulting in a stronger emphasis on cost and pricing aspects. These arguments give rise to a greater structural density, which significantly restricts the spatial configuration and even further the usability of the open spaces earmarked for residential purposes. Furthermore, the consideration given to open spaces in the projects continues to be inadequate, which is manifested i.a. in the shifting and reallocation of costs in the overall project. This considerably curtails the work performed on the open spaces, being the last in line, even though a good quality of design and materials is important especially in the case of high density.

The functional interaction between superordinate and housing-related open spaces continues to exist, yet an imbalance is discernible. While the concept of public superordinate open spaces are used by the property developers as appealing location factors for marketing purposes, the housing-related open spaces do not offer the corresponding value due to poor quality or lack of quantitative features. Usage and usability reflect this imbalance. From a professional perspective, a matching compensation (quality-wise, quantity-wise or financial) is required.

Open spaces are used to a considerable extent for marketing on all levels, in other words as superordinate public open areas, as common areas of housing complexes and in particular open spaces for private use, the latter are seen to be directly and financially realisable marketing factors. The results of the case studies show that there are significant deficits from an urban development, design and use-related perspective especially in regard to commonly used open areas. Open spaces as a marketing argument are only treated consistently as far as privately used open spaces are concerned. For the common areas, the short-term profit orientation and the compliance of construction costs seem to have a quality reducing impact, causing a discrepancy between the marketing image and reality of usage. Positive knock-on effects are not taken into account in the operational cost-benefit calculations or in quality assurance considerations.

While certain standards have been introduced and expanded by the regulations and quality assurance instruments of property developer competitions, the role of landscape architecture in the overall planning and construction process has remained weak. A strengthening of this position may be achieved by means of continuous professional support through all phases of the process and by taking the characteristics of landscape architectural design into account, e.g. the dependence of the usability on the available space and spatial configuration, interactivity of design and usage at the ground floor levels, a procedural development in general as well as implementation subsequent to the overground construction works. Yet the case studies reveal standardised procedures and a moderate interest in creating high-quality open spaces. The perception of an independent professional quality should be reflected in the structure of the construction budget as well in the quality assessment and monitoring for the purposes of housing subsidies.

It is apparent, moreover, that the property developers have a rather limited interest in small-scale care, maintenance and adaptation of commonly used open spaces. It appears that the input required for care and adaptation is too uneconomical and difficult to calculate. Yet this fact too shows how important it is to strengthen the focus on open spaces and their function as social areas in the process. The professional support of development, use and appropriation processes is urgently needed if social sustainability is understood to be more than the installation of prohibition signs in the Viennese tradition of preventing conflict.

This raises the question of whether new stakeholders and instruments should be engaged in this field. Just like 'Red Vienna' formulated specific strategies and supported them in their implementation, it appears to be also necessary in regard to open spaces earmarked for common use to support and develop a clear programme in all stages of the planning and construction process. The reorientation of the governance structure offers the possibility of liberalisation while professionalising the planning and construction process at the same time. But also the inclusion of civil society elements such as participation and self organised processes is necessary to entrench the dimension of responsible behaviour, co-determination and the concept of social space in the final instance.

## 6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 'freiWERT' research project was a cooperation between the Vienna University for Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Institute for Landscape Architecture, and the Vienna Technical University, Institute of Sociology for Spatial Planning and Architecture. The project was funded by the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology in the research line 'House of the Future ply' and co-financed by the project partners IC Projektentwicklung GmbH, GESIBA non-profit housing and construction stock corporation, ARWAG Holding AG and MIGRA Gemeinnützige Bau- u. Siedlungsgesellschaft Gesellschaft mbH. The final report is available online:

[http://download.nachhaltigwirtschaften.at/hdz\\_pdf/berichte/endbericht\\_1242\\_freiwert.pdf](http://download.nachhaltigwirtschaften.at/hdz_pdf/berichte/endbericht_1242_freiwert.pdf) (18/02/2013)

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