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The Role of Cultural Heritage in Urban Development

Chat Recording

Host

Manfred Schrenk, Competence Center of Urban and Regional Planning, Vienna, Austria

Speakers

- Pietro ELISEI, Managing Director URBASOFIA and President Elect ISOCARP – International Society of City and Regional Planners; Bucharest, Romania:
Cultural Heritage as a Context and Prerequisite for a Sustainable Development of the Contemporary City
- Wolfgang BÖRNER, Museen der Stadt Wien – Stadtarchäologie; Vienna, AT:
The Role of Cultural Heritage in Vienna for Urban Archaeology and Urban Planning

All presentations are available at <https://virtual.corp.at/>

Chat recording and transcription

From Li Fan:

My 1st question: How do you perceive the working field of cultural heritage, where does it start? What is the difference between urban heritage and architectural heritage?

My 2nd question The old town of Vienna is a cultural heritage site, but there is a new construction project, which has a negative impact on cultural heritage conservation. What about that?

From Wolfgang Börner:

We have about 100 protection zones, they should help that the city stays like it is. If a building is a little outside the zone, then it's not protected.

From Pietro Elisei:

As planners we have a different approach. We have to put the object into the context of the city. If you want to create quality of life and sustainability, we have to see things in relation and not as absolute objects. I think if we look at cities, the contemporary heritage is more in the surroundings. Where are things happening, we have to see the scale of the city. Many places are relevant today even if they don't have cultural heritage.

From Wolfgang Börner:

The 2nd question is a very difficult one, and from my position and I am not allowed to talk about this in detail. The city of Vienna is trying to get away from the UNESCO Red List of endangered cultural heritage sites again.

From Juan L. Rivas:

City is a network of networks, thus a single building needs to be put in relation to this overlapping... architecture, space, functions, memories, people(s). Thanks to all of you. Regards from Granada (Spain)

From Bettina Pahlen:

I was fascinated by the idea to see this from a planning point of view to take another view at sights. What about the role of having a responsive sight, what are your views with cultural heritage as a base for planning?

From Pietro Elisei:

At the end of the day we had a place-based approach and involvement of the community. Focus on an area and start planning, but focus at sectoral policies and stakeholders. Do a stakeholder mapping – the active ones, not the complaining ones. Many active people can contribute to the planning process. You have to be inclusive, you have to set some limits, and then different levels of governance have to be brought in, like the different levels of administration. Then we will most likely receive sustainable results. It is very difficult to make it like this, but these are the key ingredients and we know we have to use them.

From Judith Ryser:

My question is how to attribute proper weight to culture as extra dimension of sustainability when at present emphasis is on economy, a little on environment, but only as add on for social.

My other question is how to represent, even materially quantify intangible attributes as inputs into a project of cultural heritage regeneration

From Pietro Elisei:

Sustainable growth, as in many urban agendas, is not possible. Either you go for sustainability or you go for growth. We need to invest more in cultural heritage, and we need some results in short term to show politicians that these investments are meaningful. Sustainability needs cultural heritage.

From Judith Ryser:

At the end of every line it's always the economy. How can we get away from that? We need to change this physically and politically. Are there any solutions, what is necessary to foster the new concept of the four legs of sustainable development? How can we bring on board the intangible elements?

From Wolfgang Börner:

Something about storytelling: We try to put things together when we make an excavation, and put tangible and intangible things together. This is difficult because we have no proof. For example, there is literature from the Roman era, but nothing about Vienna/Vindobona. It could have been different here, who knows?

From Ernst Lung:

A question about the time scope of urban history. I am also interested in the 19th and 20th centuries. Is urban archaeology also focussing on these buildings like the old warehouse on Mariahilfer Straße? Old traditional architecture from the 19th century has often been brought to new uses and the old buildings were well preserved. Is this also a topic for you?

From Wolfgang Börner:

No, this is not our business. Archaeology ends yesterday, but we are looking at all the things down in the earth. We have no influence if these buildings are protected. In 2004 we asked people to tell us the history of Vienna. We got over 20,000 pages from people telling about the younger history, like the time of the World Wars. These are the stories we can link to our work.