

Letter received from Wolfgang Koelbl architect, teacher TU Wien (AT)  
Winners European 8 Waidhofen AT and European 9 Berlin DE

Dear Didier Rebois  
Thank you for the consultation.

I suggest "European Suburb" as topic.  
So far the suburb has mainly been an American issue, the urban discussion in Europe had a different focus.

The European model of the city is still described in a dialectic model: historic city centre versus periphery. This simple dialectic model has been transferred into specific architectural agendas. The inner city is preserved, new buildings have to be high quality architecture. (Museums, Luxury Housing, etc) The periphery still suffers from late modern functionalism and needs to be transferred into a postmodern event city. (reinterpretation of mass housing, shopping, leisure time facilities, etc).

These two agenda have been very demanding. The inner cities are critical for the overall image of the city (tourism, city marketing, etc) The social housing ring around causes problems if neglected.

So we forgot about the third realm: The suburbs surrounding the European cities. These areas are not important for the city image, and they cause no social problems, because it's the area of the middle class. Often the city authority has no direct control over these areas because they often stretch beyond the city limits into neighboring provinces.

Still, urban planning and architecture has to bring these areas back into attention. As cities in Europe are growing these areas are the last potential for urban renewal.

Best Regards

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