

Seminar of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning



Baltic Towers - Contribution to the City and the Community 2nd - 4th APRIL ○ 2009 ○ GDAŃSK ○ POLAND



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FOREWORD ABOUT GDAŃSK

A thousand years of history and a beautiful scenery linked with bright lights, lively clubs, galleries, concerts – that is not all that makes the unforgettable atmosphere of Gdańsk, the city of Fahrenheit, Uphagen, Hevelius, Schopenhauer and Gunter Grass.

The first written mention of Gdańsk comes from 997 when St. Wojciech (Adalbert), a missionary and bishop of Bohemia, arrived in the area. The dynamic development of Gdańsk started in the second half of the 10th century. The excellent location together with trade, fishery and craft guilds soon pushed the city to the leading position in Pomerania and Hansa. During Partitions of Poland (1795-1918) Gdańsk was under regime of Prussian state. In June 1919, under the Versailles Treaty, Gdańsk became a Free City supervised by the League of Nations represented by its High Commissioners. The WWII left Gdańsk completely ruined. During the post-war times Gdańsk was rebuilt and became an important seaport and a centre of shipping and chemical industry. Gdańsk also became a scene of dramatic historical transformation as a place where the free trade union “Solidarity” was born. Gdańsk is the city of Lech Walesa - the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and President of the Republic of Poland (1990-1995). This made Gdańsk a symbol of Polish road to Freedom.

Nowadays, Gdańsk is a fast transforming city. It is no longer an industrial area – services and tourism play the major role today. Gdańsk is also an important cultural and sport place – thus it has been chosen to host the UEFA European Football Championship in 2012 and is a candidate for European Capital of Culture title in 2016.





SEMINAR OBJECTIVES

With the changing world and environmental constraints, the crucial “burning question” for many cities is how to accommodate future growth and avoid further urban sprawl. One option is efficient and dense development and redevelopment in the inner city. Strategic locations of purpose built high-rise buildings may be a solution, but it evokes many difficult questions about creation or transformation of cities identity and landscape. The influences on heritage, environment, transportation and technical infrastructure requirements are important either.

The seminar focused on social and urban aspects of tall building location. Participants tried to find out:

- How well do the high-rise buildings contribute to the diversity and mix-use urban development?
- Can they contribute to the creation of viable places and sustainable communities?
- What does the community require and expect from high-rise projects in the city core, especially when public space is concerned?

The UBC seminar, as a platform of professional experience exchange consisted of lectures, “good practice” examples, questionnaire findings and workshops: organized in two different subject groups (divided into two additional groups).

The Commission tried a new method of approaching the theme by sending a questionnaire to the members of the UBC network, and although the number of answers was limited, they all were interesting. It was clear that high rise buildings are a “hot” issue in many bigger cities, but the approach to the question varies a lot, from eagerness to carefulness.



SUBJECT OF WORKSHOP

Our place of interest is located in the central part of Wrzeszcz quarter, a commercial sub-center of city of Gdańsk. This part of Gdańsk may be a subject to vital urban transformation. One of the key issues for sustainable and acceptable development will be creation of interesting public spaces along with new investment.

Group 1 **Acceptable and desirable tall buildings location**

- in what way they can strengthen the central role of Wrzeszcz,
- where are the crucial points of location (if any),
- some comments on developers' ideas,
- desirable functions and elements of tall buildings structure.
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Group 2 **Vital public spaces inspired by tall buildings location**

- composition,
- identity,
- scale,
- accessibility,
- desirable functions for the public space boundaries,
- endowment,
- linkage to the city structure.





PARTICIPANTS AND WORKSGROUPS

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SEMINAR AGENDA

TIME EVENT

WEDNESDAY, 1ST APRIL - *Hotel Wolne Miasto*

- 18:30 Meeting place at Wolne Miasto Hotel and Aureus Hotel – walk to Brovarnia Restaurant
- 19:00 Informal “get-together” at Brovarnia Restaurant

THURSDAY, 2ND APRIL - *City Council Hall, Gdansk*

- 8:30 **Registration**
- 9:00 Welcome speeches: Mayor of Gdansk Paweł Adamowicz, the UBC Secretary General Paweł Żaboklicki, the Chairperson of the UBC Commission on Urban Planning Sirpa Kallio
- 9:20 Comments on Baltic Towers questionnaire findings – Marta Jaskulska, Gdansk Development Agency
- 9:40 **Lecture:** Gdansk policy for City Towers location (SLOW) - Adam Rodziewicz, Gdansk Development Agency
- 10:00 Coffee break
- 10:15 **Lecture:** System of Polish spatial planning – law regulations and land ownership, Adam Rodziewicz, Gdansk Development Agency
- 10:30 **Lecture:** Wrzeszcz quarter – the role and location in the city structure - Maria Magdalena Koprowska, Gdansk Development Agency
- 11:00 **Lecture:** The idea of high rise buildings in Gdansk Downtown and Wrzeszcz in the 50's, Jacek Friedrich PhD, Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk
- 11:30 **Lecture:** The high-rise and the public park: functional and landscape relations – prof. Krystyna Pawłowska, Cracow University of Technology
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Sightseeing in Gdansk-Wrzeszcz, an excursion to the workshop site
- 14:30 Coffee break and forming groups
- 15:00 **Lecture:** Impact of high – rise development on the city structure – Piotr Lorens PhD, Gdansk University of Technology
- 15:30 **Lecture:** The Art in Public Spaces, Anna Januchta-Szostak PhD, Poznań University of Technology
- 16:00- 17:45 **City Towers examples - participants presentations**
Sirpa Kallio and Jussi Kautto, Helsinki, Symbols of success

Carsten Nielsen: Developing the old harbour of Rostock – comprehensive planning and recent projects

Gunilla Kronvall, presentation about Malmö

Henrik Pedersen: Policy for high house building in Aarhus Municipality

Mara Liepa–Zemesa, The Daugava River Left Bank Silhouette Concept Project in Riga

Martti Preem, Location of High-Rise Building in Tallinn

Marek Karzynski, Sea Towers – tall buildings in city structure – Gdynia case

Danuta Grodzicka Kozak, Regional Fund of Environmental Protection: Environmental aspects of high-rise building location in coastal zone

17:45 Short presentation about the next seminar – Linköping, Sweden

19:40 Meeting place at Wolne Miasto Hotel and Aureus Hotel – walk to Mercury Heweliusz Hotel

20:00 Formal dinner at Mercury Heweliusz Hotel

FRIDAY, 3RD APRIL - *Pick & Roll, Sopot*

8:45 Meeting place - Wolne Miasto Hotel – bus to Sopot

9:15 Group work

12:30 Lunch

13:30 **Presentation:** Creative Future: Growth Potentialities for Baltic Cities - Astrid Könönen PhD (PriceWaterhouseCoopers) and Silvia Stiller PhD (Hamburg Institute of International Economics)

14:30 – 16:00 Walk along the beach to the Sopot pier or bowling game

16:30 – 19:30 Group work

19:30 Informal dinner at Pick & Roll

23:00 Bus to Gdansk

SATURDAY, 4TH APRIL - *Wolne Miasto Hotel, Gdansk*

9:00 – 10:30 Finishing presentations

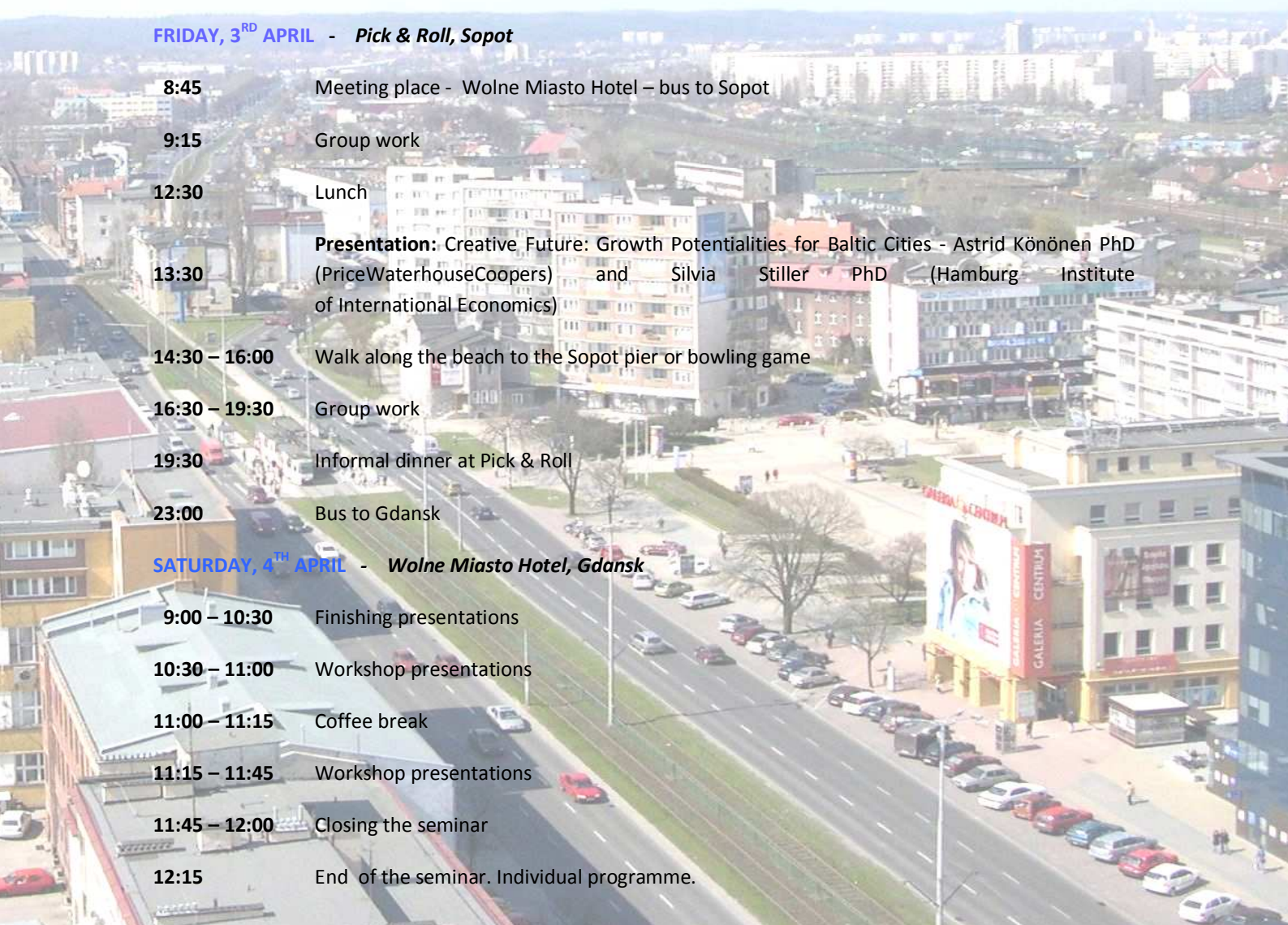
10:30 – 11:00 Workshop presentations

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee break

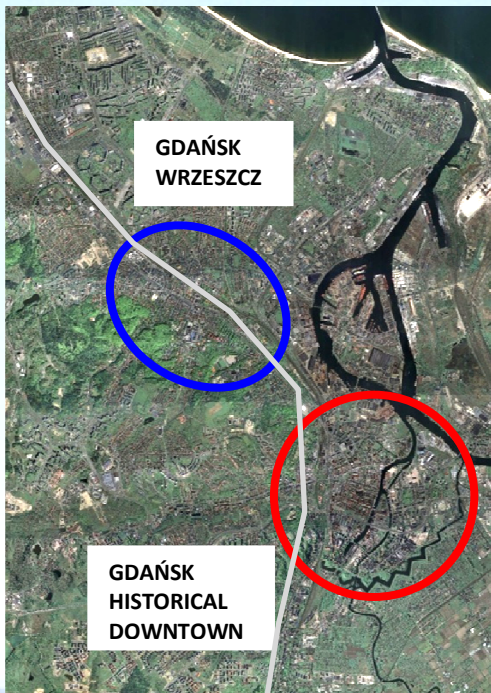
11:15 – 11:45 Workshop presentations

11:45 – 12:00 Closing the seminar

12:15 End of the seminar. Individual programme.



SIGHTSEEING IN GDAŃSK WRZESZCZ



PRESENTATION OF THE LECTURES

PAWEL ŻABOKLICKI

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The General Secretary of Union of the Baltic Cities invited for X UBC GENERAL CONFERENCE in Kristiansand, 23-26 SEPTEMBER 2009 - "Baltic cities for economic and climate solutions - a developed Baltic Sea Strategy". Subjects of workshops:

- to improve the environmental state of the Baltic Sea Region
- to make the Baltic Sea Region a more prosperous place by supporting balanced economic development
- to make the Baltic Sea Region more accessible and attractive
- to make the Baltic Sea Region a safer and more secure place

The Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) was founded in Gdansk, Poland on 20 September 1991 at the Founding Conference, when representatives of 32 cities signed the declaration expressing their will to create the organization associating the Baltic cities.

The main goal of the Union is to develop cooperation and exchange between its member cities and to contribute actively to the democratic, social, economic and environmentally friendly development of the Baltic Sea area.

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Gdansk policy for City Towers location (SLOW)

The Study of High-Rise Development (SLOW) is an urban study which aims at instigating a wide-ranging public discussion, and later specifying the procedures for dealing with high-rise buildings in Gdańsk. In order to attain the goal, variety of studies and activities have been conducted.

As a result, the Study (SLOW) comprises the following:

- definition of a high-rise building, including the local conditions of Gdańsk;
- summary of the comparative work and case studies,
- characterization of European and world tendencies for locating high-rise buildings;
- presentation of the issue of large-panel block housing estates in the context of high-rise development;
- report on the on-line survey findings;
- synthetic presentation of the analysis of the impact of high-rise development on sustainable development and cityscape;
- the matter of high-rise development in the built environment from the point of view of environmental psychology;
- photographic panoramas from the Landscape Control Points (PKKM).

In the Study, special areas for locating high-rise buildings have been proposed together with the fundamental procedures related to the matter. The issues addressed in the Study of High-Rise Development are of a very wide scope; the subject matter touches upon numerous aspects of the city life, does not have legal regulations and refers to the decisions which would influence the city for decades. Thus, the President of Gdańsk has decided to engage the inhabitants of Gdańsk in a wide-ranging and substantive discussion, and make urban analyses.

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Comments on Baltic Towers questionnaire findings

The aim of Baltic Towers seminar is to find out whether and how tall buildings may contribute to the city and the local community. To start this discussion a questionnaire was sent to UBC members, enquiring if and how tall buildings work in cities around the Baltic Sea.

14 cities decided to participate in our research. There were as follows:

- Denmark: Aarhus and Kolding
- Estonia: Tallinn
- Finland: Helsinki, Tampere and Turku
- Germany: Rostock
- Latvia: Liepaja and Riga
- Lithuania: Siauliai
- Poland: Gdańsk and Gdynia
- Sweden: Halmstadt and Nacka

There were four general points found during the survey. Firstly, the cities participating in this research represent a wide range of types. There were some single cities and some municipalities. Their population varies from 55 thousands to 1.2 million and area starts from 65 km² up to 1700 km². Secondly, tall buildings exist in 12 cities, in remaining 2 there are some plans to build them. Also in 12 cities there are developers interested in tall buildings. The high buildings are mainly used for housing and offices but mixed functions are popular as well. Thirdly, the survey showed that there is no clear definition of tall building. Depending on the city context and scale, the height that makes building to be described as a tall one varies from 20 to 70 m but the most popular is 50 m.

Finally, the reasons for not constructing tall buildings are different. One is economic - high rise buildings may attract all investments, leaving the rest of the city underdeveloped. The other reason is more aesthetic - keeping the silhouette of city low.

The research covered also more specific problems. Firstly, the case of instruments of tall building location. The most obvious and widely used tool of location of tall building was an act of urban planning. It could be a local development plan, framework or urban design study as well. Often public consultation and professionals' opinion were taken into account. Financial issues were another important factor but they are not so popular as those mentioned before. Furthermore, in 8 cities there was a long term vision, policy or other regulations of local government concerning location of tall building. In next 2 cities there was a legislation of that type in progress.

The next important issue is the social context of high rise development. In most cases location of tall buildings was discussed with both developers and local community.

Location, design, public spaces, car parks and public transport system were described as the most important parts of negotiations with developers. Below there are some quotations of answers supporting the choices.

The last point to present is local community and its attitude towards high rise development. There was no one clear tendency that can characterize local community's opinion towards tall buildings. As one of the participants pointed out – in case of high buildings location we can talk about NIMBY syndrome which means Not In My Backyard. So there was a general acceptance of high building location in the city as a whole. But location of tall buildings in a close neighborhood could cause disagreement or even conflict between local community, developers and local government.

To sum up, it is essential to highlight the complexity of high rise development process. There were only 14 participants in our research and they had some common ideas but they did not act in the same way. Although the questions were the same, answers were different



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System of Polish spatial planning – law regulations and land ownership

The new Spatial Planning and Development Act in Poland was passed on 27th March 2003. There are three levels in spatial development planning: the national, regional and local ones. The planning process provides opportunities for co-operation between many different institutions on many levels, and also constitutes an open platform for public participation. General rules are as follows:

- Spatial development management is the main role of public authorities,
- Local government carries out tasks which are not reserved for other authorities,
- Communal authorities carry out all the tasks that are not reserved for other organizations; commune provides for meeting the community's collective needs, in particular: spatial order, land management and environmental protection.

The Local Planning basic documents in Poland are: the Strategy of Commune Development, the Study of Local Conditions and Perspectives for Spatial Development, local land-use plans, analyses and studies, conceptions and programs, Long-term Investment Plan. The local land-use plan constitutes the local law, compatible with the local Study, which defines land function and principles for land management. The local land-use plan is appended with a financial impact assessment and is a basis for administrative decisions making, including a building permit. The Plan is worked out by the Communal or Municipal Mayor and approved by a respective Council. Public participation in planning process is the widest on the local level.

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The skyscraper and the public park: functional and landscape relations

The relation between the skyscraper at the public park brings interesting conclusions concerning the manner in which a city develops. A number of case studies from New York, Tokyo, Kraków, and Gdańsk, would allow to draw conclusions useful in the current development of Polish cities although the sizes and numbers of high-rise buildings in Polish cities cannot stand comparison to “the forests” of skyscrapers, yet the ambitions of the authorities of Polish cities, specialists in urban matters, and developers alike frequently reach those heights and models.

In Polish cities, the relationship between the dynamic development (which may be symbolised by the skyscraper) and natural and recreational values of the place (concentrated in the public park) increasingly often assumes the form of a conflict. Developers want to build, residents protest because they do not want to lose greens in their vicinity.

Finding place for public parks is far more difficult in extreme conditions of great metropolises than in Poland, yet there such dilemmas have been known far longer than here, which allowed foreign municipal authorities, planners and resident groups acquire greater experience in achieving the balance between “hard” i.e. developed and “soft” i.e. natural structure of the city.

The Polish case studies show characteristic barriers, such as:

1. lack of planning instruments to allow efficient balancing in the development of the “hard” and “soft” structures in the city,
2. lack of skill or at times goodwill to use the existing instruments,
3. lack of tradition of co-operation and also of trust between the three sectors of the economy: private, public, and social.

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Wrzeszcz quarter – the role and location in the city structure

The largest urban concentration in the northern region of Poland consists of the cities of Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot, colloquially referred to as the “Trójmiasto”, meaning “Tri-Cities”, adjoined by many smaller cities. The entire agglomeration in the Pomeranian Province accounts for nearly 2/3 of its population. It is also Poland’s fourth most populated urban area with more than 1.0 million inhabitants. The structure of agglomeration is shaped foremost by its location along the sea coast. The core of agglomeration, called Central Belt of Services, is located along North-South main transportation corridor. There are 4 major commercial areas; center parts of Gdynia and Sopot city, center part of Wrzeszcz borough and Gdansk Historical Downtown. Every center has unique character recognized by the Tri-Cities citizens.

Currently in Gdansk there live about 456 thousand citizens and the population is slightly diminishing. Gdansk itself has two primary functional centers: Gdansk-Wrzeszcz and Gdansk-Historical Downtown. The dual structure of the central functions location has a long, historical background. The limited space within the historical walls followed by high cost of living in the dense city area created in 18th century demand for new development in a close vicinity of historical downtown. Wrzeszcz (called in that time by German name Langfuhr) offered the ideal possibility for new commercial and housing development. World War II was relatively kind to the buildings of Langfuhr as only a few suffered damage comparing to 90% destruction of Historical Downtown of Gdansk. The modern commercial center was created along Grunwaldzka street, with many shops, administrative offices and other central functions relocated from Gdansk Historical Downtown, destroyed by war. The process of rebuilding the Old Town of Gdansk did not diminish the role of Wrzeszcz in the city structure. Gdansk citizens still go shopping there. Still the historical heart of the borough – small square 35m x 130 m is a significant public space.

The borough of Wrzeszcz is now developing and transforming rapidly. A great deal of commercial activity (particularly banking and shopping) now takes place here. A number of international firms have chosen to locate their offices there rather than in the Gdansk Historical Downtown. Large shopping centers, such as Baltic Gallery and Manhattan Shopping Center, have been opened recently along Grunwaldzka street, and extensive military properties have been sold to housing developers. The former brewery in Lower Wrzeszcz will be transformed to housing and services area. The high-rise Quatro Towers close to Manhattan Shopping Center have got the building permission. There are investors who want to reshape the former department store at Klonowa Square to high-rise building. The new investments follow the city strategy to encourage inner city development, to make the area of inner city more dense. One of the ways to achieve this strategy might be an efficient and well planned high rise development.



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The idea of high rise buildings in Gdańsk in the 1950s

Skyscrapers for Gdańsk were designed already in 1920, as a part of a competition announced by West Prussian Association of Architects and Engineers. However, none of the competition designs has ever become a reality, and the idea of building such objects was discarded a few years later.

The idea resurfaced after WW II, when a competition for urban planning - architectural design of a part of Gdańsk city centre was announced in 1953. The motif of a Central Community Centre towering over the historical city centre, planned as an element of the most important urban development axis of old Gdańsk - the line of Długa and Długi Targ streets - kept coming back in competition designs. The differences in the proposals consisted in the scale, the form and the objects' composition in the cityscape - the concept of a high rise building, similar to that of the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw was recurring most often. Placing a huge building at the outskirts of a historical city centre, which, due to its location on a hill, would dominate over the city, could constitute a clear visualization of capturing of not only the present but also the history of the city, and at the same time could be understood as a crowning of its history.

The Central Community Centre, based on the capital's model, towering over the Main City was not the only skyscraper that was planned to be built in social realistic forms in Gdańsk. A similar but smaller edifice was to be constructed in Wrzeszcz quarter. It was to constitute a vertical dominant of Grunwaldzka Housing Area. Also the new plan for the Gdańsk city centre developed in 1963 took freely from the idea of high rise buildings.

Most skyscrapers have remained just paper designs, and from among the ones that were finally built, an office building, generally known as "Zieleniak", is undoubtedly the most distinguished one. Both due to its form and its unusual structure, it is one of the most interesting achievements of Polish architecture of recent decades. Despite the fact that it was erected in the close vicinity of the historical city centre, it does not interfere with the historical tissue of the city, which cannot be said about the two skyscrapers so unfortunately located in the Old Town area.

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Impact of high – rise development on the city structure

In the structures of contemporary cities high-rise developments are developed for a number of reasons, such as economic, cultural, political, demographic and – last but not least – environmental ones. In the case of Poland, the discussion on the high-rise development is especially complicated by the unique mixture of the features of the post-socialist cities and growing ambitions to become a European-class metropolis.

The development of the high-rise allows proper utilization of the site potential and changes the image of both the site and – in many cases – the company interested in such a development. The location of a high-rise structure can contribute to the process of providing the image of the modern city (metropolis) for the entire urban area. Location of the high-rise structures is in many cases associated with the political reasons – the competition between the civil and church powers in the Middle Ages was reflected in the competition in the height of church and town hall towers. Development of high-rise buildings can solve some problems, such as demographic, lack of developable land, urban sprawl, and can contribute to the development of the "compact city" model. On the other hand, it can become both a symbol of power and importance in the developing and ambitious cities and an unwanted intruder in the historic contexts of the old towns. It raises the transportation issues - predicted access problems and volume of traffic generated by these. In the direct location contexts, there are problems with neighbors and their desires and interests.

Additionally, in Gdańsk and the entire Tri-City metropolitan area, there is a lack of a modern tradition of high-rise developments. As they are frequently located within historic and environmentally sensitive areas, their location is a subject to intense public debates and also professional discussions. On the other hand, the potential high-rise developments are perceived by some parts of the Tri-City community and also by the municipal authorities as potential new symbols of the cities and their prosperous development.

But – due to the complexity of the process – in order to avoid major problems and misunderstandings in the process, cities should possess a clear policy on location of these structures.

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The Art in Public Spaces

Historical towns owed its uniqueness to deep roots in local tradition. In the times of unification of cultural patterns the art in public spaces takes on a very responsible role – creating the image of the city and emphasizing identity of the place. High rise buildings take deserved top position in sculpturing the sky-line of the town. However, in the human scale, not only spectacular buildings create the unique townscape, sometimes inconspicuous sculptures become city symbols and important element of its identity, such as Mermaid in Copenhagen and Warsaw or Mannekin Pis in Brussels. Some forms of visual art are dominant, others are only accents in urban interior, some carry historical message, others intrigue by modern form, arising admiration or consternation, nevertheless, they individualize the urban space becoming important anchor-points on mental maps of inhabitants.

The subject of research conveyed by the author in Poznań was the quality of public spaces and raising their visual and social attractiveness by introducing monuments and water elements. The autor defines the typology of public art objects (considering their function, form and scale) and methodology of their location from the city-scale to the urban interior scale. The process of searching for optimal locations of various types of sculpture objects in the city, was divided into III stages:

I - determining areas of the city with the highest viewing popularity and rank of the place on the basis of graphical method, choosing public places in certain areas and their preliminary selection on the basis of multi-criterion analysis and SWOT.

II - analysis and evaluation of the quality of urban interior and exhibition capabilities for chosen public sites, taking into consideration different aspects: historical, cultural, compositional and esthetical values, as well as function, zoning and transportation system.

III - creating functional and compositional guidelines for location of monuments and water elements, determining their type and location.

The final effect of the 1st stage was **“The Catalogue of Public Places”**, containing information about the majority of important public places in Poznań, with the description of their location, neighborhood, spatial layout and function, short SWOT analysis as well as the preliminary estimation of capabilities for locating monuments and water elements.

Chosen public places (with the best exhibition values) were subjected to spatial and functional analysis. The objective of the 2nd and 3rd stage were **“The functional and compositional guidelines for locating monuments and water elements”** as well as exemplary concepts of urban interior layout with visual art locating.

The research work was awarded by the Minister of Infrastructure in December, 2008.



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Symbols of success - high rise buildings in Helsinki

In Helsinki the question of high rise buildings is very controversial. There are plans to build several high rise buildings in the new urban development areas, such as Pasila and Kalasatama (Fish Port), but the discussion about their influence in the city skyline and architecture as well many technical questions, such as life-cycle end ecology is going on and both supporting and opposing opinions are presented. In Finland generally a building taller than 12 floors (43 m) is considered to be a tower, but in Helsinki the height of the buildings is connected to the width of the streets and therefore buildings taller than 7 floors (25 m) are considered as "high rise".

The Helsinki skyline is traditionally low, while the height of the buildings is traditionally only 5 - 6 floors (17 – 21 metres). There are a few exceptions, such as the "high rise" hotel Tornio from 1931 that was for long the highest building in the city with its 16 floors (70 metres). The other high rise buildings have traditionally been clock towers or church towers, but in the late 1970s and early 1980s a new era of high rise buildings began also in Helsinki, and landmarks to point the sub-centres were built, e.g. in the East Centre the office building by architect Erkki Kairamo. Most of the high rise buildings in Helsinki are built for other purposes than housing. The highest housing tower in Helsinki is the Cirrus in Vuosaari, having 26 floors of apartments. With its white facade of 92 metres it is visible everywhere within 15 km range.

In planning high rise buildings it is important to take into consideration – besides architectural design – the public spaces around the building and how the building fits into its surrounding urban environment. In Helsinki's Ruoholahti the high rise head office of the Finnish Innovation Fund SITRA is situated in a knot point of the sub-centre with excellent public transportation connections (underground, tram and bus stops), commercial services and jobs around it. Car parking is located in an underground parking hall.

The moving of harbour activities to a new location in Vuosaari in November 2008 has left many locations open for new urban development in Helsinki. It is probable that at least some of these new areas will have high rise buildings as their new landmarks, but the discussion about whether or not they spoil the skyline and the environment still continues.

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Developing the old harbour of Rostock

The presentation focused on how Rostock developed and how it reached a slightly different level of town planning. The city has to face a slow downslope because of diminishing population in Rostock in the close future. The city, changing rapidly in different decades, shows the effect of political ambitions and quick urban sprawl. Rostock survived times of flourishing political ambitions and demanding private investors. There was a fierce discussion of Rostock's future, which brought up the feeling of need to create signs with remarkable high rise buildings. There were the times of eagerness and wealth, political force and ideology. But there came also times of depression, poverty and decay. The results of these times are visible in the city development and directs us to one of the main issues of town planning: Are we able to act or do we only react on influences? Do we follow that tracks? Does size matter? Can Bilbao be everywhere? Do we really have to show up?

We have to evoke and to claim quality to gain sustainable urban values. Some of the relicts of our high-rise-history are torn down, since no one wants to rent, manage or maintain these buildings. Some of them are really foreign substance because all the other projects around never became reality. Some of them are standing alone, without their proposed surrounding and still denying the historical context. In consequence, Rostock is now looking forward to high-quality-buildings instead of high-rise-buildings.

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About Malmö

Until the 1970s, Malmö was an industrial city where a few large industries dominated the economy and urban landscape. The largest, Kockum shipyard, had thousands of employees. It dominated the seafront, where some of the largest oil tankers in the world were constructed. The largest crane stood 140 meters tall, and had become the city's symbol and landmark. When the shipyard industry failed, and Malmö over two decades reinvented itself into a knowledge city, the seafront area became a high-quality sustainable urban mix use neighborhood. Dense and small scale, it became important as Malmö marketed itself as the sustainable city of the future. It was part of the city's strong vision, to create a new Malmö, to attract a population of highly educated urban people as well as students to the new university.

A housing association, HSB, wanted to be part of this visionary urban area, and create a new way to live for the people of Malmö there. They employed Santiago Calatrava as their architect and the Turning Torso, a sculptural object rising 190 meters tall, came to be. Today it has become the new symbol and landmark of Malmö. It can be seen from miles away, and is very distinct in its form.

However, what does it represent, of what is it a symbol? Of the successful growth of Malmö, of the city's prosperity? To some, yes. To others, it has become a symbol for a city which is segregated, of the wealthy residing well above others. The Turning Torso is not accessible to the public. There is no roof top restaurant or viewing gallery, and no public ground floor. The symbolic value of the building might have been different, had it been accessible. The foremost value of the Turning Torso, is probably as an object - a tall slim sculpture in the developing urban landscape and skyline of Malmö, to be viewed from afar.

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Policies concerning high-rise buildings in the Municipality of Århus

Municipality of Århus have in cooperation with a private consultant developed a handbook about the process of making a policy for high rise buildings. Here you also find the policy for high rise buildings, which now is a part of the Århus Municipality Plan. The policy is based on the structure of the landscape. Århus is a hilly city with two valleys of streams. The view of and across the valleys are important as a part of the identity of Århus. Therefore, high rise buildings will not be situated in the valleys. High rise buildings on the hillsides will underline the city-profile. Other locations that are excluded for location of high rise buildings are:

- Low rise housing areas (more than 50% of the urban area)
- Areas with cultural heritage
- Urban blocks
- View to churches

Business areas are in general a possibility. At important road crossings high-rise buildings can generate a "gate" or a fixpoint for orientation. The conclusion of the survey is a valuation map, where it is pointed out where high rise buildings is a possibility.

For projects involving high rise buildings the developer has to present a feasibility study in two phases:

- a preliminary feasibility study
- a basic feasibility study.

The preliminary feasibility study is a report with the following headlines:

- Public interest
- Location as a landmark
- Relation to existing landmarks
- Views
- Functional need
- Advantage (Socio-economy, sustainability etc.)
- Infrastructure

If the Department of Building and Planning accepts the preliminary feasibility study, a more basic feasibility study is made with the following headlines:

- Influence on the city skyline
- Relation to surrounding building patterns and architecture
- The building in street level
- Scale, materials
- Surrounding space
- Access, function,
- Urban life
- Traffic, parking, public transport
- Local climate

The basic feasibility study is accompanied by 3D-studies of the building in context with the surrounding areas and the skyline, which are used in the public debate about the local plan for the project.

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Tall Buildings Interaction in Existing City Structure The Daugava River Left Bank Silhouette Concept Project in Riga

The silhouette of a city forms during the time city develops and is created by several generations. The development of Riga spatial structure is proposed to build on historical background, adjacent Old Riga, but as contrastive and modern accent in the planned new Riga centre, which is located opposite the Old Town, on the left bank of Daugava.

The architectural spatial joining of both riverbanks of Daugava have the same dimensions since the beginning of 20th century.

Nowadays this territory is characterised by diverse forms of buildings: unique modern building coalition in Kipsala central part, former industrial areas, existing high rises and the projects which are accepted and which are under construction.

Since the beginning of 2006 the Riga City Council City Development Department has worked on the Daugava river left bank silhouette concept project.



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Thematic Plan: “The Location of High-Rise Buildings in Tallinn”

The thematic plan, “The Location of High-Rise Buildings in Tallinn”, was initiated on 04.03.2004 by Tallinn City Council. The initial task for the thematic plan “The Location of High-Rise Buildings in Tallinn”, which is also the basis for framing the given plan, was approved on 25.08.2004 by Tallinn City Council. Within the framework of the thematic plan many different basic studies have been commissioned, in which the actual need for high-rise buildings as residential and entrepreneurial/business space, and the coincident effects of high-rise buildings on the surrounding environment were explained.

One of the main objectives of the thematic plan is to determine possible locations and prohibited areas for the construction of high-rise buildings in Tallinn, while considering the need to take the development of Tallinn’s urban space in general as well as the question of the observability and height dominance of the Old Town, that has been included into the UNESCO World Heritage list, under systematic control.

The second main objective of the thematic plan of high-rise buildings is to try to stop the suburbanization process of the city by densifying the City Centre and sub-centers of the city.

The thematic plan of high-rise buildings concerns primarily buildings higher than 45 metres. The following areas have been determined in the thematic plan to have higher development potential as locations for high-rise buildings by using the method of exclusion according to the various outlined restrictions:

- *centers of city districts and areas;*
- *developing areas;*
- *junctions of arterials.*

A prospective high-rise building must conform to all three aforementioned main criteria.

Twelve prospective high-rise building districts have been determined while framing the thematic plan.

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Sea Towers – tall buildings in city structure – Gdynia case

Gdynia is a young city. The decision to erect a port and new town in this location was made in the early 1920s. According to a city building ordinance enacted in the 1930s, all buildings in the central district were to be 5 storeys high. A 6th storey was allowed on corner lots or if the highest floor was set back. As the city rapidly grew, the original building regulations quickly became too constraining. In the late 1930s first buildings exceeding the height limit appeared. The highest building constructed before the 2nd WW was a nine-story residential-commercial building.

In the 1970s many building 11 storey, constructed using the prefabricated concrete technology, appeared in the city center – often dramatically ignoring the character of surrounding neighborhoods. After the year 2000, a new fashion of building housing towers arrived to Poland. These new structures were at most 55 meters high with up to 18 storeys. This height was not exceeded in Gdynia until the year 2005.

In 2005 an architectural competition concerning the development of a postindustrial area located on the waterfront just near the South Pier - the most significant urban axes - was announced. Rules of the competition encouraged the design of a tall building as a symbol of this prestigious place. As a result of the competition the construction of the Sea Towers, a mixed-use skyscraper complex, commenced in May 2006 and is currently drawing to a close. When completed, it will be over 140 meters tall, which makes it the tallest building in Poland outside of Warsaw and the tallest residential building in Poland. On the 38th floor of the tower a viewing platform will be arranged, which will provide a wide panoramic view of the city and sea. Sea Towers made a real change in the city landscape. The characteristic shape of the towers appears behind existing buildings and as a closing accent to the perspective view of several streets and other frequented places in the city.

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Environmental aspects of high-rise building location in costal zone



Polish coastal zone, and especially the coastline, e.g. in Gdańsk, is considered as one of the most valuable regions in terms of environmental and landscape features. The coast has always been a very attractive area for development. The observed process of converting the space has become more intensive on the Polish coast. It is often connected with excessive human pressure driven by the investor's interest and not that of the society, and which is not sufficiently controlled.

Seaside serves very important social functions in urbanised areas – providing background for sports and recreation, walking areas and meeting places for inhabitants. In the process of developing coastal areas, it is important to remember about the needs of local societies, as they have the strongest connection to the place where they live. Hence, proposals for spatial development options should derive from them.

Structures built in the coastal zone should “blend” with the local landscape in terms of proportions and correspond with the local tradition – low-rise buildings of spa and health-resorts as well as small fishing ports.

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Creative Future: Growth Potentialities for Baltic Cities

The Study ‘Creative Future - Growth Potentialities of Baltic Cities’, developed by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) and the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI) analyses the potential for economic growth in the knowledge economy in nine small and medium-sized urban areas around the Baltic Sea: Aarhus (Denmark), Gdansk (Poland), Kiel (Germany), Riga (Latvia), Rostock (Germany), Tallinn (Estonia), Turku (Finland), Umea (Sweden) and Vilnius (Lithuania). The results of the study make it clear that development of these cities is marked by the growing importance of knowledge-intensive sectors of the economy. Many cities in the Baltic Sea region already are dynamic knowledge economies. Plenty of cities have the potential to establish themselves as knowledge hubs in the future. For a dynamic urban environment and the successful positioning as a centre of the knowledge economy, ‘soft’ location factors, such as innovation capability, knowledge and openness are of striking importance. However, the prospects for economic growth for each individual city over the course of structural change depend on the specific location conditions, the structure of their economy and the design of regional policies. A basic necessity is the orientation of the strategic goals in all cities towards their specific strengths and weaknesses. It is important for small and medium sized cities to concentrate on their particular capability and thus distinguish themselves, since by nature smaller cities are not in the position to compete successfully in all sectors. A strong image establishes international recognition despite small city size or a peripheral location. For clusters to emerge, the intensive transfer of knowledge is necessary. In the future it will be of great importance that education systems are internationally oriented. Therefore, universities should interact with other locations in teaching and research activities and be proactive in attracting foreign students. To attract and keep highly skilled labour, family friendly infrastructures and attitudes are fundamental. An open atmosphere, as well as a broad and sophisticated cultural scene, influences the quality of living in a city.



WORKSHOP

WORKSGRUP 1: WRZESZCZ - ACCEPTABLE AND DESIRABLE TALL BUILDINGS LOCATION

- in what way they can strengthen the central role of Wrzeszcz
- where are the crucial points of location (if there are)
- some comments on developers ideas
- desirable functions and elements of tall buildings structure

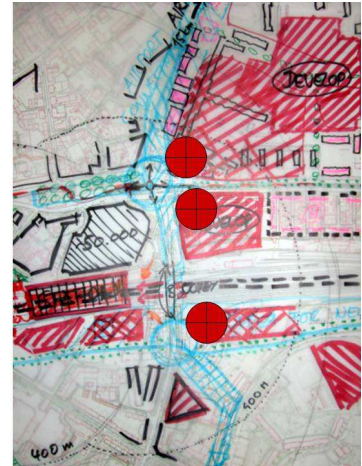
GROUP 1A

WRZESZCZ - Targets

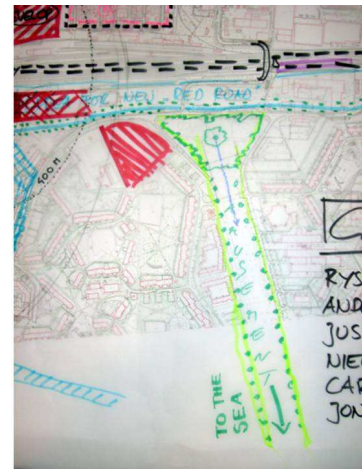
- TOWN PLANNING SHOULD RUN THE INVESTORS - NOT RUN BY THEM
- LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK IS NEEDED → MASTER PLAN
- HIGH-RISE-BUILDINGS ARE DEMANDING SOLID TRAFFIC SOLUTIONS
- ACCEPT/RECOGNIZE THE DECISION
- WORK MORE DETAILED WITH INVESTOR
- MAKE A 20+30 YEAR PLAN USE LONG-TERM VISION
- TRANSFORMATION OF MILITARY AREA AS A 30 YEAR-PLAN / STEP BY STEP



This is the one main junction with superior meaning which has to be developed with 2-3 high-rise-buildings



Baltic Connection change former Airfield into exquisite access to the Sea



2.nd Airport Connection by reusing former railroad tracks



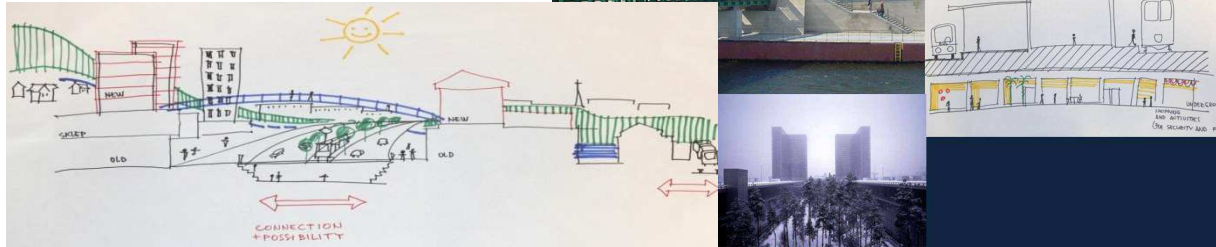
Green Connections
Old and new parks and trees



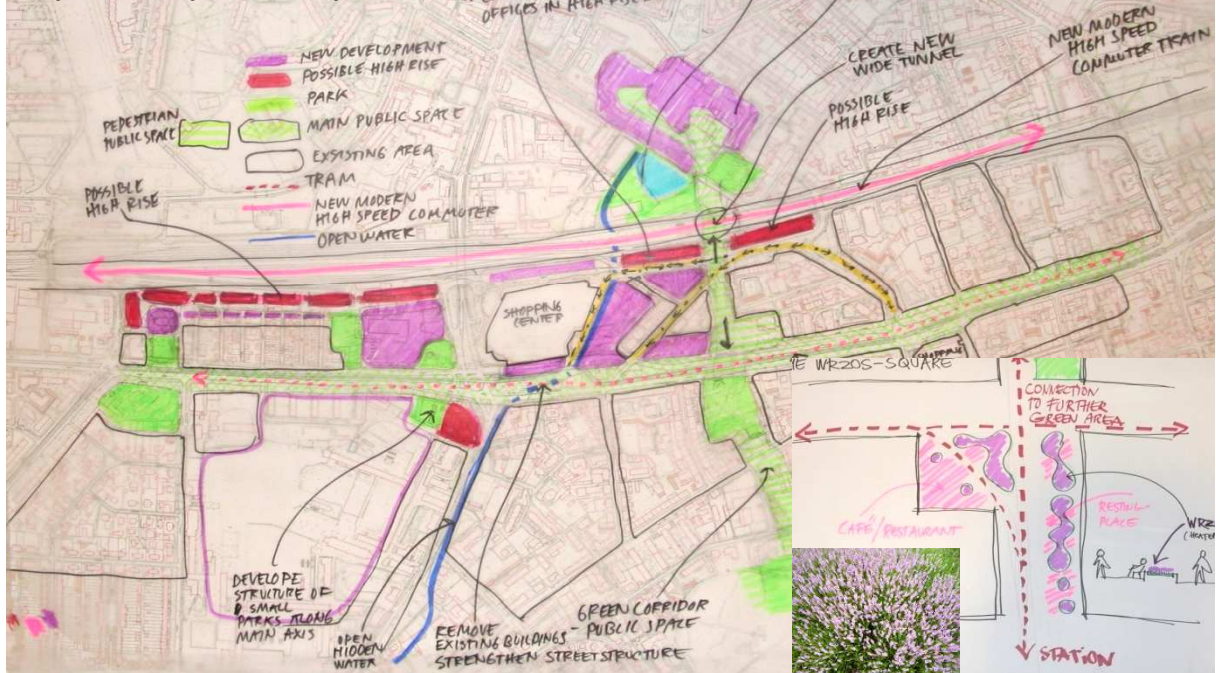
GROUP 1B

POSITIVE IMAGE OF THE CITY – A MODERN / ATTRACTIVE CITY – WHAT IS IT ?

1. Movement of people – density
2. Possibility to develop public transport and commuting
3. Landscape and valuable natural elements.
4. Interesting historical neighbourhood



Location for high-rise building with transferring hub on the lowest or underground levels pointing out to important public place (easy access to public transportation).



GREEN AREAS AND RECREATION

1. Green and recreation areas are fragmented and very poorly developed.
2. Strzyża Creek should be recovered and used as a essential natural element of green spaces.
3. Green and recreation areas should be filled in and transformed into the system of green sites in Wrzeszcz downtown.



WORKSGRUP2: WRZESZCZ - VITAL PUBLIC SPACES INSPIRED BY TALL BUILDINGS LOCATION

- composition
- identity
- scale
- accessibility
- endowment
- desirable functions for the public space boundaries
- linkage to the city structure



GROUP 2A

WRZESZCZ - as it could be in future

IDEAS:

- How to enhance / "highlight" the connection to train station
- Grundwaldska Street ("main street") is very wide, could there be more space for pedestrians?
- Underground parking or separate parking houses to improve city view

IDEAS FOR BETTER ACCESSIBILITY:

- No gates or blocks. Allow access through sites (e.g. pine alley on the site of 4 towers)
- Too short time for pedestrians to cross main street. Slow speed on streets
- Adjust time of traffic light intervals to be more pedestrian friendly
- Walking bridge or underground tunnel (or for the cars??)
- Reduce traffic in or through Wrzeszcz, use the other west passage "threecities bypass"
- Obstacles, such as squares or objects of landscape architecture to slow down car speed.
- No gates or blocks. Allow access through sites (e.g. pine alley on the site of 4 towers)
- Walking bridge or underground tunnel (or for the cars??)
- Reduce traffic in or through Wrzeszcz, use the other west passage "threecities bypass"
- Obstacles like squares or objects of landscape architecture to slow down car speed.

MORE IDEAS:

- High rise buildings must not be closed for the public
- Allow access to ground or top floor (the experience from Turning Torso)
- High rise buildings should be strongly linked to city structure and tempt people to enter
- How to optimize the quality of public spaces around high rise building
- Sunny places for sitting
- Good quality material & design: Choose the right equipment for the place (benches, lightening, fixtures etc.)
- Vegetation (flower, tree, miniparks&gardens)
- Environmental art, activities and squares, christmas market, concerts etc.



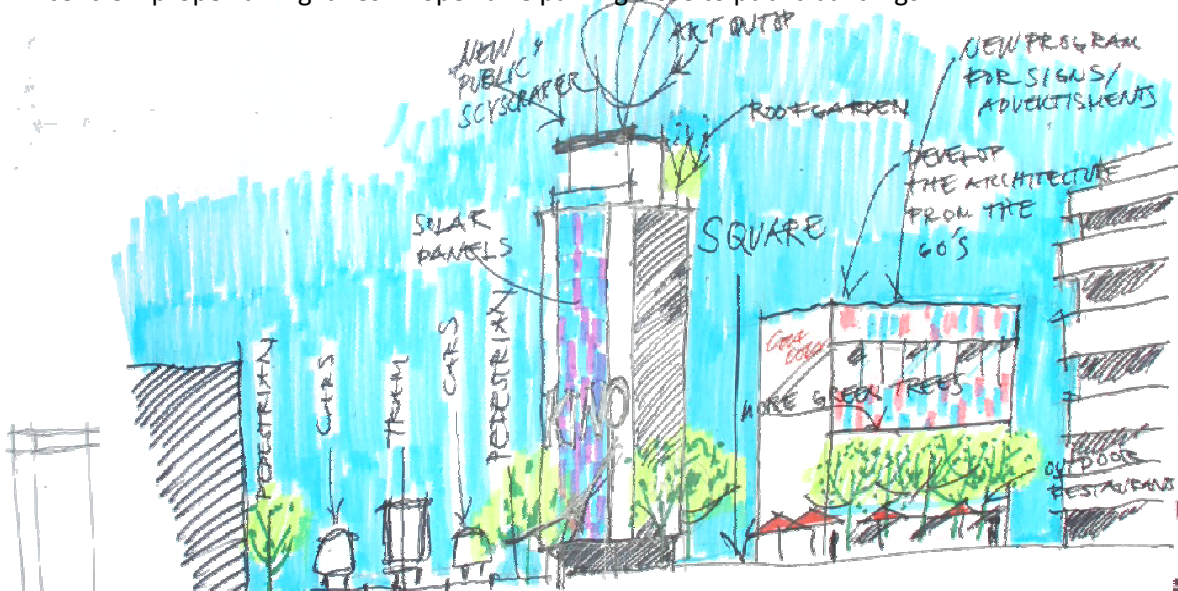


MORE AND MORE IDEAS:

- Negotiate with the national railway company about building better connections across/under/over the railway to the new housing area
- Where do ordinary people buy their everyday services, groceries etc. The area is not connected to people's real needs. Cafés, restaurants?

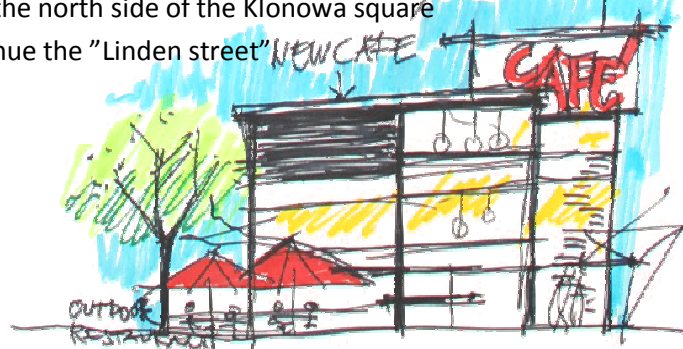
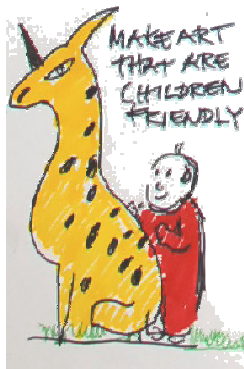
- Families – children playgrounds?
- Mentality of jetset-life, business, banks ?
- Revitalize the Klonowa square!! + axis to station

- Connect the street from Klonowa square to with pedestrian lane to the Baltycka shopping centre + proper biking lanes. Proper bike parking close to public buildings



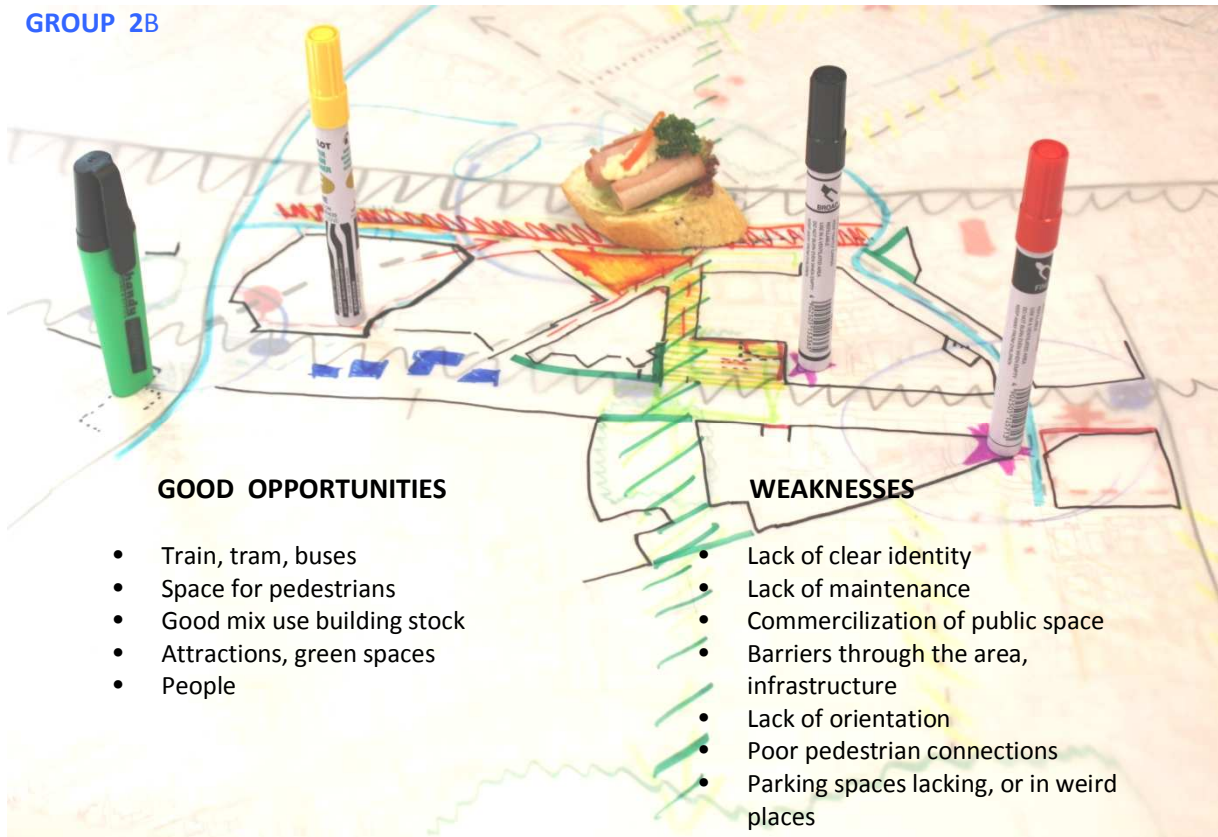
AND EVEN MORE IDEAS :

- Bus station improvement . New bus station underground and commercial services and /or housing in high rise above (example KAMPPI in Helsinki and Viru Center in Tallinn)
- High rise possibilities on the north side of the Klonowa square
- Trees along streets, continue the "Linden street"



- Ecological things (recycling, solar heating, et.) in new high rise buildings?
- Parking buildings covered with greenery

GROUP 2B



STRATEGY FOR AREA AND PUBLIC SPACES

- Green connection between Lower and Higher Wrzeszcz
- Working on definition of public space edges
- Move bus depot and make important place+landmark by the station (high quality)
- Commercial ads strategy for main public spaces – good opportunity!
- No temporary buildings in area
- Develop economic activities, both “local” and “global” both
- Pedestrian routes and crossings

STRATEGY FOR HIGHRISES

- High rise development along Grunwaldzka street, formed together with street design/development
- Parking under ground
- Attraction point by the station/over tracks/connecting both sides, marking infrastructure node
- Environmental concerns should be investigated, such as wind and sun, and how it should affect the tower design
- Highrises have to be good design objects and VERY GOOD QUALITY!!
- Public ground level and top floor!!

WEAKNESSES OF CURRENT HIGHRISE PROPOSALS

- Location is questionable (4 towers..)
- Heights: who decides and how
- Randomly placed, disconnected from one another and with the public space structure
- Use and function, in relation to the symbolic value of the buildings (democratic/exclusive/...?)

Gdańsk Development Agency wish to thank you all for coming to Gdańsk.
We hope that you had a good time here and that you will want to come
back and visit us again some day !



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