



DOMODOSSOLA WORKSHOP 2008

DOMODOSSOLA CITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM "GIMME 5"

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STRESZCZENIE

W kwietniu 2008 w mieście Domodossola u podnóża włoskich Alp odbyły się warsztaty architektoniczne zorganizowane przez prof. Arch. Ado Franchini z Politechniki w Mediolanie. Celem tych warsztatów było znalezienie nowych idei dla rozwoju miasta, którego dotychczasowym głównym źródłem utrzymania były przemysł wydobywczy i obróbka granitu. Autor miał okazję prowadzić jedną z ośmiu międzynarodowych warsztatowych grup studenckich. Rezultatem prac były projekty pokazujące możliwości nowego zagospodarowania terenów pokolejowych jako kontynuacji zwartej zabudowy miasta. Idea projektu została oparta o liczbę 5 i pentagram, charakterystyczny dla rozplanowania i topografii miasta. Warsztaty zakończyły się z sukcesem przynosząc satysfakcję uczestnikom i wiele nowych pomysłów mieszkańcom i władzom miasta.

INTRODUCTION

Prof. Architect Ado Franchini from the Milanese Polytechnical University organized in April 2008 the international workshop for students of architecture and urban planning in Domodossola, small city located on the foots of Alps. The city is confronted with the decline of stone industry, which is the main base of its existence and resulting need to re-use the large city areas devoted to railway facilities. Domodossola needs badly new image, new "driving forcers" to stop the ongoing process of gentrification and decay. The aim of the organized international workshop was to find out the new ideas, to look on the city in the different way and propose some inventive thinking about abandoned or miss-used places in the city of Domodossola. There were eight student groups with 6-10 participants from different countries, universities and knowledge background. The challenge was to find within the groups the common language, precise common ideas,

to find ways how to work on one project together. The workshop took place in the wonderful place: previous church of San Francisco transformed into multipurpose public area in the very centre of the small-scale city of Domodossola. Working between the romanian and gothic columns and vaults, workshop participants could discuss together and with the tutors the architectural and urban issues, listen to lectures of renown Italian architects, host visits of local inhabitants interested very much in the ongoing "action". The workshop was planned for two weeks. First week was mostly devoted to learn the place and the surroundings, to discuss trying to find the way of acting. The second week was marked with the very intense job on the project. The group has to prepare the project on delivered maps, the model, Power Point presentation for the final day and the booklet about the idea. There were different ideas developed. Finally the decision had to be taken about the one, which has to be continued.

THE WORKSHOP GROUP

I had a pleasure to lead one of the groups together with PhD Arch. Maciej Płotkowiak from the Technical University Szczecin-Poland. In our international group of students working on the project participated:

SILVIA LOPEZ from the University Lusofona of Humanities and Technologies Lisbon-Portugal,

VALENTINA BAGINI from the Politechnical University of Milan-Italy,

ANNA KORGOL from the University of Technology Cracow-Poland,

JULIA KRETZ from the Bochum University of Applied Science-Germany,

SIMON DE LA SAUSSAY from the Paris IV Sorbonne-France,

JOAKIM BLOMQUIST from the Magdeburg University of Applied Science –Germany.

THE CONCEPT

Looking for the main idea of the city improvement concept the group has found out the numerological dependence of different elements present in the city and its surroundings. This "magic" number was "5".

The marvelous location of The City of Domodossola in the place where **5 valleys** are coming together has been marked in the **pentagonal shape of ancient Roman city**. This pentagonal shape is still visible today on the city map. But the notion of that ancient space within the contemporary city, which has grown over the Roman location, is no more so clear.

The consideration upon the improvement issues lead to the statements, that the city improvement project consists of "**software**" elements which are visions, ideas, brand development etc. and "**hardware**" which are the feasible projects of renovation, extension and new developments improving the city. This distinction was the base for the redevelopment project proposed by our team.

As a software of the proposed Program GIMME 5 were considered:

- Creation of a **new brand** for Domodossola;
- **Sustainability** of the city by controlled and compacted urban grow;
- **Inventive thinking**;
- **Diversity of possibilities**,
- **Connectivity** in all scales of physical development.

The DOMODOSSOLA CITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM "GIMME 5" was taking the number 5 as a good start for new brand creation and as the leading project idea.

The vision of the city named **GIMME 5** project was to promote Domodossola as a city to live, visit and create new opportunities for the future sustainable city grow.

In the proposed project future of Domodossola was seen in:

- new types of **activities** and **services** introduced in the city, in order to attract touristic traffic,
- **improvement** of the identity factor (highlighting of the Domodossola marvelous history and monuments),
- **pedestrian connectivity of the whole city (pedestrian city),**
- introduction of **new attractive developments,**

The idea of Domodossola improvement as proposed in the project consisted of 5 main goals:

- City of pedestrians (slow city)
- City of culture (multilayered culture)
- City of innovative industry (new leading function in the city)
- City of conferences and fairs (new secondary and service functions)
- City of commerce (highlighting the stone industry)

Finally the Gimme 5 Project consisted of 5 main elements, constituting the "hardware" of the project:

1/ communication improvement project:

- providing clear access to the city (entrance gate),
- new parking facilities (invitation to stay in the city),
- improving the inner city organization (better traffic organization),
- enlarging the pedestrian (car-free) zone.

2/ new development of convention centre and hotels:

- building the new function for the city,
- bringing new incomers,

3/ shopping area development:

- improving the life quality,
- attracting tourists,
- bringing more income for the city.

4/ productive/economic sector development:

- improving the working conditions and enlarging the amount of working places,
- enabling new ideas for production,
- helping to start new businesses.

5/ city cultural infrastructure improvement:

- improving the city information system,
- enlarging the cultural service offer.

RESULTS

Those ideas has been discussed and visualized by the team in form of panels with plans, sketches, 3D visualizations, etc. They were finally presented to the public during the final presentation session and in the issued booklets. The efforts of students has been priced with the appropriate number of ECTS points. The international workshop, marked by perfect organization and working atmosphere, brought a lot of new experiences both for the participants, and – as it is to hope, for citizens of Domodossola, enriching them with new ideas for future development possibilities of charming City of Domodossola.



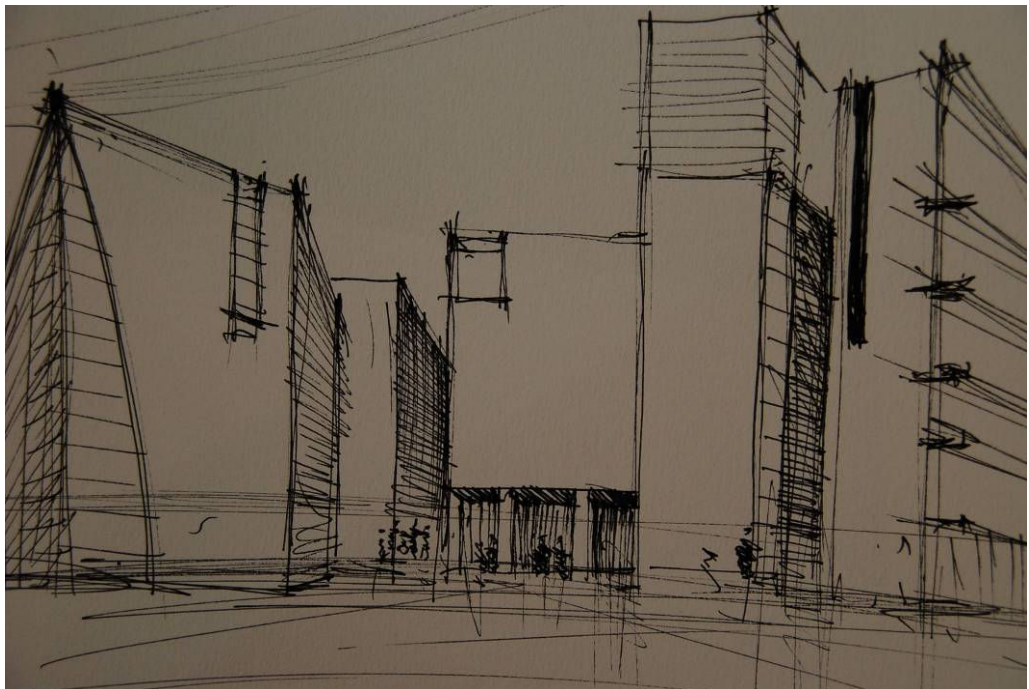
Ryc. 1. View toward the main Market Square at Domodossola.



Ryc. 2. The students group GIMME 5 at work.



Ryc. 3. Overall view on the City of Domodossola from the Mount Calvario.



Ryc. 4. Author's sketch describing the character of the planned architecture



Ryc. 5. The main facade of the Market Square in Domodossola.



Ryc. 6. Model of the area development planned in Domodossola by the group GIMME 5.

O AUTORZE:

Autor jest doktorem habilitowanym, inżynierem architektem, profesorem nadzwyczajnym, od września 2008 prodziekanem ds. nauki i organizacji Wydziału Budownictwa i Architektury Politechniki Szczecińskiej.