

Nordic Centre for Spatial Development – NORDREGIO.

RE-GREEN PROJECT

Conference “Renewing the City: Retrofits & Brownfield Development”

*STOCKHOLM
MAY 8 2013*

Keynote presentation

An urban sustainability framework for retrofitting the city

By Dr. Pierre Laconte - President, Foundation for the Urban Environment & Former VP, Scientific Committee in charge of urban issues –European Environment Agency.

Summary

1. Green building becomes more and more commonplace for new construction, if only because green building saves increasingly costly energy and these prospective savings help financing the construction. Passive buildings open the way to buildings producing surplus energy.
2. But the annual impact of new building represents only a small fraction of a city's building stock, often estimated at 1%.
3. There is therefore a growing interest in accounting for the embodied resource intensity of existing buildings (the resources necessary for constructing or reconstructing a building) and infrastructure, besides its potential importance as memory of the city.
The importance of keeping the embodied resource intensity of existing buildings leads to the adaptive reuse of existing buildings instead of their clearing.
4. The importance of the existing infrastructure and building stock justifies in turn an increasing focus on the role of comprehensive urban planning as a framework that influences the performance of the built environment in cities.
5. Reducing transport energy consumption and consumption of other resources related to continued urban sprawl (land, clean air and water, etc) is therefore an integral part of sustainable urban development, in conjunction with the retrofit of existing buildings and the redevelopment of underused, but often well-connected parts of cities as low energy districts like Gartenstadt Drewits in Potsdam or Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm.
6. Examples of a wider sustainability framework include the global retrofitting of Bilbao, the traffic and parking policy of Zurich, the finger plan of Copenhagen and the stop and go planning of Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium

The presentation includes the following items:

- Mass individualism as societal framework for human settlements and its effects.
- The resource issue, in particular the scarce urban land issue.
- Land consumption through “automobility” and dispersed housing
- Adaptive reuse as a tool for keeping the embodied energy of buildings ILL.
- Bilbao global retrofitting
- Traffic and Parking policy in Zurich
- Finger plan of Copenhagen
- Adaptive planning (stop and go) planning of Louvain la Neuve, Belgium.
- Conclusions