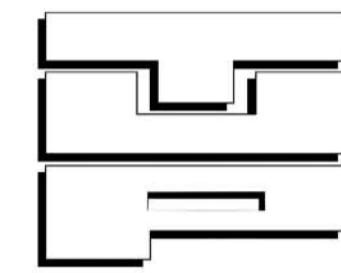


NEW APPROACH TO URBAN HOUSING

ISOCARP Young Planning Professionals Workshop
 1st edition of the Gdynia Urban School
 7th AESOP European Urban Summer School

The workshop was organized along with the INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE LIVING IN THE CITY - PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF SHAPING HOUSING POLICY, which is hosted by the City of Gdynia.



ISOCARP, International Society of City and Regional Planners

In partnership with
City of Gdynia

AESOP, Association of European Schools of Planning

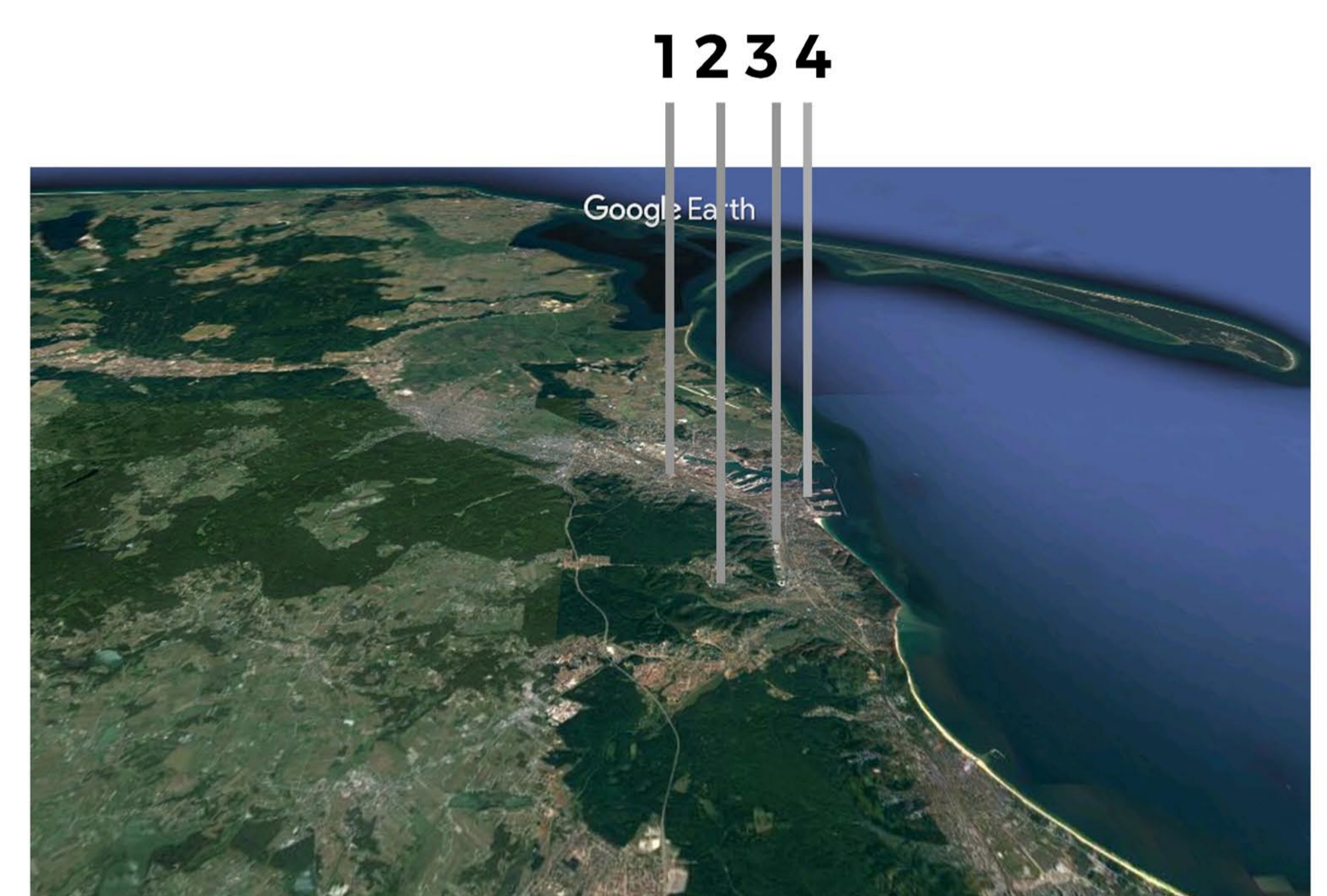
TUP, Society of Polish Town Planners

Committee for Spatial Economy and Regional Planning, Polish Academy of Sciences
Department of Urban Design and Regional Planning, Gdansk University of Technology

Workshop Theme

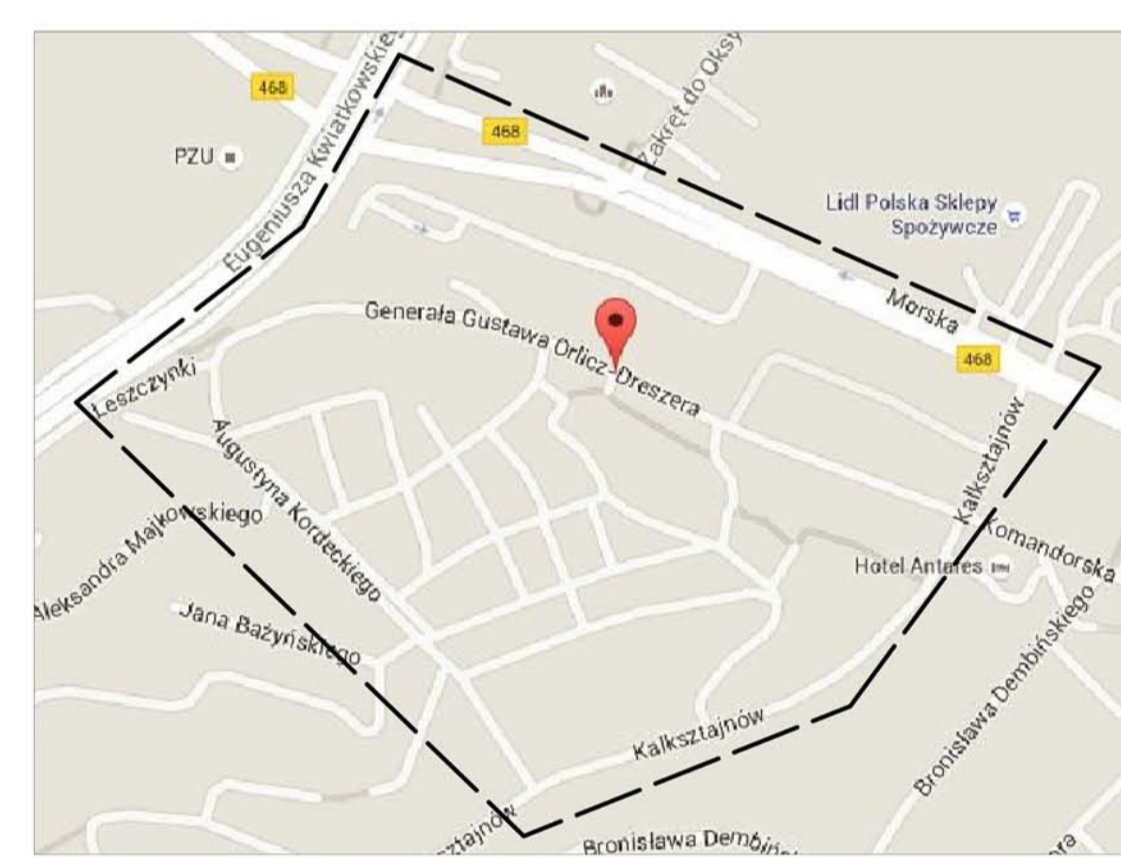


The theme of the workshop was "New approach to urban housing". Participants were working on developing an innovative approach to urban housing, based 4 different themes and cases. Each of the teams was working on one of four preselected sites. Their distance to inner-city differ (from innercity urban regeneration areas up to new developing residential districts) but all of them are situated within already shaped urban structures. Not only their position with respect to city center varies but also they are located in very diverse urban context starting from blighted area through affordably but comfortable residential districts up to high-end waterfront apartments. We hope that the results of the workshop can become an important statement in discussion about development of housing policy in Gdynia.



Gdynia sites characteristics

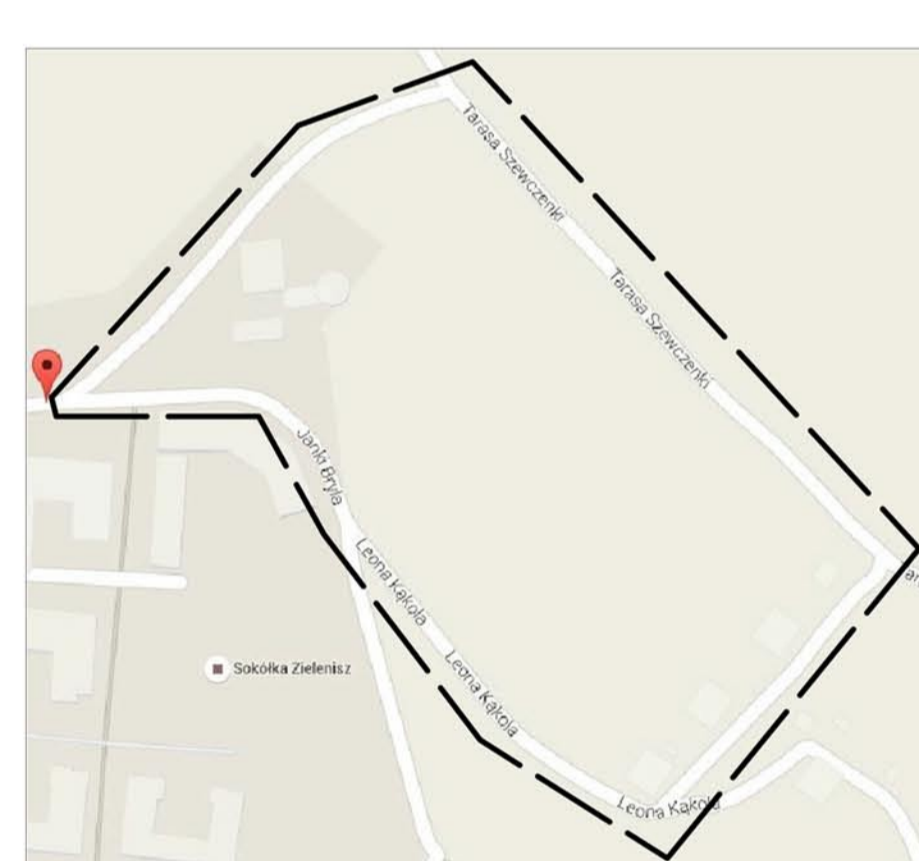
1



The area of Orlicz- Dreszera Street

The area of Orlicz-Dreszera Street is a residential area, located in the district of Gdynia Grabówek, on the steep slopes of Gdansk Plateau. Hypsometry of the area (drops of the slopes are reaching as much as 30%, and height differences are approximately of 60 m) makes this area difficult to manage. So, the problems, which appear here are among others: necessity of construction of high retaining walls, bringing drinking water to a site, discharging the rainwater, running bus routes, ect. At the same time it is extremely attractive area in terms of landscape (view to the sea and the port, situated in the valley underneath). Housing dominates among functions of the district. Underinvestment in services and recreation is clearly visible, and jobs are lacking. Buildings within this district are very heterogeneous - there are both high and low block of flats, terraced houses, villas, one-family houses, and sub-standard housing substance. The district raised suddenly: It expanded chaotically in the interwar period (starting from 1930.) as a slum area, providing residence to the poorest builder of the port and city of Gdynia. The challenge is: how to redevelop this site avoiding gentrification, and preserving the memory of the district's heritage?

2



The Sokółka-Zielienisz District

Sokółka-Zielienisz is a new, large housing district, situated west from the Gdynia city center. It lays about 120 m higher than the city center (situated at the sea level), on the morainic plateau (so called upper terrace). The slopes separating lower and upper terrace of Gdynia is covered with forests, protected as landscape park. While the rapid spatial growth of the city of Gdynia in late 90. new blocks of flats came into being, creating the first part of Sokółka-Zielienisz district. Housing blocks were dedicated to middle class, and were mostly populated by families with kids. Some parts of the district were created as gated communities. The district was well equipped with recreation facilities (such as: playground, walking paths ect.), but was, and still is, underinvested in services, jobs, and public transport connections. That situation lead to everyday commuting by the district's inhabitants, not only to work, but also to schools, or to do some shopping. At the same time, the only available public transport mode at the moment is a bus line, which has a limited bandwidth. The question which rises while planning Sokółka-Zielienisz is: how to create and maintained a heterogeneous, sustainable society living in a self-supporting district?

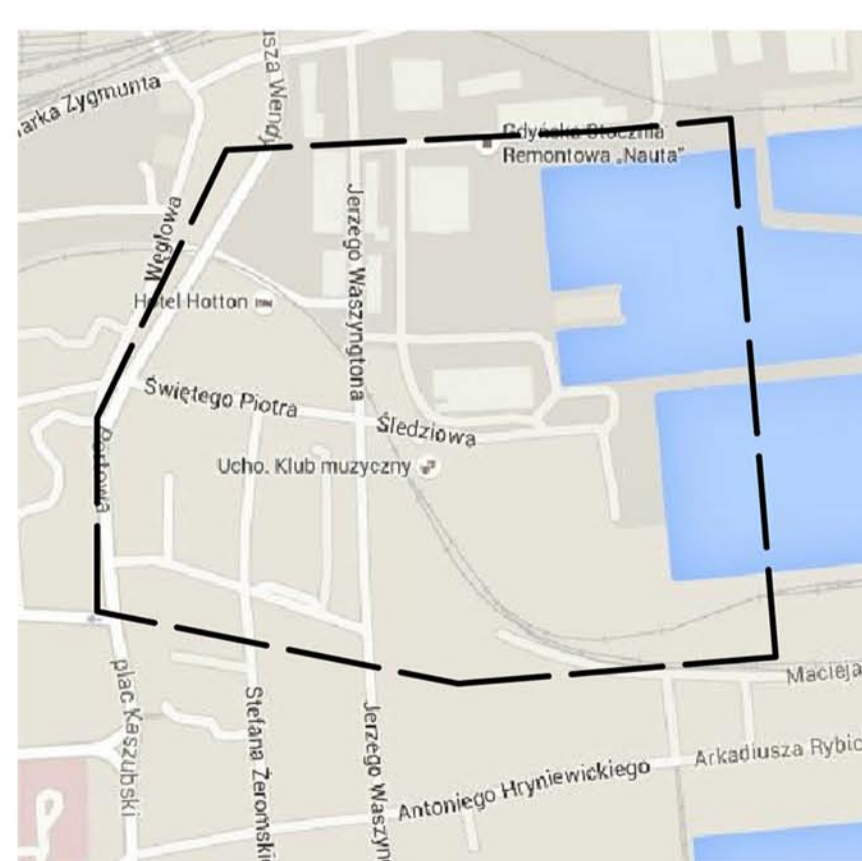
3



The southern fringe of Gdynia city center - "The Circus"

Although the area is located in a direct vicinity of the city center of Gdynia (the pedestrian distance is about 5-10 minutes), it is strongly divided from it by two car arteries, and railway tracks. For many years this open, flat area was a scene of temporary activities such as: a circus, festivals and fests (hence the name). The area is very well communicated with the other parts of Gdynia and the whole Tri-city - it neighbors with the rapid transit train stop, and a bus loop. It is surrounded by blocks of flats on the North, and single-family houses situated on slopes of the morainic hills on the East. At the southern border of the area a large shopping of a regional importance mall is located, together with some high-tech company buildings. Due to the recent transport infrastructure investment, the value of a site has changed. New representative office buildings along the road made "The Circus" area a potential entrance (gate) to the city of Gdynia. Therefore, it's spatial management is currently very intensively discussed. The most vivid question is: how to achieve the best conglomerate of offices and housing, being at the same time able to maintained public spaces and activities, and achieving a attractive architectural form?

4



The area of Portowa and Weglowa Streets

The area is situated at the northern outskirts of Gdynia city centre, at the border with a former marshalling yard, which was design to serve bulk terminals of Gdynia port (the Coal Pier). In 1926, when the first urban plan of Gdynia appeared, the living quarters of the city, where situated further North. The main axis of the whole city was following the line leading from the railway station on East to the sea on the West, where a huge public space was planned (so called Maritime Forum). In 1930, due to the fast development of the port and it's turnover the borders of Gdynia port where moved toward South, the area, which according to initial plan supposed to be the central part of the city, become the "dead end" of the city centre. Sharp border between the functions (living quarters/transport and logistics) led to problems in finding the proper spatial solutions for the site. Nowadays, the port's border moved back again, what opened the new development opportunities for the city functions. The site contains a mixture of: open space abandoned by former marshaling yard, old warehouses from 60. and 70., tenement houses of modernistic origin, as well as newer buildings hosting services or housing. The question is what would be the best housing policy to incorporate the post-port area into a city centre?