/Translated from the Lithuanian language/

CLOSED ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN COMPETITION OF ARCHITECTURAL PROPOSALS (PROJECTS) FOR A MULTIFUNCTIONAL COMPLEX AT KONSTITUCIJOS PR. 18B, VILNIUS

PROTOCOL No 3

REPORT ON THE COMPETITION

05 May 2016

AIMS OF THE COMPETITION AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

Object of the Competition: Design solutions for A Class Office Complex and Hotel at Konstitucijos Avenue 18B, Vilnius. The object consists of one land plot with an area of 62.11 ares.

Aim of the Competition: To select the best design proposal for the multifunctional complex with an A Class office and medium-class hotel at Konstitucijos pr. 18B, Vilnius, which:
a) would create a high-quality environment for work and business;
b) enrich the composition of the urban hill of the new centre of Vilnius city on the right bank of the Neris river with a contextual and representative mark of modern architecture;
c) would enrich the system of public spaces of Vilnius city on the right bank of the Neris river, while creating attractive public spaces in the land plot.

Type of the Competition: Closed single-stage competition by invitations.

Participants in the Competition: Invited architecture teams:

1. AKG
2. ARCHES
3. ARROW
4. G. Natkevičius and Partners
5. KOKO Architects
6. Libeskind studio
7. Paleko ARCH studija
8. PLH Arkitekter
9. SP Architektų grupė
10. Studio Fuksas

The Jury:

1. Jan Litborn (Commission Chairperson, Lords LB Asset Management)
2. Marius Žemaitis (Lords LB Asset Management)
3. Tomas Kučinskas (Lords LB Asset Management)
4. Marius Šaliamoras (Architects' Union of Lithuania, Chairperson, Architect)
5. Irena Kliobavičiūtė (Architects' Union of Lithuania, Architect)
6. Janis Dripe, Architect (Latvia)

7. Rūta Matonienė (Vilnius City Municipality Urban Development Department)
8. Virginijus Pauža (Vilnius City Municipality Municipal Economy and Transport Department, Director)
9. Mindaugas Pakalnis (Vilnius City Municipality, Chief Architect; Urban Development Department, Director)
10. Marija Nemunienė (ICOMOS, Lithuanian National Committee, President)
11. Algimantas Degutis (Cultural Heritage Department, Deputy Director)
12. Vitas Karčiauskas (Cultural Heritage Department, Vilnius Division, Head)

Competition Experts: Architects Algirdas Kaušpėdas, Saulius Motieka

Competition Coordinator, Secretary of the Jury Meeting: Rūta Leitanaitė

Competition Calendar:

Provision of the Competition Conditions to the Competition Participants: 10 March 2016
Questions and Answers (with answers to be provided within 3 working days): by 11 April 2016
Submission of the Proposals: by 25 April 2016, 13:00
Public presentation of the Proposals; Jury Meeting: 28 April 2016
Announcement of the results of the Competition: 29 April 2016

PROGRESS OF THE COMPETITION

The preparation of the Competition Conditions was started in February 2016. In the course of the preparation of the Conditions, the Jury Members were consulted, and cooperation was maintained with Vilnius City Municipality, State Enterprise Vilniaus Planas, and Cultural Heritage Department on the provision of materials for the Competition Conditions. The prepared Conditions and Annexes thereto were sent to all Jury Members for coordination, and their approval was received.

After the provision of the Competition Conditions to the Participants and the start of the period of Questions and Answers and updating of the Conditions, the received questions were translated into the Lithuanian and English languages, answers were formulated and sent to all the Jury Members for coordinating approval. Upon receipt of the approval of the Jury, the answers to the questions or updates of the Conditions were translated into the Lithuanian and English language and sent to all Competition Participants with indication of the Participant who was the author of the question. All the answers to the questions and updates of the Conditions were sent to the Participants within a period of 3 working days from the beginning of the receipt of the question.

All the teams submitted their Proposals for the Competition, 10 in total. All the Competition Participants submitted their Proposals in time and within the scope provided for in the Competition Conditions. Arches team submitted its materials in 3 rather than in 4 folders; however, it included all information required in the Competition Conditions. The Jury took a decision to evaluate the Proposal.

From 26 April 2016, the Proposals were exposed in the hotel of K29 Business Centre (Konstitucijos pr. 29, Vilnius). On 27 April 2016, the display was presented to the mass media and public. On 28 April 2016, a public presentation of the Competition Proposals was held, where each Participant presented its project to the Jury and the projects were commented on by the Experts. The event was attended by around 250 visitors. From 2 May 2016, the display was transferred to the premises of the Architects' Union of

Lithuania at Kalvarijų g. 1, Vilnius. From 27 April 2016, the materials of the Competition Proposals are available public on the website of the Architects' Union of Lithuania www.architektusajunga.lt.

MEETING OF THE JURY

Progress of evaluation

On 25 April 2016, after the deadline for the submission of the Proposals, the digital materials of the Competition Proposals were provided (sent by e-mail) to each Jury Member and the Experts. From the evening of 26 April 2016, the Experts and the Jury Members could review the display of the Proposals in the hotel of K29 Business Centre (Konstitucijos pr. 29, Vilnius).

The Jury Meeting was held on 28 April from 9:00. Prior to the evaluation of the Proposals submitted for the Competition, all the Jury Members sign declarations of impartiality. The Meeting began with a public presentation of the projects, during which each Competition Participant presented its proposal (15-20 minutes), which was followed by hearing of the reviews from the Experts, and the Jury were given the possibility to ask questions to the Competition Participants. The Jury decided to continue the consideration of all the Proposals.

After the completion of the public presentation of the projects, a closed Jury Meeting was held, which was attended by the Jury Members, the Experts, and the Coordinator/Commission Meeting Secretary. At the beginning of the Meeting, the Jury asked questions on each Competition Proposals to the Experts. Having answered the questions, the Experts left the room and a discussion of the Jury started. Each project submitted to the Competition was discussed according to the requirements and criteria set forth in the Competition Conditions.

After discussing each Proposal, an anonymous voting of the Jury Members was held. Each Commission Member had 10 votes, which he/she distributed over the 10 Competition Proposals at his/her own discretion. Three Proposals that collected most votes were announced the prize-winners (the 1st place – to the Proposal that collected most votes, 2nd place – to the one who takes the second place by the number of votes, etc.). In accordance with the Competition Conditions, only the teams that took the first three places were made public; the number collected / position taken after the voting by other Participants was not published.

COMMENTS OF THE JURY ON THE PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO THE COMPETITION

AKG. 2nd prize

The idea of symbolic gates connecting the old and new centres of Vilnius city is compelling and semantically justified. The building is respectful towards the nearest urban environment and contributes to the formation of the Southern slope of the urban hill. The solution clearly (visually and in the sense of composition) emphasises the White Bridge – Europa axis, while emphasis on the Church of St Raphael the Archangel – NDG axis is smaller.

Its image is calm but noticeable and has "remarkability" (however, in the opinion of a part of the Commission, it is not sufficient for such an important place). The architectural language is not innovative. The selected different types of finishing texture highlight the tectonics of the arch. While moving along Konstitucijos Avenue, the views of the building create a diversity on the elevation.

A rational and logical transport, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic flow management scheme is developed. The route of the White Bridge, filled with common city interests, gradually disperses the flows into separate branches up to the underground crossing at Konstitucijos Avenue. Traffic to/from the area is functional; the crossings of pedestrian and transport routes are resolved well. A point of concern is the allocation of area near the building for transport, for passenger disembarkation, while that place could be used for creating a public space with a more valuable content. The building is economic. In the opinion of a part of the Commission, the scale and height of the building is too small. The solution of the arch is not appropriate for creating an attractive public space near the building. The entrances for guests and vehicles to the hotel lack representativity.

ARCHES

The biggest value of this Proposal is the public programme being created at the ground level and covered with a public space, which becomes the dominant element of the complex. This original Proposal, which has its own identity, is at the same time a public building providing many opportunities to carry out various activities for people who are not connected with the internal activities of the centre. The solution of the public spaces led to a situation when the cubic capacity of the building is bigger than it is provided for in the Competition Conditions (the total area is about 25 000 sq. m.). The building creates a coherent ensemble with the nearby Radisson Blu Hotel and Swedbank, becoming a secondary accent, descending towards the Church of St Raphael the Archangel and the monastery, and creates a sensitive relation. Because of brutality and incompleteness, the architectural expression lacks substantiation, links with with the context. In the perspective of the White Bridge, the complex excessively converges with the building of the Municipality.

ARROW

The solution lacks comfortable, active links with the existing urban axes. The court of honour proposed in the project at the Konstitucijos Avenue is similar to the solution of Europos Square and is substantiated. However, the natural relief forms proposed in the White Bridge axis, which are not typical to the city centre and Vilnius, are not convincing. Movement by the Old Riga Tract also lacks convenience,

particularly for people with movement problems. There is a lack of compositional coherence in the immediate environment: an insufficient space between the complex being designed and the Radisson Blu Hotel. The vertical being designed does not play a dominant role; when viewed from the White Bridge, it converges with the Europa Tower. The implementation of the building would require technically complicated and expensive solutions. Due to the availability of only one access to the plot, when servicing 3 underground levels with only right turns, additional problems may arise at the exit, while the traffic arm crossing pedestrian area diagonally may result in traffic jams during peak periods.

G. Natkevičius and Partners

A new dominant of the urban hill is created, exceeding the well-established parameters of urban hills by its height (89 m) and creating a new, unexpected, but compositionally balanced image of the urban hill. The dominant rectangular silhouette of the vertical would have a negative impact on the panoramas of the old town to be viewed from different points in the city. The volumes composed in the form of a cross create an impression of gates or a certain concentrated space, while leaving some space for public activities. However, in those areas, the project lacks public programme solutions, their architectural expression. The connection of the building with the underground crossing remains unresolved; no solution is presented for the integration of Šnipiškių Tract axis. The colour of the vertical presented in the Proposal for the Competition should be interpreted indirectly, as a sign that the finishing of the building should be distinguishing.

KOKO

It is a conceptual design, but it does not create an ensemble; on the contrary, it brings about even more disorder in the urban context than now; the complex ignores the context of the well-established built-up environment. The building "intrudes" Konstitucijos Avenue too closely, too aggressively. Although the building does not exceed the parameters of the urban hill physically, its scale is too large. The building fails to perform the declared function of gates. The functionality of urban axes is not resolved; the public programme of the public space is insufficient.

STUDIO LIBESKIND. 1st prize

The building is a sculpture of modern architecture, a sign, a new dominant on the right bank of the Neris river. By its plastics, it stands out from the context (links with the silhouette of Swedbank can be seen), but the overall dimensions meet the parameters of the urban hill. In the panoramas of the old tow, the peak shape of the building is dominant less aggressively than rectangular and, therefore, it may be considered. The shortcoming of the project is a too small scale for such an expressive form.

The "insertion" of the building into the urban situation is correct and highlights the attraction of the flows into public spaces of the complex. The complex is expressive when viewed both from the White Bridge and from Konstitucijos Avenue. The relation between the compositional elements – the vertical and stylobate part – is harmonious and complies with the compositional principles of the surrounding buildings vertical + stylobate). The vertical connects the composition with the Municipality and Europa Tower. The covered passage can become an attractive space and diverse public programme for city dwellers. In developing the project, it is proposed to further open, strengthen the pedestrian and bicycle

White Bridge – Europa axis, to elaborate the access of pedestrians from Swedbank and crossing of both axes, and to optimise the access of vehicles to the plot.

The building a rational, the functional scheme is logical (the function is not sacrificed for the sake of the form), and the project is professional.

Paleko ARCH studija

It is a masterful composition: the arrangement of volumes and terrain of the public space is sensitive and humane. However, the image is too anemic, non-innovative. The vertical competes with the Europa Tower, and its high is also questionable (too low). The console solution of the low building would require technologically complex, expensive solutions, or it would be implemented by means of supports, which would discredit the idea. The public spaces and pedestrian traffic; public interest is ensured at various partner levels. Transport service from the side of Upės Street and Konsitucijos Avenue is resolved logically.

PLH

Scandinavian aesthetics, which are becoming more common in the city, are appropriate for Vilnius. Friendly and inviting architectural expression raises sympathy; the parterre solution of the and interior public space is attractive; there is a "fifth façade" solution. However, the complex lacks scale, substantiation of proportion, and charisma. The solution is more suitable for a natural environment and does not match the existing context. The expression of the building resembles K29 too much; the proposed idea of green roofs, as experience shows, is not appropriate (feasible) for Vilnius. The solutions of pedestrian and bicycle paths is convenient.

SP architektų grupė

The project carefully analyses and takes into account the context: precisely establishes locations of buildings and their dimensions as well as the emergence of vertical places. The verticals do not harm the visibility of the buildings standing behind them. The project harmoniously complements the urban hill. In the construction elevation of Konstitucijos Avenue, the complex participates as an equivalent element, retreating from the street and forming a court of honour. The tilt of the building lacks substantiation; the visual dispersion of the volumes is questionable. The architectural image is not adequately strong for significance of the location; a deconstructive concept is not appropriate at this location. Transport service through the 2 driveways from Konstitucijos Avenue is logical, simple, and, knowing the existing and forecast structure of transport flows, unequivocal.

Studio Fuksas. 3rd prize

The project is a bold, has international expression, which at the same features a convenient functional scheme; a rational solution and flexible possibility of implementing the project in stages. However, the project lacks attention to the solutions of public spaces, connections of axes, link with Swedbank, and integration of the silhouette of the complex into the environment when viewed from different points of the city, not only from the White Bridge. The buildings being designed, when viewed from the White Bridge, change the elevation of the urban hill essentially, obscuring the verticals of Europa and the Municipality.

The architectural concept is too universal, not adapted to Vilnius. It is not clear why one building is higher than the other.

Jury:

1. Jan Litborn (Commission Chairperson, Lords LB Asset Management)
2. Marius Žemaitis (Lords LB Asset Management)
3. Tomas Kučinskas (Lords LB Asset Management)
4. Marius Šaliamoras (Architects' Union of Lithuania, Chairperson, Architect)
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12. Vitas Karčiauskas (Cultural Heritage Department, Vilnius Division, Head)

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