

Summary meeting Prague 02-02-15

Location: Dutch embassy, Prague

Attending: Pieter van der Ploeg and Sidoeri Dekker (Alliander NV), Birgit Dulski (Neyenrode Business Universiteit), Tomáš Matuška (Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, CVUT), Tomáš Voříšek (SEVEN), Petr Wollner (Archdiocese of Prague), Marie Špačková and Kateřina Folprechtová (Czech Chamber of Architects), Milota Siderová (reSITE), Marta Vojtova (Dutch embassy in Prague).

Presentations:

Kick-off by Pieter van der Ploeg:

Alliander is an energy network company. The energy transition from fossil fuels to the use of renewable and sustainable energy systems may have large impact on the role of the energy grid. Alliander believes that by playing an active role in the energy transition you may learn the best how to facilitate this process. The best way to do this is to participate in projects or initiate them. On several levels Alliander now participates in projects: regional (e.g. 7 municipalities involved in a common project), cities (e.g. Amsterdam Smart City) and districts (e.g. in Arnhem Coehoorn a project with greenhouses on the roofs, together with the local community). Jaromir Alliander has started Project Jaromir (district level), with the intention to increase the sustainability of historical city centers, while keeping their cultural value intact. In the Dutch city of Zutphen, this idea has been put into practice by the start of a pilot-project, aimed at the design of a new, more sustainable, energy system owned by the local community.

Even though this project is still in the research and technical development phase, it has become clear that its success will not just come from technical savviness, but also heavily relies on 'non-conventional knowledge' such as social innovation, legislation and stakeholder management. To avoid having to 'reinvent the wheel' Alliander has the intention to create a new network (or community) which includes national and international running, or going-to-run, projects which have a similar intention. By sharing our best practices, and determining why similar practices work in one project, but not in another, we can all learn from each other and increase the chance of successful implementation of future projects. *Comment:* In Prague communal owned systems are not preferable. Due to its recent history, people on Prague prefer to live individually and are less interested in co-ownership. Even though this might change with future generations, at present an energy system which is owned by its users will be difficult to realize.

Situation in Prague by Tomáš Matuška:

Together with SEVEN, the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering has investigated the possibility of a similar project in Prague. While there is a large district heating, fed by combined heat and power, for the eastern part of the city, the UNESCO protected city center (Prague 1 and 2) is heated with local systems. Several sustainable projects have been realized in or around the 'protected zone' of the historic center (UNESCO). However, these involved separate non-historic buildings. There are technical opportunities, for example the nearby river Vltava can be used for a heatpump system. But local water costs and regulations prevent profitability of a joined heat-pump system for multiple buildings close to the river. Strict regulations on PV and the change of material/structure, prevent changes to the UNESCO protected area, which may even be the case for not listed buildings.. In

addition there are no feed-in regulations at the moment, making pv less attractive than in former years.

A possible sustainable project would involve several municipality-owned buildings. By lengthening an existing pipe and using existing tunnels, these buildings could be connected to an existing heat-pump network, making use of the temperature of the Vlatava river. Such a project would fit into the local energy policy of the municipality, as local energy production is one of the elements described in the recently published strategy paper

Sustainability of monumental buildings – *An argument for customized solutions* by Birgit Dulski:

In the Netherlands around 20% of all existing buildings were built before 1940. Even though most of these buildings do not have monumental protection, they still have cultural and historical value. To ensure future use (or re-use) of these buildings it is vital that modern wishes and demands (such as acceptable comfort and affordable energy bills) are met. The required interventions can lead to loss of cultural and historical value. To avoid this, customized solutions are necessary.

In the Netherlands, many beautiful examples show that it is possible to enhance sustainability of historic buildings without decreasing its cultural value. This is accompanied by an increasing awareness of its necessity. This is partly the result of the economic crisis which has hit the building sector hard and has led to a focus on existing buildings. Additionally, there is a growing desire among Dutch people to live, work and reside in a historic/distinctive setting. Customized solutions are not just necessary for individual buildings, on district or city level a similar trend is experienced.

Recently, responsibility for Dutch cultural heritage has shifted from national to regional level; from State to municipality. This has caused a differentiation in regional legislature. Even though citizens and businesses often experience this as arbitrariness, the differences often do have an underlying cause. A municipality with primarily young monuments (Hilversum for example) has different priorities, and thus different legislature, than a municipality with a centuries-old city centre (such as Delft and Utrecht). The trick is to carefully explain the underlying causes for different legislature (the local context) and the resulting priorities. This requires cooperation between different parties, for example representatives of different disciplines with an organization, between governmental body and business, between municipalities, etc. In this way it is possible to learn from each other, to find a position fitting to the local context, and to substantiate this with good argumentation.

On an international level, Parallel 52 is a good example for a network focused on cooperation between partners and exchange of knowledge.

General discussion

Milota Siderová: reSITE is interested in the participatory and social aspects of the project. If it chooses a more active role, this will be in the future. Currently, we can promote the project between our contacts in Eastern Europe.

Marie Špačková: Within the chamber of architects there are working groups working on cultural heritage and sustainability. We can spread the project information with them, as well as with the Architects council of Europe and the Chamber of Engineers.

Tomás Matuška: Doing research for this project has opened my eyes to the situation in Prague. There are possibilities in the centre of Prague, but they are still very site specific.

Huygen Installatie has worked in Prague for a long time and might be able to help with H2020. We (CVUT, SEVEN) are here for technical support of the project.

I will discuss the project with my colleagues and the local decision makers. I can also act as the local project coordinator.

Petr Wollner: At this moment there is not a reason why the energy system of the churches should change. Churches are well visited and people are used to low temperature during their visits. This may change in future, right now this is the situation. We therefore don't see how we can join the project in general, but maybe we can find some specific buildings where we can do something. Maybe these are not churches but schools, hospitals or community centers which also belong to the building stock of the Archdiocese. When there are more substantial plans, we could be interested. Prague is too complicated for such a project. It might be more successful in smaller cities with stable politics and no UNESCO sites.

Contact Studio 8 and Future Religious Heritage (FRT) for help and possibilities.

Pieter van der Ploeg: We would like to work together with people/cities who have projects in the same field, in the field of sustainability and cultural heritage, We want to learn from each other and share experiences.

Marta Vojtova: This is an initial meeting. I think we need people who are in charge. We have to find out: Who are the decision makers? The elections took place in autumn 2014. This means that now is a period for changes, in Prague and other cities. There are quite many nice progressive small cities in the Czech Republic. Who will be the ambassador of our project? Who can convince the decision makers? Who will contact them? It's interesting to work on a more political level and share the possibilities with the decision makers.

It was agreed that Tomás Matuška will be the Czech project leader for the coming weeks. Pieter, Sidoeri and Birgit will send the presentations to the participants of the meeting. Tomás will spread them and he will organize a meeting with the municipality and share information with additional potentially interesting partners. If there is sufficient interest/enthusiasm among Czech organizations, among them at least one or more municipalities, a follow-up meeting will be organized in March with a larger group. Meanwhile Pieter and Sidoeri will get more information about projects and initiatives in other European cities who had expressed to be interested in the project. They also will share this information during an eventual follow-up meeting in March.