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## **Participants**

Stoilka Stoyanova-Mihneva  
Kaloyan Ignatov  
Eleonora Gaydarova  
George Georgev  
Gabriëlle van Asseldonk  
Mechtild Linssen.

## **PART 1: OPENING AND ACQUAINTANCE**

### **Opening**

Eleonora opens the meeting at the office of CAC. She calls everyone welcome, especially Gabriëlle and Mechtild. CAC and BHA like to exchange experiences with them. The training is aimed to successful acquisition by CAC/BHA of paid assignments from municipalities. The training will focus on the municipality of Pernik and Monte Carlo neighborhood as a specific case. CAC and BHA are very interested in LenvA's acquisition practices in the Netherlands and hope for an inspiring day. Gabriëlle and Mechtild are honored to be there. As a small consultancy (Linssen en van Asseldonk, LenvA), involved in urban renewal projects in the Netherlands, LenvA is asked by Woonbron to organize this training. Probably because of the similar scale and the similar approach of urban renewal projects between CAC/BHA and LenvA. They all are small organizations and they all put residents in the center of their projects. Also LenvA likes to exchange experiences with CAC and BHA. Hopefully at the end of the day CAC and BHA will have specific ideas for their acquisition practice. First LenvA will show the program of the day.

### **Program**

Mechtild explains the program, based on the agreements of Woonbron and CAC/BHA. LenvA proposes to divide the day in six parts with a lunch somewhere in between. Every part starts with a presentation of LenvA, after that we gather facts of the Bulgarian situation, than we gather questions of CAC and BHA and together we will try to find answers.

Part 1: Opening and acquaintance, personal and as consultancies

Part 2: Succesfully apply assignments for obtaining european subsidies for urban renewal projects

Part 3: Succesfully apply assignments for advising how to organize urban renewal projects

Part 4: Projectmanagement

Part 5: Participation

Part 6: Conclusions

The participants recognize the subjects and agree with the program.

### **Acquaintance**

#### Personal acquaintance

As personal acquaintance Gabriëlle has several questions about cultural aspects in Bulgaria and the Netherlands. For example Eleonora and Mechtild have to answer the question: 'What is typical Bulgarian/Dutch food? Eleonora explains a receipt of 'tarador', a kind of cold zaziki-soup. Mechtild tells about Dutch hotchpots.

Other questions are about the way of living, national celebrations, the way of celebrating birthdays (and namedays in Bulgaria), studies/education and the way of going with neighbours. The last question is: 'Can you ask a Bulgarian: 'What did you vote?' The answer is: 'Not as easy as in the Netherlands'.

#### LenvA

As consultancy acquaintance Mechtild shows the LenvA website. Gabriëlle and Mechtild work as projectmanagers in urban renewal areas. Most of their assignments come from municipalities and housing associations. In all their projects residents (tenants and home owners) and other users of the area have an important place. Their living and working conditions have to improve. Strong cities, sustainable neighbourhoods and powerful residents who participate and emancipate, that's the goal of LenvA's interference.

Mechtild tells about the LenvA way of working: good listening to the question and good thinking about a creative answer how to organize the project in this specific case.

The LenvA website describes ten different projects to show how they approach different questions from different suppliers of assignments. At the end of each story the results of the project are

described. For example Mechtild tells about the competition 'smart start': what to build to move young urban professionals to South West, an urban renewal area in The Hague. With 'Pimp my house' LenvA presented ideas to renovate the portico flats for different groups of young people and won a honorable mention.

LenvA's turnover is € 300.000 a year. LenvA's hourly rate is € 125. Gabriëlle en Mechtild each work an average of 2350 hours (more than 50 hours a week during 11 months). They work at paid jobs, unpaid jobs, study and acquisition/networking.

LenvA started 14 years ago to organize a conference for its network: 'Here we are!'. After five years they organized in cooperation with the municipality of Utrecht and the largest housing association of Utrecht a special conference about urban renewal. When LenvA existed ten years they did this website by a young designer and they organized a party in a theater with a play. That's their way of acquisition.



## CAC

Eleonora shows the CAC website that is maintained with the support of the MNATRA program of the Government of the Netherlands. CAC is the independent Union of Associations of owners in Bulgaria. CAC brings together home owners in residential buildings and supports owner associations to improve their living conditions.

CAC protects the common interests of home owners and owner associations to local and central authorities. CAC provides information to home owners and owner associations. CAC organizes trainings. And CAC supports home owners and owner associations when they want to manage the maintenance and renovation of their homes.

## BHA

George tells about BHA. The website is under construction. BHA is set up 15 years ago as a NGO. It's an organization of housing experts. Before that the state did everything. Since 1995 there was no system. Everything had to be done: legislation, rules, research, policy... BHA initiates and manages pilotprojects, researchprojects and investmentprojects. The problem is funding.

Since 2001 BHA works with Woonbron. At the beginning they focused on the renovation of existing residential buildings. The last two years they work together in their efforts of founding a housing association. As long as Bulgaria has no housing association, BHA is member of Cecodhas, the international union of housing associations.

Since 2006 BHA sees opportunities for energy projects.

## **PART 2: SUCCESSFULLY APPLY ASSIGNMENTS FOR OBTAINING EUROPEAN SUBSIDIES**

### **LenvA project**

Gabriëlle tells about an European project of LSOBA, a national union of migrant workers in the Netherlands. The project started in 1986. The housing conditions of migrant workers were relatively poor at that time: high prices and low quality. Aim of the project was to improve their housing conditions.

The program/products of the project consisted of:

- information/publications for migrant workers and their associations
- training groups for migrant workers
- supporting local groups of migrant workers and
- protecting common interests (towards the association of Dutch municipalities and towards the Dutch government).

It was not easy to obtain a European subsidy for the project. But at the administration of the Dutch government there was one man (his name was Ron Spreekmeester) who believed in the project. Together with him they made the grant application and sent it to Europe. The Dutch government paid 50% of the costs. The question to Europe was to pay the other 50%. When Europe finally decided to pay for one year, and the project was successful, it was very easy to get more subsidy for the following years. So after a difficult start Europe was happy with the project and wanted it to go on. Finally the project existed for five years.

In the first place the support of Ron Spreekmeester (Dutch government) was very important for the success in Brussels/Strasbourg. Other explanations for the success are that:

- they looked for the relationship between their own goals and the targets of Europe and
- they paid much attention to the information to the contacts in Europe (good monitoring, reports and evaluations).

The project was successful. Specific results were:

- rules for debt remediation for migrant workers
- housing benefit for migrant workers
- support of local groups

### **Facts**

The following facts are gathered about European subsidies for urban renewal projects:

- energy related subsidies
- OPRD 2007-2013: € 13 million
- but: in 2009 all European programs are blocked (because of corruption)

### **Questions**

- CAC and BHA want to know more about the social European program the LSOBA project belonged to. The program won't exist any more, but LenvA will try to collect more information about similar programs today and send it to them.
- CAC and BHA want to know if it is possible to address directly to Brussels to obtain European subsidy, because the route by the government is blocked. They don't expect this problem will soon be solved.

### **Strategies**

- CAC and BHA can go to Brussels together with municipalities.
- CAC and BHA can organize a training for municipalities about opportunities for European grants for urban renewal.

### **Facts of Pernik and Monte Carlo**

The following facts are gathered about Pernik and Monte Carlo:

Municipality of Pernik:

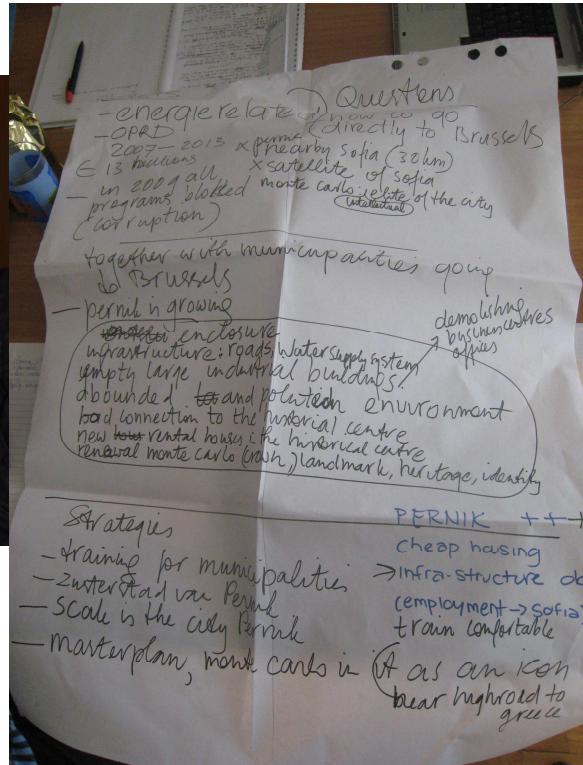
- situated near Sofia (30 km)
- is a satellite of Sofia
- has employment nearby in Sofia
- has cheap housing
- is growing; so existing houses must be improved and new houses must be build
- has very good public transport
- has a motorway to Greece nearby
- has poor infrastructure (roads, water supplier system...)
- has many empty, large, ruined and useless industrial buildings along the road to the historical center
- has abandoned and polluted environment surrounding the industrial buildings
- has a poor connection to the historical center

Monte Carlo neighborhood:

- is a potentially nice neighborhood in the historical centre of Pernik
- is the residential area of the intellectual elite of Pernik
- can become the icon, landmark, identity of Pernik

Pernik has a good masterplan. The urban renewal task in Pernik consists of the following elements:

- improving infrastructure (roads, water supply...)
- demolishing industrial buildings and building new business centers and offices
- improving the environment,
- making a good connection to the historical center
- building new rental houses in the historical center
- restoring Monte Carlo (as an icon, crown, landmark, heritage, identity of Pernik)



## Strategies

How to finance the urban renewal of Pernik?

- European subsidies
- Money from sister cities/twin cities.  
Maybe LenvA can help CAC and BHA to find a partner city in the Netherlands for the municipality of Pernik.
- Special funds?

CAC/BHA have to go with project ideas to the deputy mayor of Pernik, connected to plans of the municipality of Pernik (win-win).

## FIRST BREAK

As a break the participants get the assignment to think about appealing titles for the Monte Carlo project in Pernik. The following titles are suggested:

- Making Pernik a nice place to live
- Pernik: home for our children
- Monte Carlo in Bulgaria
- Monte Carlo in the Balkans
- Monte Carlo in Pernik
- Perspective Ecological Redevelop New Integrated Knowledge/Keystone



### PART 3: SUCCESSFULLY APPLY ASSIGNMENTS FOR ADVISING HOW TO ORGANIZE URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS

#### LenvA project

Mechtild tells about an assignment of the municipality of Utrecht. The question was: 'Organize a 'light' process to a 'light' urban renewal plan for the South part of Kanaleneiland. LenvA worked on this project last year.

The municipality asked for a 'light' process because many residents already participated in the last ten years. They were tired. They wanted to see specific investments. The municipality demanded a 'light' plan, because this part of Kanaleneiland is the better part of the district. There is no need for large scale demolition.

Mechtild shows a presentation that is made for the alderman of urban renewal of the municipality of Utrecht and the director of Bo-Ex, the largest housing association in the South part of Kanaleneiland. The presentation is made at the start of the process. LenvA made it after reading all research reports from the past and after interviews with important people who live and work in the neighborhood: chairmen of tenant organizations and home owner associations, school directors, employees of welfare organizations and housing associations and civil servants. It is a proposal for the contents of the urban renewal plan and it is a proposal for the organization of the process.

At first LenvA presented the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the neighborhood. Strong points are for example: many active resident groups, a nice mix of rental houses and home ownership an a perfect location and accessibility. Weak points are: a bad condition of the housing blocs and a poor condition of the environment. Opportunities are: the green place in the middle of the neighborhood and the motivation of many people who live and work there to make things better. Threats are: criminality, the fact that rich people left the neighborhood and only poor people came in and last but not least: the bad imago of the district as a whole.

After that LenvA presented next goals for 2020: different groups of residents (young and old, rich and poor, households with and without kids), good looking houses and environment, good supplies (for example schools, nursery/childrenshomes and a community center), stopping criminality and creating a good image.

From there LenvA proposed the following topics for the plan:

- image
- social and technical maintenance
- supplies
- environment
- stamps (the housing blocs and the environment in between)
- planning and euro's: the money that was available was a very important subject. The residents had explained: 'We only want to participate when there is money tot invest.'

For the process LenvA proposed the following steps:

1. starting phase (finished at that time)
2. developing phase
3. decision phase

LenvA proposed to develop the plan with a project group with professionals and residents. Between the meetings of the project group, LenvA proposed to organize workshops about different themes for all interested residents and professionals in the whole neighborhood.

The alderman and the director of the housing association decided tot do as proposed. In 2009 LenvA developed an urban renewal plan. In this year (2010) the first flats will be renovated and also the green place in the centre of the neighborhood will be improved.



## SWOT

Together we decide to go on with the case Pernik. CAC and BHA make a strength-weakness analysis:

<b>Strength</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cheap(er) housing</li> <li>- accessibility (by train)</li> <li>- location next to E43 to Greece</li> <li>- growing population</li> </ul>	<b>Weakness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- empty industrial buildings</li> <li>- polluted environment</li> <li>- no connection between neighborhoods and historical center</li> <li>- bad infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monte Carlo and the mining administration building as a landmark</li> <li>- market / lots of need for dwellings</li> <li>- plans to found a housing association and to build rental housing</li> <li>- masterplan (the municipality has a clear vision of urban renewal)</li> <li>- ideas/finance</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of capacity</li> <li>- lack of knowledge</li> <li>- social problems (criminality)</li> <li>- lack of social cohesion</li> <li>- lack of money/investments</li> </ul>

## Parties

Next step is to identify the parties that can be involved in the case.

### Local

Municipality:

- deputy mayor of urban development
- city council Pernik
- civil servants (architect MM, chief architect, min. prop. Dep. Dep. EU integration)

Investers:

- industrial owners
- small businesses
- chambers of ... commerce
- industrial association Pernik

Residents platform (to be formed)

Trade unions

Palais of culture administration

University of Pernik (polytech)

Union of Architects

### National

OPRD (75% EU, 25% national)

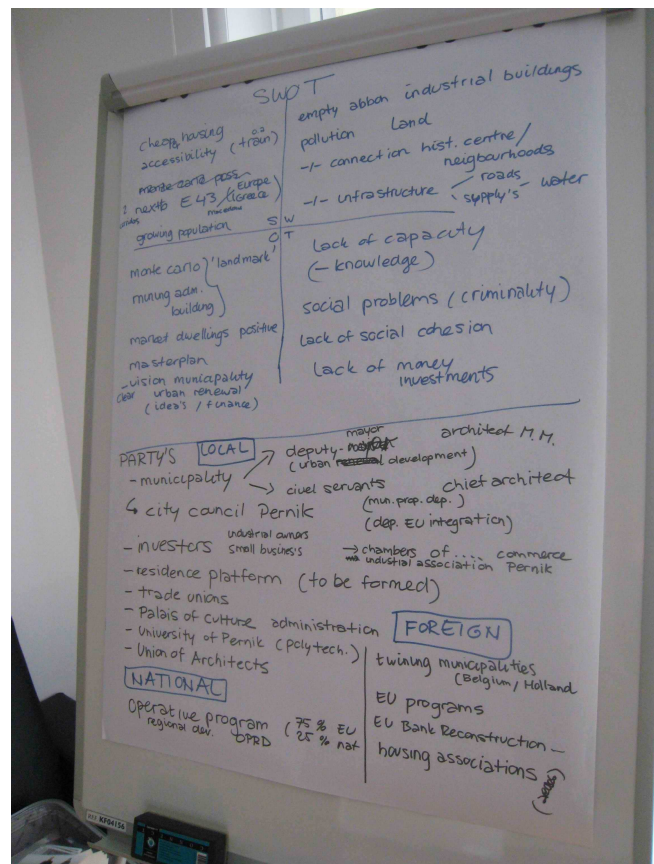
### Foreign

Twin cities (Belgium/The Netherlands)

EU programs

EU Bank reconstruction

Housing associations (Cecodhas, Aedes)



## PART 4: PROJECTMANAGEMENT

### LenvA project

Gabriëlle tells about an other job in Utrecht. In this case it is an assignment from the municipality of Utrecht and Mitros, a large housing association in Utrecht. The project is in Zuilen, the name of the project Pedagogenbuurt / GroenZuilen.

The reason to ask LenvA to develop a new approach was that urban renewal in Zuilen so far was very top-down. We were asked by the municipality (neighborhood manager) to develop a alternative approach: bottom-up. The assignment Pedagogenbuurt consisted of the demolition of 400 dwellings (apartments) and the construction of a new neighborhood GroenZuilen. The inhabitants did not protest against demolition, but they wanted to have good perspectives for their future housing. We designed a approach with a social and a physical part.

Social: One on one meetings with the tenants. Inventarisation of their needs and problems . 30% appears to be multi problem families. We made contracts about their resettlement with the municipal housing agency. And hired a case manager to deal with their problems (elderly people needing nursing homes, tenants in prison etc.)

Physical. There was a project group consisting of representatives of the municipality, Mitros and the developer. And a reflection(group) including tenants, buyers, the church, the sports club. Together they hired a urban planner. To design a plan for a new neighborhood with no traffic, with rent dwellings and owner occupied property, closed housing blocks, and a good solution for parking (not in sight). 3 architects participated in a competition to find solutions for:

- the parking problem (on ground floor, but invisible)
- the relation between public and private space
- mixing different types of dwellings

In all parts of the project the reflection group was involved. Just before the demolition we organized a huge theater play, a stage performance in one of the old flats. All the former tenants were invited to say a proper goodbye to their neighborhood. We obtained the money for the play by combining it with a conference about urban renewal in Utrecht.

The pilot Pedagogenbuurt, this approach, is now standard in the city Utrecht.





## Strategie

CAC and BHA will develop a project plan. After some discussion about the scale of the project (George argues for the scale of the whole municipality), the majority of the group decides to focus on Monte Carlo.

Monte Carlo has around 150 residents. Goal of CAC and BHA will be: to make a better living environment for these 150 residents as the beginning of the renewal of the municipality of Pernik as a whole.

CAC and BHA define the next steps for the project plan:

### 1. Preparation

Look for a few (4) opinion leaders/representatives/ambassadors of the residents who support the project plan.

Organize a meeting with the deputy mayor (and the few opinion leaders of the residents).

How to convince the deputy mayor?

- innovation (renovation project and democratic process)
- land mark
- start renewal Pernik as a whole

Assure collaboration.

Form a project team of professionals (representatives of municipality, professional organizations, CAC experts and BHA experts)

### 2. Research

Visiting the residents one by one.

Research (residents profile (direct and indirect information), type of household, kind of building (type, construction, maintenance), environment, community level (leaders, strength of community)).

### 3. First meeting with the residents

- Do you agree with the results of the research?
- Are we going to work together to solve the problems?
- Forming of a residents platform (different people, a good reflection of the whole population); the other residents must agree with their representatives.

### 4. Training the representatives

- Training the members of the residents platform
- Making a program requirements (prepared in the project team, discussed with the residents platform)
- Selection of an architect and a landscaper (prepared in the project team, discussed with the residents platform).

### 5. Making a plan with several options

- The integrated plan has three parts: house improvement, energy savings and infrastructure
- The plans are prepared in the project team, than discussed with the residents platform and after that presented to meetings with all residents.

### 6. Showing costs and how to finance (scenario's)

### 7. Exhibition, election and celebration

### 8. Financial support

## Financing

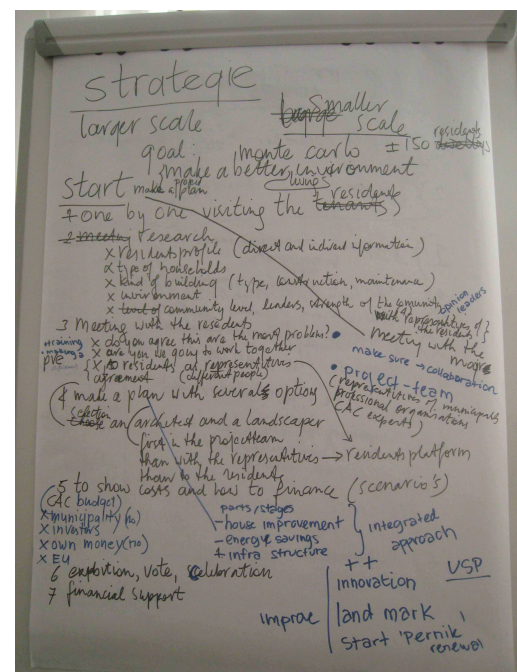
Municipality (no!)

Home owners (no!)

CAC budget

Investors

EU



## SECOND BREAK

As a break the participants get the assignment to make a poster for the residents of Monte Carlo with the announcement of a meeting. Both CAC/BHA and LenvA make a poster.

Slogans on the poster of CAC/BHA:

- Monte Carlo, a love story
- Monte Carlo, ever green

Nice pictures on the poster of LenvA:

- historical buildings
- infrastructure/roads
- landmarks

Both groups have tried to make a poster with a short, promotional text. Both have tried to touch people's hearts. In either case it will be a crowded meeting!



## EVALUATION

Together the participants decide to end the training at five o'clock. The training was fascinating but tiring. Part 5 will be saved for another meeting.

Dick Reinders joins the group for the evaluation.

Stolka and Kaloyan have learnt a lot about the LenvA experiences in the Netherlands.

Eleonara will not forget every situation is different and requires a different approach (custom made). If it is up to her CAC and BHA will go to municipalities with specific plans of action. The brainstorm on the Monte Carlo approach was instructive.

George found it an interesting exchange. He hopes for assistance of the Netherlands (information about EU subsidies, sister/twin city).

It is concluded that everyone is happy and satisfied with the training. Everyone appreciated the exchange of experiences.

LenvA will try to find information about social European programs like the program in the eighties to which the migrant housing project belonged. And LenvA will try to find a sister/twin city in the Netherlands to the municipality of Pernik.

LenvA will make a report with a print of the powerpoint presentation.