

Architectural Features of Cities and Towns during the Period of Lithuania's Reconstruction in 1918–1925

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to disclose the architectural features of cities and towns during the period of Lithuania's reconstruction in 1918–1925. Therefore, the features are analysed according to three criteria – the functional needs of a newly founded state, its technical capacities and stylistic preferences – by granting an acceptable stylistic shape to buildings. The results of this will help to identify the state's functional needs in consideration of losses caused by WWI to a country that could not be reconstructed in full from the then state budget; thus, from the very beginning the focus was on reconstruction of public buildings and residential houses, out of necessity.

Introduction

The process of rebuilding Lithuania involved not only the restoration of directly destroyed buildings or other material assets, but also the formation of an ideological field as it has become no less important, in which discussions have begun about the principles on which Lithuanian cities and towns should be rebuilt. Lithuanian urban planners were attracted by the ideas of urban planning applied in foreign practice at that time, especially the Ebenezer Howard garden-city concept and its application to urban settlements being developed in England.

The concept of the Ebenezer Howard garden-city, its implementation, and the local transformations of this urban phenomenon is an extremely broad and still debatable topic. Urban historian Peter Hall notes that in the interwar period, despite the huge number of publicly subsidised residential buildings, there were almost no examples of a real garden-city [1, 108]. The only exceptions are the cities of Letchworth [2, 409–433], [3], Welwyn [4, 114–115], [5, 15–37] and the Hampstead Garden suburb [6, 141–152]. According to Mervyn Miller, the development process of Letchworth reflects the complex interaction between Howard's theoretical ideas, their practical interpretations, the development of planning legal regulation, and the growing role of local government in controlling land use

as well as urban development [7, 167]. According to Stanley Buder, Welwyn Garden City repeated the Letchworth experiment and at the same time demonstrated how difficult it is to build a modern city given the high need for a return on capital and income. At the same time, however, Welwyn became a demonstration project for new British cities, an example of urban planning and appearance, far superior to Letchworth [4, 114–115].

The concept of the garden-city has resonated in other European countries as well. Kiki Kafkoura writes that the garden-cities of Paris were created at the central level, by top-class officials and professionals, as befits a country with administrative eminence. In Belgium, the quality of garden-city development was determined by direct contact between local population cooperatives and their architects who carried out social and environmental reform, while the German approach was marked by innovative municipal initiatives that historically enabled more independent decision-making [8, 971–978]. Before World War I, the *gartenstadt* that began to sprout throughout Germany was, on the one hand, an orthodox reflection of the formal ideas of the garden-city, and at the same time a vivid reflection of the romanticised essence of Camillo Sitte's urbanism [9]. After the war, selective manifestations of garden-city ideas were found in the development of German *siedlungen* – hints of one or another concept were reflected both in the

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widespread *siedlung* – homesteads of single-family homes and in the modernist apartment building *siedlungen* that emerged near metropolitan areas in the 1930s. According to Onur Tümtürk, the reconceptualization of the garden-city theory in the German context made it possible to fulfil two main goals that were vital for German cities: to restore the relationship of the population with nature and to respond to the urgent need for affordable housing by establishing cooperatives [10, 20]. Pablo de la Cal also notes the efforts of urban planners to integrate urban agriculture into the 20th-century urban planning and cites Leberecht Migge's ideas in Germany as an example, who, in 1918, proposed a model for a society in which families would have access to their vegetable gardens, would be able to grow their own food and reuse the land as needed. Migge has also collaborated with many architects to include these vegetable gardens in the urban description of the German *siedlungen*, such as Britz in Berlin, Römerstadt in Frankfurt and elsewhere [11, 329].

The purpose of this article is to reveal the architectural features of the construction of cities and towns formed in the context of new urban ideas during the period of Lithuanian reconstruction in 1918–1925, using exemplary cases of that period. In order to achieve the goal, the following tasks are set:

- 1) to identify the urban ideas that prevailed during the period of Lithuanian reconstruction in 1918–1925;
- 2) to analyse the functional needs, technical possibilities and stylistic preferences of the nascent state;
- 3) to present how urban ideas and architectural features of cities and towns were reflected in the creation of living environments using exemplary cases.

1. Reconstruction of Lithuanian Cities and Towns: Theoretical Framework

The need for the liquidation of war losses encouraged the Lithuanian authorities to develop a strategy for the reconstruction of the destroyed territories assessing the previous situation and anticipating new prospects. The environment of cities and towns during the tsarist period was assessed as untidy, awkward and chaotic, not meeting the requirements of aesthetics, health and society. It has been argued that the authorities need to seize the opportunity that cities have already been destroyed and take over the work of rebuilding, taking care of building legislation, overseeing construction processes. The idea was to rebuild cities according to the latest examples no longer repeating outdated approaches [12].

Despite the material damages, the war destruction was also seen as a new start providing an opportunity to start qualitatively new processes of planning and

construction of cities and towns. The first decisions of the then government were to follow; they had to outline the future directions of reconstruction and planning of cities and towns. On January 29, 1920, the Ministry of the Interior adopted an "Interim order for the planned construction of towns and cities" addressed to county committees and city boards stating that cities and towns must be built in a planned manner, cities and towns that had more than 2000 inhabitants before the war must draw up plans for the current situation and further development. Further development plans regarding cultural needs and urban development had to mark restoration sites for public buildings (schools, churches, theatres, etc.), public spaces (city gardens, sports and children's playgrounds, etc.) and good access to railway stations. The order also stated that any construction in cities and towns is prohibited until the city plans have been approved [13].

After a couple of years of unsuccessful experiments to form a department that would coordinate the reconstruction in one ministry, it was decided that the process of reconstruction of cities and towns should be coordinated by a special body whose powers would include both the formation and implementation of reconstruction principles using a wide network of local institutions and specialists. From an institutional point of view, this was discussed more systematically in September 17, 1920. In the Constituent Seimas, the law of the Lithuanian Reconstruction Commissariat prepared by the Land Reconstruction Commission of this Seimas was considered. During the discussion, much attention was paid not only to the issues of the Lithuanian Reconstruction Commissariat as the most important institution coordinating reconstruction activities or to the discussion of the entire bureaucratic apparatus "from top to bottom", but also to public initiatives in the reconstruction process. Vincas Čepinskis, a member of the Constituent Seimas, thinks that upon the adoption of the law on the Lithuanian reconstruction commissariat, reconstruction should not have become so bureaucratic that public initiative in the reconstruction process would not be allowed to occur [14].

There was no shortage of public initiative for reconstruction after the war. The press at the time wrote that the reconstruction of the country had already begun on the initiative of the people themselves. Residents could not be required to build according to the beauty and health requirements [12]. However, in practice, the situation where the interests of the population prevailed in one place and the aspirations of the authorities in another developed dynamically. Residents were actively looking for ways to rebuild their homes more quickly to circumvent government bans on building in the absence of ready-made plans for cities or towns.

The idea was developed that long-term urban and town planning tasks should be undertaken by the Lithuanian government: "What direction should we take

for the future development of our cities? It is clear that we cannot immediately pick up the rules for the construction of innovative cities for our country, as we should first take advantage of the experience gained by other countries. It is no secret that the government has a very important role to play in how it will position itself in administration of cities. This has fundamental significance not only for the near, but also for the distant future. <...> Nor can any government leave the development to the discretion of the cities. However, the resulting mess would be a heavy indictment of the government. The government needs to define the right way forward for urban development" [15].

On September 18, 1920, during the congress of cities and counties, which started in Kaunas City Hall, examples of construction of foreign cities and towns based on the garden-city principle were displayed in the hall before the meeting. Participants were mainly interested in the city plan of Harbour in England depicting a detached house with its own garden and a flower garden in front of the street. The plan also depicted wide streets with public squares, kindergartens, gardens, and plenty of sunlit trees in the middle [16]. During the congress, a resolution was passed that Lithuanian cities and towns must be built to the garden-city model [17], (Fig. 1).

The planning and reconstruction of towns and cities according to the garden-city principle proved to be acceptable to the Lithuanian situation by the pioneers of Lithuanian urbanism, and an attempt was made to develop it further by initiating a discussion in the press of that time.

In a series of articles published in the daily newspaper *Lietuva*, E. Kubilius presented the idea of a garden-city implemented in various foreign countries in more detail.

One example was the Hampstead district plan drawn up by Raymond Unwin and implemented according to the garden-city principle. According to E. Kubilius, "<...> all the positions, as well as the individual houses and rows of houses, except the part of the structure, should be an example of our garden-cities. The situation of single streets and very beautiful squares, the exchange of houses standing in groups and rows of single houses, especially houses standing in rows, each with its own way of finishing, with gardens going out into the street, made an extraordinary impression on the viewer. Here one feels cheerful and happy" [18]. According to Kubilius, following the example of urban planning, house building and street network formation, the most suitable examples for Lithuanian cities are the London Hampstead and Birmingham Harborne districts: "Everywhere, especially in Hampstead, the construction and city plan is very successful. All the beauty of the streets that the ancient cities were famous for and that fascinated us in the past, only now, when Camillo Sitte first taught us to look for the reasons for that beauty, do we understand why they are so fascinating – here they are newly made and successfully combined in the city plan" [19].

In the preparation of plans for cities or towns, the construction of separate houses in gardens was first encouraged by ensuring hygiene requirements. Not only the space outside the plot, but also the plot itself, where it was desired to have a large garden, was important. There had to be enough light and air in the house. The house construction height was limited. The streets were littered with trees. Smaller or larger lawns were left on the streets. Parks and gardens, playgrounds and sports fields were established for recreational purposes. Homeowners were also urged to have beautiful flower gardens on the streets of their homes not hiding them by a high board fence from the eyes of passers-by: "The heart and eyes must be allowed to rejoice" [19].

II. Trends Influencing the Architectural Concept

After World War I, the massive lack of various facilities became one of the most important conditions for the architectural development of cities and towns. Many institutions and authorities did not have facilities built for their needs, therefore they usually settled in premises that were not adapted or which were converted from residential houses. As a result, the potential living space further decreased and the housing shortage crisis deepened. During the reconstruction period, Lithuanian cities and towns faced the inevitable challenge of comprehensive renewal. The complete lack of resources in the post-war years did not prevent the formation of the first functional expectations. During the initial period of reconstruction, central government institutions, municipalities, public

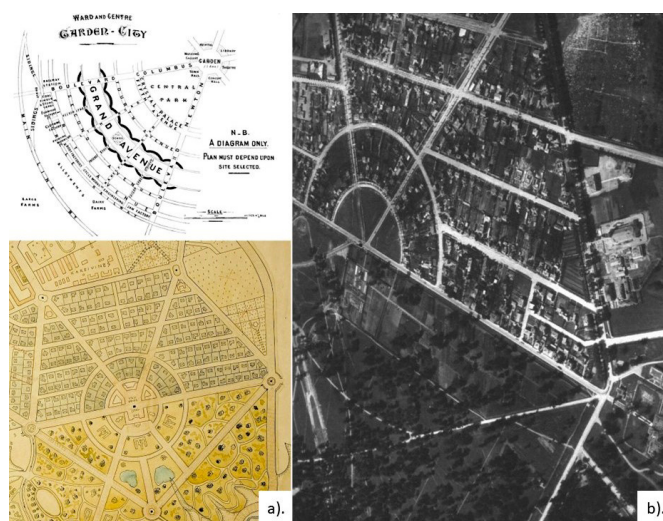


Fig. 1. The Flower Circle (Gėlių rato) area of district Green Hill (Žaliakalnis). Comparison with ideas of Ebenezer Howard: a) the circular plan with six boulevards dividing area into six equal parts; b) a circular space with public buildings in the centre [2], [5].

organisations (including religious communities), businesses and private builders became the main groups of customers for housing and premises. The creation of social infrastructure, in particular schools and hospitals, depended on the central authorities or municipalities. The function of the central government in this sphere was mainly manifested by creating certain conditions, for example, granting loans or providing free forest material to municipalities, but the construction initiative remained in the hands of the local government (Figs. 2 and 3).

Significant construction-related tasks also fell on the executive authorities, for example, the Ministry of Education had to maintain the entire network of educational institutions, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Department of Health, among other things, took care of the proper maintenance of health institutions, etc. Their competence included the establishment and maintenance of schools and other educational institutions, hospitals, dispensaries, alms-houses, shelters, issuing various decrees for the health and well-being of people, etc. [20, 84].

Changes in the architectural environment of cities were also determined by the contribution of various communities, business institutions and private individuals. It consists of hotels, cafes, restaurants, entertainment venues, saunas and other similar infrastructure representing commercial interest, which were important not only functionally, but also architecturally. The spatial uniqueness of cities and towns was determined not only by one larger building of public purpose or industrial enterprise, but also by residential architecture interwoven with shops.

The architectural revolution of the 20th century, which took the form of modernism, is inseparable from the development of construction technologies. Elements and constructions of metal, reinforced concrete, glass, new home plumbing, installations and finishing materials not only allowed to reshape the functional program of buildings, but also influenced aesthetic transformations.

Certain trends related to materiality can also be discerned in the construction development of Lithuania during the reconstruction period. The most important of them was the *attempt to replace wood construction with masonry*. It was the masonry, which was associated with longevity and urbanism, that was perceived as a sign of modernity. Meanwhile, wood, especially in the central parts of the cities, was “out of fashion” even in the environment of economic deprivation [21, 6]. Masonry construction embodies both practical and aesthetic priorities: “... everywhere efforts should be made to build brick or otherwise fire-resistant houses, which, although more expensive, are stronger and better decorate cities and towns” [22, 6].

Despite the priorities given to non-combustible building materials, wood remained the most used building material during the reconstruction period. This was due to practical reasons, as during the period of reconstruction in Lithuania, there was not enough production of such building materials, in addition, the destroyed houses had to be rebuilt urgently, using the most financially available material. After the Lithuanian Government took over the management of the forests from the Germany in 1919, a considerable amount of forest material had to be given for the reconstruction of houses demolished and destroyed during the war and for various production purposes [23, 1]. Back on 18 May 1920, at the meeting of the Constituent Seimas, when considering the issue of the formation of commissions of the Constituent Seimas, one of which was for forests, it was emphasised that the management of forests will be of great importance for the future of Lithuania because during the implementation of the land reform, the division of estates will lead to the construction of many houses [24, 10].

However, there was a move towards reducing the use of this material in order to preserve and increase the area of Lithuanian forests and switch to modern construction materials. For example, LRC told the Reconstruction Commissions of counties and cities that, based on the



Fig. 2. Tauragė city after WW I [photo from Lithuanian Central State Archive, LCSA].



Fig. 3. Šiauliai city after WW I [photo from Lithuanian Central State Archive, LCSA].

decision of the Constituent Seimas, stricter measures should be taken to stop the destruction of forests, therefore, in order to achieve this goal, it was prohibited that churches, chapels and all kinds of prayer houses were built from wood; all county and city reconstruction commissions were ordered to accept the projects of wooden churches and other wooden prayer houses and send them to LRC for approval [25, 78].

In order to abandon wood as the main building material, an attitude began to be formed that the building material must be strong and resistant, and forest material is not suitable for this because it rots quickly and burns easily, and it is best to use it only inside the house but not for building external walls [26, 10]. Gradually, consideration began to be given to how the production of non-combustible building materials could be increased. Bricks were considered to be such a material. Based on the examples of foreign countries, it was calculated that 100 bricks should be allocated to each inhabitant. When using bricks to build houses in cities and towns, the inhabitants of Lithuania would have needed 250 million bricks per year [27, 110]. However, in order to increase the volume of brick production, major technological improvements were required, since most existing brick factories were technologically quite primitively equipped [28, 28], (Fig. 4).

The addition of technical and functional rationality to the aesthetic dimension transformed the construction into an architecture conveying a cultural message. Therefore, the spirit of the time or place can be felt in stylistic preferences, no less than in functional solutions or the use of technology. In interwar Lithuania, architectural quality itself became one of the key arguments defining progress. However, a significant part of the new construction did not really have more pronounced aesthetic expectations. In brick and wooden construction in both the private and

the public sector, utilitarian façades abound. There was no shortage of more ambitious ideas, which stood out not only for their functional ambitions, but also for their aesthetic preferences. Even if a large part of the ideas remained unimplemented, the array of exceptional projects testifies that the expectation of an impressive building is associated not only with churches or other important public buildings.

The architectural worldview was formed by a dozen of the most important architects and engineers who expressed themselves by designing and participating in administrative and public activities [29]. These specialists of different generations and education were united by the fundamental provision in architectural aesthetics to trust “mature styles” according to Kazimieras Jasėnas [30, 520]. Meanwhile, the newly created state should be represented by the examples of the *national style* (although there was no consensus on the latter). Both composition principles borrowed from the history of architecture and those inspired by examples of Lithuanian folk architecture are treated as *beautifications*, which, according to Professor Mykolas Songaila, must “satisfy at least elementary aesthetic requirements” [31, 6–7]. Such beautifications had to find a place not only in representative buildings, but also in houses that are “dedicated to commercial establishments and life in general” [32, 14].

III. Residential Environment and Architecture

After the war, a large shortage of residential housing prevailed in almost all cities and towns of Lithuania. The reason for this was the significant losses of the war, as it is estimated that about 57 thousand buildings were destroyed, including at least 13 thousand inhabited houses [33, 64]. In addition, around 550 000 Lithuanian war refugees left Lithuania during the war [34, 55]. Refugees returning to Lithuania after the war made up a considerable part of the homeless population.

The atmosphere of housing shortages influenced another significant aspect of residential construction in cities and towns – hygienic conditions, which were neglected due to housing shortages [35, 4]. The post-war press was full of messages about the deplorable living conditions and the poor general sanitary condition of the cities. Living in damp, dark and cramped apartments was accompanied by a whole series of problems faced by a significant part of society. Workers and servants were forced to work in insufficiently equipped factories, craft and trade establishments; acute, contagious diseases raged, especially dysentery, typhus and typhoid fever, as well as syphilis were rampant [36, 3]. Thus, although the Athens Charter was formed as a guideline to get rid of the unsanitary conditions prevailing in big cities, the Lithuanian context, despite its much smaller scale, basically corresponded to international trends. Modernisation, and



Fig. 4. The most common type of brick town house of reconstruction period is a two-storey house. This type of construction requires relatively less investment but embodies an urban quality standard [project for house for Jakubas Šusteris family, engineer A. Golovinskas].

at the same time modernism as a style, became a search for a way out of a difficult social situation.

The solution to the housing problem had two aspects, on the one hand, residents were interested in rebuilding their homes as soon as possible, despite the new planning principles of cities and towns and stricter construction requirements. On the other hand, a new concept of residential environment and housing was sought in the newly developing urban field. An idea that it is necessary to use the experience of other countries in this area was raised during this time [15]. One of the examples to follow was Prussia, where reconstruction work was much more advanced [37, 1]. Examples of urban planning in the United States and England had also become relevant, on the basis of which the main ideas for urban planning had been developed – to ensure transportation, a healthy environment, economy and aesthetics [16]. The principle of a healthy environment had to guarantee that there was enough light and air both in cities and in residential houses, so houses had to be built in gardens, and the street trees were planted [19]. Optimism that it is possible to build spacious houses surrounded by gardens was strengthened by the fact that Lithuanian cities do not lack land. However, the inability to produce non-flammable building materials and the country's financial difficulties suggested that the city-garden idea might have to be abandoned [38, 1].

The urban-garden principle, which had taken root in the Lithuanian urban planning, did not in principle interfere with the practice of building houses in different countries. In 1921, Adolfas Kelermiuleris, acting as Lithuanian Reconstruction Commissioner, brought back his secondment in Germany the idea of introducing the small (*kleinsiedlung*) system throughout Lithuania. During his trip to Germany, he visited the Rothenstein “settlement” (*Siedlung Rothenstein*) near Königsberg. In the submitted report, he emphasized that he first became theoretically acquainted with the “small house society” (*Heimstättengesellschaft*), the goal of which was to build good and aesthetic houses quickly and cheaply [39, 30]. These houses were intended for artisans and lower officials, whose living conditions were the worst. Due to the efforts of the association, over 2 years, 80 residential houses were built, for the construction of which various combinations of building materials were used: brick masonry, concrete soaping masonry, wood, masonry and wood. Having familiarised himself with construction technologies, Kelermiuleris thought that it was suitable for Lithuania because Lithuanian nature provides everything needed for such construction: wood, clay, lime, and cement [39, 31].

In December 1921, at the Congress of Lithuanian County and City Technicians, Borisas Helcermanas, a technician from Mažeikiai County, gave a presentation “The Significance of Town Planning and Headquarters Plans” in which he introduced the concept of the *Vecgubene* Railway Station in Latvia [40, 13–15]. The idea of the

Vecgubene train station reflected the prevailing ideals of urban development of that time. Architect *Pauls Kundziņš*, presented the train station project in 1920. He wrote that Western Europe provided many good examples, e.g. in England, many new city-gardens have been being built. The visionary courage of city-gardens can be considered as a starting point in implementing the project plan of the town of *Vecgubene* [41, 517–518]. Interpreting the image of a traditional Latvian homestead, up to 4 apartment houses were designed, each with a garden of at least 800 m².

A similar project was prepared in Lithuania in 1921. When presenting it, the author, Swiss architect Eduard Peyer, wrote that considering the fact that the current construction in Lithuania has many shortcomings, LRC will try to develop such a system of housing construction in

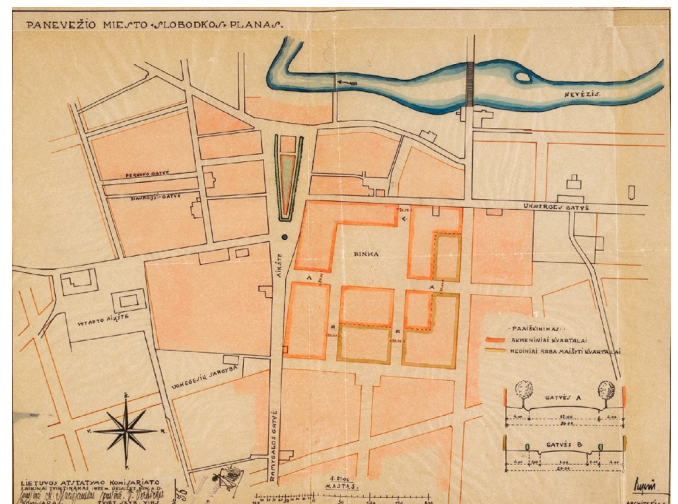


Fig. 5. Slobodka reconstruction plan prepared by architect Eduard Peyer [photo from Lithuanian Central State Archive, LCSA].

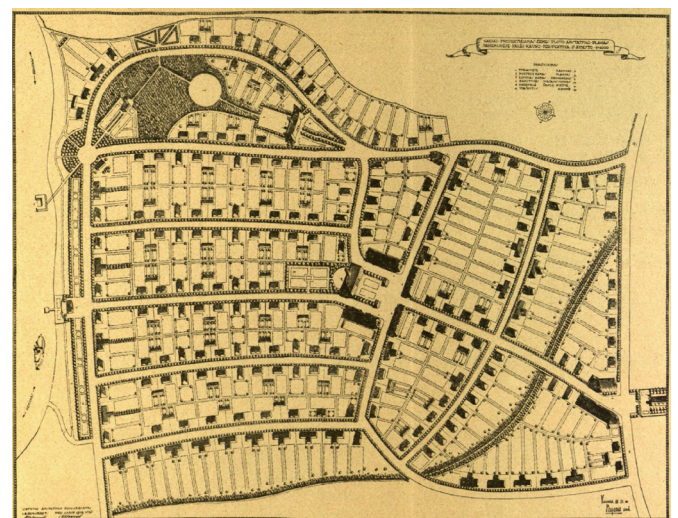


Fig. 6. Project for *Panemunė* neighbourhood development for 250 plots (1922), architect Eduard Peyer [41].

which next to a good and comfortable grouping of houses, traditional forms with a national style would appear. As an example of such a construction system Pejeris proposed the *Panemunė* neighbourhood project [42, 3]. According to the submitted project of the Department of Land Reform, *Panemunė* was divided into 250 land plots, and for their furnishing, the Lithuanian Reconstruction Commissariat prepared projects of several types of house that could be considered “exemplary in terms of economic construction and aesthetics” [42]. The presented projects were intended for a detached two-apartment three-room house built from wood and similar houses built only from clay. The territory of the project included places for public purpose objects: a public house with a hall for concerts and a theatre, a school, a hotel, a market, a park, and a sports ground (Figs. 5 and 6).

One of the most prominent interwar projects in Lithuania, where foreign city planning and housing ideas were implemented, was implemented in *Panevėžys*. Part of the residents of *Panevėžys* were war refugees who had returned to Lithuania from Russia and found their houses destroyed. After the war, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (hereinafter referred to as the JDC), which began operating in Europe during the war, with the main mission of helping Jews suffering from the war, undertook to help to rebuild the destroyed houses. In Lithuania, this organisation helped Jews in various cities and towns to rebuild their houses destroyed during the war.

Even before construction, the JDC had a clear vision that new housing estates and houses in line with the garden-city principles had to be built for the Jews of *Panevėžys*, so the land plot was subject to high demands – it had to be in the city centre and undeveloped. On December 3, 1921, the JDC report outlined the stages of implementing this vision: given the severe demolition of houses in *Panevėžys* and the difficulty for individual residents to rebuild their houses, it was proposed to build houses on a cooperative basis: “A plan is therefore proposed to erect on a cooperative



Fig. 7. JDC built houses on Colonel Lehman Street in *Panevėžys*, architect Girsha Mazel [photo from Jewish Community of *Panevėžys*].

basis a new town, occupying a large area and adjacent to the old one. <...> a new little town will be included in the plan of garden-city, having in its first row fifty houses. The area of one lot will be 9×13 square fathoms, of which the house will occupy 4×5 square fathoms, and the remainder will be used for a yard, outbuildings, vegetable garden and few fruit trees” [43] (Fig. 7).

The process of building the houses for the *Panevėžys* residents overseen by the JDC was also planned in detail. In 1923, JDC hired architect Girsha Mazel who wrote pamphlet “How to Build a House Practically and Cheaply”. In addition to technical and financial advice on house construction, the pamphlet presented a concept of modern house based on foreign practice. The building principles reflecting the garden-city principles were also indicated there. Much attention was paid to the implementation of fire-fighting measures and the provision of sanitary and hygiene requirements [44].

Finally, the vision gradually began to become a reality when, in June 1923, JDC poured the foundations for first 10 houses on a land plot purchased in the very city centre and began to build the house frames. The house was built on a newly formed street named after Colonel Lehman, (later renamed Joint – abbreviation from American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee), former chairman of JDC [45]. It was planned that the house would be occupied by the poorest families, one of whom would be given two rooms with a kitchen. It was planned to have small flower gardens in front of the house, and gardens and barns in the back [46]. JDC's approach to the planning of Jewish residential areas, the reconstruction of houses, the organizational level and practical steps at that time significantly surpassed the Lithuanian urban optimism bubble, which was still forming only at an ideological level at that time.



Fig. 8. An example of a wooden residential house in the city [drawing from Kaunas Regional State Archives].

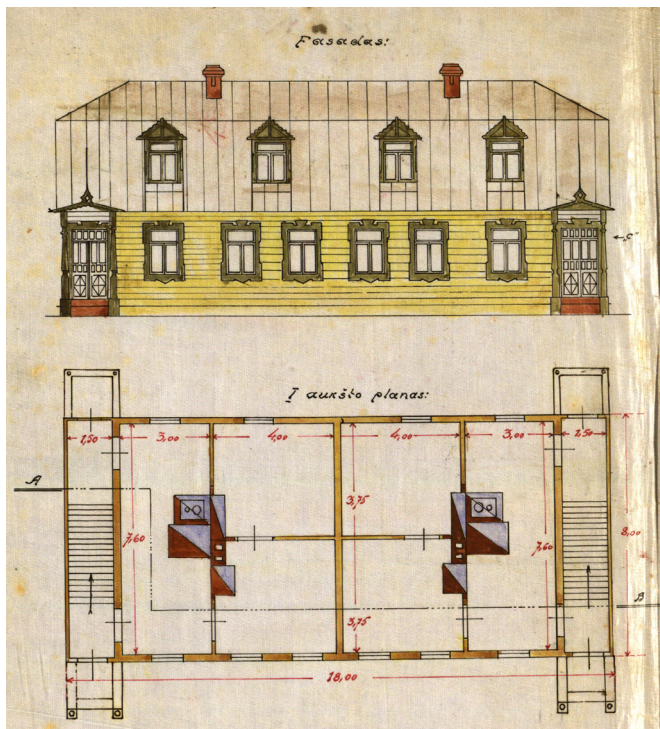


Fig. 9. An example of a wooden two-story residential house in the city [drawing from Kaunas Regional State Archives].

During the reconstruction period of Lithuanian cities and towns, the construction of residential houses revealed the diversity of architectural and functional solutions of the time – luxurious villas were built, distinguished by their scale and stylistic characteristics, solid brick city rental houses, cheap and minimally built wooden apartment buildings, and private farmhouses. Wooden houses became the most abundant, aesthetically and functionally variegated typological group of residential houses, where the design and construction of the simplest and cheapest wooden country houses dominated. The second important type of wooden residential house is an apartment house intended for rent, in the capital or a larger city, usually built with two floors, four or six apartments. Given that wood predominated as the primary and most affordable building material, new brick houses were an expensive option that few housebuilders could afford. Therefore, houses of this type were most often built in the so-called “masonry blocks”, where no other choice was available. Such a construction was a rare phenomenon outside the masonry blocks during the reconstruction period. The concept of urban masonry was most vividly embodied by apartment buildings reaching 3 or more floors. However, the most common type of brick town house of the reconstruction period was a two-story building because this type of construction required relatively smaller investments but embodied an urban standard of quality (Figs. 8–10).

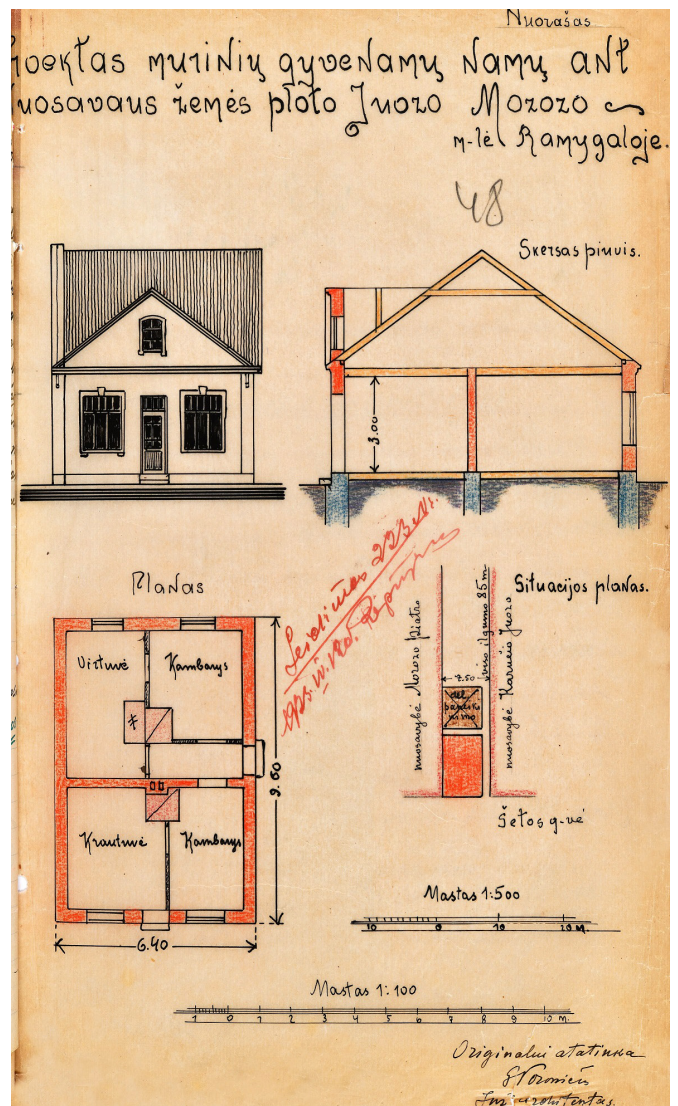


Fig. 10. An example of a brick one-story residential house in the city [drawing from LCSA –Lithuanian Central State Archives].

Conclusions

First of all, new urban planning ideas were looked into, which would not only transform the urban space clogged with disorderly constructions, but also provide better living conditions for the residents. The idea of the city-garden turned out to be quite consistent with new expectations.

The architectural concept during the reconstruction period of Lithuanian cities and towns was influenced by functional needs, available materials, and technologies used in the construction of buildings, as well as stylistic priorities. During the reconstruction period, the dominant position was taken by functional needs, as there was a massive demand for various premises and housing for residents. In the field of construction materials and

technologies, the idea of abandoning wood as the main material used was formed, in favour of more durable and more aesthetically appreciated construction materials. The trends in the formation of the living environment and architecture were determined by the prevailing difficulties in reality – a great lack of housing and financial opportunities, due to which, from a material point of view, wooden houses remained the predominant part of residential buildings built in cities and towns. Nevertheless, during the construction period, a variety of architectural and functional solutions for both wooden and brick houses were revealed. The model JDC houses built for the residents of *Panemunė* or *Panevėžys* demonstrated qualitatively new trends in the formation of the living environment, based on the principles of a healthy and comfortable environment.

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