



Informationstafeln für die Gartenstadt Frohnau - Frohnau Information Boards

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Frohnauer Vereine und Organisationen – Projektgruppe Infotafeln

Panel 2 The center of the garden city Frohnau

The basic structure of the center of the garden city Frohnau at Ludolfingerplatz and Zeltinger Platz was created around 1910. Today, it is still the most important local supply location and social center of the people of Frohnau. The double square complex at today's S-Bahn station is one of the most important suburban centers from the first half of the 20th century in Germany in terms of its high-quality design, its diverse offerings and its good transport connections.

The founder

Guido Graf Henckel Fürst von Donnersmarck (1830- 1916) had acquired a large fortune as an industrialist in Upper Silesia. Since the turn of the century, he had also been active as a real estate developer. At the end of 1907, he acquired an approximately 740-hectare forest area in the Stolper Heide and Bieselheide from the landowner Werner von Veltheim through the "Berliner Terrain-Centrale" (B.T.C.), which belonged to him. Here, in the then less attractive north of Berlin, Prince von Donnersmarck invested considerable funds in the planning, development and structural design of a new suburb. The prince, who was already almost 80 years old, was obviously concerned to create a lasting legacy and to present urban planning in its most modern form.

The planning

At the end of 1907, the B.T.C. announced an urban planning competition - unusual for a suburb. The jury, which was made up of important urban planning experts, met in March 1908, and renowned urban planners such as Karl Henrici and Hermann Jansen were shortlisted. First prize was awarded to the "Freiluft" design by Joseph Brix (1859-1943) and Felix Genzmer (1856-1929). The two professors of the "Königlich Technische Hochschule zu Berlin" in Charlottenburg (today TU Berlin) are considered important pioneers of the discipline of urban planning due to their overlapping consideration of architecture, engineering as well as social and health aspects. The winning design was characterized by

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„Projektgruppe Infostelen der ArGe Frohnau“, englische Übersetzung Dorothee Bernhardt;
Kontakt Dr. Carsten Benke: Infotafeln-Frohnau@online.de*



curved streets that followed the moving terrain, as well as by numerous squares and green spaces. The rainwater was to be channelled into decentralized infiltration ponds. In the center of the village at the future train station, a dense small-town center was planned at two irregular plazas.

The development

When B.T.C. prepared the development plan, only Polo Square and some collector streets were added, and minor modifications were made to the green space and development system. However, B.T.C. made significant changes in the center, creating today's double ornamental square. With its axial structure, it stands out from Frohnau's plan, which is otherwise characterized by curved lines. Until the official opening of the garden city on May 7, 1910, the casino tower, the casino building, further commercial buildings and the station building were erected on Ludolfingerplatz - originally Bahnhofplatz - by the architects Gustav Hart and Alfred Lesser on behalf of the B.T.C..