

## OPINION

**of Prof. Dr. Arch. Ekaterina Kr. Sentova**

Industrial and Agricultural Buildings Department, Faculty of Architecture, University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy (UACEG)

**Re:** a collection of materials submitted for partaking in a contest for acquiring the academic position "Professor" under the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria

- professional field 5.7. Architecture, Construction, and Geodesy
- scientific specialty "Territorial and Landscape Planning, and Urban Planning"

**Good cause for the contest to take place:** The Scientific Panel called together for the purpose of a contest for acquiring an academic position "Professor" by duly observing the Regulations on the implementation of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) was summoned upon order №551/16.09.2021 issued by the Rector of VSU "Lyuben Karavelov" under Art. 67, para. 2 of the Regulations for Development of the Academic Staff of VSU "L. Karavelov", and upon a decision made by the Faculty Council of the AF at VSU "L. Karavelov" (Minutes № 4 / 26.07.2021). This OPINION was prepared based on Order № 625 of 14.10.2021 of the Rector of VFU "L. Karavelov" according to a decision of the FS of AF - protocol № 4 from 26.07.2021, and a decision taken upon a meeting of the Scientific Panel - protocol №1 / 04.10.2021.

**Candidate in the contest:** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Dimitar Vlasarev. He is a lecturer in the Department of Urban Planning, Theory and History of Architecture for the Faculty of Architecture, at VSU "L. Karavelov".

### **1. Biographical information: professional and academic development**

The professional growth of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. D. Vlasaraev in the field of Architecture and Construction, firstly began upon finishing vocational training at "Hristo Botev" High School of Construction, Architecture, and Geodesy in Sofia, and further went on to higher education, when in 1980 he completed a Master degree in Architecture at VIAS, aka UACEG. Arch. D. Vlasaraev then undergoes a two-year specialization on Industrial Territories and Environmental Protection of Food Industry Buildings and Complexes at VIAS (UACEG), a training that he finished in 1983. In 2014, he acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Territorial and Landscape Structure, and Urban Planning" at Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar". In 2015, he was habilitated in the scientific specialty "Architecture of Buildings, Structures, Facilities, and details", and since then he has held the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the Department of Urban Planning, Theory and History of Architecture at VSU "L. Karavelov".

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Dimitar Vlasarev embarked on his professional carrier in 1980 when he began to work as a Designer and a Control specialist at Agropromproekt-Sofia, until 1991. Over the years of 1991 through 1993 he was appointed a Head of Department at "Industrial Construction - Universalstroy" State Fund, thence later, during 1993-1996, he would work as a freelance architect. He would hold the position of "Chief Architect" at the Municipality of Krumovgrad (1997-1999), and for the Municipality of Konstinbrod (1999-2008) having been successively elected.

His academic development at VSU "L. Karavelov" dates back to 2008, where he was appointed by holding the academic positions of "Assistant", then went on to "Chief Assistant" in 2010, and an "Associate Professor" in 2015 for the Department of Urban Planning, Theory and History of architecture". Arch. Vlasarev is a member of the Union of Architects in Bulgaria, and also a member of the Chamber of Architects in Bulgaria.

## **2. Teaching activity**

The teaching activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Vlasarev covers lecture courses and practical classes (exercises) for students majoring in architecture, and undergraduates majoring in CACC [CABF], at VSU "L. Karavelov". The classes he holds in the field of residential, industrial, and agricultural buildings, and others that cover urban planning and landscape architecture include: *Urban Planning I - Fundamentals of the theory and practice of urban planning*; *Architectural Design - designing a small residential group (cluster-like residential area) on private land (or a project of a village)*; *Industrial Buildings II - Fundamentals of the theory and practice of IBs*; *Architectural design – Designing an industrial building*; *Urban Planning II - Current issues of modern urban planning*; *Architectural design - urban planning solution for renovation of an existing settlement structure or a central area of the medium-sized city*; *Urban planning and landscape architecture "Park"*; *CACC[CABF]-III. Territorial, settlement planning, and urban planning I*; *CACC- IV. Territorial, settlement planning, and urban planning II*; *Agricultural buildings*; *CACC- IV. Industrial and agricultural buildings*; *CACC- III. Landscape architecture and planting design*.

The teaching activity of the candidate, given academic workload and classes conducted, should be accepted as fully satisfying the criteria of this particular contest.

## **3. Research work, applied science, and artistic-creative achievements of the candidate**

For the purpose of the contest, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. D. Vlasarev presents the following monograph: *Developmental Conversion of former agricultural yards for modern-industry manufacturing, modern farming practices, development, and green system. Following the example of agricultural clusters of small and medium enterprises*, ed. VSU "Lyuben Karavelov", Sofia, 2018, ISBN: 978-954-331-083-8, and another published monograph - *Current problems, and developmental and spatial-planning measures in the development of the small town in Bulgaria, following the example of the towns of Kyustendil, Samokov, Kostinbrod, Dolna Banya, etc.* Ed. VSU "Lyuben Karavelov", Sofia, 2019, ISBN: 978-954-331-107-1.

**Other works** submitted by the candidate for partaking in the contest include reports published in non-refereed journals in edited collective volumes - 34 pcs. (17 copies in co-authorship); build-to-order author's architectural projects - 3 pcs.; citations in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world databases - 3 pcs.; citations in collective volumes with scientific review - 31; teaching aids - lecture courses on industrial buildings and spatial planning of industrial territories - 2 pcs. (co-authored); textbooks - 3 pcs.; manuals - 4 pcs.; guidebook of scientific projects - 3 pcs.

**The main habilitation work** of the candidate for this very contest is the monograph - *Structural Conversion of former agricultural yards for modern-industry manufacturing, modern farming practices, for development, and green system. On the example of agricultural clusters of small and medium enterprises*. It covers current, and also characteristic for the specific conditions of our country **issues** related to the transition period from a state-planned to a market economy. In the process of undergoing an agrarian reform, many changes have been made in the economy of our country, including the economic planning of some territories within the boundaries of the settlements, and also by altering their

function or use. As a result of the discontinued activity of the agro-industrial complexes (AIC) and the industrial-agrarian complexes (IAC), and the restoration of land ownership, it is necessary that a new land cadastre, real estate, and utility cadastre for the territories of the former farmsteads, for the land of the settlements, and their adjacent territories be created. In many places across the territory of Bulgaria, former farmsteads tend to acquire (or already have acquired) the status of new-economic-growth initiative zones. The prime goal when drafting new development plans for settlements and municipalities is that developmental opportunities for the construction of new production facilities on the territories of the former farmyards be created.

In this regard, the monograph examines innate matters related to the structure, development, and environmental characteristics of these particular production areas and farmyards. The author proposes within the general (Master Plan) and the detailed development plans (DDP) of the settlements that the development structure affecting the production areas of agro-economic purpose be improved. He clarifies the place and role of farmyards (or farmsteads) for buildings and complexes for storage and production of plant and animal products in the territorial development plans. The proposed localization of complexes of agricultural clusters for production and storage of plant and animal produce, based on sanitary and hygienic requirements, aims to scientifically substantiate the planning of the general and detailed development plans (DDPs) when it comes to the developmental regimes, as well as the planning of sanitary-protection zones, but strictly within the scope of these plans. Among the original scientific and applied-science contributions of the research paper, arch. Vlasarev was exploring certain issues for sustainable development of farmyards and agro-industrial areas, whereupon concrete propositions relevant to the problematical matter have been provided. The author substantiates their essential place and importance in the spatial planning as a key instrument in the policy of sustainable spatial development.

The proposed specific alternative solutions for utilization of the existing infrastructure of former farmsteads of AICs can be used in their reconstruction into production units, with consideration of local natural resources, specific conditions and opportunities of individual municipalities and settlements. The analysis of the accumulated factual and experimental material, having been widely illustrated and providing numerous examples, has enabled the author to draw some important scientifically sound conclusions of scientific and practical value. They can be used as a basis for the development of normative documents in the field of spatial development and planning of agricultural areas, as well as by local authorities of settlements when drafting spatial development plans, including by adopting the already developed models for the purpose of the revitalization of abandoned and unused farmyards. The proposed examples and the research work shared in the research paper can also be used by farmstead owners for more effective development of their activities while aiming at creating a continuous circular process of a closed production cycle.

**In the monograph** - *Current problems and developmental measures in the development of the small town in Bulgaria by following the example of Kyustendil, Samokov, Kostinbrod, Dolna Banya, etc.*, through investigating and studying real cases, a methodical approach for research and design of public spaces in the central urban parts of the middle and small towns has been introduced. The scientific and applied valuableness of contributions to this work is the novel views and the novelty conceptual solutions proposed by the author, alongside the developed structural theoretical model. The research on the change of exploiting and the functional dependencies of the public spaces in the central urban parts, also the investigation of the integration connections of the green system, the approach to public service, and not the least, the cultural-historical heritage, appear as fundamental elements of the created theoretical model. This model is also based on certain procedural requirements in the legislation for the



implementation of the developmental policy of the local authority, either vertically or horizontally, and yet takes into account the decentralization of authorities.

**The artistic and creative work** of architect Vlasarev covers projects and other realizations in the field of architectural design and spatial planning like preparation of a detailed development plan, construction plan, and working development plan, as seen from the detailed list of documents enclosed in his bio. The successful professional practice as a designer of investment projects, rather being of different scope and functional purposes are indisputable. If I may accentuate the facts, undeniable proof of evidence is the awarded State Award for the Mill Plant building in Sofia. It is good to note that the main monographic work includes photographs of some of the completed architectural projects designed by the candidate.

To wrap it up, I may say that as regards the research, the scientific-applied and artistic-creative work of the candidate, it can be said that the range of results accrued exceeds the requirements for acquiring the academic position "Professor", which is evident from the presented report on the implementation of scientometric indicators.

#### **4. Critical notes, questions posed, and recommendations for future work**

In the comparative table provided [Table 2. Number of points by indicators], wherein the fulfillment of the scientometric indicators are to be checked correctly, the candidate has marked Indicator E (Art.20 Published university textbook or textbook used in the school network) - Guidebook of 3 NIZ projects (2016-2017) (2018) (2019). I believe that the above-mentioned ones are not subject to review.

I have some notes and recommendations to make concerning the monograph - *Developmental Conversion of former agricultural yards for the purpose of modern-industry manufacturing, modern farming practices, for development, and green system. Following the example of agricultural clusters of small and medium enterprises*. Within the outlined main aim of his work, the author has somehow limited the scope of the application of the study. As I noted in point 3 herein, not only the research done, but also the specific proposals suggested therein, can be used not only by professionals and for educational purposes, but also by non-specialists and other readers interested in the subject. Because of all that, a list of the abbreviations used should be attached. In the rich illustrative material, there are no references to some figures, nor is the authorship given due credit in some places.

It is advisable that the above-stated remarks may be reflected on in the following publishing of the monograph, given the wider use of the work.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Based on the presented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Dimitar Vlasarev bundle of materials, I believe that his candidacy meets the requirements stipulated in the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, it also follows the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and not least, it abides by the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of VSU "L. Karavelov ". I certainly extend herein, my positive opinion, and I propose that because of his merit, Dr. arch. Dimitar Vlasarev should be acknowledged to acquire the academic position of "Professor" in the professional field 5.7. Architecture, Construction, and Geodesy.

29th Oct, 2021

  
Prof. Dr. Arch. Ekaterina Kr. Sentova