

OPINION

of

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Jordan Kostadinov Hristov

Lecturer in the Department of Industrial and Agricultural Buildings for Faculty of Architecture,

at the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy (UACEG),

Regarding the materials submitted for partaking in a contest for acquiring the academic position of **“professor”** in a professional field **5.7. Architecture, Construction, and Geodesy**, scientific specialty **Territorial and Landscape planning, and Urban planning**.

Good cause for holding the contest: The Scientific Panel convened to hold a contest for considering an academic position "Professor" under the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) has been summoned under Order № 551 of 16.09.2021 issued by the Rector of VSU "Lyuben Karavelov", pursuant to Art. 67, para. 2 of the Regulations for Development of the Academic Staff of VSU "Lyuben Karavelov" and upon a decision made of the Faculty of Architecture Council at VSU "Lyuben Karavelov". The OPINION was prepared based on Order № 625 of 14.10.2021 issued by the Rector of VSU "Lyuben Karavelov", observing a decision of the Faculty of Architecture Council taken (minutes №4 of 26.07.2021), and upon a decision taken in a meeting of the Scientific Panel (minutes №1 / 04.10.2021).

In the contest for acquiring the academic position "Professor", Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Dimitar Vlasarev who is a lecturer in the department of "Urban Planning, Theory and History of Architecture" for the Faculty of Architecture at VSU "Lyuben Karavelov" is, in fact, the only candidate.

1. Short biography

The biographical data provided by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Dimitar Vlasarev undeniably defines him as a suitable candidate for taking the academic position announced in the contest. He graduated from the Department of Industrial Buildings of the Faculty of Architecture at VIAS (UACEG) in 1980, having obtained a Master's degree in Architecture. He later embarks on a two-year specialization in the same department in the field of Industrial Territories and Environmental Protection of the Food Industry buildings and complexes, which he completed in 1983. In 2014 he obtained an educational and scientific "Doctor" degree in "Territorial and Landscape Planning and Urban Planning" scientific specialty at VFU "Chernorizets Hrabar" in Varna. Further, a habilitation followed in "Architecture of Buildings, Structures, Facilities and details" scientific specialty, in 2015 at VSU "Lyuben Karavelov", and so far he holds the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the Department of Urban Planning, Theory, and History of Architecture.

The **career path** of Arch. Vlasarev as a designer started at *KIPP Agropromproekt* where he worked from 1980 to 1991, as **it** goes on by being appointed Head of Department at

"Industrial Construction - Universalstroy" State Fund (1991-1993), to eventually continue his career as a freelance (1993-1996).

Later on, he would hold the position of Chief Architect, firstly, for the Municipality of Krumovgrad (1997-1999), and then he was invited to hold the same position in the Municipality of Kostinbrod over the 1999-2008 period.

From 2008 until now, Arch. Vlasarev has been working as a full-time lecturer at VSU "Lyuben Karavelov" in the Department of Urban Planning, Theory, and History of Architecture: as an "assistant" (2008), "chief assistant" (2010). He attains habilitation as an "associate professor" in 2015, upon defending his doctoral dissertation in the previous year.

His diverse experience and personal interests in investigating problems of scientific and applied-science nature are a rather reliable basis for his further unfolding and evolving as an educator and a scientist.

2. Teaching and Pedagogical activity

The educational and teaching duties of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Dimitar Vlasarev is subordinated to the academic programs designed to train students majoring in "Architecture", acquiring either master's or bachelor's degree in "Construction and Architecture of Buildings and Facilities" (CABF) at VSU "Lyuben Karavelov". The process includes delivering a wide range of lectures, and also holding practical-training classes following the curriculum of the Department of Urban Planning, Theory and History of Architecture:

– Lecture courses in the field of Industrial Architecture, Urban Planning, and Landscaping:

Urban Planning I – Theory and Practice of Urban Planning – fundamentals;

Urban planning II – Current problems of the modern Urban Planning

Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture "Park";

Territorial planning, settlements development, and urban planning I and II (CABF – III and IV);

Landscape Architecture and Planting Design (CABF– III);

Industrial Buildings II - Theory and Practice of IB. Fundamentals.

Industrial and Agricultural buildings (CABF – III and IV);

Agricultural buildings

– Practical-training classes with students in Design (designing buildings and facilities):

Architectural Design - designing a small residential group on its own land/private land (or project of a village);

Architectural Design - Design of an Industrial Building;

Architectural Design - Urban Planning Solution for Renovation of the Existing Settlement Structure or the Central Area of a Medium-sized town;

The academic workload of Assoc. Prof. Vlasarev significantly exceeds the requirements stipulated in DASRBA for participating in the contest.

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

The candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Dimitar Vlasarev participates in the competition with the following published materials from recent years: Monographs - 2 copies

“Developmental Conversion of former agricultural yards for modern-industry manufacturing, modern farming practices, land 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, which is the main habilitation work to be considered and discussed.

The topic of land conversion for new land use is absolutely relevant domestically for Bulgaria in the context of the changes affecting land ownership. After the liquidation of the agro-industrial and industrial-agrarian complexes, their farmsteads would acquire the status of zones for an economic initiative. The author proposes a "cluster-type approach" in the modern planning of agricultural areas as an alternative to large territorial structures. According to him, **clusters of small and medium-sized companies** in the food industry of common business interests may be able to achieve a rather high economic efficiency upon cooperation and via co-sharing technical and logistics infrastructure. On the other hand, setting **clusters** for the processing and production of plant and animal products are considered as a key factor for the restoration of disturbed ecological balance in that particular territory of cluster deployment.

The research revealed in the monograph substantiates the importance of agro-production territories, as well as the farmyards in the spatial planning of sustainable spatial development, which is one of the main contributions in terms of applied-science developments discussed in his research work.

The cluster type of organization of the farmyards is formulated as a key factor for a rational organization of economic activity with a continuous circular process with a closed waste-free cycle in the productions of the Food Industry.

The farmyards of the previous **AIC (agro-industrial)** and **IAC (industrial-agrarian)** complexes during their transformation into production enterprises within the agro-economic cluster contribute to the sustainable social development of the municipalities by providing new jobs, as well as keeping some of the existing ones.

The main contribution of the work is the thesis that the "cluster approach" in the modern planning of agro-economic territories is a leading factor for their sustainable development, which the author substantiates theoretically and practically.

The second 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 is focused on the study of the central urban parts of the small town and the possible ways for their modern development. In the process of research, it was found that in their historical development, the public spaces in the central part of the small town often change partially their functional purpose, as they also violate their established scale, and some more, lose the connection with the green system, as all that had been the result of a somewhat heterogeneous urban design.

The monograph offers a theoretical structural-and-developmental model for the possibilities of integrating the elements of public service, historical heritage, and not least, the green system but though diverse and influential public spaces, which proves to be the leading scientific and applied contribution of the work.

For taking part in the contest, Assoc. Prof. Vlasarev presents a significant volume of other publications and materials:

- reports published in non-refereed journals in edited collective volumes - 34 pcs. (half co-authored);
- teaching aids - lecture courses on industrial buildings and spatial planning of industrial territories - 2 pcs. (co-authored);
- textbooks - 3 pcs.;
- guidebooks - 4 pcs.;
- guidebook on scientific projects - 3 pcs.
- citations in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world databases - 3 pcs. (co-authored); citations in collective volumes with scientific peer-review - 31;
- build-to-order author's architectural projects - 3 pcs.

The creative work of the candidate in the field of design and spatial planning covers various projects and personal realizations (built buildings, facilities, etc.). In the table of scientometric indicators, Assoc. Prof. Vlasarev has introduced and included only three of the buildings designed by him. Apart from it all, (according to the enclosed list of projects and the turn-key projects over the 2014 - 2018 period) 17 sites remain, as some of these are presented as illustration material in the main monograph. The overall data and the information provided conceives the belief of a **reasonable and meaningful creative path** that the candidate has endured so far.

4. Critical notes, questions to pose, and recommendations for future work

I have none whatsoever.

5. Conclusion

The materials submitted by the candidate fully meet the current requirements of DASRBA and the Regulations for the Implementation of DASRBA, as well as the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of VSU "Lyuben Karavelov". The report enclosed shows that the candidate meets more than the minimum national requirements for certain groups of indicators for acquiring the academic position of "Professor".

Having considered all the above, I propose that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimitar Vlasarev be elected "Professor" in the professional field 5.7 Architecture, Civil Engineering, and Geodesy, in the "Territorial and Landscape Planning and Urban Planning" scientific specialty.

Reviewer: ...



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arch. Jordan Hristov