

Rose Square in Liepaja until the World War II

Abstract

City is a complex and multi-functional organism whose architectural spatial planning is affected by the layout of streets and squares. Liepaja city center building evolved around the New Market Square.

Liepaja as an industrial and resort city flourished at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, thus promoting the development of architecture and garden art. A great attention was paid to improvement of the environment. The visual image of Liepaja center was formed through the interaction of two cultures – Russian and German, and it reflected the latest European urban development ideas in city environment design of the corresponding period. Rose Square, designed in 1911, became the symbol of Liepaja and it demonstrates the effect of the national political system and ideology on changes of Liepaja city center's structural, functional and artistic design.

Topicality of the research: Architects' creative input in forming Liepaja's image at the beginning of the 20th century has been largely ignored. No research has been done on multi-functional center building and planning composition around Rose Square in the period between both World Wars. Due to this, traditions of development of high quality balanced urban environment have been lost. Without anticipating the improvement of Liepaja city center building composition and developing a detailed plan as a part of the official Liepaja City Spatial Plan for the period from 2011 to 2023, previous generations' contribution to the growth of Liepaja is belittled and destroyed.

The main aim of this research:

- to determine the changes in the architectonic special composition of Liepaja city center since the beginning of the 20th century till the World War II and to analyze the planning composition and landscape design of Rose Square until the World War II,
- to study planning and building composition of Liepaja's center and Rose Square to pay tribute to the architects and gardeners' mastery in creating and highlighting Liepaja's image and identity before World War II.

The main results: This research provides valuable information for future local territorial development plans, focusing attention on cultural values and identity.

Material and methods: This study is based on research and analysis of cartographic, archive and photo materials, as well as on a comparison of the use of rose plantations in German cities and Liepaja in the corresponding era.