

## **Kleihues + Kleihues develops ideas to revitalize Berlin's City West**

**Berlin – The architectural office Kleihues + Kleihues presents plans for an identity-endowing, vibrant district around Hardenbergstrasse in Charlottenburg.**

Berlin's City West is a popular place again. Plans are being drawn up, investments made, and construction work is underway: the Bikini-Haus, the renovation of the Zoo-Palast and the "Zoo-Fenster" tower are bringing life to the almost forgotten western part of the city. The Berlin-based architectural office Kleihues + Kleihues has also been preoccupied with the further development of City West for many years. Jan Kleihues is particularly interested in the hitherto neglected and partially idle plot of land behind Bahnhof Zoo. Buildings –amongst others - belonging to the Institute of Federal Real Estate (BIMA), Berlin's transport services BVG, the Technische Universität zu Berlin and Berliner Bank currently occupy the 119,000 m<sup>2</sup>-large site between Hardenberg- and Müller-Breslau-Strasse and Jebens- und Fasanenstrasse. According to the plans of Kleihues + Kleihues, a modern district with residential, office and commercial space could be created here which will blend in harmoniously with the existing environment and enhance Charlottenburg's *Gründerzeit* surroundings. "The site offers us the opportunity to realise a comprehensive urban concept which will serve many different interests and help revitalize the western city centre. Over 80,000 m<sup>2</sup> of living space could be created," stresses Kleihues. The plan also includes space for retail and catering facilities, offices and the Technische Universität Berlin. Planners envisage a blend of typically urban blocks, high-rises and green areas.

Back in 1999, in collaboration with Florian Mausbach, the then President of the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR), Jan Kleihues' father, Prof. Josef P. Kleihues, outlined initial visions for a comprehensive urban development concept for the site with the working title "Europolis". Almost 13 years later, Jan Kleihues is picking up on the subject again and developing new ideas which satisfy today's conditions and requirements. He is convinced that the site behind Bahnhof Zoo has great potential: "It is the biggest, continuous and most accessible site in the City West, but it has sadly been underestimated and neglected in the past few decades."

After initial discussions, owners and investors expressed their interest in the concept. Apart the ideas developed collaboratively by Josef P. Kleihues and Mausbach and Jan Kleihues' own new plans, other development plans have been put forward repeatedly in the past 17 years: in 1996, under the supervision of Hans Stimman, a masterplan was drawn up for the inner city development that was based on a context-related design. In 2010, plans to develop a Berlin Ferris wheel by Great Wheel AG became more concrete. A year later, the city of Berlin announced a competition for the development of a university campus on the site. So far, none of the ideas have materialised. With the plans of Kleihues + Kleihues, it is hoped that the debate will be resumed again and the next step taken to develop a vibrant neighbourhood in City West.

Kleihues + Kleihues is an internationally active architectural practice that focuses on architecture, urban planning, interior design, landscape architecture and general planning. Josef P. Kleihues, planning director of the 1984 International Architecture Exhibition (IBA) in Berlin, laid the foundation stone when he opened his architectural practice in 1962. In his capacity as planning director, he also coined the term "critical reconstruction", a key concept in architectural theory.

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Since 1996, his son Jan Kleihues and business partner Norbert Hensel have continued to run the practice under the name Kleihues + Kleihues. Current projects include the National Museum Oslo in Norway, the headquarters of the German Federal Intelligence Service in Berlin, the reconstruction and extension of the Pergamon Museum and the development of the Kröpcke-Center in Hanover.

If you have any queries or interview questions or require pictures and more detailed information, please contact:

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