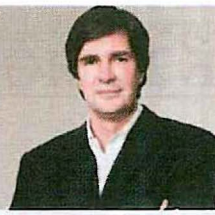




Irish Investment Group's Solaris Center project has been green-lit

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Lokale Immobilia talks to Miasteczko Wilanów master-plan architect Guy Perry

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# LOKALE IMMOBILIA

Warsaw Business Journal's weekly supplement on real estate, construction and development

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## 'Family on its Own' popularity

Banks have already granted over 100,000 subsidies within the framework of "Family on its Own," the government's popular mortgage-subsidy program for first-time home buyers. Although the number of people interested in the program is gradually increasing, it is planned to terminate in 2012. According to data gathered by Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK), as of April 15, 2011 as many as 100,222 families had benefited from subsidies granted within the program's framework.

## Saskie Zacisze partnership

Mak Dom has acquired 51 percent of shares in Diamentic Estate. The two real estate investors have entered into a partnership to work on Saskie Zacisze, a complex of single-family houses in Warsaw's Wawer district. The offer includes three types of homes: detached houses of 224 sqm or semi-detached houses of 188 sqm or 224 sqm. About a quarter of the houses have already been built. The whole investment, begun in Q1 2010, is planned to be completed by the end of 2011.

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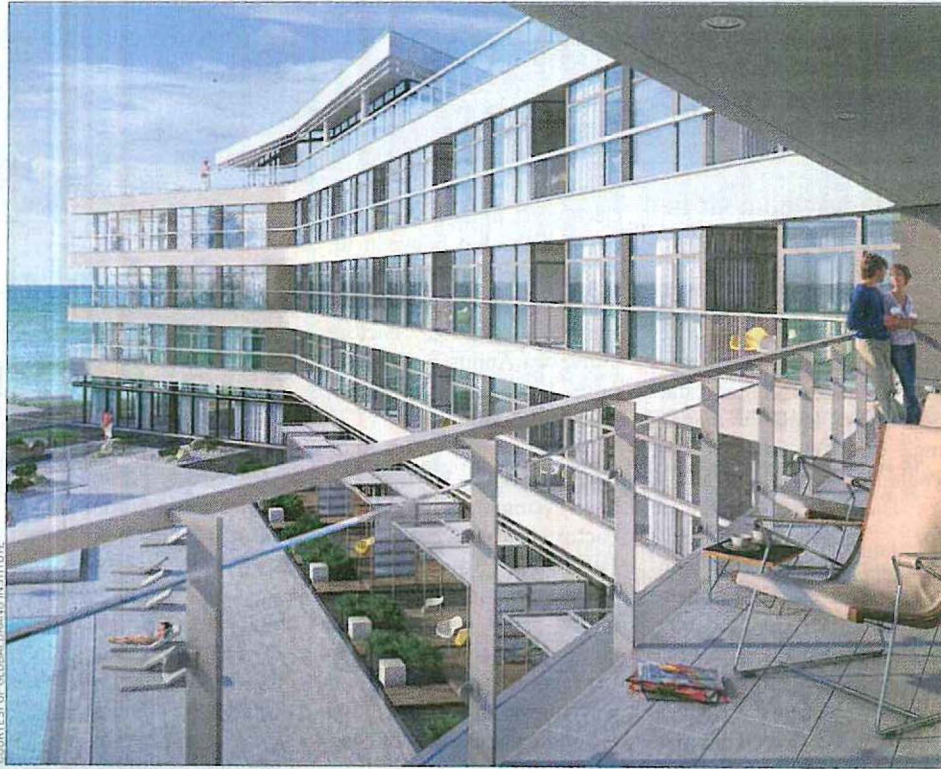
## Residential

# Dune project construction launch

The development will be located on Mielno's seafront

Within the next few weeks developer and investor Mielno Holding-Firmus Group will launch construction on its Dune apartment building in the seaside resort of Mielno, Zachodniopomorskie voivodship. The scheme, scheduled for completion in autumn next year, will be characterized by its location just meters away from the shore of the Baltic sea.

Dune, which was designed by the Mellon Architekci studio, will comprise turn-key apartments priced at zł.7,950 per sqm. The majority of the units will be two- and three-room apartments sized from 30 sqm to 53 sqm, although the development will also include a number of penthouses



The value of the Dune investment is estimated at zł.52 million

es of almost 145 sqm.

The value of the Dune investment, financing for which Mielno Holding-Firmus Group has already secured from Noble Bank, is estimated at zł.52 million. Budimex has recently been selected as the general contractor of the project, while Gleeds will be responsible for the management of the investment process.

Mielno Holding-Firmus Group is a group of companies active in the Polish, Norwegian and French real estate markets. The group's completed and ongoing projects in Poland include Mielno Tarasy and Rezydencja Park, both of which are located in Mielno. The firm is now also planning a major residential-commercial scheme called Beach City in the same resort.

Adam Zdrodowski

## Shopping center

# Bella Dolina to move forward

The developer expects the mall to receive over five million visitors every year

Developer Mayland Real Estate and Rzeszów City Hall have signed a land-swap agreement that will enable the construction of Bella Dolina, a new shopping center. With 90,000 sqm of GLA, it is expected to become the largest retail project in the region. The development is scheduled to open at the end of 2013.

Bella Dolina will be located in the fast-developing Staromieście district in the northern part of Rzeszów, Podkarpackie voivodship, between the city's downtown area and Rzeszów International Airport in Jesionka. The mall will comprise 170

retail units, entertainment facilities and a parking lot for 2,800 cars. Anchor tenants will include a hypermarket and a large DIY store.

According to Mayland's estimates, some 730,000 potential clients live within Bella Dolina's catchment area. The center is expected to attract more than five million visitors each year.

Established in 2006, Mayland Real Estate specializes in the development of regional shopping centers. In 2008, the company delivered the Karolinka, Pogoria and Jantar malls located in Opole, Dąbrowa Górnicza and Słupsk, respectively. Within the next few years, the firm plans to deliver retail projects in Poland totalling 240,000 sqm of GLA.

Adam Zdrodowski



Bella Dolina is expected to open at the end of 2013



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BUSINESS JOURNAL



## BTC Office Center changes hands

IVG Institutional Funds has acquired the BTC Office Center project in Warsaw from BTC. The transaction, whose value has not been disclosed, marks IVG's second office property acquisition in the capital in recent months after its purchase of the Victoria office building in October last year for around €29 million. The BTC Office Center is located in the capital's Mokotów district.

## EGIS in GTC's Corius building

Hungarian pharmaceutical firm EGIS has leased almost 1,700 sqm of office space in the Corius building of Globe Trade Centre's Okęcie Business Park complex in Warsaw. Corius, which will deliver 9,100 sqm of class-A office area and will be the third office building in the business park, is currently under construction and is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.

## Arvato stays in Panattoni Park Poznań II

Arvato Services Polska has renewed its lease contract for 12,600 sqm at the Panattoni Park Poznań II logistics complex in Wielkopolskie voivodship. The tenant, which belongs to the Arvato AG group and is part of the Bertelsmann AG media corporation, uses the leased area for warehousing purposes and its book-dispatch services.

## Dom Development eyes Warsaw land

Warsaw Stock Exchange-listed residential developer Dom Development has signed a preliminary purchase agreement with Wojskowe Towarzystwo Budownictwa Społecznego "Kwaterna" concerning almost 99,000 sqm of land on ul. Powązkowska in the capital's Żoliborz district. The value of the transaction amounted to over zł.168 million. However, a number of conditions have yet to be met before the initial sale is finalized. ●

## Urban planning

# Don't fence us in

**Lokale Immo­bil­ia talks to French-American architect and urban planner Guy Perry, president and founding partner of design and development services company IN-VI, about his Miasteczko Wilanów project in Warsaw and the problems of urban planning in Poland**

**Adam Zdrodowski:** The Miasteczko Wilanów scheme has won international recognition, but critics have said that not all of what the original master plan called for has been realized. What is your assessment of the project, now a decade after its development started?

**Guy Perry:** I believe that of what has been built over the last 10 years, 90 percent is consistent with what was intended. The biggest difficulty is regarding what has not yet been built and in what order it was executed. I came to Poland in 1999 to work on the Town Center for a Canadian/American developer. It was to be the first phase and heart of a new community; hopefully we will see it coming up – of course 12 years later.

It is also a miracle that the project survived until 2010, given that virtually the only entrance to the development forced one to pass by an abandoned carcass of a city hall and failed residential development.

The density west of Al. Rzeczypospolitej is considerably higher than was originally intended – but to [Ostoja Wilanów developer] Fadesa-Polnord's credit, they have chosen to reduce the density that they had already received permits for – something rare in Poland.

Another component that has detracted significantly from the image and value of the community is the disregard or ambiguous responsibility of the residual spaces between buildings: like the Royal Axis and Klimczaka Canal [official name *Wolicki Canal* – ed.]. Both of these spaces should be the highlight of the project – beautiful and organized linear parks for the people of the community and Warsaw – instead they are too often left to the dogs.

Through our local actions we are trying to improve this situation, but with little tradition of public space maintenance in Warsaw beyond a few tourist attractions in the center, it is an uphill battle to even have decent grass at zł.1 per sqm. [But I am confident we] will find solutions.

**A major retail project is now being planned within Miasteczko Wilanów. There are some fears that the scheme could be yet another**

**mall, incompatible with the concept of an open, resident-friendly estate. What's your view?**

To our knowledge the potential interior shopping component will represent about one-third of what is now called "Downtown Wilanów." The remainder is still planned to be organized around the traditional streets and squares that have always been promised for the heart of the community. This is an objective shared by Polnord, Capital Park and PKO BP Inwestycje. It is also the objective of the current administration.

It is likely that IN-VI will be working on the design of the public spaces, and if so we will do our best to keep promises made a decade ago. Some interior spaces and galleries have always been part of the concept of the center of Miasteczko Wilanów. I am hopeful that GTC and their architects will rise to the occasion and deliver something of enduring commercial and urban value.

**Do you believe that large, architecturally cohesive projects such as Miasteczko Wilanów are the future of urban planning in Poland and elsewhere?**

In order to develop sustainable and qualitatively competitive cities this is the only way to go, but I have to be honest – they are really difficult to pull off. You need a good vision from the start, people who will stick with that vision for decades. A city has to support it regardless of political vicissitudes, someone (in our case citizens) has to be willing to fill in the gaps.

Unable to maintain the very basics, Central European cities are a mess, the majority of the suburban areas are like giant villages with strip development. Good urban planners have no authority to pull these things together. That's unfortunate, since this work is not being done now, with relatively cheap labor. They will be even less affordable to implement in the future.

It is much easier to plug your mall or gated community onto an existing highway and let the residents drive around to make their "community" – a path we took in the US during the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. That path has put our



Cohesive urban plans are the future, says Mr. Perry, but they are not easy to pull off

carbon footprint through the roof and has exploded our waistlines. People will simply no longer have the option to walk, and public transport cannot efficiently accommodate this fragmented urban development pattern. The US is trying to implement new planning policies, but once you go that route it takes decades to come back, if ever.

**Marina Mokotów, another project of this kind in Warsaw, is not regarded an example of proper urban planning. How do you see it?**

Marina Mokotów is simply a gated community, like many, that for marketing purposes plays on the fears of insecurity. It celebrates its "gatedness" as if we were located in a war zone.

*Newsweek* published a statistic a couple of years ago regarding the chances of being killed by a gunshot in countries throughout the world. Poland in this respect was safer than Switzerland – not many gated communities there.

We have had virtually no serious crime in Miasteczko Wilanów – I hope it will stay that way. When the street is everyone's business, lots of doors, no fences, it polices itself. It is great to see joggers and dog-walkers out at midnight.

**"What I see happening around major Polish cities is not unlike what we saw decades ago in the US and Western Europe"**

**In your opinion, what are Poland's biggest problems when it comes to urban planning, and how could urban planning in the country be improved?**

What I see happening around major Polish cities is not unlike what we saw decades ago in the US and Western Europe. I already mentioned the US; in Western Europe [this type of urban planning] is simply illegal now. The idea that you can simply buy land on the urban fringe and build with basic infrastructure requirements is something from the last century.

It is unfortunate that the good architects and planners are so tied up trying to win small battles that they rarely make good politicians here. In Brazil, an architect of Polish decent, Jaime Lerner, not only became mayor of Curitiba, but governor of the state [of Parana] for two terms.

Planners, if they are both local and exposed to international experience – good and

bad – can really create long-term value for Polish cities and the economy, but not from the sidelines.

**What major projects is your company currently working on?**

We are working on a new community on the eastern edge of Poznań with an array of services: shops, schools, playgrounds, parks with lakes, even stables. A tram line is expected to pass through the heart of the community. The developer wants to make something very human and without gates.

We are also working on QBIK on ul. Woronicza, in Warsaw, which celebrates the transitional and semi-industrial character of the neighborhood through high volumes and vast expanses of glass.

The developer, Ghelamco, had the courage to orient shops and restaurants to the street and to celebrate the building's transparency and urbanity. ●