

SELSELEH REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.
Architectural and Planning group.
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REPORT: 1.1.35. - 18.4.35.
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A. REGIONAL PROJECTS.

1. HAMAM - NIAZABAD.

The hamam is complete except for:

- 1.1. Roof Paving.
- 1.2. The boiler and Tank room front walls which can only be completed after the boiler has been installed.
- 1.3. Services: The water reservoir has to be erected, the wells dug, the water pump, boiler and petrol tank installed. The boiler is ready in Hamadan and the purchase officer should collect it. Once the boiler is collected the remaining services and construction work can be completed and the Hamam will be ready for operation.
- 1.4. Dr. Ram Bux Singh has recommended that a 3 h.p. water pump he has converted to run on Bio Gas should be used for the Hamam to pump water to the reservoir if it is strong enough. He says this would be more efficient, given the scale of the bio gas plant, than trying to heat the water with it. It would be interesting to try this out as an experiment.

2. CENTRE FOR COLLECTIVE PROMOTION - SERAB SHEIKH ALI.

Progress:

The teachers room, toilets, aivans, interior and exterior finishes and external works remained over from last year and are now being completed.

Work has been slow on this project because:

Comment.

1. The village was not able to donate any workers during this period because of demands from agricultural work, many workers are in Tehran working and partly because they felt they had done their share having donated workers over a 3 month period last season. Paid workers are being used but even so a regular full force is difficult to maintain, because of the shortage.
2. The builders assigned early this season did a very bad job. They had to be replaced and most of their work rebuilt.
3. There are delays in the delivery of materials.

3/ LIME AND BRICK KILNS - KAMAR SIAH.

Progress.

Construction was delayed because water flooded the pits as the water table was too high. This problem was overcome by modifying the original design. Both kilns have now been constructed. The brick kiln has several problems the major one being that the soil, and therefore the brick has too much lime stone in it. The limestone may be removed either through sieving or through filter beds. Sieving is a laborious and expensive process. Ustad Adil says he can implement the bed system. It remains to be seen if this system can work.

Comment.

Several of the problems arose out of obtaining a site other than that recommended by the architects. The architects had recommended a site near where an old Kiln had been run in the past. (see report on Proposed Kiln at Kamar Siah 26.1.76. plus Report 16.12.75.) The soil of this site had been tested and found to be better than the site finally obtained. It is further away from the hills and had much less limestone in it. It was near a river and therefore assured free control of the water whereas at the present site a special water channel has been diverted and whoever controls this channel (the village headman) could control the Kiln. As there had been an old kiln run successfully near the site the water table was low enough to avoid the flooding that took place in the present site.

4. SCHOOL - FIRUZABAD

Progress.

Walls have been constructed upto the lintel stage and the building is progressing satisfactorily except that the builders say that materials are not reaching them on time.

5. SCHOOL - KAKA REZA.

Progress.

After being informed that the site had been levelled the architects went to layout the building but found the site in fact had not been levelled. As soon as this is done the building can be laid out and construction begin.

B. ALASHTAR PROJECTS.

1. Petrol Pump -

Facade tile work and windows grills remain.

2. Care takers house.

The foundations are being dug.

3. TEACHERS HOUSING.-Three units.

The walls of one of the houses is approaching lintel stage. The second and third houses are laid out but construction delayed because of land disputes. Water mains were discovered under one of the house but Abul farsi and Danesh say these can be diverted.

4. KINDERGARTEN.

The walls are being constructed.

5. RAHNEMAIEE SCHOOL.

External foundations were laid out 5 weeks ago and internal foundations a week ago. Foundations have not been dug because no workers have been assigned to the site.

6. HOUSE ABOVE AMIR

Footings are being constructed.

COMMENT.

Although the acquiring of land and the organisation of labour and materials is not our responsibility we feel bound to comment on these as they closely effect our work. Most of the buildings are being constructed slower than they should be because of the above three reasons.

1. Land.

Most of the Alashtar projects started late because land was not finally obtained till about 6 weeks ago. The architects had identified two optional sites for each building as early as last October and requested these sites be obtained. In the case of the Rahnamaiee school the site was changed thrice because of land ownership problems. In each case the architects had to redesign the school to fit the new site. The present design, being implemented is a slight modification of the 2nd. design and not fully suited to its location. Pressure to begin construction did not allow complete redesigning.

In the case of the 2nd. and 3rd. Teachers Housing although the buildings are laid out it is still not definite we will be able to build in those sites. In the case of the Students Housing Project designs have not been developed because there seems to be no indication that a site will be available.

The problem of land acquisition for specific projects is related to the wider problem of obtaining development land for implementation of the Master Plan and will be further considered there.

2. Labour.

The architects recommended that each project have at least one good builder made responsible for it. This would insure better quality work and speedier construction. The architects drafted a builders questionnaire and had all the local builders fill this in. From this list they suggested which builders would be good for which project in a meeting with Adil, Danesh and Bafekf about two months ago. Except for the school at Firuzabadin no other project has a good builder been assigned. The results are poor quality building as in Serab sheikh Ali and slow work. There is a real problem in that some of the better builders are asking for more than the project is willing to pay. Furthermore there is also a general shortage of workers in Selseh during this period and most of the projects are under manned.

There are two possible solutions.

i) We could pay more for good builders. At present our builders wages range from 30 to 50 Tomans a day while the good builders are demanding 120 tomans, which is apparently the market rate for them. We think they could accept 80-90 tomans.

ii) We could contract our buildings to good builders. Judging from the Firuzabad School project which is contracted, construction is quicker when the building is contracted. This would also overcome the worker shortage as it then becomes the contractors responsibility. The contract becomes responsible for labour while the project provides the materials. The school has been contracted for 140 tomans per square metre, projects within Alashtar could be contracted for less. We recommend the contract system but keeping three points in mind.

1. The contract must be with a builder from the region so that the building budget is invested within Selseh.
2. The contract must clearly define the builders and the projects responsibilities. The Firuzabad school contract has not done this sufficiently causing some disagreements.

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1. In the daily wage method it is in the workers interest to spin out the construction time as much as possible.

3. The contract should be with a builder who actually works on the site rather than a middle man which is the case in Firuzabad. With no middle man the contract price could be lower.
The architects have worked out a Co operative contract system which would give all the workers on site an interest in doing the job quickly and also distribute earnings more equitably between, skilled builders, builders help and labourers. This system should be tried out.

3. Materials.

Prior to the commencement of several projects the architects gave a detailed list of materials required for these projects to Danesh, and in all cases the type of materials required were made clear to him. In some projects there have nevertheless been delays in materials delivery thus delays in construction. This has been partially due to materials shortage and partially due to a lack of organisation in the system of deliveries. A more efficient system of ordering purchasing and particularly delivering materials, is required. The architects have worked out a method which should help. However to be implemented requires that each projects should have a responsible builder and that there should be a person coordinating the order, purchase and delivery of materials for all projects. Danesh appears to have too much to do and he should be given an assistant to help him fulfill this role and furthermore someone who would keep this function going in his absence. Now if Danesh has to be absent for a period there is no one to carry out his function.

Uncertainty about the availability of building materials can also increase the amount of time taken in designing. For example early in the season we were told that bricks would be difficult to obtain but stone would be plentiful. Thus both the Kindergarten and the Rahnemaiee which had been designed for brick had to be completely re designed for stone. Recently bricks have been obtained in large amounts and the architects are now told that stone will be in short supply. The bricks arrived in time for the Kindergarten to be designed back for brick construction; but since the Rahnemaiee has already been laid out before we were told of the changes in materials availability it may be too late to change. The main thing to appreciate is that a building designed for one material cannot easily be constructed in another without major re designing.

C. MASTER PLAN. ALASHTAR.

A preliminary master plan was developed by the architects in October '75. This was approved by the project committee, Dr. Rahnema and the Ostandars office. It was stressed at the time by the architects that alot more work needed to be done before the plan could be implemented. It was also stressed that the plan could not be developed and implemented unless the following was carried out. (Report Sept.-Oct. '75 pp 4,5.)

1. "Good employment opportunities and basic facilities spread in villages throughout the region" (Report Sept-Oct P5) -- Except for the 5 regional projects mentioned earlier, o of which only one is employment generating (the Kilns) and esta blishment of some weaving looms, no significant small scale industry has been sta rted. Thus the move by villagers to come and settle in Alashtar increases increasing the number of building applications and an undesirable extension of the town. Lack of action on the small scale industries threatens the fundamental concept of the Master plan, (and indeed the fundamental development policy of the Selseleh Project) which is that Alashtar should be a place where "people come for short periods to market, for recreation, and services and then return to their villages" where they continue to live and be employed. (Report Sept-Oct p 5)
2. A survey of Alashtar giving essential information on land ownership pa tterns and housing conditions. A survey was prepared and carried out by the architects a and Mr. Niazi thorough the Front Line Workers. It was agreed that with Mr. Niazis assistance the information would be soon collated. (Mr. Niazi has particular exper tise in statistics and has carried out surveys before) (Report Nov Dec '75 p 2.)

It was felt that the surveys would not give suffecient information on Land ownership, which was necessary to decide where roads and alleys were to go and which development land to obtain. On danesh's suggestion, sup ported by the architects, it was agreed with Mr. Bafikr approximately 6 weeks ago that he would assign some front line workers to find out about land pwnership. This has not yet been done, Lacking such information the architects have recently discovered that an area w which appeared agricultural has infact been sold in small plots for building and a road proposed in the master plan goes over several such plots creating anxiety among the people.

On the importa nce of collectijg such information, the architects stated as early as October '75. " If these surveys are not carried out and collated there will be very little base data on which a plan ca n be made for the building needs of the next seas on. The result will be a continuation of peice meal

planning, stop-gap measures and mistakes made because there was insufficient information on the existing situation." (Report Sept. Oct. '75 p 6)

The third most important requirement to implement the Master Plan was:

3. "A Land and Housing Policy that will achieve the following:
 - a) Control on Land Costs.
 - b) Control On Rents.
 - c) Easy availability of land required for development by the Master Plan." (Report Sept. - Oct. '75)

In repeated meetings with the project the architects stressed that a Master Plan had two essentially inter-dependent parts. One was the Physical Plan ie Locating Green Spaces, Housing, Commercial zones, roads and alleys etc. and the second was the Legal-Social-Economic Plan of which a Land and Housing Policy was a part. The first part of the Master Plan could not be implemented without the second part. For example, without a control on land costs many people are wanting to build outside the building area zoned by the master plan because land inside is too expensive. Without a control on rents more people than would have been the case, want to build their own houses because as tenants their rents are rising they are afraid of eviction by their landlords and their rented houses are deteriorating because there is no policy requiring landlords to repair their houses. Finally without Development Land being available to the project, if the project forbids people who want to build outside the building zone or in the path of a proposed road, it cannot offer alternative sites or any other form of compensation.

On presenting this case most recently (2 months ago) to the committee the architects were told by Mr. Bafikr that it had been decided Mr. Qazi Noori had been appointed head of the City Committee and through him the Land and Housing Policy aspects could be implemented. The architects had detailed discussions with Mr. Qazi Noori two days later on what was required. Since then they have been informed Mr. Qazi Noori has declined this responsibility.

What the project has to appreciate is that the development and implementation of a Master Plan requires the collaboration of sociologists, economists and legalists as much as architects. If those project personnel who have these required backgrounds cannot collaborate fully on the master Plan then additional personnel are required if the job is to be done.

However to ease the pressure on the project by people who want to build and to try to implement the Master Plan as much as possible, the architects have taken the following actions.

1. We have seen approximately 150 plots of land where people want to build. Of these approximately 50 can be given building permission without reservation. The rest have plots below the 150m² minimum or lie in the path of a proposed road or outside the building zone.
2. To try to allow more people to build we have been modifying the master plan slightly so that fewer building plots are effected.
3. We have carried out a Land ownership survey of one quarter of the town. This was only possible for us after we did 4. below.
4. Roads and alleys for atleast 70% of the town were laid out or shown to the people. From peoples responses to this we came to know where peoples plots were and where our roads crossed them.
5. We have worked out a more detailed Land and Housing Policy for the Town. This has included for example a Land Costs Zone Plan for the town which now needs to be taken up for official ratification to implement Land Cost Control.

Despite these actions many people have gone ahead and built outside the building zones or in the path of proposed roads, although told by the architects not to do so and without having recieved building permission. Without a policy of compensation (or knowing what the projects legal rights are) the Project cannot enforce the prohibition of building where it contradicts the Master Plan without creating hardship and justifiable dissatisfaction amongst the people. This reinforces the fact that the Physical part of the Master Plan cannot be implemented without the Legal- Social and Economic part.

D. FUTURE PROJECTS.

At present the architects have 10 projects underway as well as work related to the Master Plan. All construction must be completed atleast a month before winter (to give buidings t time to dry out) ie by November '76. Much of the building work done through last winter had to be re-built. Hence th the importance of quick construction and delivery of mater ials. The existing projects will absorb a large amount of t the architects time. However the following additional projects, within the previously agreed program, could be embarked on.

1. REGIONAL PROJECTS.

1.1. Hamams.

Some existing Hamams in the region could be renovated and put back into operation or new hamams built.

1.2. Centre for Collective Promotion.

Some more centres could be established either by renovating existing buildings or building anew.

1.3 Kilns.

On the experience gained in constructing the present Kilns some more Kilns should be built. Several people have offered sites ane both its potentia l to make the region self - reliant in building materia ls and its employment generating qualities, makes such a project a priority.

2. ALASHTAR PROJECTS.

1. Low Cost Housing.

The architects have designed a cluster of two storey vaulted houses. Besides their obvious practical need given Alashtar housing shortage this would a lso be an experimental building and training project. The Yazdi masons have been consulted in the design. Discussions have also begun with the Building and H Housing Research Centre in Tehran (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning) to collaborate on this project, particularly with regard to providing petroleum based mud bricks (Mulch Bricks) A cpmarison betw een fired brick, mulc brick and mud brick will be made on cost, and environmental criteria in building this cluster. The training program begun with the Niyaabad Ha mam w ll be extended into the construction of these units. The architects have several optional sites for this project one of which must be obtained as soon as possible.

B. MASTER PLAN ALASHTAR

Originally the architects were told that the preliminary plan would be approved by the Khorromabad Ostandars' office without the need for referral to Tehran. The architects have now been informed that a full presentation will have to be made to the Council in Tehran for approval. The architects are now involved in developing the master plan for such a presentation. To develop the master plan to a suitable level the following is required.

1. An accurate map of Alashtar as it exists. This was originally requested in September '75. Two months ago the Ostandari promised to send a surveyor. A surveyor was sent a month ago, for one afternoon and we are now in the process of requesting his return to complete his job.
2. Drawings of the previous plan proposed for Alashtar, particularly for water supply pipe runs and other services. This was requested from the Technical office of Khorromabad but has not yet been received.
3. Government plans for roads, industries and buildings in the region and in Alshatar.

HABITAT - HUMAN SETTLEMENTS CONFERENCE - VANCOUVER

The members of the architectural group had been invited to contribute to the Habitat Forum during May and June. The architects involvement in Habitat dated back to the spring of 1975, before coming to Luristan. The group presented a series of workshops as part of the conference, and participated in various discussions and seminars. There was a great deal of interest in the Selseleh Project from many people at the conference. We were able to make contacts with people working on development projects in other areas, and to discuss common problems. We would like to encourage an ongoing dialogue and information exchange with these other projects and organizations, and continually feed this into the Selseleh Project.

Of particular interest at Vancouver were discussions on land policy and settlements. This helped us to clarify our ideas on these problems in the Alashtar Plan. We are preparing a presentation on the Human Settlements Conference for the project, and will give it in a couple of weeks time.