The Garden City Movement

5. September 2014 - Eli Støa

Dalen hageby, Trondheim. Foto: Tore Brantenberg
Ebenezer Howard: “Town and country must be married, and out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilization” (p.10)
"A house with a feeling"
Andrew Jackson Downing, USA 1850

To the right: Plan of Riverside, Illinois, 1869
(Ill: Fishman, 1987)
Other inspirations

**New Lanark**, Scotland (1786) built for cotton mill workers by David Dale and developed further by his son-in-law Robert Owen – Welsh philanthropist and social reformer
Other inspirations

Port Sunlight, by Lever (Liverpool, 1888), built for workers at Sunlight Soap factory

Bournville, Birmingham (1893-1900), built for workers at Cadbury chocolate factory
The main idea

To unite town and country in a new synthesis, as a reaction towards the miserable housing conditions for the working class in the cities (Brantenberg, 2002)

Foto: Miller, 1989

Letchworth Garden City, ca. 1905
"..all the advantages of the most energetic and active town life, and all the beauty and delight of the country may be secured in combination" (Howard, 1945:45-46).
Ebenezer Howard:
“Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform (1898)

“But neither the Town magnet nor the Country magnet represent the full plan and purpose of nature. Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together. The two magnets must be made one” (p.9)
Ideological background

The villa suburbs of the bourgeois (from the 1700s)

- Separation between work and housing
- High “status” moved from the city centre to the suburbs
  - ‘Family’ got a new meaning
  - Class antagonism
- “The genuine suburban landscape”
  - Housing in a park like environment (open and deep front gardens)
  - Asymmetry and formal diversity
  - Picturesque, emotional, eclectic aesthetics

(Fishman, 1987:145)
Ebenezer Howard: “Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform” (1898)

Physical principles

- Satellites in the outskirts of existing cities
  - Surrounded by farm land
  - Small industries
  - Maximum ca. 30,000 habitants
- Divided into neighborhoods with approx. 6,000 inhabitants
GARDEN-CITY

AGRICULTURAL LAND 5000 ACRES
POPULATION 32,000

CITY, 1,000 ACRES
NEW FORESTS
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
NEW FORESTS

CHILDREN'S COTTAGE HOMES

COW PASTURES

ARTESSIAN WELLS

BRICKFIELDS

BROOKS SIDING

MAIN LINE RAILWAY

NEW FORESTS

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

LARGE FARMS

FARM FOR EPILEPTICS

FRUIT FARMS

ASYLUMS FOR BLIND AND DEAF

HOUSE AND GARDENS

CENTRAL AVENUE

PARK

HOMES AND GARDENS

N.B.
DIAGRAM ONLY.
PLAN CANNOT BE DRAWN UNTIL SITE SELECTED

SCALE
0 ¼ ½ ¾ 1 MILE
WARD AND CENTRE

GARDEN CITY

N.B.
A DIAGRAM ONLY.
PLAN MUST DEPEND UPON SITE SELECTED.

SCALE

0 110 220 440 YDS. = 1/4 MILE
Ebenezer Howard: “Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform” (1898)

Organizational / financial principles:

- Garden City companies were established by help of private investors.
- ‘Voluntary socialism’: Increased values returned to the community
  - Local self government (“Social city”)

“..by buying land at depressed agricultural prices, the community could create its own urban land values and use them to finance a local welfare state” (Hall & Ward, 1998)
Examples

- Letchworth Garden City, England (1903-1919)
- Sunnyside Gardens, New York (1924-1928)
  - Ullevål Hageby, Oslo (1915-22)
  - Lille Tøyen, Oslo (1916-22)
  - Øvre Rosenborg (1922-23)
Letchworth Garden City
(1903-1919), England
Architects: Barry Parker / Raymond Unwin

Foto: Miller, 1989
Letchworth Garden City (1903-1919), England
Architects: Barry Parker / Raymond Unwin

• Hertfordshire 56 km north of London
• Combination of monumental axis and winding roads
• Small scale housing boliger (terracced housing)
• Planned for ca. 35,000 inhabitants – reached 15,000 in 1938 and 32,000 in 1991
• Recreating the image of a picturesque English village with low density
Letchworth: Architectural design

- Traditionalism: ‘Vernacular style’ (Arts & Crafts)
- Detached and semi-detached houses
  - Green streets
  - Community centre, park: “village green” and public buildings
- Growing focus on new housing requirements: sanitation systems, ventilation, daylight
HEALTH of the COUNTRY
COMFORTS of the TOWN

LETCHWORTH
The FIRST GARDEN CITY

39a. & b. The evolution of housing layout by Parker and Unwin. Above, Birds Hill, 1906. This estate layout incorporates a village green and a cul-de-sac, now very restricted for motor access, together with a communal playground and a planted buffer zone to separate housing from the adjoining factory estate. Below, ‘Parmore’, 1907-9. This estate reached the scale of a self-contained neighbourhood, including a community institute, now the Hillshott School.
“Det var en nostalgisk drøm om en førindustriell verden, og da versjonen av hagebyen senere ble gjennomført i Letchworth, ble den hensiktsmessig utfylt med Arts and Craft-formspråket i Raymond Unwins arkitektur” (Brantenberg, 2002:26)
Sunnyside Gardens, New York (1924–1928)
Arch: Henry Wright / Clarence Stein / Frederick Ackerman

Objective
- Reasonable and adequate housing for low income groups: "Decent homes for all"
- Cooperative models for ownership
- Demonstrate advantages with mass production of housing

Localisation
- Queens, 15 min with subway to Manhattan
Sunnyside Gardens, New York (1924–1928)
Arch: Henry Wright / Clarence Stein / Frederick Ackerman

- Linear terraced housing and low apartment buildings
- 1202 standardised units
- Large urban quarters (90–100 units in each quarter)
  - Community house
- Parking houses: carfree outdoor areas
- Combination of flat and gabled roofs
Sunnyside Gardens, New York (1924–1928)
Arch: Henry Wright / Clarence Stein / Frederick Ackerman
Traditional and modern elements

- Identifiable housing units, well known / traditional elements (porches, chimneys, cornices, windows etc)

- Modern movement expressed in the overall area plan, the inbuilt furnishing and functional plan layout providing light and air
The Nordic version of the Garden city idea

«Own home» («egne-hjem») movement

- Decent and healthy houses for the working class
- Small houses with private gardens – the best for common people ("almuen")
- Traditional housing from the countryside transferred to the cities
- Modest public involvement – private industrialist built the houses
The Nordic version of the Garden city idea

“På den ene side representerte de en anti-industriell reaksjon som knyttet det selveide hjem til en konservativ eierfilosofi med røtter på landsbygda. På den annen side var bevegelsen preget av et mer moderne, kollektivt og industrielt tilpasset idégrunnlag”

“On one hand they represented an anti urban reaction with connected the home to a conservative homeowner philosophy with roots in the countryside. On the other hand, the movement was marked by a more modern, collective ideological foundation adapted to industrialism” (Annaniassen, 1991:57)
Arctanderbyen, Oslo 1911

Arkitekt: Morgenstierne & Eide
Foto og tegninger: T. Brantenberg, 2002
Ullevål Hageby, Oslo (1915-22)

Reguleringsplan: Oscar Hoff / Arkitekt: Harald Hals m.fl
Lille Tøyen Hageby (1916-22)
Ark: M.Poulsson
Lille Tøyen Hageby (1916-22)
Arkitekt: M. Poulsson
Lille Tøyen Hageby (1916-22)
Ark: M. Poulsson
Øvre Rosenborg, 1922-23
Ark: Klingenberg / Pedersen
Foto: Brantenberg, 2002
Øvre Rosenborg, 1922-23
Ark: Klingenberg / Pedersen
What happened?

"Garden cities were (..) intended to become the perfect antithesis of noisy, dirty industrial towns. Of course, the principle was soon reduced to a planning exercise.."  
(Förster, 2006:12)
What happened?

- Garden suburbs instead for garden cities
- For the middle class instead of the working class
- Post war “New towns”
- 60-70s low-dense movement in Scandinavia
  - ”New urbanism”
  - ”Sustainable housing”