This is the submitted version of a paper presented at ICC 2016, 27-28 October 2016 Leeds School of Architecture at Leeds Beckett University.

Citation for the original published paper:

Andersson, J E. (2016)
When all is said and done: an architectural competition, was it a good idea?.

N.B. When citing this work, cite the original published paper.

Permanent link to this version:
http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:kth:diva-199210
When all is said and done, an architectural competition, was it a good idea?

Jonas E Andersson
Jonas.andersson@arch.kth.se (corresponding email address)

Abstract:
In 2004, development plans for the Swedish municipality of Järfälla detected a severe disappointment concerning appropriate forms of housing for frail older citizens. In 2006, the municipality organized an architectural competition in order to renew housing for dependent and frail older persons. In 2007, a winner was selected from 33 submitted proposals. The proposal was made by Danish architects, who envisioned different types of housing that were organized around a central residential care home that became the centre for the town plan.

The paper is a study on how architectonic visions were converted into a built environment under the influence of Swedish civil administration. Interviews with 10 key informants, involved in different stages of the process, along with official documentation allowed for reconstructing stages that influenced the course of the project. The research was focused on the perceived similarity between the winning proposal and the actual realization.

The analysis of the research material identified three decisive stages in the realization of the winning proposal. Firstly, the commission, which the architects had won, created problems since it could be seen as merely a town plan or a plan in combination with a building commission. Secondly, public regulations on tendering procedures generated spatial problems for the key building of the town plan as well as for segments of the full plan. Thirdly, the financial market in a large city region affected the level of architectural quality. The study identified a continuum of exterior influence that could be termed as adaptiveness that organisational and political priorities imposed on the competition proposal.

Key words: architectural competition, winning proposal, realization process, imposed adaptiveness

“Le concours a pour objet principal d’ôter aux ignorans le choix des artistes qui sont chargés des travaux publics, et d’empêcher que l’intrigue n’usurpe les travaux dus au talent. Il faut donc d’une part que les artistes ne puissent point intriguer, et de l’autre que les ignorans ne puissent pas choisir; mais si les artistes se jugent, ou se nomment des juges, voilà l’intrigue qui s’agit de plus belle, et s’ils ne se jugent pas, ou ne nomment pas leurs juges, voilà l’ignorance qui de nouveau influe sur les choix,” (p. 38, Quatremère de Quincy 1801)².

¹ Architect SAR/ MSA and Ph D fellow at the School of Architecture, Royal Institute of Technology, KTH, and expert advisor at the Swedish Agency for Participation (Myndigheten för delaktighet, MFD), both institutions in Stockholm.
² The principal motif for an architectural competition is to suppress the ignoramuses’ choice of artistes for a public commission, but also to hinder the artistes’ attempts to manipulate the commission at the expense of talent. The principal motif for an architectural competition is to suppress the ignoramuses’ choice of artistes for a public commission, but also to hinder the artistes’ attempts to manipulate the commission at the expense of talent. On the one hand, it is necessary to block artists from intriguing against each other, and, on the other hand, to block ignorance from choosing artists. If the artists evaluate each other, or appoint jurors, then, intrigues will follow directly, but if they do
Introduction
Practising architects and researchers, who focus their interest on architectural competitions, tend to agree upon that the realization of a winning proposal in a competition will follow procedures that are similar to those of any other building commission that is entrusted to an architect’s office. Hence, the interest is often focused on three distinctive phases in the competition process, i.e.:

1. the programming phase, when the organizer defines the competition task in the competition brief along with additional programming requirements, the selection criteria and the composition of the jury, and the organisational format of the competition in order to target interesting architects (open, invited, restricted);

2. the design phase, when the participating architects visualize the competition task by use of the brief and additional documents that the organiser has supplied, and, on rare occasions, when the organizer, the jury and other experts enter in dialogue with the architects through education course (often two-stage competition);

3. the assessment phase, when the appointed jurors evaluate the submitted proposals by use of selection criteria, evaluation protocols or dialogue-based seminars, but common for all types convert the brief into a set of assessment criteria in order to find the most appropriate architectural solution for the defined competition task.

Contemporary and historical examples suggest that a fourth phase also could be trace, i.e. the one of going from being a winning proposal into becoming a realized architectural design. For instance, in the Renaissance competition about the new dome for the Florentine Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore in 1421, the sweet taste of victory included an equal amount of bitterness, since the jury teamed the winning Filippo Brunelleschi with the second prize winner Lorenzo Ghiberti. This was a calculated plan by the jury to guarantee the successful realisation of the project.

Another case is the competition that concerned the Spanish stairs in Rome 1721. Here, the second prize winning proposal was realized with the assistance from the first prize winner. Here, a century-long conflict between the pope and the French kings influenced the final outcome. A more contemporary example is the winning proposal of the architectural competition in 2006-2007 that was organized for the extension of the Stockholm City Library by renowned Swedish architect Gunnar Asplund. Here, the winning proposal by the German architect Heike Hanada was blocked due to a political rift in the Stockholm city council, which shifted from a left-wing majority to a right wing majority. After a long silence, the new majority annulled the competition and abandoned any plans of expanding the library.

The cases suggest that once the protective shield of the organisation structure of an architectural competition is removed, then, the winning proposals are exposed to the dual threat of ignorance and intrigue using the words of Quatremère de Quincy. The phenomenon suggests that the organizer and future building contractor has to conceive measures in order to protect the true values of the winning architectural designs in order to vouch for a true realization of the winning proposal. On the one hand, these measures have to minimise potential percussions that derive from the organism’s own organisational structure that might stall or inhibit the realisation of the project. Using de Quincy’s words, the intent is to block the influence of ignorance.

not evaluate each other, or appoint their jurors, then once again, the ignoramuses will prevail and influence the selection.
On the other hand, contemporaneous trends, at least in Sweden, suggest that a winning architectural design is no longer seen as a particular artistic expression of an individual architect, star architects and iconic buildings excepted, but rather as an organisational outline for future architecture that could be entrusted to architect with some level of experience. Hence, in these cases, the contractor has to construe arguments for keeping the winning architect as main creative head of the project in order to safeguard the architectonics from distortion. This could fall under the category of misfortunes that de Quincy called intrigues. In long term, these intrigues threaten the essence of architectural competitions, i.e. to conceive appropriate architectural solutions to complex spatial problems with respect to individual artistic freedom.

**Aims and purposes**
The present study is focused on a single case, which was an architectural competition that took place in 2006-2007. The competition was organized by a municipality in the larger city region around the Swedish capital of Stockholm, the municipality of Järfälla. This paper relies on other studies that have been executed in order to analyse earlier stages of the realization of this particular competition. These retrospective studies have been combined with an on-going follow-up study of the later stages that have followed after the announcement of the winning architect.

The competition in focus for this study was an open competition for architects, but also for other design professions in close collaboration with architects or architect’s offices. This combination was more or less recommended in the competition brief in order to promote innovation. In line with this underlying strive, the subsequent steps that took place in order to realize the winning proposal included frequent challenges for the organising municipality of a diverse nature. These could refer to hindering legal frameworks, intra or internal problems between or inside the municipal administrations or simply a lack of knowledge on how to renew established concepts and notions.

The paper is focused on what could be labelled as an imposed adaptiveness that the municipal structure initially forces upon the idea of realising a competition and, then, gradually during the later phases of the competition process, will create hinders that may block the full potential of the architectonic vision of the competition proposal. The purposes were to identify the constituents of this imposed adaptiveness that materialized during the study of one particular competition, i.e.:

- restraining forces in the competition brief and the selection process
- potential threats to the building commission for winning architects after the competition,
- the necessary amount of adaptiveness and mediating factors that may reduce this force.

**A single case as a research object**
The present paper explores the strategical measures of one organizer for protecting the innovative potential in a municipal competition about a town plan with both ordinary and special housing for older people on a new development site. Single case studies contain an obvious restriction, since the mechanics of these individual cases are retraced in the logical order that they appeared within the perimeters of the cases. However, the reconstruction of this meticulous puzzle of events often produces a series of events that are guided by general principles for building commissions, physical planning or any other decision-making procedure. Most researchers in case study methodology agree that the structuring of seemingly random events during mostly viva voce processes can unravel underlying forces and supply theorems for explaining complex phenomena.

The case in focus for this study is an architectural competition that was realized by a municipal stakeholder that is part of the Swedish civil-administrational structure. In this system, municipalities assume the direct responsibility of executing welfare objectives that are passed in the Swedish
parliament. Referendums every fourth year decide the composition of the government and the orientation of comprehensive objectives for the Swedish welfare state. Similarly, elections decide the political composition of political assemblies of regional and municipal governments. The actual interpretation and realisation of these welfare goals are realised in a three-levelled hierarchy.

Firstly, the national level with government and authorities supply guidelines and regulations that control the lower regional and local levels. The municipalities convert locally national welfare objectives into actual outcomes, however, influenced by local or regional considerations. Regional authorities monitor and report back to the national level of failures or successes in the realization of national welfare goals. Central for this type of administration is the consultation process that aims at balancing and harmonising various foci of interests that are actives on the three different levels. The consultation processes are documented in official minutes that are registered in public archives. Equally, field notes and other events are recorded in order to comply with a transparent management principle of public means. In the present case, it is this consultation process that is of core interest, since given the organisational structure, it is likely that similar processes would occur in other Swedish municipalities, which organize architectural competitions.

Researchers claim that decision-making and planning processes can be seen as a type of social space, in which interests and values interact so that networks of capital or relationships are formed. Combinations of various foci of interest and value constitute individual or groups of stakeholders, often assembled under the name of actor-network theory, ANT. Such stakeholders may form different networks that facilitate or inhibit the realization of different projects, for instance architectural competitions. Ethical or political ideals may also constitute grounds for promoting or delaying various projects given their ranking on an open or secret agenda.

**Study design and methods**

The research material for this study was assembled during two distinct phases; i.e. directly after the realization of the competition and in the early stages of preparing for planning for a realization, i.e. the period of 2007 to 2009, and directly after the inauguration of the residential care home that the winning architects were entrusted in addition to converting the winning proposal into a new town plan with design programme for the competition site, i.e. the period of 2012 to 2015.

The information was assembled by use of interviews. These were transcribed, so that they formed a manuscript that the informants could correct and approve. This transcription also meant that colloquial Swedish were restructured into grammatically correct language in order to facilitate translation into the English language.

**Analysis with cross-checks**

This mostly verbal information, which to some extent was based on assumptions and remembrances from different stages in an all in all 12-year long planning process. This information was cross-checked with official documentation that was recorded in the local register or unofficial documents that followed the building process.

The accumulated information was submitted to a close reading process, so that a logical order of events associated with preparations for and finalizations of the architectural competition could be established. This also allowed for establishing approximate dates for the process that took shape after the competition had ended.
This section will summarize the competition process of the architectural competition in the municipality of Järfälla. The municipality is a vibrant community in the northern corner of the larger Stockholm region. Since the 1970s, the municipality has gone from being a mostly rural community into becoming a hot spot for people, who migrate to the capital region in search of education and challenging jobs in the nearby Swedish Silicon Valley, situated in Kista. In 2015, the population reached a number of 70,000 people, which is twice the average sized municipality in Sweden. In addition, it has the 6th largest population growth per year. The municipality regularly shift political majority in the public elections every fourth year.

Typical for municipalities in large city regions, the population is young, the average age is 39.5. The proportion of older people is about 16 per cent, which is below the national ratio around 20 per cent. The regular influx of young families with children, which started in the early 1970s, has made the municipality to allocate means mostly to new kindergartens, schools and new housing.

Before that date the population composition was reversed with a large group of older people, which made the municipality to invest in large scale housing for older people, often with institutional features. In the mid-1990s, the municipality started invest in new housing for older people, to some extent a consequence of a national reform that made the municipalities into the prime responsible for supplying housing for both able and frail older people. Existing housing for these groups of the 1960s and 1970s continued to live on, however, refurbished according the new credo of an individual flat inside a residential care home.

Prelude to a competition
The reform in 1993 manifested the end of the era with large institutions to solve pressing societal matters, i.e. nursing homes and long-term geriatric wards in the hospitals. Despite the new orientation, the municipality of Järfälla continued to rely on its converted large scale nursing home to the dismay of the senior part of the population. During the 1990s, additional residential homes in smaller scale were constructed, but not acclaimed by the target group of older frail people. Instead, the most appreciated housing for frail older people turned out to be a temporary housing in a former school building from the 1970s with direct access to nature, and integrated the surrounding residential area. Subject to a restricted building permit, the building was marked for destruction, but served as temporary housing for evacuated older people from the old nursing home, which underwent reconstruction in defined phases.

During the first decade of the new millennium, older people’s dismay with the living conditions in the existing residential care homes grew stronger. Being one of the pioneering municipalities to form special advisory boards for issues of importance for older people, the matter of poor living conditions and dull settings in residential care homes became one of the first matters for the new board to tackle in the municipality of Järfälla, the so-called board for elder issues, BEI. The matter also engaged the municipal administration for health and social welfare, AHSW, so that an inquiry into demographic changes in the local population was launched in 2004. The inquiry concluded that despite the update of existing nursing homes and some new residential care homes, which were built during the 1990s, an increase of older people, especially in the higher age groups 80 and above, would require new housing. As a consequence, the political board of the AHSW tasked the administration to map possible sites for 1-3 new residential care homes around the municipality.

In 2005, a special seminar was organized by the AHSW in order to explore innovative thinking about appropriate housing for frail older people that invited researchers from nursing science, public health and architecture. In contrast to the ambitious plans to renew the local thinking about residential care homes, the municipal physical planning proved to be a disappointment, since the
only available sites that were owned by the municipality were found in the outskirts of the communities around the municipality, or in some rare cases in the centre of the main settlement in the municipality. However, in either case, the different types of sites suffered from being subjected to a tedious physical planning process due to regional infrastructure or due to necessary changes of the intended usage of the particular site.

A competition, it is…
The lack of suitable sites circumscribed the possibilities to renew the architectural design for residential care homes in the municipalities. Given the size of the site, the most suitable solution was to mimic the models that had been developed during the 1990s. However, in a parallel track to the minor issue of rethinking housing for frail older people, the municipality had a much larger problem to solve. A large piece of land not far from the central community in the municipality is a former military airfield on whose tarmac Charles Lindbergh landed in 1929 when performing his world tour after crossing the Atlantic in his airplane the Spirit of S:t Louis. The air force left the premises in 1963, leaving the field open to urbanistic ideas of expanding the northern suburbs around Stockholm. However, the tarmacs continued to be used for various purposes like civil air rescue operations and aeronautic clubs.

In 2006, the municipality had to face the mandatory requirement of deciding the exact orientation for the airfield in a physical planning document for the area. In addition, public elections were due for the fall of 2007 and neither of the two larger political parties, who normally formed government every second election, wanted this matter to trouble the election campaign. Given the close contact between the AHSW and the city planning office, CPO, the two matters finally merged into the idea of organizing an open architectural competition on the part of the airfield that had been used for hangars and quarters. This competition supplied a possibility to vent the idea of developing the airfield into a new settlement for over 20.000 dwellings with kindergarten, schools and work opportunities in commercial space in the ground floor level of the new houses. This idea was approved in the two political boards over the two administrations, and the ASWH and the CPO were commissioned to continue the realization of a competition.

The collaboration worked smoothly between the two administrations, although a closer look on the combination would have revealed an inconsistency with the normal municipal procedure, the administration for municipal real estate, AMR, was not included in the work group, only in the consultation process. In retrospect, this ostracism could be viewed as fatal, since when the competition was finalized and the winner was announced, the CPO would be entrusted the work of producing a detailed physical plan for the site, while the AMR was to initiate the contacts with the winning architect’s office. In any case, the AHSW would have to leave the influential position of programming the future residential care home in direct contact with the architects. The normal procedure for municipal administrations was that the AHSW commissioned the AMR to work on their behalf during the building and planning process.

An open competition with 33 proposals
Consistent with most preparations for architectural competitions, the AHSW paid close attention to the formulation of the programme brief. The AHSW and the BEI followed up on the loose ideas that had emerged during the initial phase prior to the decision on organizing a competition on the site for the old hangars and quarters. This implied a study trip to residential care homes outside the Danish capital of Copenhagen, but also a visit to the anthroposophical care home of Vigs Ångar in southern Sweden. Inspired by the liberal Danish eldercare and the philosophical approach on ageing and frailties, the AHSW commissioned the founder of the Vigs Ångar, both architect and manager of the home, to develop a competition brief. Keen on providing mostly inspirational input for the
participating architects, the brief mixed photographs from the Vigs Ängar with key statements that had surfaced during the initial stage towards an architectural competition.

To the great contentment of the AHSW, the architectural competition attracted a large number of participating architects or teams of architects in collaboration with nursing professions, when it opened in August in 2006. In addition, the competition brief seemed to function, since it generated few questions. All in all, 33 proposals were submitted that, at first glance, also lived up to the AHSW’s expectation of demonstrating a level of innovation. The proposals were exposed in the city hall that had special opening hours for the public to come and inspect the proposals that had emerged in conjunction to the municipal strive of announce a “future-oriented architectural design for residential care homes.” Despite the considerable number of proposals, the jury quite soon selected a handful of proposals that met the assessment criteria on feasibility, innovation, economy and capacity to realize the project.

The composition of the jury reflected very much the origins of the idea of organising an architectural competition. The AHSW, the CPO, representatives of the two largest political parties, the author of the competition brief, who also acted as one of the two representative of the Swedish Association for Architects, SAA. In order to integrate the BEI but also the AMR, the members of these groups were appointed members of advisory groups that scrutinized the proposals that the jury found of interest, and want second opinions on. These groups also included some of the experts from the seminar back in 2005. In the very final stage of the assessment process, just two proposals remained. As a final check-up question, the advisory groups were asked to assess the submitting architects’ potential to take on a commission.

The winner is …. a flower meadow
In February in 2007, the municipality organized a prize ceremony in the premises of a nearby wholesale trade, some 100 metres from the competition site. Five competing teams of architects had been invited to the competition and all of them were fully aware of what was at stake: the first prize sum of 400.000 SEK and the second prize of 150.000 SEK. No third prize was issued, but instead three honorary mentions, each rewarded 50.000 SEK. The competing teams of architects reflected approximately the geographical area that the AHSW had staked out in order to map the territory for innovative residential care home – expanding from the Stockholm area to the second largest city in Sweden, i.e. Gothenburg, but also tentacles to countries outside Sweden, i.e. Denmark and Germany.

The five selected proposals were the ones that had been discussed the most within the jury group, and in consequence, the ones that the advisory groups had commented on. However, one of the two proposals in the final selection that the groups had been asked to study was missing. Both proposals emitted a scent of winning quality, but during the final assessment the advisory groups had discovered that one proposal was doped: For unknown reasons, floor plans were presented in an incorrect scale in order to make the buildings slenderer in the exterior views that accompanied the proposal. It was an assumption by the jury that proved correct and was harshly punished: the proposal did not even qualify for an honorary mention.

After having handed out the honorary mentions and the second prize, it became quite obvious that one of the proposals in the final selection was still in the game. The head of the jury broke the sealed envelope and announced the winner to the Danish architect’s office of the GPP Architects SA in Aarhus in southern Denmark. This was a smaller architectural firm that had started to gain its first merits in an international competition. Based on a previous knowledge of a refurbishment of a residential care home outside Aarhus, the architects had had the ingenious idea of placing the
residential care home in the Swedish competition in the centre of the town plan, thus merging the discomforting feeling of having placed the Danish building on the very far outskirts of a new settlement into becoming the generating image for the competition proposal – ageing suggests being in the centre of attention.

An appealing proposal to the AHSW and the CPO
The winning proposal was highly appreciated by both the AHSW and the CPO, however, for different reasons. The AHSW saw the organization of the town plan with the residential care home as a central hub for activities, eldercare and health care as an innovative approach for the new development. In addition, the architectural design of the residential care home was highly different than the other ones in the municipalities. It was a slick modernistic building with several essential interior qualities both in the individual flats, and in communal areas in the five units for approximately 50 residents in need of 24 hours caregiving.

For the CPO, the main attraction in the winning proposal was the town plan, which allowed for a transition from a neighbouring remainder of the original rural landscape with landscape protection, and organized around a small 17th century manor. The town plan allowed for opening up the original creek that had been culvertized when constructing the tarmacs for the air field. The reconstruction of the creek also supplied an architectural motive for reconnecting the new settlement with a road along the creek that started at the manor. Double rows of lime trees had marked the road to the 14th century church in an old village next to the former air field. Given defence reasons, the pace of developing and expanding the village had been considerably slower than the rest of the municipality.

Imminently after the announcement of the winning proposal, both administrations started to plan for how to realize the architectonic vision for this first step in converting the former airfield into a new vibrant town. The AHSW formed an advisory group of people working in the municipal eldercare that scrutinized the proposal for a new residential care. The jury’s main critical remark had to be tackled, since it evaluated the flats as too condensed without necessary space for assistive equipment upon which the frail residents would depend. Also the overall organization of the full complex was explored, since both the organizer and the winning architects relied on a sketchy idea of how to integrate an open restaurant, a fitness centre and a conference venue in a building that accommodated people with frail states.

A problematic tongue creates conflicts
The phase after the realized competition also meant that the AMR entered into a key position for moving the project from architectonic visions into a built environment. The administration was sceptic to having a Danish architect, since most Swedes have initial difficulties in understanding spoken Danish. This goes especially for numerals which are formed by addition of a factor of 20 to which the number 10 is either added or subtracted. To some extent, the numerical system resembles the French numerals, but both systems are very far from the Swedish system that is based on the factor of 10. In addition, Danish architects are often seen as difficult and headstrong who would cause problem in the organisation of the building process. Hence, the AMR lobbied for restricting the winning architects’ commission to merely the town plan.

The AHSW had wished for a residential care home that was to be owned by a private facility manager. This actor would manage the building, while the caregiving operation was supplied by a private care entrepreneur. In a similar manner, the restaurant would be operated by a catering service, and the fitness centre by another health promoting operator. However, this complex system of different service suppliers created a problem in relation to the Swedish public procurement act.
Finally, the municipal juridical administration concluded that the municipality had to own the building in order to launch such a complex variety of services as complements to the caregiving entrepreneur. In contrast to the AMR, the AHSW did not perceive Danish to be difficult, rather that the Danes would be an asset in innovating the inertia that had been detected in the design of local residential care homes. Nor did the administration think that the winning architects should be ripped off their rightfully earned commission to conclude the detailed planning document for the area along with the centrally located residential care home.

The conflict demonstrated the evident weakness of the AHSW in the continued process, since the local procedure implied that the administration had to relinquish the reins of the project to the AMR. Instead, a consultation process would occur in which the AHSW was asked to comment the design solutions that the AMR landed with the contracted architects. Contrary to the AHSW, the CPO maintained a firm grip on the development of the detailed planning document, but it also had a natural partnering role with the AMR. In addition, the AHSW experienced problems in this communication, since its more humanistic and ethically charged wording clashed with the more logic and technic language that the AMR and the CPO used. On the brink of losing the full commission, the Danish architects turned to the Swedish Association of Architects, SAA, who intervened.

A compromise was reached. The architects were entrusted the work of producing the detailed planning document in close collaboration with the CPO, mainly assembling a set of aesthetical guidelines for the new buildings to respect that accompanied the planning document. In addition, the architects were commissioned to produce drawings of the residential care home that would meet the requirements for a building permit. In counterpart, the architects were forced to open a local office in the municipality with a Swedish-speaking architect. The intervention of the SAA supplied the AHSW with a Pyrrhic victory, although its influence diminished considerably on the project. The remaining ace was that the AHSW possessed a person skilled in building matters, but also able to master the Danish language. The AHSW bid its time.

**After peace comes the storm**

After initial debacle about the architects’ continued inclusion in the project, the work with producing the detailed planning documents and drawings for a building permit proceeded in a productive and a normal pace. The regular consultation process between the municipal administrations functioned impeccably and the project kept its innovative potential. The only detectable disturbance was the repercussions of a parallel but smaller project about a new building for a hospice for older persons. The contracted builders created a considerable strain for the AMR with dubious claims on extra payments. The builder motivated these claims with drawing errors committed by contracted architects, engineers or consultants, or supposedly extra requirements by the AHSW. The builder made continuous threats on terminating construction works halfway and take legal actions against the AMR. Faced with this situation, the AMR focused their work on this project, and allowed the AHSW representative to play an expanded role in the building process for the residential care home that was part of the competition project.

In 2009, the detailed planning documents and the drawings for the building permit of the new residential care home were terminated. The realization of the project entered into a new phase at the same time as the financial market began to falter in Sweden. The original idea behind the town plan with some blocks specially dedicated to housing for older people were challenged, since the municipality faced a lacking interest among building companies to bid on the different block with detailed aesthetical and functional requirements for mainly older people. To the great dismay of the AHSW, the municipality decided to skip this mandatory requirement and open up all blocks for any
age group, but maintaining the aesthetical typology that the winning proposal had established. This made the AHSW to concentrate their attention to the residential care home, but argued that the full idea behind the project now had lost one important quality for creating a viable solution for the residential care home.

The new phase made the situation of the winning architects vulnerable, since few or no Swedish building company were interested in affiliating them to their bids for the different city blocks. Mostly, Swedish architects were contracted to develop buildings according to the winning architects’ idea of suitable building volumes. However, the Danish architects were entrusted to develop additional drawings for the residential care home in view of a tendering process for the residential care home. The local branch office had been dismantled and the AHSW representative achieved a key position in the new phase as a messenger flying back and forth between the municipality and the Danish city of Aarhus. The documents were intended to be part of a turn-key contract that a builder would realize. Despite a volatile financial market, the municipality opened the tendering process in the fall of 2009. The municipality hoped that the market conditions would make only solid building contractors to compete for the contract.

Contrary to the municipal hopes, the market did not encourage the solid building companies to bid, rather the same set of troublesome builders, established since several years, submitted their bids. Faced with a potential replay of the difficult realization of the hospice, the municipality opted for the only new bidder in the lot, a small building company from the northern part of Sweden. Partly having misunderstood the documents, partly sweetening their bid based on a gambling penchant, the building company won the building contract. If the hospice had been an ordeal, the realization of the new residential care home turned into a terror for two project leaders at the AMR. Sticking to the stipulated time planning, the municipality had to pour extra money into the project so that the delay was only six months.

Discussion
The present paper is mainly a narrative from an architectural competition spanning from its preparation to the aftermath when the competition was fully realized. It is an open question whether the outcome is to be considered as a success or a failure. To some extent, the project seems to be the victim of financial fluctuations of the Swedish economy, to some extent, fundamental errors in the initial strategical planning influenced the project. In order to keep the architectonic vision alive, the main protector of the project applied considerable negotiating skills so that the artistic influence remained by the winning architects. However, fortuitousness rather than strategic planning kept the realization process on track.

In retrospect, the imposed level of adaptiveness that the winning proposal has had to assume in order to proceed might appear to be similar to an ordinary project. However, it can also be considered as the result of excluding the one administration that holds the necessary competence for leading an architectonic vision into a realized milieu: the AMR was mainly left outside the organisational preparations for the competition. Charging the competition with an innovative potential overlooked the necessary planning for how to channel innovation through established procedures of doing things. The main lesson for other competitions with a similar intent would be to pay an increased attention to how innovation can be made tangible.

An architectural competition, a good idea?
The building was inaugurated in March 2012 with several building problems remaining to fix. The estimated building cost has been fixated to about 50 million SEK. Still, in 2015, the AMR
continued to refurbish the new building according to the requirement list on which the contract was based. Instead of legal pursuits, the municipality opted for removing the building contractor, and realize the remaining measures with smaller contracts for small building companies. In 2015, the basement suffered from flooding due to heavy raining, and additional repairs had to be made. Windows have been coated in order to reduce heating during summer time, since no air conditioning system was installed. So, in the end, an architectural competition was it really a good idea.

The architects are moderately happy with the project, although the winning of the competition seems to have profiled the firm as especially competent in the field of designing architecture for frail people of any age. The architects state that they had expected more work in conjunction with winning the competition, and they cannot understand Swedish builders’ hesitation to take them on as architects. They think the residential care home turned out alright, although they find themselves unfairly accused of having caused some of the remaining problems in the building, since the builder preferred to update their drawings with a Swedish architect.

Given the local reception, the building has been acclaimed by older frail people, since the institution-like feeling that is found in other facilities in the municipalities is not present here. The presence of the restaurant, conference venue and fitness centre is both an attraction for the residents and people living in the neighbouring housing complex. The municipality sees the residential care home as an innovation, although an additional residential care home will assume the program requirements of the homes of the late 1990s. The residential care home attracts many visits from mainly Asian countries, which to some extent also is due to the fact that the former air field now is more of the envisioned vibrant new city that the comprehensive physical planning document described.

So, in the end, despite a troublesome realization process, this might be the normal course for any winning proposal from an architectural competition, or?

**Biography**


Once you have completed the submission form:

**References**

To be completed later in a revised version.