

TRANSKRIPT PODCAST SIEMENSSTADT CALLING #2

- ERWARTUNGEN DER STADT BERLIN -

Regula Lüscher - Teaser

If we want to bring living and working very close together, then we have to invent things at some point or other.

Sarah Tietze - Intro

Welcome to Siemensstadt Calling, the Siemensstadt Podcast. A podcast for everyone interested in technologies in the urban environment, urban development and smart building. And for all those who are looking forward to the development of Siemensstadt as a place of the future. I am your host Sarah Tietze-Kamyra and together with the general manager of Siemensstadt, Stefan Kögl and our guest today, Senate Building Director of Berlin, Regula Lüscher, we present to you here the background to the Future Place Siemensstadt. Get ready! In today's episode we talk about the next steps of Siemensstadt and especially what the development project means for the city of Berlin.

Sarah Tietze

Ms. Lüscher, Stefan, how nice to be together here today.

Regula Lüscher

Yes, very nice. I am happy to be here too.

Stefan Kögl

Hello, Sarah.

Sarah Tietze

Hello. Ms. Lüscher, you are an architect, you are also an honorary professor at the University of the Arts. You were previously in the city of Zurich. You are a native of Switzerland. In Zurich, they also led the way in urban developments. It is said that you held a similar position there to the one you hold today in Berlin. What additional information would you regard as something our listeners would like to know from you?

Regula Lüscher

Yes, I think the important thing is that unlike Zurich, where I was at the top of the administration and not in a political office, that here in Berlin I am in a political office. I'm Senate Building Director and State Secretary and that's a significant difference. So, I have two hats on in that respect. I am responsible for questions of building culture. In short, for the beauty of the city. And at the same time, of course, I am very much anchored in the political environment as an extension of the Senator for Urban Development. So I'm at least 50 percent a professional politician, but my heart is still closer to the subject, to architecture, to urban development. And there I also have a prominent position in Berlin, compared to my state secretary colleagues. What is perhaps also important is that I came to Berlin in 2007. I was not networked at all. Berlin was not only an interesting city for me, but actually almost a dream city to be able to work here as an urban planner. And I think I underestimated a bit back then how difficult it is to approach the city from the outside. Today I have to say that I think it was an advantage because I came here with my eyes wide open. I had no previous experience, and I was also in the special situation that Berlin was still growing together. So this rapprochement between East and West, this growing together is still a big issue. And since I came from the outside as a neutral person, I was actually seen as neutral by everyone and was able to act differently. And I believe that I was able to move a lot and contribute a lot to this unification in this city. It is also important to me, cooperation is also important to me. The inclusion of the citizens, citizens coming from Switzerland, from a direct democracy. And in the meantime I have completely settled in Berlin, also in German politics. And I also have German citizenship in the meantime. So. I am a dual citizen. And from that point of view, I am not only 50 percent professional and 50 percent politician, but I am also 50 percent Swiss and 50 percent German citizen. And yes, that feels very good.

Sarah Tietze

That was certainly a nice answer. You are responsible for the beauty of the city. Wonderful. You've definitely come to the right place with us at the Siemensstadt project. After all, it's supposed to be a beautiful campus. Stefan, in the podcast or in Episode No. 1, you gave us some facts. You said that in 2022 the first excavators will come to Siemensstadt, and in 2030 Siemensstadt will really be a finished, open district. Today, 7,000 Siemens employees live here or work here. For such an opening to be practical, a number of things will certainly have to happen. What are the first steps that Siemens has to take in order to be able to realise such an opening?

Stefan Kögl

The two main focal points at the moment are, first of all, Siemens itself. So, as you mentioned, what requirements are now given from the existing production sites? How do we develop the site for Siemens in the future? That is a key issue. Considerable sums will be invested in the next three or four years to ensure this. And a second topic is, of course, the creation of building rights, i.e., the development of the master plan and then the creation of the corresponding land-use plans, urban development contracts, and so on. In other words, creating the basis for being able to develop and implement areas here at all. In this respect, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Lüscher for the great support we have received over the past two years. And what we particularly appreciate at this point is that we have a very differentiated, sometimes controversial discussion. It's not just saying; sure, we'll do it all this way. Rather, we believe that all decisions that have been made and will be made in the future have a really sound basis, because the relevant discussions are being held across the board.

Sarah Tietze

Ms. Lüscher, Stefan Kögl has just described a bit what is important to Siemens in the development. We are not developing a free new area here, but an industrial site that we are carrying into the future - as a challenge here, too. What is important to Berlin in the development of Siemensstadt?

Regula Lüscher

I believe that the most important thing for Berlin is that Siemensstadt remains a place of work, but with a successful transformation into a truly mixed neighbourhood. And that is a complex process because the planning law conditions that we have in Berlin, as in in all of Germany, are based on an image from the post-war period, where people basically consciously separated working from living. Yes, that is still the image of workplaces that make enormous noise emissions and other emissions. And that housing is separated from the workplace for the benefit of the citizens, those classic industrial workplaces. And that has changed completely. And Siemens is embarking on this path with us. And that is also an experiment. And to have the confidence to try things out together, to dare to do things that haven't ever been tried and tested yet. I think that's almost the most important thing. In the end, of course, it's about the result that we achieve together. But above all, it's also about a great deal of trust in the two parties - I'll call them that now. In administration, politics and in an industrial company. And Siemens is first and foremost an industrial company. And the main focus of this company in recent decades has not been to develop cities, of course, but to do other things.

And I think that is actually also the reason why we need these intensive discussions that Mr. Kögl described. We need to bring together different types of knowledge. And we, as the administration, naturally have the task of implementing things that we know are associated with certain risks. So if we want to bring living and working very close together, then we have to invent things in one place or another. And I think that's the biggest challenge. But that's also the most fun part of the whole thing. And that is also part of building culture from my point of view. There is no building culture without innovation, building culture without experimentation. Then it is only backward-looking. And building culture should always be forward-looking as well.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan, what is important to Siemens?

Stefan Kögl

Well, first of all, I can only underline what Ms. Lüscher said. And I can't express it any better, so I won't repeat it. With regard to Siemens, perhaps only as a supplement, Siemens also offers solutions in its product portfolio that are needed in the city, I'll call it that. And what is new here, as you rightly said, is that we have set ourselves the goal of not only partially integrating this into cities, but also to really ask: What does the city of the future actually look like? In other words, where do we need to develop our products and our portfolio? And examples are, of course, in our smart infrastructure. So how does a networked city work? What is needed there in the first place? How do you develop something like that? Or there is talk of smart buildings. Yes, but what is the content of that? How is the data processed? We have solutions for that. But not yet to the extent, how should I put it, applied in a way that we can and should apply them here. Another example is, of course, mobility. We are all currently experiencing significant changes in this area because it is what I would call a special challenge. In the next five or seven years we will, let's say, be familiar with our environment. But we know of course, that in 20 or 30 years completely different demands will be made here. And what we are doing here is already developing in this direction. That is, not just roads and cars driving along them, but that other ideas are implemented here. How do I get there with the suburban train? How do I perhaps have hard models to move around in the district, etc.? In terms of living and working. Here, the requirements are also very different, and very, very exciting discussions are taking place. And we can also contribute a great deal in terms of content as Siemens. And that's why we do it.

Sarah Tietze

We also do it for the people who move to Berlin. Berlin is an incredibly growing city. I think around 40,000 people move to Berlin every year. In Siemensstadt apartments are also being created, 2,750 new apartments. Ms. Lüscher, what does this growth mean for the city of Berlin? What impact does it have on your work? How is Berlin developing?

Regula Lüscher

Yes, the most urgent issue is of course the development of new urban quarters. It's actually great that we can do this again and that we have the great opportunity to be able to control and accompany a growth, a growth of the city at a partly rather delayed point in time compared to other large German cities or also large cities in Europe, which is perhaps even much more important. And it offers the opportunity to make a growth spurt now in the next 15 years that does not lag behind the climate policy, the social policy and the sustainability policy issues, but sets new markers. I believe that this is Berlin's incredible opportunity to reinvent itself. And at the same time, the challenge is that Berlin still has a comparatively balanced social structure. We don't have any social ghettos. We still have a great deal of mixing. And the issue of gentrification and the issue that of developing individual neighbourhoods - and now I'm back to Siemens - and also develop these neighbourhoods for people who also largely come from outside. How can we succeed in embedding these neighbourhoods in their larger context in such a way that they are spatially, but also socially sustainable and that those who are already there are not left behind or feel left behind. That rents don't rise ad infinitum in the surrounding area, that's a very big concern. And that accompanying measures are taken. And that means - and here the state also has a big, big task - not just focusing on this new neighbourhood, where we can do a lot of new things. But also funding programs, but also programs with which we can preserve existing buildings, where we can grant a certain milieu protection, i.e. where you can also stabilise social conditions, to give funds and resources and planning power. And I believe that this is perhaps also the task of administration and politics, to think about this again on a larger scale. And the third challenge is, of course, the infrastructure. So that these places become accessible, that we develop new mobility concepts, that we naturally reduce traffic on the roads, individual traffic, and that it doesn't become more, that we think in terms of completely different mobility strategies. Here, of course, Siemens can again be a wonderful partner, a technological partner where we can implement pilot projects on a small scale, especially in the area of mobility. I mean trying things out, experimenting, in order to then implement something like this on a larger scale.

Sarah Tietze

I might go into that again. One aspect that you mentioned was particularly exciting. You mentioned the opportunity that Berlin has in its development because it is taking place at a slightly different time than in other metropolises. After all, we are living in a special time now. A global pandemic. Does that also have an impact on urban planning? This new normality in which we are currently living?

Regula Lüscher

Yes, this has a major impact on urban planning. It's interesting that the urban development administration is not being challenged as much in the immediate pandemic. Those other departments: health, economy, etc. are enormously challenged. But of course we have already immediately set up discussion circles, expert committees, in which we are dealing with the future. What does it mean if we suddenly have to reckon with such pandemics coming again and again? And what impact will this have on our spaces? Because we are doing spatial urban development. And what impact does that have on hardware planning, on our buildings, on...? For example, the whole issue of ground floors. I think that's a very, very good example. We are always fighting for the ground floors to be used as much as possible for public purposes, for public-related uses. That lively public spaces are also created on the Siemens Campus and that a liveable neighbourhood is developed, both for those who work there and also those who live there. Up to now, about 10 percent of the work in Berlin has been done in a home office. 10 percent. Of course, that has now changed completely in this Corona period. We planners have always said that we have to think in terms of hybrid structures, because that will change. And it's going to be much more like both where you live, you spend at least part of your working time there, and you carry out certain work processes together, in places where you meet to exchange ideas. So both of those things. And that means that, basically, in both places. I'll say now, where you actually live, so also where you work, you also need infrastructures that are available for both living and working. If retail is going to change, and it will change, corona made that clear, the retail also no longer animates our ground floor zones so much. Then it will simply be the case that we have many more co-working spaces, where I live, for example. But as a tenant, and a tenant on the ground floor, I have the opportunity to have my home workspace there, so that I don't have to implement that into my apartment, where I may also have little space. Because we can't constantly increase our square meter consumption by having an office at home. So this question of sustainability, these overlapping possibilities for use, is something we have to think about more. And that means we need spaces that are very flexible.

And I think that will change our cities a lot in the next few years, that we will have a completely different form of quasi public and transparency where we work. And I can also imagine that in Siemensstadt, for example, things can be implemented in a really exemplary way, because it is already a place of work and because you also have to integrate the people who are here now into this process. We don't want the people who are now working here to suddenly feel displaced. They should be part of this development. I think that is very, very important for Siemens. But it's also very important for us as urban planners.

Sarah Tietze

At this point, I'll hand over to Stefan. Stefan, a very exciting perspective on new urban planning from the current situation of the global pandemic. Does that have any impact on the planning of Siemensstadt?

Stefan Kögl

Yes, I can only confirm what Ms. Lüscher also said. We are - perhaps from a time perspective - very early in the project. That is, God knows, not meant cynically, a certain advantage here now, because we can of course react to it now. Nevertheless, it remains exciting, of course, because answers are supposed to develop over the next few years. That means we need a certain flexibility. But, as Ms. Lüscher already said, these discussions are ongoing in our team, and are also currently happening together with the authorities. So how do we address the situation? I found the aforementioned example very interesting. Apartments where I have a co-working space directly in the complex, because I just can't have a home office in my apartment and I don't want to drive to the office now either. So, if you just relate it to the residential area, new usage structures that are imposing themselves here, but at the same time, of course, also in the office itself. At Siemens, everyone is actually working in a home office at the moment. But if the situation were to improve somewhat, the New Normal, that's what we're working on right now. But it would also mean that people wouldn't be in the office at nine and go home again at five or six, but rather two or three hours for certain meetings, in other words, that people would have more common rooms than individual workstations. But those are exciting questions that are coming up now. And of course we ask the same questions, I have to mention here, for production as well. Here, of course, there are still structures that are maintained because production is taking place somewhere. But what does that mean for the employees on site? Of course, we also have networked production sites. So there too, there are definitely opportunities not to always have to be on site. There will also be a great deal of development.

And yes, we are now taking the first steps in the project and will address these issues. And, of course, that is also very exciting, because we believe it will accelerate certain developments that would probably have come about in the longer term anyway. So in this respect, we accept the situation and look forward, in terms of urban development of course, to finding good results and good solutions here.

Sarah Tietze

I find it a very exciting exchange here, really at eye level. On strategic topics: what should the future of the city look like? How can Siemensstadt benefit from this in terms of development? I'm interested, Ms. Lüscher, Stefan, how do their exchanges take place? So, do they have regular meetings where they push ideas back and forth, where they enrich each other with their thoughts - what does their daily collaboration look like?

Stefan Kögl

Ms. Lüscher is looking at me... Yes, from Siemens' point of view: at the very beginning of the project, we had this as a key topic. When agreeing on how to start this project, not only in terms of content but also in terms of cooperation, a steering group was agreed upon and then established, as well as other working groups. Currently there are 6 working groups, in which colleagues from the authorities, from the Senate, but also from the district are always involved, depending on the area of expertise. So, these working groups are, for example, urban planning and building law, infrastructure, media, energy, but also communication and, of course, historic preservation. Just to name a few. And on Siemens' side, there are also representatives for the specialist topics. From Siemens' point of view it is very positive that the representatives of the authorities are really committed to participating in the meetings. We never ask questions, but both parties provide their input. There is also a very good development here and good progress. And then there is a higher-level steering committee in which the topics are sorted again. And of course there are also discussions at a higher level with Ms. Lüscher or the Senate Building Director, right up to the Governing Mayor and other senators, but of course not as frequently as in the working groups, in order to advance topics and also to make decisions. Perhaps the working groups, you could say, meet weekly but in different constellations. Every week there is some kind of working group where people sit together and work.

Sarah Tietze

A big common theme that the city of Berlin and Siemens have now is the structural engineering competition that we are in. What exactly is this structural engineering competition, Stefan? What is being defined there?

Stefan Kögl

So, the basis of the whole thing is the master plan, which was decided in January by the urban planning competition. And that was the first stage of the first competition. And now the second stage is to design part of the site as a building construction competition. The master plan was won by Ortner und Ortner Baukunst from Berlin. That should be mentioned here. And from the participants of the urban planning competition, 6 offices were selected by the jury at that time, which are now participating in the building construction competition. The first two buildings of the new entrance, to describe it qualitatively, will be part of this competition. So, in the immediate vicinity of the time-honoured administration building, the S-Bahn station and the switchgear hall. These two buildings are an administration building and an administration high-rise. And then there will be a third building, an information pavilion, where citizens can then also obtain information at any time.

Sarah Tietze

That means that it becomes concrete. This gives the buildings a sense of view, a visual element. Ms. Lüscher...

Regula Lüscher

So, I think with these competition procedures it is perhaps also important to explain once again what role they actually have for cooperation. Mr. Kögl has now described very well the intensive working process in which we meet. And basically, the strategic questions are being discussed in preparation for the urban planning competition, i.e. for the master plan. The questions about the so-called vision of the future are actually discussed there by saying, what requirements are formulated for the teams, what goals are to be implemented in this neighbourhood, what kind of mobility, what framework conditions of all sustainability factors, what qualitative requirements are imagined for the open spaces. Also for the architecture, what issues are there with historic preservation. This is a very, very important aspect that has to be discussed in advance in intensive exchanges, discussions, and sometimes in real debates, because people simply have different interests. And then comes the competition, and then you have different teams that make proposals.

And on the basis of these proposals, you can basically discuss the pros and cons together again. And by having different urban district designs, you can also go into more depth again: yes, is it really important to us now to preserve this hall? Can we imagine that this hall can be used in an economically viable way in the future? And if you have perhaps discussed this in abstract terms beforehand, you then look at the design and see: Oh, well, if that's how it's implemented, then yes, you can imagine that, or monument conservators say: No, well, if this hall is now reformed in such a way, then it's no longer a monument for me. That's how you have to imagine it. And that's why these competition procedures...these are ultimately award procedures of course, select a team to accompany this entire future process. Ortner & Ortner will now accompany this entire process as master planners and remain the guardians of the idea. But it is also a matter of really getting to the crucial issues, discussing them and also discarding things. And I always say that designing is actually the process of discarding. That you think things out, that you formulate things and then reject them, knowing why you don't want them that way. And in the end, you know why you want something the way you want it, like the project you choose. And I think that outsiders often can't even imagine that. How important such 2 or 3 days are, when you are locked in a room and have to come to a decision, so to speak. And I think that also brings people together. Because then you are convinced that this is our vision and we want to implement it.

Sarah Tietze

Ms. Lüscher, you said at the beginning that you come from Switzerland. The topic of participation and co-determination of citizens is incredibly important to you. How do you involve the public in such construction projects in Berlin, for example in Siemensstadt?

Regula Lüscher

I think what I described before, this process so to speak, the preparation of such a competition, is actually a good example. Normally - and this was also done here at Siemens - if we take a programming approach as I would call it, you ask, what do you actually want to implement here? If you have a rough idea of this, then it is a very, very good moment to enter into a dialogue with the citizens. You already have a little bit of something, you can present it and then you can take the hints, the ideas, but also often a very detailed local knowledge - these are mostly people who are from here, who know the place well, who know where the deficiencies are, etc. - you can then incorporate this very well into the programming. You can again include other topics.

Then the teams can design, and it is often the case that the teams then present their projects in an intermediate phase before the jury convenes, so that the reactions of the citizens can be recorded once again and the jury can take something like this with it. And the projects also still bear in mind the concerns of positive also critical voices, including them in the selection discussion for the drafts. That is simply a very small excerpt. And the citizens, citizen participation, must basically be adequately involved again and again in the entire development phase, which will still take many years. And you have to think about it every time: what would be a sensible format now, so that you can also use the local knowledge? The swarm intelligence so to speak, as I always call it, for the development of the project. So, it's not just about acceptance. That is of course also an important aspect, to show, to inform. But it is also about simply integrating knowledge.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan, I'd like to ask you what Siemens is actually doing in terms of citizen participation.

Stefan Kögl

Well, so first of all, the whole thing takes place in consultation with the Senate. That is essential. It's not just our idea, it's a joint process. We have had various events over the last year until the beginning of this year, from information events to a citizens' dialog to the exhibition of the competition entries. And the whole thing was always supported in parallel online. Then the pandemic hit us, and I think it's fair to say that we reacted very quickly. Starting with the exhibition, which was put online, but also the modules on our homepage. These have been prepared in such a way that citizens can obtain information here, can participate in the future, and can also make suggestions about the building construction competition which will then be incorporated accordingly. And of course there will also be presence events again. So we intend to do that at least. But of course we have to see within the scope of possibilities what can be implemented. Because we are of course aware of the advantages of the online medium. We notice that more people participate than if you can only say something in a presence. Because, of course, many people are always quick to go to the computer and write something in. We have already received thousands of suggestions. On the other hand, we are aware that not everyone has such a possibility. Perhaps not everyone has a computer or a smartphone, or is not so adept at using them. So therefore, it can currently only go so far, but there will again be appropriate events if at all possible. So, interestingly... Here it should be mentioned that a special emphasis was certainly made on the topics of ecological and mobility. So, I would now call it less suggestions than more questions or requirements that the highest standards are met here in terms of ecology. So the whole topic, also climate, is very

important to the citizen. It doesn't matter what and how you build there, but it must be sustainable in the future and meet the requirements accordingly.

And when it comes to mobility, there are simply many questions today, such as: Where do I park my car? Are there enough parking spaces? In the same way, in the other direction: we don't want any parking spaces at all, and not so many. We'd rather have public transport, etc. And that's what I said earlier. We've only known about the master plan for about six months, and we shouldn't forget that either. So we are also in the very early stages of discussion on mobility issues, even though we already knew the modules beforehand, of course. But I can say that it is very exciting at the moment, for example, the speed. There will be a maximum speed of 30 kilometres per hour allowed here, in general probably more like 10 kilometres per hour or walking speed. And yet it will work. Yes, just as it is not impossible - I would like to put this cautiously at the moment - that self-driving systems can also be integrated. In any case, we have to think it through now: how can this work? Let's assume - I'm deliberately reaching far ahead here - that in 20 years it will probably be a matter of course. So we have to create the foundations.

Sarah Tietze

Ms. Lüscher, back to the city of Berlin. You are not only developing Siemensstadt together with Siemens, but are also involved in many other projects. Berlin has 11 sites for the future. These are areas where science and business are being carried into the future together. What exactly are these future locations and why is Siemensstadt one of them?

Regula Lüscher

You know, I sometimes ask myself that. Why these places are called future places, and other places are not called future places. Because basically urban development is always something where you try to anticipate the future, so to speak, and at the same time you are anchored in the now. But why these places are called future places and why Siemensstadt is one of these future places. It has to do with the fact that people have a special ambition. To overcome outdated patterns - and we discussed this at the beginning of the conversation - outdated patterns of how work and living should take place. Or to develop innovation, production, and even technologically new things in these places. In other words, it's not just a matter of these places of the future being quasi-innovative in the way they function, but of either knowledge or hardware being produced at these places of the future, which are also forward-looking. And I think that is what is expected of these places of the future. And at the same time, we must not forget that future sites must always be integrated into the existing buildings. And my experience is that such a

term can also trigger enormous fears. So now the city of the future is taking place and we next door are just left hanging here. Nothing works for us anymore.

And that's why my heart is torn between such terms, because they don't reflect the complexity of urban development.

Sarah Tietze

The future of Siemens is definitely also taking place in Berlin. I'm interested in the story behind it again, Stefan. I remember in October 2018, it was in the newspapers: Siemens is building its innovation campus in Berlin. How did that come about and why Berlin?

Stefan Kögl

Yes, that fits in quite well with the future location now. I'll start by saying that there is definitely a culture in Berlin of developing things. Even though I can very well understand all the points you raised in terms of how it relates to the environment. The reason for Berlin: the project itself needed production. That was a basic requirement. So the interconnection of business and science and thus also research, development and the practical reference into production, are one of the essential aspects in terms of the content that is sought here. Also in terms of cooperation with partner companies, which Siemens is looking for and for which a platform is to be created. The site had that. A second important aspect is that there is still a relatively large amount of free space in the area or on the site. Although it looks very cramped in the pictures, the bottom line is that only 35 percent of the land is built up. 65 percent has no buildings. So in that respect, there was development potential, without having to intervene too much in the existing buildings. And the second, essential aspect is of course: In Berlin, you can sense a certain spirit of optimism. You've probably been feeling it for decades now. But it is there. It is omnipresent. And, of course, in the dialogue with the representatives in Berlin. At the beginning of the project, there was a great deal of openness. I would rather say a clear sense of purpose to want to do such a project here. And these two foundations made it relatively easy, I think, the decision that this was the right location. And what also played a not insignificant role was that this is also the birthplace of Siemens itself. So, to continue the story here is of course a great story, I say that deliberately. It's simply credible and every Siemens fan supports it. And I think every Berliner says: yes, this is a good statement and is also perceived as such beyond Berlin.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan Kögl just said that this spirit of optimism can still be felt in Berlin today. Ms. Lüscher, if you looked into a crystal ball and imagined the year 2050 in Berlin, can you still feel that spirit of optimism?

Regula Lüscher

In 2050, a great deal of what is now being designed in this spirit of optimism will have been implemented. We will have more than 15 new urban districts here. When I look in the direction of Siemensstadt, I assume that Siemensstadt has been built. I can imagine that hardly anything moves in the street spaces in Siemensstadt anymore, except for people on foot and perhaps in some small vehicles, however they are powered. I can imagine that all the moving of goods, the things for daily life, is somehow happening in the air. So that we have a completely congested airspace and we use the ground for a lot of green space, for a lot of organic space, for the climate-appropriate and climate-adapted city. Because in the meantime, the weather patterns are even more extreme than they are now. It's just insanely hot, insanely dry, or then it's also sometimes very, very humid and wet. And that we are basically using our soil, which is not reproducible, that is simply a finite commodity. That we think much, much more. What really needs to be on this soil and what can we somehow put elsewhere? And that we share this, how shall I say, that exchange of thoughts and we already do that via many virtual instruments here as well. Our thoughts that we share here now, you can listen in without having to be in the same place as us, which I think is nice. And that we are somehow finding more and more different ways to be in exchange with each other. But what remains is people want a roof over their heads. What remains is, people want to see each other, to meet. And what remains is that we want a healthy environment and that we have to fight for it. And that every square millimetre is simply very valuable. And this back to nature in cities, I think that's the crucial issue. I could also imagine that by 2050 over 80 percent of the hardware that is built will be implemented from purely renewable resources. That in the meantime we will have completely detached ourselves from the idea that we produce CO₂ through buildings, but that we consume CO₂. Yes, that would actually be my wish and my vision, and I hope that part of it will be implemented.

Sarah Tietze

In any case, a very beautiful vision. It's a very innovative, CO₂ neutral and yet still human Berlin in 2050. How beautiful. That would fascinate me, too. Stefan, what fascinates you about Berlin today?

Stefan Kögl

So, there I would also have to repeat the departure mood. At that point, well, there's not such a clear-cut description. There are many clichés from the past, but as a new Berliner I have to say, basically I find Berlin in almost everything when I look for it.

From a green, almost suburban flair in Zehlendorf to the family houses in Prenzlauer Berg to the real hotspot that is Kreuzberg. So, I can find what I'm looking for. It's a good mix, even for a capital city, I think. It represents Germany because it just has this range. In contrast to other cities, which became more streamlined over the decades. And of course the opportunities that you have here. So, very many young people working in the digital field, the startup scene is very comprehensive. There's fashion. And to name something completely different, film is very present in the city. So, also culturally it is a little bit different to what you would find in other cities, in addition to the classic cultural offerings. Yes, and in that respect it's up to you where you find yourself here and how you want to utilise it most effectively.

Sarah Tietze

Mrs. Lüscher, Stefan, thank you very much for being here in the studio and see you soon in Siemensstadt.

Regula Lüscher

Yes, see you soon.

Stefan Kögl

See you soon. Thank you very much.

Regula Lüscher

Thank you.

Sarah Tietze - Outro

This was the second episode of our podcast. Today we showed you what expectations the city of Berlin has for the Siemensstadt project. But we also heard how the cooperation between Siemens and Berlin is taking place and how the current situation, i.e. the New Normal, will change the development of future cities. In our next episode, we talk to District Mayor Kleebank about Spandau's view of our Siemensstadt. If you want to learn more about Siemensstadt, the people who live and work in it, or the projects happening around it, tune in again next time. Bye and see you soon.

S-Bahn announcement

Next Stop: Siemensstadt.