



TRANSCRIPTION PODCAST SIEMENSSTADT CALLING #8

- CITY OF THE FUTURE -

Michael Müller

The future lives from new ideas, and from the fact that one is never satisfied.

Sarah Tietze

Hello from Berlin and welcome to Siemensstadt Calling. A new urban quarter is being built in Siemensstadt and with it a 70-hectare piece of the future. How we will live and work in the future is therefore also one of the central questions that we will get to the bottom of in our podcast. My name is Sarah Tietze, and I'm always joined on our podcast by Stefan Kögl, who, together with his team, is implementing the Siemensstadt Place of the Future. Hello Stefan, nice to have you with us.

Stefan Kögl

Hello, Sarah.

Sarah Tietze

We are delighted to welcome two particularly exciting guests to our studio today. One is Berlin's governing mayor, Michael Müller. Hello Mr. Müller, how nice to have you with us.

Michael Müller

Hi.

Sarah Tietze

And Siemens board member Cedrik Neike. Hello Cedrik, good to have you with us.

Cedrik Niece

Hello, Sarah.

Sarah Tietze

We start with a warm up, a quick little round of questions. We call it "2 minutes future". The rules of the game are very simple. We have 2 minutes. Each person gets 5 questions. So a total of 15 questions. And we'll see together if we can do it in 2 minutes. Mr. Müller, I would start with you, if that is okay.

Michael Müller

Gladly.

Sarah Tietze

I briefly set my watch to 2 minutes and with that I say, 2 minutes future.. off we go. Mr. Müller, what other city can Berlin learn a lot from?

Michael Müller

There is not one city. There are many metropolises where you can pick out the best again. Like Vienna in housing construction, or Singapore. When it comes to digitalisation, or medicine, or even Australia, we see that there is no one city.

Sarah Tietze

If they had one wish for Berlin's future. What would that be?

Michael Müller

Oh, that the places of the future, which we are also talking about right now, that they are really accepted by Berliners, and that we then see Berlin life and the Berlin mix in the next few years, also regarding future concerns.

Sarah Tietze

What else needs to be invented in the next ten years?

Michael Müller

Well, clearly the drugs for pandemics like the one we are experiencing now. The vaccine is great, and that the testing took place so quickly, but we still lack medication for the sick.

Sarah Tietze

A year without a car, heavenly or devilish?

Michael Müller

Well, without a car... There are times when one needs it, but on the whole it would probably rather be relaxed.

Sarah Tietze

Let's stay within the one year range. Imagine you were a member of the Siemens Managing Board for one year. Which key issue would you focus on? Or would you put your team, your best team, on it?

Michael Müller

Clearly the health care sector. Siemens is already doing a lot in this area, which is great, and for many of us they are a very strong and important partner.

But medicine and health are the most important issues for us at the moment, independent of Corona. And being able to help more and more people to an ever greater extent. That's something that you can definitely combine with entrepreneurial success. But it is simply a huge help for many people if there are networks and cooperations. That would clearly be my focus.

Sarah Tietze

I always thought I could talk fast, Mr. Müller, but you can definitely keep up. Cedrik, over to you. The first thing that comes to mind when you think about life in ten years?

Cedrik Neike

Oh, life becomes even more worth living.

Sarah Tietze

Who would you like to meet for lunch to talk about the future?

Cedrik Neike

Mr. Müller, of course.

Michael Müller

For me, it has already been worth it.

Sarah Tietze

What do you take away from the pandemic?

Cedrik Neike

That it's possible to meet a lot of people even without a lot of CO2 emissions, and to meet them virtually. So, the simple idea of less and seldom travelling. That you can rethink ecologically, that was a big realisation for me, a positive realisation from this time. And of course to see my family more.

Sarah Tietze

If you could beam a highlight from another city to Berlin, what would it be?

Cedrik Neike

Like Mr. Müller, I could list various cities, but I'll take the skyline. After all, I lived in New York. The skyline in New York is great.

Sarah Tietze

And imagine, Cedrik, that you were Governing Mayor for a year. What issue would you never let out of your sight?

Cedrik Neike

I would say, if I were mayor after the pandemic, I would definitely want to locate the future of sustainable production here in Berlin. Quite simply, Berlin has written industrial history and can write industrial history going forward. And I would like to help shape that.

Sarah Tietze

Great. Stefan, over to you. The first word that comes to your mind when you think of the topic "Future and Berlin"?

Stefan Kögl

Yes, that's now accepted, isn't it? Siemensstadt Square. But it was not planned...

Sarah Tietze

It is only authentic. Two weeks without the Internet. Heavenly or devilish?

Stefan Kögl

Neither. I think we have just shown in the pandemic that everything has two sides.

Sarah Tietze

Will the pandemic change the way cities develop?

Stefan Kögl

Yes, for sure. You can see how digitisation is being driven forward, in all countries around the world. And in this respect it will also change our lives sustainably, and life in the city.

Sarah Tietze

And who would you like to have lunch with to talk about the future?

Stefan Kögl

I find the Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin quite interesting. Very, very young politician. She certainly has a very different view of many issues. I would have a few questions.

Sarah Tietze

"Another perspective" is a very exciting keyword. What from another city or another region would you beam over to Berlin if you could?

Stefan Kögl

The sad truth is that there are no pedestrian zones here. Really. So, areas like Siemensstadt will later be areas where you have priority as a pedestrian.

Sarah Tietze

Mr. Müller is smiling. Do you have any ideas, Mr. Müller?

Stefan Kögl

Did I understand this incorrectly?

Michael Müller

Pedestrian zones are a difficult topic in Berlin. But because we simply have these decentralised neighbourhoods and shopping streets, there's just not this one pedestrian zone where the city meets. But that's exactly what we're looking forward to now. We are experiencing the new neighbourhoods, the neighbourhoods of the future, and perhaps things have to be tried out or developed further. I am curious.

Sarah Tietze

So I have a bad and a good news. The bad: we shot past the two minutes we had. The good is, we definitely answered the questions concisely, brought in a lot of information. I think if we had an audience, we would still get an applause. Mr. Müller, you are not here with us by chance. You have just inaugurated the new name with us. Siemensstadt Square is now the name of this place of the future. How does a square like this, a future square, have to be designed in order to be well received by the people of Berlin?

Michael Müller

It must offer something day and night. It must be diverse. It must, of course, bring together a wide variety of people and topics. It must not only be an office city, but there must be stores, there must be social, cultural institutions. And of course in Siemensstadt, Siemensstadt Square, that's where a lot of the daytime activities will take place. Meeting then in the working world. That's quite clear. But we will also be offering something for after hours, after the office closes, and creating opportunities for people to meet. That is important, that is living Berlin. And then you can quickly inspire the people of Berlin.

Sarah Tietze

Cedrik, what technologies does a day and night operation like that need?

Cedrik Neike

It must be modern, it must be digital, and above all it must be sustainable. So whatever we want to plan here, it must also be based on these factors. We want to promote this development of exponential growth. And by that I don't just mean production, but also human interaction. New friendships should simply form here as well. And you talked about technology. We've used very, very much technology now in the pandemic, but it's going to be important again at some point that we can physically come together, also meet again. And that's what Siemensstadt Square is supposed to make possible. That's where we need new communication networks. This is where 5G will come in. We need research. I also talked about the Werner von Siemens Center, where we are conducting research together. But everything we do must have a sustainable footprint. And I'm extremely proud of the fact that this will be the first neighbourhood that we develop that is completely CO2 neutral. I don't think there's anything like it anywhere else in the world. And we will also - Stefan Kögl will talk about this later - we will also be assigned to this, that we also want to plan and set up with that in mind.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan, what is meant by CO2 neutrality?

Stefan Kögl

Well, actually, as already mentioned, that is one of the goals. But the exciting thing about it, if you really want to implement it, is that you are permanently moving in the innovative area. There is simply no blueprint for it, no standards. It also has to be said that some of the regulations are not designed with this in mind. But I think it is essential because we live in a time of great upheaval, and we will be creating a city or a district in the next 10 or 15 years. In other words, what we think today will probably be the standard in 10 years. In this respect, we did not somehow arrive at, how shall I say, a surprising path, but many will be able to orient themselves on this.

Sarah Tietze

Mr. Müller, when we talk about the future, the topic of mobility is of course also a very important one. Berlin is also providing quite innovative impetus in this area. Keyword: pop-up bike lanes. The other day, Ms. Günther said that by 2030 only e-cars will be allowed, and mentioned the Pedestrian Act, now as an extension of the Mobility Act. So these are real innovations that are being unleashed by Berlin. Sometimes you get the feeling that these innovations are being implemented somewhat hesitantly. Is that the case? What is your assessment?

Michael Müller

Well, first of all, it's right to approach the topic with real commitment, because everything revolves around the question: How do we want to live together and what is a liveable city? And I believe that living, working, leisure time, thinking together.. actually, the old Berlin model, is suddenly becoming very modern again and is also playing a role worldwide. And of course it also has something to do with avoiding mobility, traffic routes, unnecessary mobility. Thinking about living, work and leisure together. Not to say: Why don't you drive out of town, your workplace is 15 km beyond the city limits, or vice versa, but to organise things well in a confined space. And that's why it's important to think about pedestrian traffic, to think about bicycle traffic, to enable mobility for the car, for commercial traffic, where it's necessary, but to make other offers where it's not necessary. Whether via public transport or car-sharing models for the necessary journeys. There are all kinds of different things. So it is right to approach this with commitment. But we also have to say that social acceptance is needed for such a transformation. And you also have to lead by good example and show that it's possible. It's not enough to just say overnight, 'leave your car at home', the infrastructure has to be right. And this is something that also takes time and for which, I repeat, Berlin also needs partners. In the area of digitisation, the mobility revolution, and climate and environmental awareness, we need partners with whom we can manage this major infrastructure transformation.

Sarah Tietze

That's right. But sometimes things happen really fast, don't they? Keyword: pop-up bike lanes. That was also a very exciting development, and people were definitely looking at Berlin nationally.

Michael Müller

Yes, that also accelerated Corona, it has to be said. We've seen that people can't stand together in a confined space on public transport. And when the pandemic started, we thought about what we could do in terms of additional services: What can we offer in terms of additional services, how can we organise them? And of course, I can't order and decide on new subway lines overnight. But I can quickly support other mobility. Like, for example, bicycle traffic, and that's where this came from. And we have seen, and you must then accept this as a policy, not everyone was set up wisely, not every pop-up bike lane. And then you have to correct it again. But many were excellently accepted. And then they also have continuity for next time. I think that was a good way to go.

Cedrik Neike

I would again promote the pop-up bike lanes because I am a self-confessed cyclist. I also came to Siemensstadt from Friedenau by bike this morning. So as such, this is very important to me personally. But now joking aside, 3000 kilometres will be built or also extended. That is important. What are we doing now in Siemensstadt? In Siemensstadt, we are really trying to build this connectivity between the different means of local transportation. Means of transportation and also electro-mobility. We shouldn't demonise the car. We should simply see: How can we bring the combustion engine into electro-mobility? And that's where we are very, very actively with Siemens. We are building the entire infrastructure, such as charging stations. We have expanded our entire portfolio in this area. That means - and I'll mention this to Stefan again - how do we achieve this in Siemensstadt? We have the opportunity to integrate local transport - we are working together with Deutsche Bahn and BVG in order to integrate Siemensstadt. And then how can we move further and further within Siemensstadt? We are also considering new technologies here, but I also mentioned that we should perhaps think this through further. We should also consider the Waterkant and the Tech Republic, because we'll never get another chance to try something like this out on a test field or in a real lab. And Berlin could really make another footprint in the direction of the future of mobility.

Stefan Kögl

We are working here together with the Northwest Region and an overall concept, now also with funding, is being considered and developed accordingly. So it's not every man for himself, but all of working together.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan, Siemensstadt in 10 years. How do you have to imagine such a street of the traffic ecosystem? What does it look like?

Stefan Kögl

What does it look like in the future? Actually, most things have already been said. But what is decisive, I think, is that the individual traffic known today with passenger vehicles defines the streets and also very much restricts them, restricts the possibilities of those involved - the pedestrian and the cyclist. And that results in two things; one is that there will be less car traffic in the area, because we of course also have modern mobility concepts to get from A to B. This means that the cars will be more likely to be parked in the general area, i.e. that cars will tend to park on the outskirts.

There will be mobility hubs from which someone can get to their apartment in an electric bus, perhaps an autonomous shuttle, if they don't have heavy things to load or unload. And the street in the area will no longer be dominated by cars. So the cars that are still driving - of course, it will not be completely without cars - will drive very slowly. So, between 10 and 30 kilometres per hour. I am convinced that we will see a time when they will also drive autonomously. You have to imagine that. I always imagine the city without signs. That's what I find most fascinating, because what does an autonomous car need a sign for? And that will of course change the whole, the whole city culture, how do you say the atmosphere, significantly. And people, of course, if I can walk on the street and be freer and no longer be restricted to this 1.50 meter pedestrian walkway, I'll have a different city than I have today in most cases.

Sarah Tietze

When I ride my bike with my two children today, I'm always drenched in sweat afterwards. Will that change in Siemensstadt if I live there with my children?

Stefan Kögl

Yes, definitely, because the focus will be on pedestrian and bicycle traffic in addition to modern transportation. And the individual car traffic, as we know it today, will be rather secondary and also only one element.

Cedrik Neike

But there is one more very important point. We are going to take this individual traffic out of the center, out of the Square. But there are still 6 factories that we have here. That means the logistical challenge is how do we combine this movement of people and still include the goods traffic. And that's where we really are, the logistical concept. This connection between the things we build here, that we bring in and out, plus the people we move here. Connecting this together is the art that we also bring together in Siemensstadt.

Sarah Tietze

Of course, we also want to advance mobility because it is good for our environment. And that would be... Then we come to the issue of sustainability. Here, too, Mr. Müller, Berlin is doing quite a lot. There are incredibly innovative start-ups that are driving forward the circular economy, minimising leftovers in food or minimising waste. The Senate also has a very innovation-driven policies in this direction. What is the balance sheet here? Is it enough for them? Do they want more? Where would they still set the course?

Michael Müller

No, that would be terrible if we said that's enough. Then you sit back and do nothing more. And the future thrives on new ideas and on never being satisfied, but always trying to somehow find a new approach, to implement a better idea. And there's a lot more possible in energy supply. In our residential quarters, too, it has to be said. We have already implemented many things with the Berlin Energy Agency and the housing associations. Tenant electricity is generated and offered. But this can and must continue. There's no question about it. We can do much more in the area of solar energy. We have so many state-owned buildings where we can use innovations and completely different technical possibilities to generate the energy of the future and in turn produce the energy ourselves. There is still a long way to go. But it also has to be said that we have to go further into private consumption and consumer behaviour. Politics can only set a framework here, and must do so. In the end, it is up to each and every individual to be aware: What can I do to improve the environment and climate policy? Where can I avoid waste? Does this purchase, let's say, really have to be the way I have always made it up until now? Where can I avoid individual transport - going somewhere in my own car - where can I avoid that? It's going to come down to each individual. Private consumer behaviour, I think, is crucial to moving forward.

Cedrik Neike

Let's keep this in mind: A person in Jakarta uses 20 times fewer resources than a person in New York. This means that this new way of thinking, which we also have to do in the private sector, is very, very important. Of course, we also have to do the same with companies. Siemens was already thinking about this in 2014: What is our... How do we reduce our carbon footprint? We are now 54 percent away from that. So we've already saved 54 percent since 2014 by saying we're going to use our own technologies to save our resources. And that's what we've done. In Silicon Valley, it's called Eat Your Own Dog Food. I'm half French. I say more like drink your own champagne. We implemented these technologies. And we set four parameters and said, we're going to start with ourselves instead of telling everybody else how to do it. That goes for energy efficiency programs that we've carried out internally: how do we use less electricity? We've applied decentralised energy systems that we also build ourselves. Even the technology, that's what Stefan Kögl does in his planning for Siemensstadt right from the start. We also buy green electricity. It also very, very much produced here in the north, in Brandenburg, but also in the North Sea and Baltic Sea. And we look at our vehicle fleet and say: What can we reduce from our footprint?

And if we do that, we want to be completely climate-neutral by 2030. Then we'll take a big step forward by saying, not only what you have to do personally, but what we have to do as Siemens and how we can be self reflective enough to really reduce it? But our goal should be to really achieve sustainable production in industry. And we want to help shape that here. And that's why Siemensstadt Square is so important for this.

Sarah Tietze

Cedrik, we need to rethink. But what can technology possibly do to help us?

Cedrik Neike

There are several possibilities. It starts with consumption. So a building... buildings consume about 40 percent of all the electricity in the world, and half of it goes to waste. In other words, rooms are heated that don't need to be heated at all. Lights are turned on when lights don't need to be turned on. So the technologies we need here are very much digital technologies, where the building starts to know what the user needs and when they need it. That means it will only switch the energy up or down when it's needed. In many countries, the room has to be cooled. Here, yes, it has to be heated in Berlin at the moment. But all of this would only happen when it's needed. And this technological composition, building sensors into the buildings and also letting people entertain themselves with these sensors, i.e. letting them communicate, allows us to drastically reduce energy consumption. For the last 2000 years, a building didn't know if anyone was in the building or not, just blindly heated or cooled. And that was fine. And that's changing now thanks to the new technologies that we have.

Michael Müller

Of course, that would also open up opportunities for management. You have to look at that, too. We are a huge employer. We have over 100,000 employees, huge administrative buildings, and with these technologies that Mr. Neike describes, with these intelligent buildings in practice, the city can also make its contribution to saving energy, can be more sensitive in its use of resources, and that is also overdue in our case. As far as schools and other public buildings are concerned, there are thousands of places in our city where this kind of technology is lacking and where we have to work together with the companies to establish what the right thing to do is, and where. But there is much more possible in Berlin, and not just in Berlin. These public buildings exist all over the world, and we have a lot to do.

Cedrik Neike

We should definitely talk to each other about this, because if you save resources, you also save money. And Berlin needs these two things, too. We all need them. These are technologies that we should definitely be using.

Sarah Tietze

Absolutely. If we think about the administration or existing ecosystems, then these technologies would have to be retrofitted, so to speak. If we think about Siemensstadt, that's where we start planning. That means planning an entire city with these modern technologies right from the start. You can probably convert such a sustainability concept with even more innovation, even more fluidity. Right, Stefan?

Stefan Kögl

Yes, of course. But we also have - and I'm happy to remind you of this - more than 2,500 square meters of listed buildings. We are also challenged at this point and are happy to accept the challenge. As far as sustainability is concerned, we have of course set ourselves lofty goals. And as I just said, we have goals that we believe will soon be standard, but which we cannot take for granted today. And there is the fact that we also want to certify the site or work together with certification of the company. This is the German Sustainable Building Council. And then another international company LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. And we have a pre-certification in the highest classification now in platinum from both societies. For the LEED certification it is the first time in Europe. And I can only add, this is a big step because it shows we are on the right track. But it has also become clear that this is not an easy path, because all the standards and regulations are not yet at a sufficient level and therefore we have to think and work very innovatively.

Sarah Tietze

Mr. Müller, if there's one thing you can say about them, it's that they really enjoy the field of science. They have also achieved a lot with Team Krach in recent years. Science, and universities in particular, currently have a great need for space if you look at City West and City East. Could Siemensstadt be a good alternative?

Michael Müller

No, not alternative, but in addition. We don't want to give up the other sites, but rather develop them further. But Siemensstadt and Siemens as a direct partner have already been taken into consideration. And as part of the further development of Siemensstadt, Siemensstadt Square, we already have our own science focus and science campus.

And we are counting on this to develop further. And I think I can understand quite well that this was also an important basis for Siemens' decision. What kind of science and research environment is available when deciding on a location? And if this is a focal point and a point of attraction for such companies, then we would be crazy if we don't continue to focus on it and expand it accordingly. So, it is important in order to be able to solve the future issues that concern us all. We have now talked about climate, the environment, mobility and new forms of housing. If we want to actively address these issues of the future and not just be spectators, then we need an appropriate scientific and research environment. We have it in Berlin, and we want to strengthen and expand it further. And we are again looking for cooperation with companies and industry so that we can implement the ideas of science.

Sarah Tietze

Cedrik, what does the current scientific landscape look like in Siemensstadt?

Cedrik Neike

Mr. Müller mentioned that. One of the reasons why we really opted for Siemensstadt Square here in Berlin once again is also the good relationship we have with the Berlin universities. And one of the reasons for making Siemensstadt open is that everyone should also participate, so that the ecosystem continues to function and expand. I worked in Silicon Valley for several years. That's how it works there. If they have know how, then there. Good research and people who really want to develop something. Then something happens. And that attracts more and more people who then want to join in.

Michael Müller

And if I may add something. What I consider to be a great asset at the moment are the other non-university partners. Whether Helmholtz, Max Planck, or the Leibniz institutes, they are all here on site. They are not just anywhere, they are just a few kilometres from this location in Siemensstadt. And they are active contacts and cooperation partners, and they attract others. If Max Planck and the Berlin Senate now build a building for Ms. Charpentier, a Nobel Prize winner, for her research, that will trigger something. Then suddenly others in the world are interested and say: What's going on in Berlin? Why are they doing this? What is their focus? Can't I be part of it? And then we might have new impulses for companies as well. And that's simply what is creating a lot of momentum in Berlin at the moment.

Sarah Tietze

How do you manage to keep such a woman as Ms Charpentier? Other cities are probably interested in attracting her too, right?

Michael Müller

She has already had several stations on her professional path. When we received her in the Rotes Rathaus she made it very clear once again in her acceptance speech. She made a conscious decision to come to Berlin, partly because of the environment here which is also important for her work. But what is crucial for scientists is reliability and the ability to plan ahead. She has also seen here that we have kept our promises and financed them for years. Now this research building for her and her team, of course, that is another important step. It gives her the basis to continue working well in the coming years. And that, I think, is of great importance, probably also for the companies. It's not about putting a lot of money on the table for two years. Almost anyone in the world can do that. But to say over a long period of time: I have a picture of the future and step by step - not everything can be done immediately - but step by step we will finance it and equip it better. I believe that this ability to plan is very important, especially for science and research, and thus also for companies.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan, then we also have to plan into the future to get the top scientists to come to Siemensstadt.

Stefan Kögl

We are doing that. We plan for the future, of course.

Sarah Tietze

Mr. Müller, Berlin is often quite daring. If I were to describe Berlin as a person, then it would definitely be a particularly courageous person. When it comes to the rent cap, we were also quite daring. We are really quite.. or Berlin has taken a completely new...

Michael Müller

You really leave nothing out of the conversation.

Sarah Tietze

...completely new path. What conclusions would you draw from this.

Michael Müller

Yes, such steps are also important, and I know that there are many in the business community who initially wince and say: Actually, these are all areas where the market has to regulate matters. But on the other hand, I keep saying that we should perhaps reconsider whether it isn't right and important for Berlin to take such bold steps in these areas as well. Because at the end of the day, it's about getting people excited about this location and keeping them here, enabling them to get ahead, and you can get people excited about science and research, for example, and about attractive jobs. But there also has to be a chance for students to stay here, start a family and pursue their careers here. And not everyone can afford every rent. And we see in locations like New York or London that there are also many younger people and scientists, even people with good or normal incomes, who say: It's no longer something for me here. I don't have what I need here in terms of a basis for the next few years, for my family. And in this context, we say that rent and housing are a basic right, and you have to be able to afford them. That's why we're setting such priorities here and making sure that we limit the rise in rents. I believe that something like this is important, also for Berlin as a business and science location. And, of course, that's not the only answer. You also have to continue to build with commitment and you also have to make the new neighbourhoods which we were talking about just now, attractive again. Make other mobility offers. But one thing meshes with the other. And finally, yes, the affordability of housing also plays a role.

Sarah Tietze

There are also some critical voices about the rent cap. But you would still decide to do it again, and you think it's worth it?

Michael Müller

It's worth taking a step like that and I say that everywhere. I also accept the judgement of courts or when others also have political competitors, other ideas or better ideas. If someone says in the end: The way we have taken simply does not work the way it is, okay. But then you have to find another solution. For me, the answer can't be, 'Let's wait and see, rents are rising, that's just the way it is. That's not a political answer. Then we can all stay at home and everything will somehow be sorted out by someone. No. Political work means reacting to demands and sometimes courageously trying to steer one thing or another in a different direction. And in this respect I say, I have experienced this so often in my political work, that maybe one way doesn't work, but another way does. And the subject of rent control, rent regulation and curbing rent increases.

Michael Müller

This remains an issue for all political parties. And it is also the right thing to do, because people can also expect that their wage level, their income level, to also keep pace with the development of rents, and unfortunately that has often not been the case in recent years.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan, we're also building apartments in Siemensstadt. Will there also be apartments that everyone can afford?

Stefan Kögl

So yes, I think that has already been mentioned many times, that we will develop the city according to the Berlin model and implement 30 percent rent-controlled housing construction. But I think it's important to mention again that by creating building land here, we're not just fighting the symptoms, which is what I see with the rent cap, but it's actually the shortage of building land that's causing the problem. And in this respect, rapid developments here, such as in Siemensstadt, building law, urban land use planning, etc., are of course important steps to simply create apartments and living space, which will then enable better or different prices.

Sarah Tietze

Mr. Müller, we announced that you would be a guest on our podcast and quite a few questions came in. We have chosen three. I hope it's okay if I just ask them. One question was whether you will treat yourself to a vacation after eight years of being Mayor, once your term is finished.

Michael Müller

Yes, you can be sure of that. It's not like I didn't have a vacation in between. But it's just that time of year when I feel the same as everyone else. I had planned a vacation with my children, and of course I also wanted to go on one or two business trips. To visit our twinned cities, for example. We have long-standing twin cities and anniversaries. London, Istanbul, all that was on the agenda now. And that's all gone.

Michael Müller

Because of corona it is of course not possible to travel and I don't want to in the situation we're in just now. That being said, when this is over and when there is a bit more air again, then of course I will also take a vacation.

Sarah Tietze

After all, you won't be running for mayor again in the fall. You would like to be in the Bundestag, if you had to choose a focus or a subject area, which would it be?

Michael Müller

That's a difficult thought. Because that's the beauty of my, of my current job, of my current job as governing mayor. That there is this huge spectrum of topics. I was already a senator for construction, and that means the whole topic of urban development - what we see here in Siemensstadt and the further development of future locations, the topic of housing construction - first of all, I enjoyed it immensely and it remains a very important topic nationwide. By the way, there is also a lack of affordable housing nationwide and now we are in an international competition for locations. I keep saying this: My competitor is not in Bavaria or Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. My competitor is in the USA or in China. And that is precisely a nationwide issue, how we develop. Science and research are very close to my heart. But I also say as Governing Mayor I have learned a lot in recent years regarding the subject of integration and migration. The coexistence of the most diverse cultures and religions in a confined space. That, too, has to be organised. And not everything works out right away. But you can learn how to bring people together and how things can be done better. So there is a wide range of topics that I would be interested in. Finally, you have to see what works, it needs a large group, such a parliamentary group. And you have to see where you can best contribute your experience.

Sarah Tietze

And the last audience question that we have for you is whether you will remain loyal to the Siemensstadt project in your new role, or make an effort to promote it.

Michael Müller

Yes, that's definitely the case. And I'm staying in Berlin for the time being. It's my hometown and I live here and that... I've never lived anywhere else, nor do I want to, and I think it's so beautiful how Berlin has developed in recent years. And for that reason alone, as a citizen of this city, I will of course continue to actively accompany it. But if I have the chance to continue working politically in the Bundestag, for example, and the interfaces will be there whether urban development or science related, then there will certainly be many opportunities to continue to actively accompany and support this project.

Sarah Tietze

Before we go into our final round, I have one more question the same question to you three, please answer quickly and impulsively. Dear Cedrik, it goes to you first, and that is the question when you think about cities in 2030 what is the first thing I need to change here to make them liveable?

Cedrik Neike

Cities need to become more sustainable. They are already the most sustainable place there is, if you look closely. And we have to think about the fact that 30 percent of our grandparents lived in cities. I think 56 percent of us live in cities. And of our children, over 70 percent will live in cities. In other words, the future will be decided in cities. And that's why these cities have to become more sustainable.

Sarah Tietze

Stefan over to you. Cities in 2030 - what needs to change?

Stefan Kögl

I think the individual traffic, the many passenger cars that ultimately determine and park up the streets in the cities that have grown over time. Solutions must be found for this.

Sarah Tietze

Mr. Müller?

Michael Müller

I'm still believe in bringing living, working and leisure together. This old Berlin model: live in the front building, work in the back building, and then around the corner, whatever, you find either a bar or the cultural center. But living in a neighbourhood, working, thinking about leisure time together, I think that's an ideal image, especially for the metropolises.

Sarah Tietze

I came across nice quotes from all three of you this week and my task for you is - this is the last task now in this podcast, after that you are free - the task is to extend those quotes a little bit more because they were so exciting. I'd like to have a little bit more input. Stefan, now let's start with you for the sake of fairness. The quote from you "Everything here is cutting edge". How would you extend that into overtime?

Stefan Kögl

...Because it was always like that.

Sarah Tietze

Cedrik, your quote is "We need to move away from the ego-system and to the ecosystem. If you had to extend that, how would it do it?"

Cedrik Neike

We live in a time where, unfortunately, demarcation and exclusion are becoming stronger and stronger. We live in an open country, in an open city. And as Mr. Müller said, we should think or rethink an open neighbourhood. That means inviting everyone to think not of themselves, ego, but of everyone.

Sarah Tietze

Mr. Müller, your quote, which particularly inspired me was "The future of Europe is in the hands of the cities".

Michael Müller

Really, I said that? It's good. It's good for now.

Sarah Tietze

...it appeared on my Twitter timeline yesterday.

Michael Müller

That's a good thing to have said. Yes, it is in the future of cities, quite simply because we connect everything together. We are connecting the coexistence of cultures, religions, people from all over the world, with science and research, with companies, and we are connecting this coexistence in a small space and also bringing together the competencies. I think that is very important in order to be able to give a good answer. And that's why cities are not only problems, but also problem solvers. For many questions. And that, for example, is what excites me about cities.

Sarah Tietze

Wonderful. Thank you for clarifying that, Mr. Müller. Thank you Cedrik for your exciting input, and thank you Stefan for the nice dialogue. I really enjoyed it. If you enjoyed it too, dear listeners, then tune in again next time. And see you very soon in your Siemensstadt.

Michael Müller

Thank you.

Stefan Kögl, Cedrik Neike

Thank you. Thanks.