

## **Reclaiming Public Property is Possible**

The proposal regarding reclamation of abandoned public property for lodging purposes comes from the habitation rights' movements carried out in Northern Europe (the Netherlands, England and Germany) in the 1970s.

In Italy, the first ones to practice it were in Bologna, when sne jouns created the cooperative *"Why worry? Squat!"* (*Literally it would be: 'who doesn't squat, worries'*).

In 1982, they won the first public competition for self-restructuring of lodgings in the historic center of the city, while at the same time, similar cooperative movements came into being in Rome, Padua, Livourne, Pistoia and Florence; the last two cities having also won public competitions.

In the 1980s, thanks once again to The Tenants' Union (Unione Inquilini), some buildings belonging to the Caltagirone (who went into exile overseas after a financial crisis) were taken over by the people, but the Municipality did not accept the proposal and gave the buildings back to their owners.

In 1989, once again thanks to the Tenants' Union of Rome, the cooperative *Vivere 2000* occupied an abandoned convent in Trastevere, which was the property of the Municipality. Along with hundreds of homeless people, they then restructured it. In addition, they organized the occupation of dozens of buildings in the historic center of the city (in Borgo Pio, Trastevere, Via del Governo Vecchio, Trionfale, Via dei Prefetti, Via dei Serpenti, Via dei Delfini), buildings regularly empty of tenants.

In 1996, the building on Via Tommaso d'Aquino 11, belonging to the region of Latium, was occupied by a group of young people; at the same time, the regional deputy S. Bonadonna, approved, with the unanimity of the region of Latium, the first regional law for the self-recovery of public property through the intermediary of homeless cooperatives.

Since 2000, numerous other occupational and reclamation experiments have been developed by all the organizations dedicated to the struggle for housing rights, in both Rome (ACTION and urban coordination for the struggle for housing) and throughout the nation.

A valid survey regarding public property, which could be reclaimed for housing purposes, as carried out by cooperatives and some cities, has not been done.

It would require that every region approve a law for reclamation, along the lines of the model adopted by the region of Latium.

The 29<sup>th</sup> of December 1995, deputies De Angelis, Lanti, Pistone, Saia, Nardini, Boghetta and Cocci proposed the national law "Rules for the reclamation of abandoned and run-down buildings, both public and private,

for the express purpose of lodging, through the medium of cooperatives composed of individuals who have been expelled from their domiciles or have found themselves homeless”.

When will the center-left wing propose something similar and improve upon it?

**Information sheet concerning reclamation in Rome as pursued by the political deputy, for the suburbs and for the local development of districts in Rome**

The intervention of the deputy is taking shape according to these two plans:

The first is legal and connected to the program agreement signed with the minister of infrastructure and the region of Latium for the need for dwellings. There is a public subsidy of around 3 150 000 Euros matched with a subsidy from the cooperatives bordering on 1 500 000 Euros for a total of 97 lodgings. In one such phase, under adjudication, some interventions are being led in the following occupied schools:

School Via Marica 5<sup>th</sup> District  
School Via dei Lauri 7<sup>th</sup> District  
School Via F. Degrenet 12<sup>th</sup> District  
School Via Grotta Perfetta 11<sup>th</sup> District  
School Via Saredo 10<sup>th</sup> District  
School Via Colomberti 4<sup>th</sup> District

The second plan is being fulfilled with funding from the Communal Budget with a public investment of around 2 000 000 Euros. The financing from the cooperatives is around 1 000 000 Euros for a total of 66 lodgings and is linked to the following buildings:

Ex-convent Piazza Sonnino 1<sup>st</sup> District  
School Via delle Alzavole n° 23 8<sup>th</sup> District  
School Largo Monte Sangiusto n° 14 4<sup>th</sup> District

Below are the interventions under way, which will be fulfilled with funding coming from the program agreement signed by the minister of infrastructure and ratified by the region of Latium after deliberation by District Council n° 103 on 18 October 2001.

**School of Via dei Lauri**

The final project will have 23 lodging spaces and some communal areas to be turned into garages or meeting halls. There are about 65 residents who will benefit from this reclamation.

### **School of Via Filippo De Grenet**

The final project will provide 8 lodging spaces for a total of 26 residents. In addition, there will be a communal area for socializing.

### **School of Via Grotta Perfetta**

The final project will provide 18 lodging spaces for a total of 50 residents. In addition, there will be a communal area for socializing.

### **School of Via Saredo**

The final project will provide 11 lodging spaces for a total of 35 residents. In addition, there will be a communal area for the residents.

### **School of Via Marica**

The final project will provide 27 lodging spaces for a total of 84 residents. In addition, there will be a communal area and a day care center.

### **School of Via Colomberti**

The final project will provide 10 lodging spaces for a total of 23 residents. In addition, there will be a central communal area.

## **Buildings in the finalization process financed by the Communal Budget**

### **Piazza Sonnino ex-convent S. Agata**

The building has for a long time been an integral part of the convent of S. Agata. The residential section has been restructured several times over the preceding centuries. During the 1930s and 1940s, the ex-convent served as an orphanage, then in the 1950s and 60s, it was used for lodging. The building was then abandoned during the 1970s and 80s.

The program will oversee the reclamation of 11 lodging spaces of varying sizes.

The building, occupied 18 years ago by the cooperative *Vivere 2000*, was partially restructured during this time by partners of the cooperative.

The cultural center *Il Cantiere* was built in an old garage adjacent to the convent.

### **School of Via delle Alzavole n°23**

The building is part of an anticipated educational complex found in the alternate plan for zone 28 bis de Torre Maura with a homogenous M3 zone, the complex is comprised of a primary school, a secondary school; in addition, a nursery school with three classes to be held in the building.

The building has an area of 715 m<sup>2</sup> for 3 045 m<sup>3</sup> on a site of 2 840 m<sup>2</sup>. The zone is demarcated to the north by a football field and by some installations for open air sporting activities, which were at the outset, shared with the adjacent secondary school.

The entrance is situated towards the south. It benefits from a vast parking lot inside a court reserved for the school that overlooks the street. Also, there is a no-parking zone and a garden area with tall trees.

The building is made up of a basement with some cupboards and only the concierge's lodging is found on the 3,5 side. An external staircase leads into this particular lodging space.

From a functional point of view, the building is laid out around a large central area where communal activities take place. There are four blocks, of which three are divided into sections and one is reserved for toilets. Certain modifications have been carried out by the occupants, which are nonetheless without any effects on the future typological layout, and will therefore be eliminated. 8 Lodging units are anticipated.

### **School Largo Monte Sangiusto n°14**

The building is part of an anticipated educational complex on the plan of Zone 1 bis de Castel Giubileo. It was originally destined to be a primary school consisting of 25 classes. Afterwards it was designated a professional technical institute.

The building was begun in 1989 and completed in 1992.

This building is comprised of a basement, a mezzanine, a first floor, a second floor as well as some small towers. The roof of the building is flat and the area of the building stands at around 17 500 m<sup>2</sup>. Construction of 31 lodging spaces of varying sizes is anticipated.

The building is composed of a central space of equal vertical and horizontal dimensions. There are three wings of a "t"-shape in which one can find the rooms and other facilities (gymnasium and canteen, etc.).

In addition to the projects mentioned above, two other interventions are under examination.

The first one in the 4<sup>th</sup> district, Via Monte Meta, will replace the plan of Via Polio. It will use just the communal subsidy, which dates from 2005. This intervention, as mentioned above, is anticipated by the Contract of the Fidene Tufello Quarter, approved by the district council.

The second intervention concerns Via Appiani in the 7<sup>th</sup> District and will be financed by funds from the program agreement. These funds have already been stipulated and transferred from the Via Vertunni project. The

aforementioned project was rendered unfeasible. The file for this project has already been sent to the minister of the infrastructure. The reason for this is to facilitate the change regarding the destination of the funds.

**Supported Projects Involving the Latium Region**  
**Building Situated on the Via Tommaso D'Aquino, 17<sup>th</sup> District**

The building was occupied by 22 groups of residents in 1996. The building comprises six floors for a total of 1 600 m<sup>2</sup> and is located in the historic quarter of the city.

The building has been partially reclaimed by the occupants who, constituting a cooperative (cooperative Corallo), are in negotiation with the region of Latium (owners of the building) to use a subsidy allocated in 2005.

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