

Explanatory note

Karin Dom is an organization with a leading role in providing professional services for children with special needs and their families. Their new home should provide a pleasant environment with respect to all children's needs. Our project is aimed at creating a functional, safe and flexible place with engaging surroundings, where children can easily develop their behavioral and emotional skills.

Nature is proven to have a profound impact on our brains and our behavior, helping us to reduce anxiety, brooding and stress, and increase our attention capacity, creativity and the ability to connect with other people. That is why most of our surfaces and materials, both in exterior and interior, are related to nature. We have also a lot of green walls, which are covering the elevations or creating a soothing environment and have managed to preserve tree species in good or very good condition, without any damages to their core.

The main body of the building has a rhythmic façade solution made of brick elements. This is not only inspired by the organization's logo but also provides environmental benefits, health benefits and energy savings, and contributes to a distinctive presence of the building. Bricks have a lot of advantages compared to other materials because they can last in time and help lower heating and cooling expenses. They are strong and durable, won't rot, rust or encourage mould and can also absorb and store heat until needed. The passage of heat is much slower compared to other materials which is why during the summer it will remain on the outside whilst during the winter it will be trapped inside. Bricks also have a very low maintenance because they don't need paint, and dirt or stains are hard to see.

Two other dynamic volumes, containing the swimming pool and the seminar hall, are easily distinguished. They are situated on the opposite ends of the building, creating a balanced silhouette and achieving the impression of a much lighter volumes due to the ethereal uniform white curtain wall, wrapping around them.

The architectural form is subject to deep analysis of the functional program and connections between different functional groups. There is one underground level with access from Prilep Street and we have 22 underground parking spaces, two of which are for the disabled. There is also a warehouse of 48 m², heating/ventilation room and a server room. On the ground floor with an area of 920 m² we have situated the physiotherapy, which was mandatory to be there, the hydrotherapy unit, the Montessori center and the medical center with the last two having their own separate entrances. The reception and toy library are of course welcoming visitors through a main entrance area. We have further increased the functional program with a winter garden going throughout the hole vertical of the volume and which can be opened to the outside and face the landscaped part of the plot during warmer periods of the year. The upper floor contains the early intervention center, training center, administration and the staff rest areas, which have access to a roof terrace. It has a total floor area of 575 m² which is the same as the third floor, where we have the center for diagnostics and therapy and the center for family-mediated intervention. In the interior, wood surfaces and calm, natural colors are mainly used to help reduce children's anxiety.

Sanitary facilities are provided on every above-ground level including 4 toilets for the disabled – two on the ground floor and one on the second and third floor. Every unit has also at least one dressing table for children with physical disabilities. The vertical communication is secured by an elevator, suitable for

wheelchair users, and an emergency staircase, situated in the middle of the building with access to every floor.

Water efficiency is another topic that we would like to introduce in our project, because it is up-to-date and will become even more and more relevant. We have used water saving products that can help to minimize the consumption of this natural resource and reduce the impact of the building on the environment. By calculating the results and comparing them to the usage of standard non-efficient products, the aftermath is a consumption of 21.23 liters per person leading to 2866 liters per day for average of 135 people, compared to 3687 liters per day for the same number of people that are using standard products. This results in a consumption of 558 870 l/day versus 718 935 l/day or a distance of 160 000 liters saved per year.

Estimated value of the implementation of the project is € 1,360,000 (one million three hundred and sixty thousand euro).