

MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER

Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives

(Sweden)

Ref N° 2010-28

PART A – ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

1 SUMMARY

They have created for themselves, all in all, the most beautiful capital in Europe, but its beauty is spare, not lavish. In Stockholm's outdoor folk museum you may see how simply the people of these parts lived not so long ago, and realize how suddenly, by European standards, this city's sophistication arrived. Travel writer Jan Morris, in *Journeys* (1985).

Stockholm is the capital of Sweden and has a history of more than 750 years. In Stockholm City Archives the city's archival heritage is preserved and made useful, today and in the future.

One archival fond in Stockholm City Archives is of exceptional value, as a holder of key information regarding the development and structural properties of one of the most historically significant cities in Northern Europe. This archival fond is the series of architectural drawings and plans in the *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives*. Geographically the material covers the whole city and the time-span is outstanding for one single archival fond. It contains information about buildings and structures from more than a quarter of a millennium, from the year 1713 to the present day. The architectural drawings covers buildings of every kind, from the poor peoples' huts to the wealthy estates and of course all kinds of administrative, commercial, educational and industrial structures.

The drawings and plans in the *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* are not only a memory of the cultural heritage of today, but also of that which have been lost. Most of the buildings depicted on the drawings and plans are no longer there, they have been replaced by new buildings and structures. But the city of Stockholm is in this respect blessed with an exceptional memory of its former self, a memory that, we think, is of value to the whole world.

The architectural drawings and plans in the *Stockholm Planning Committee Archives* are hereby suggested for nomination as a Memory of the World.

2 DETAILS OF THE NOMINATOR

2.1 Name (person or organisation)

Stockholm City Archives

The vision of The Stockholm City Archives

With a basis in scientific and welltried methods, the Stockholm City Archives selects the information to be preserved for the future. We manage the archives in order to prevent information loss. We take care of our archives in a manner that ensures that the information is authentic and intelligible over time. Our archives are preserved to be used. The use, the users and our educational efforts are vital when the City Archives describes and provides access to its stored information. The Stockholm City Archives ensures the preservation of important civic information for the future.

We look after and administer our city's collective memory. We support the citizens' democratic right to public control and the legal rights of individuals, and facilitate access to the knowledge about the past.

2.2 Relationship to the documentary heritage nominated

Stockholm City Archives manages all archives emanating from the administration of the City of Stockholm. *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* forms a part of this administration. The series of drawings and plans in the archives will in time grow when the active administration of today transfers its material to Stockholm City Archives.

2.3 Contact persons (include address, phone, fax, email)

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3 IDENTITY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives, Stockholm City Archives, Stockholm

The archival fond appears in the Swedish National Archival Database (NAD) as *Byggnadsnämndens expedition och stadsarkitektkontors arkiv* (SE/SSA/0174) which translates into English as *The Office of the Stockholm City Planning Committee and the City Architect*. Archival description number : 174. The architectural drawings are in Nya samlingen 37 (New collection nr 37).

3.2 Description

Time period: 1713-1978 (the architectural drawings for 1979 to 2010 are currently in the possession of the active Stockholm City Planning Administration, but will in time be transferred to Stockholm City Archives).

Archival description number : SE/SSA/0174. NS 37.

Approx. Number of architectural drawings : 2.5 million. Originals on paper in black and white or colour, copies and reproductions on paper and other materials.

Architectural drawings exists from 1713 and up until today but a government ordinance in 1736 stated that an architectural drawing or copy of such a drawing – in most cases involving the building of new houses or when changes were made to existing houses – should be presented to the municipal authorities and then archived for future use. For this reason there is a marked rise in the number of preserved drawings beginning in the year 1736. Royal and state-owned buildings are not in these archives, but can be found in the Swedish National Archives.

There is a complete catalog on paper of these architectural drawings, in the Stockholm City Archives. For the timeperiod 1713–1859 a database has been constructed that gives access to catalog information and digital scans of a majority of the catalog entries. Drawings for the period from 1860 and onwards are currently being digitized by the Stockholm City Planning Administration. Together these measures ensures that these archives, to a very high degree, are accessible to the general public in Sweden and abroad.

The database covering the years 1713 to 1859 can be found here:

<http://www.ssa.stockholm.se/sv/Anvand-arkiven/Sokvagar/Kartor-och-ritningar/>

4 JUSTIFICATION FOR INCLUSION/ ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

4.1 Is authenticity established?

The *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* contains without doubt original sources. The nature of the archives, its size and legal character, and the structure of the material attest to the provenance.

4.2 Is world significance, uniqueness and irreplaceability established?

As a collection of information covering aspects of architecture and urban development the architectural drawings in the *Stockholm City Planning Committees Archives* are not bound by the usual limitations regarding these types of materials. Documents are structured according to time and place. This enables researchers to direct access all drawings and plans for the area and time studied. In contrast to this it is often usual to find architectural drawings and plans in the collections of single architects or architectural firms. Only a few cities in Europe – maybe in the whole world – have a memory of its former architectural and structural self, with the geographical and chronological scope of Stockholm.

4.3 Is one or more of the criteria of (a) time (b) place (c) people (d) subject and theme (e) form and style satisfied? (see 4.2.5)

All of the criteria are satisfied.

Criterion 1 – Time:

The *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* gives access to a moment in world time when the city of Stockholm grew from a population of roughly 50.000 in the early 1700s to over one million at the end of 1900s. If this rate of expansion continues in the future, the city of Stockholm will have a population of 20 million in the year 2310. Current growth rates, however, speak of a much lower expansion in the future. The increase in population, urbanization and strong city growth in European history is by most scholars viewed as aspects that characterizes the period from the 1700s to the 1900s. In the *Stockholm City Planning Committees Archives* the architectural and structural properties of this moment in time can be studied in detail.

Criterion 2 – Place:

Stockholm has been one of the most important capitals in Northern Europe since medieval times. It has few rivals in the Scandinavian area and is by most scholars and commentators regarded as the most important city in the countries that surrounds the Baltic Sea.

Criterion 3 – People:

The time and scope of this material is not only of use for researchers interested in the historical development of Stockholm. Its complete nature (almost all buildings for almost 300 years) allows researchers and the public to raise questions about many issues: architectural, social, economical, even political.

It is possible to highlight a few important aspects of these developments in Stockholm. In the 18th century Stockholm was a city severely affected by poor living conditions (clearly visible in architectural drawings of houses for people of low social standing). This appears in sharp contrast to the cultural golden age under the reign of the king Gustav III (1772–1792). During his time of power Stockholm became a city of culture in many respects, in architecture, in music, in theatre and in art. This sharp division between the social classes, before the onset of industrial, political, economical and social modernization of the 19th century, is a main component of the architectural drawings from this period in the *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives*.

The 19th century was a period of rapid developments in many areas. In Sweden a professional cadre of architects emerged. They changed not only the nature of architectural drawings, but the physical structure of the city itself. At the same time the development of a modern working class changed both social structures and the urban environment. Another important part of the 19th century is that women started to acquire economical rights which until then had been denied them. From now on women appear in the urban panorama as keepers of small drinking establishment, as small dealers – and as owners of houses and as contractors of new houses. At the same time, in the large apartments of the bourgeois, different male and female spheres appeared.

In the 20th century Sweden became a Northern European welfare state. In Stockholm, under the long reign of the Social democratic Party, planning in many scales – from the whole region down to miniscule details in apartments, schools, hospitals and more – became an important part of the reformation of society. In Peter Hall's book *Cities in Civilization* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1998) Stockholm is included as "The Social Democratic Utopia". In the *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* this "utopia" is preserved in more than 100.000 architectural drawings and plans.

Criterion 4 – Subject and theme:

It is inherent in the nature of architecture that different periods of time produce unique physical structures. It is of course possible to build the Palace of Versailles today but everyone will instantly recognize it as a product of our time. The architecture of the past is in this respect "lost". We may preserve it, admire it on location or via different kinds of media, but it belongs foremost to its own time. For this reason the architectural "memory", of ideas, plans and physical forms, preserved through the keeping of architectural archives, is of vital importance to human culture as a whole.

The key aspect of this is in our opinion the notion of "ideas". In architectural drawings and plans "ideas" of different ages, people and social groups appear in clear light. The *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* holds such ideas from more than a quarter of a millennium, from the social structures prevalent in the 18th century, over the revolutionary events of the 19th century, to the ideas behind the welfare state in the 20th century.

5. Criterion 5 – Form and style:

Architecture and the profession of the architect is a combination of art and technology. These elements have together created the physical environment in which we live. But the relationship between them has not been static, sometimes art has prevailed and sometimes technology. In architectural drawings, the evolution of this relationship, between ideals and "the possible" can be traced through the centuries.

The *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* contains information about the "architecture of Stockholm" as a totality, through the ages. Within the archives, however, this totality can be divided into

different categories, territorial (districts with different demographics), functional (living quarters, schools, hospitals, hotels etc) and personal (all architects active in the Stockholm area are included, from the unknown to international stars like Gunnar Asplund). Form and style is therefore a vital component of these archives.

4.4 Are there issues of rarity, integrity, threat and management that relate to this nomination?

♦Rarity: does its content or physical nature make it a rare surviving example of its type or time?

It is rare to find a collection of architectural drawings and plans with a “total character” like the *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives*.

. ♦Integrity: within the natural physical limitations of carrier survival, is it complete or partial? Has it been altered or damaged?

The *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* have not been damaged since the 18th century.

♦Threat: Is its survival in danger? If it is secure, must vigilance be applied to maintain that security?

The archives are kept by a modern professional archival institution with no risks regarding its survival. Digitisation and web accessibility diminish the risks involved in manual handling of the documents.

5 LEGAL INFORMATION

5.1. Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

City of Stockholm
Stockholm City Archives
Box 22063
104 22 Stockholm

5.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details, if different to owner)

Director Björn Jordell

5.3 Legal status:

(a) Category of ownership

Owner (City of Stockholm)

(b) Accessibility

**(a) access to verify the world significance, integrity and security of the material.
This is the minimum condition for listing**

The *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* are highly accessible, either through the reading room at Stockholm City Archives, or via the database on the web, with direct access to digital scans of the architectural drawings.

(b) access for reproduction, which is strongly encouraged

Reproductions of architectural drawings are available as digital scans through the website of Stockholm City Archives, or through orders put to the reading room at the Stockholm City Archives. We use the latest scanning technology and can produce digital copies for all uses.

(c) public access in physical, digital or other form

All archives are accessible in the reading room of the Stockholm City Archives, open Monday-Friday 09.00-16.00, without any previous reservations or restrictions. Access to the reading rooms is free of charge as is consulting the reading room staff.

(c) Copyright status

The City Archives, and the City of Stockholm have no copyright claims. Large parts of the information is by age, according to Swedish law free of copyright. The Swedish freedom of information acts also grants everyone free access to information belonging to the civil service agencies, regardless of any copyright. This includes the proposed documentary heritage which is as a part of the building application process.

(d) Responsible administration

City of Stockholm.

(e) Other factors**6 MANAGEMENT PLAN****6.1 Is there a management plan in existence for this documentary heritage?**

All archives in Stockholm City Archives are kept according to the latest principles in Swedish archival methods, as outlined through the ordinances of the Swedish National Archives. The *Stockholm City Planning Committee Archives* are however subject to object level registration, for improving the level of accessibility.

7 CONSULTATION**7.1 Provide details of consultation about this nomination with (a) the owner of the heritage (b) the custodian (c) your national or regional *Memory of the World* committee****PART B – SUBSIDIARY INFORMATION****8 ASSESSMENT OF RISK****8.1 Detail the nature and scope of threats to this documentary heritage (see 5.5)**

The proposed documentary heritage is kept in secure archival conditions and not in any acute danger. The City Archives archival storage rooms are secure and equipped with a state of the art climate-control system as well as modern fire and burglar alarm systems. The storage facilities were totally renovated in 2008.

9 *ASSESSMENT OF PRESERVATION*

9.1 **Detail the preservation context of the documentary heritage (see 3.3)**

The archives are kept in acid-free covers in secure conditions, see 8.1. All documents covering the period 1713-1874 have been renovated.