

## **BUYING AND SELLING OF PROPERTY – AN EXAMPLE OF CO-CREATION**

### **Introduction**

A citizen contacts the property department of the municipality because they wish to purchase a larger residential plot of approximately 5000 square meters. However, the municipality does not have such a large plot for sale, but it does have plots that are designated for development under the local plan, though not yet fully serviced—meaning that installations, utilities, drainage, and sewer connections have not yet been brought to the plot.

As a rule, it is not possible to sell such a large residential plot to the citizen. Therefore, the employees in the property department could rightfully inform the citizen that the request falls outside the scope of the land available for sale. Instead, the employees choose to explore what the citizen truly wants to buy.

### **Curiosity about the Case**

Rather than sending an email, the employee calls the citizen and arranges to meet at the area in question. During the meeting, the employee asks curious questions to understand what the citizen wants in relation to buying a plot and building on it. It is important for the employee to know what the citizen intends to use the plot for. There is a significant difference between the specific plot the citizen wants to buy and the value the citizen wants to derive from it. For example, if the citizen wants to use the plot for something that is not currently permitted or requires special authorization, it is crucial that the citizen is made aware of this before the purchase. The citizen dreams of building a Viking fortress that could also serve as a Bed & Breakfast during the summer months. The employee brings the local plan with them so that the citizen can assess for themselves where they would like the plot to be located. The employee also points out that it is not certain that the citizen's wishes can be realized according to the local plan for the area.

The employee subsequently sends an internal inquiry to both the planning and environment departments to investigate whether it is possible to fulfill the citizen's request for a Bed & Breakfast Viking fortress. The citizen is not interested in the plot if building the Viking fortress is not possible. The feedback from the internal inquiry is an approval of the citizen's plans for the area. The employee also uses their professional expertise to ask the citizen questions that open up possibilities the citizen hadn't previously considered.

The employee then takes the citizen's request back to the Planning Department to investigate whether the citizen's preferred plot size can be accommodated. As a rule, it is not possible to sell the entire 5000 square meters that the citizen desires, but only 3000 square meters. This is because part of the area belongs to the homeowners' association, and the residents of the area expect it to be used as a shared green space. The homeowners' association must therefore be involved in the process.

### **Exploration of Solutions**

The various possible solutions are explored—not only based on what the citizen immediately wants, but based on the value the citizen wishes to derive from the plot—the establishment of a Bed & Breakfast Viking fortress. However, the exploration of solutions does not stop with the inclusion of the specific buyer, as it is important that all relevant voices are included in the process regarding the purchase. Therefore, the local council, the homeowners' association, and the neighbors are also involved. In addition to accommodating the buyer's wishes, the employees in the property department must ensure that everyone's voices are heard to serve the collective good.

### **Co-determination**

The citizen has a clear role in decision-making, as the entire issue is based on the specific plot the citizen wishes to purchase and the value the citizen wants to achieve. The local community has co-

determination through ongoing dialogue between them and the buyer, facilitated by employees from the property department. They are also involved later in the process through specific consultations regarding the sale of the plot. As a rule, there are areas controlled by the homeowners' association that cannot initially be part of the sale, despite the buyer's request. However, through dialogue and conversation with the potential buyer, the homeowners' association, neighbors, and the local council agree that part of the homeowners' association's land can be included in the citizen's desired plot, provided that certain conditions are met by the buyer. Throughout the process, the focus shifts from "demands" to "what we can do together" in solving the issue. Instead of the homeowners' association insisting on their rights to the land, they agree that the municipality can sell part of it if the buyer meets their conditions. The result is a plot of 4000 square meters that is put up for sale.

### **Co-responsibility**

The municipality has a responsibility to offer the plot through a public tender so that all citizens have equal opportunity to purchase it. If the citizen wishes to buy the plot, they are also obligated to submit a bid and use their resources to acquire the land. Additionally, the citizen is responsible for fulfilling the specific conditions set by the homeowners' association that are required for the purchase.

During the process, the citizen has felt that their wishes have been taken seriously by the employees in the property department. Even though the outcome was not exactly what they initially desired, the citizen is very satisfied with the solution, having gone through dialogue and the exploration of solutions with the employee. The involved citizens feel a greater sense of mutuality and community due to their involvement in the solution process, as well as a sense of ownership in the result that emerged from the process.