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CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

May 5, 2000

Dimitrios Kallitsantsis,
Vice Chairman,
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GR 115 23, ATHENS.

By hand and by fax: 011-30-1-69-00301

Dear Dimitrios,

I have been meaning to write to you, to thank you for the wonderful evening of hospitality you showed to me and Jenny, when we first arrived in Athens. I want to tell you, what an unforgettable meal it was, and how, it hangs in my memory... as time goes by I realize more and more with what care, and generosity, you chose the dishes and made the arrangements for a beautiful evening. It really was a very wonderful and kind thing on your part, and both Jenny and I thank you deeply for taking such good care and for giving us such pleasure.

Now, as you probably know, Artemis has been staying here in Berkeley for the last two weeks, and this has been very much on my mind: she has told me many things about her life and work with you in Athens; and, also, we have been talking for many days about new ways of looking at architecture and construction – and, too, we have spoken much of some of the great things we would like to do together.

In particular, I should like to speak with you about the possibility of undertaking the reconstruction project in the center of Thessaloniki: the same that I described very briefly to you, at the time of our first evening

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together in Athens. You probably know that there has been rather substantial coverage of my proposal in the newspaper of Northern Greece, and that it has been received with some seriousness by relevant people in Thessaloniki.

During the last few days we have had several technical discussions about the project: and I have had a chance to describe completely, to her, my ideas about the actual organization of the project. In particular it has, in my mind, a necessity of taking a form which is driven by a construction company – hopefully yours – not by the city. This connection between a construction company as the driving force of the project is very much of the essence, and creates something that is, practically and politically, a new conception of the role of a construction and project management company, that is uniquely able to solve essential practical problems which arise in a correct and organic reconstruction of a city, in such a way that people – real people of the neighborhoods -- benefit.

I have expressed the key points of my ideas, in two documents. One is the speech I gave in Thessaloniki, to the Regional Conference organized by the Minister of Northern Greece. The other is in a short memorandum, which I have written during our discussion with Artemis, that describes in outline form what I see as the contractual basis of an association between your company and the city of Thessaloniki. The most surprising thing in this proposal, is that the nature of the contract is, in essence, a management contract, not a bid contract. As you will see, this is necessary to the essence of the idea that I propose. I do fully recognize that this is unusual, and may meet considerable resistance from the city or from the Ministry of Public Works, since the present law requires – at least in the majority of cases, that such contracts should be bid contracts obtained by public bidding. Nevertheless, I do believe that this problem can be solved, and hope that you do not, at this early stage, turn away from the idea because you believe this is too difficult.

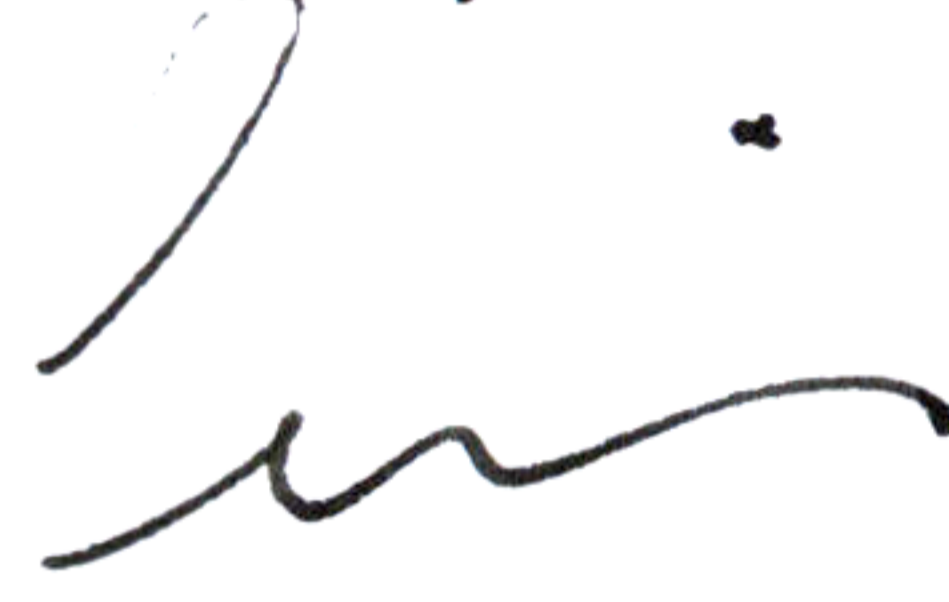
If I may ask you to do it, I would ask that you first try absorb the main points of the idea, also in discussion with Artemis; and that once you have absorbed this, if it appeals to you, I would propose that you and I then turn to the question of finding a framework within which the more innovative aspects of the proposed management agreement might be undertaken, in a way which is acceptable to the city, yet also retains the essential points of the program that I hope to achieve.

What we have in mind, is a very big thing. I believe it can, if implemented, be of enormous benefit to the City of Thessaloniki, and to Elliniki Technodomiki.

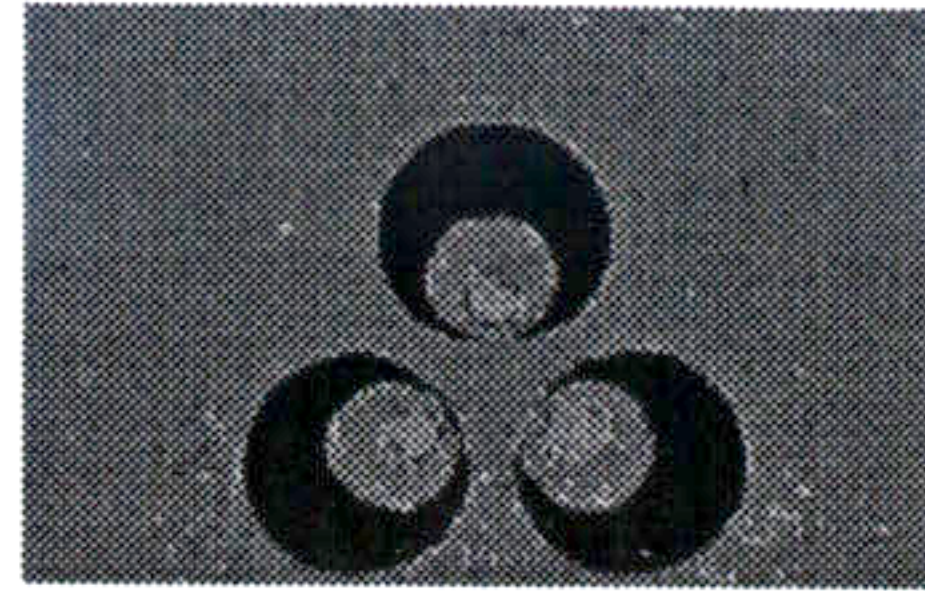
Please let me hear from you after you have given this some thought.

Once again, thank you for your wonderful hospitality in Athens.

Yours very sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Alexander', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher Alexander



Project Management

THE VITAL UMBRELLA THAT YOU NEED FOR EVERY PROJECT

VERY LARGE SCALE PROJECT OF REPAIRING A DOWNTOWN AREA

Consider, for example, the downtown of Thessaloniki: an area of 300 blocks and 600 street segments (see paper delivered to the conference on the development of Thessaloniki as a regional center and the sequence material on repair of downtown)available on this web site.

This is a massive, complex, undertaking which will involve hundreds of streets and local neighborhoods, together with citizen-inspired action in each block, to make the car-pedestrian relation successful, and to increase the sense of belonging, and the living and vibrant character of the city.

In order for this process to work effectively, we believe it cannot be managed successfully by the city. For many reasons the city is too bureaucratic, and has too many intricate responsibilities to too many different groups. The process will be too slow to work effectively, and, in the end, it would fail because too slow and too inefficient.

We propose, instead, that as a necessary foundation for such a project, the following conditions will be met:

- A large construction and management

company (known as the pm-company, below) will be appointed to take care of all street repair for a particular and restricted area of 300 blocks from From Niki to Agiou Dimitriou, and from the White Tower to Vardari Square.

- The contract is a management contract, both for the design, and for construction. The contract for construction will be a construction management contract with a fixed percentage fee, place on all construction activity, with a fixed annual budget for construction.

Note on the need for construction management. To undertake the fast track, highly flexible management process, in which users needs are carefully accepted, yet in which users are also held to specific timetables of performance, and to retain the freedom and flexibility to make a success of this procedure, while maintain steady on-schedule production of \$6,000,000 construction per year, a conventional bid process cannot be made to work. The legal requirement for public bidding of large projects can be maintained by the fact that all subcontracts are bid, while the management by the pm-company may be viewed as a necessary consultancy arrangement for the city's requirements.

- The agreement is given as a long-term contract for five years renewable twice for a total of fifteen years.
- The company is *guaranteed by contract*, ahead of time that each year \$6 million of construction will be done somewhere in these 300 blocks.
- Legally and administratively, the city is the client. The contract is with the city, and the city pays.
- Operationally, however, the contract is between the pm-company and the users, that is to say, the residents, shopkeepers, and neighborhood members of the city. The services provided by the company are contracted for by the city on behalf of the users, but will be provided to the users, and will be worked through, operationally, on a day to day basis, primarily with the users.

Note: There must be a delicate balance in which the pm-company works for users in different streets, provides for their needs and their wishes, and the company takes the initiative in interpreting these needs and wishes in the best and most economical way. Although, the city must act as overseer of this process, the contract expresses the delicate balance in such a way that lengthy bureaucratic procedures, initiated by the city, will be kept to a minimum so that the pm-company can do its work efficiently and effectively. This delicate balance will be maintained by carefully wording on the contract which places limits on the extent to which the city may insert its decisions, in between the requests of the citizens, and the construction operations of the pm-company.

- The main obligation of the pm-company is to manage, oversee, and implement, the citizen improvements done within the patternlanguage.com process. That means, it is based on diagnosis, use of sequences, step-by-step procedure, heavy involvement by users in design and plan decision making, and direct path from design to construction under project management conditions.
- The pm-company has the obligation to follow certain criteria of priority, in choosing which projects will be done in the next 12 months. This would be done in conjunction with the city.
- The pm-company has direct access to and interaction with the users on each street segment, and works directly *for them*.
- The pm-company decides, on the basis of its own experience and judgement, what is needed to make the proposal designed by the users, work effectively.
- The pm-company is also responsible for coordination with transportation, public works, fire, and safety departments.
- Above all the pm-company is responsible for bringing \$6 million of completed projects to fruition, within each 12-month period, and has the power and authority necessary to make all judgments needed to make this happen.

The above points define the conditions needed for

successful operation by the pm-company. It is necessary that these points are balanced by an equally well-defined set of conditions which express the benefits of this program to the *city*. In particular, conditions must be established, making clear that this arrangement will benefit the city in terms of more efficient use of financial resources, cost efficiency, more successful adherence to political resources and goals, and that the benefit of the contemplated program for accomplishing the city's goals and necessities is highly visible -- and is expressed with equal force and clarity. This has yet to be done, but will be done in the early stages of formulating a successful and balanced contract of the type contemplated here.

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