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Land development of the Iwonicz Zdroj spa in tourists and patients' opinions

Abstract

Many components influence the quality of the spa space. It is well-developed and includes functional and visually interesting small architecture and botanically and aesthetically diverse vegetation. It is a showcase for the town, and its attractiveness has an impact on strengthening the treatment process and increasing tourist interest. According to the respondents, the promenade in Iwonicz Zdrój is adequately equipped with elements of small architecture and has an interesting arrangement of plants. In their opinion the current development of the space is consistent and complements the historic sanatorium architecture. This is also confirmed by field studies regarding the analysis of small architecture. Visitors to the area feel safe and rest well. The shortcomings on a fairly long walking route are the lack of sanitary installations and shade, which is particularly troublesome in the high tourist season.

Keywords: Iwonicz-Zdrój, spa space, bather, small architecture, stocktaking

Introduction

In Poland, 45 towns have the status of spa towns [www.mz.gov.pl]. One of the oldest of them is Iwonicz Zdrój, now a municipal town located in the Podkarpackie Province, in the Krosno District.

The status of the health resort was awarded in 1973, the current was established in 2009 [Resolution of the City Council of Iwonicz-Zdrój]. The spatial layout of the city is dominated by buildings with a spa function. From the area of the city center, three visible types of space should be distinguished: extended promenade and two squares (Dietl and Karol Józef square), historical buildings (eg. Bath House, Bazaar, Old Palace, Old Baths), mostly built in the XIX century and a health resort park [Gancarz-Żebracka 2012: 292; Kobylarczyk 2012: 69-70]. The park is located along the river flowing among the hills, it was founded in 1837 from the initiative of the Załuski family [Gancarz-Żebracka 2012: 293]. It is accompanied by walking routes and wheeled roads, and on its outskirts there are sanatoriums and holiday centers [Rut 2016: 80].

In the spa there are 11 sanatoriums specializing in the treatment of respiratory, bone, alimentary and nervous disorders. The presence of therapeutic mineral waters allows the implementation of drinking, bathing and inhalation cures, and the mountain climate has additional healing properties positively affects the well-being of the patients. Iwonicz Zdrój also became famous for the production of "Iwoniczanka" healing salts and cosmetics, whose properties have won it numerous prizes in regional and national competitions [uzdrowisko-iwonicz.com.pl].

Currently, spa facilities are increasingly often expected to provide attractions comparable to beauty salons [Dąbrowska-Zielińska, Wołk-Musiał 2012: 45-46], amusement parks or sports and recreation centres [Górna 2013: 63; Wójcikowski 2013: 211]. Great emphasis is placed on green areas, which should be comprehensively designed, contain plant forms with architectural facilities, i.e. parks with connecting squares, gardens, among which there are medical facilities [Gancarz-Żebracka 2012: 298, Płachta 2014: 81].

In recent years, revitalization activities have been observed in many spas, which aim to improve the quality of space, and thus improve the image of the town [Gargała-Polar et al. 2016: 88, Wójcikowski 2015: 65]. However, the proposed changes do not always meet the expectations of users, in the opinions of patients and tourists.

The current appearance of the spa area of Iwonicz Zdrój is the result of the project "Revitalization of the historic centre of Iwonicz Zdrój", which was carried out in 2014-2015. As part of this project, the historic centre of the town was rebuilt, and small architectural elements were replaced. In this way the concept from the turn of the century was restored. In addition, new plant elements were introduced – seasonal flower beds. They replaced the previously standing tall trees, which caused excessive sun exposure, and thus the discomfort of resting patients and tourists [Gargała-Polar et al. 2016: 94]. Nevertheless, the central part of the spa gained new places to relax. A few hundred meters of new walking paths appeared, a spacious pergola with benches and a playground for children were installed, and the 'shell' bandstand was replaced with a stylish pavilion recreated on the basis of archival photographs. At Dietla Square, the surface was changed and the fountain was rebuilt, and on the site of a concert shell the wooden gazebo "Glorietta" was erected, reconstructed based on archival photographs. On the northern and southern sides of

the Old Palace, green areas are located, between the sanatorium facilities "Pod Jodłą" and "Klimat", a wide pavement, a pergola and a playground for children were built [Polish Promotional Center, www.pcp.org.pl]. In order to coordinate activities in the field of revitalization, among others preservation of valuable cultural heritage objects, the Local Revitalization Program of the Iwonicz-Zdrój Commune for 2017-2023 was created [<http://iwonicz-zdroj.pl/local-program-rewitalizacji/>].

Purpose, materials and methods of the research

The aim of the research was to get to know the opinions of visitors about the aesthetics and functionality of the new development of the promenade in Iwonicz Zdrój. In order to determine the functionality of the spa area of Iwonicz Zdrój, taking into account the changes taking place over the years, in 2016, questionnaire surveys were carried out on a group of 40 respondents (20 men and 20 women) of an average age of 45. People living in Krosno, Rzeszów and Brzozów predominated, as well as in other towns located up to 15km radius about Iwonicz Zdrój. Most of the respondents visit the spa once a year (70%), which is due to them living nearby.

The respondents answered a few closed questions related to the development of the central spa space contained in the original questionnaire. Visitors in this patients' opinions were supplemented with field studies related to the inventory of small architectural elements.

Research results

From the statements of patients, it shows that more than half (57.5%) clearly remember the Iwonicz promenade of a few years ago. Older respondents remembered back to the 1980s and 1990s, younger ones to the period 2000-2007. What stuck in the respondents' memories the most (27.5%) were the red flowers filling the promenade (probably referring to the lush canna flowers once planted on flower beds along the promenade) (fig. 1A). The same number of respondents (27.5%) pleasantly recall the fountain in the central part of the walking route. The 'shell' bandstand also stayed strong in the memory of the respondents (fig. 1B) and the "Krakowiak" building where musical parties and events took place. A few remember unique buildings from the promenade, among them the characteristic ice cream parlour.

The recollections of the patients also include the nineteenth-century building of the pump room with arcades, which is undoubtedly a landmark of the spa. Other factors that encourage retrospection are, for example, the taste of the water in the pump room and the image of concerts that currently take place on the new main stage. Many people do not like the new form of the stage and suggest the need to restore its former appearance. However, sports enthusiasts want to recreate the ski jump.

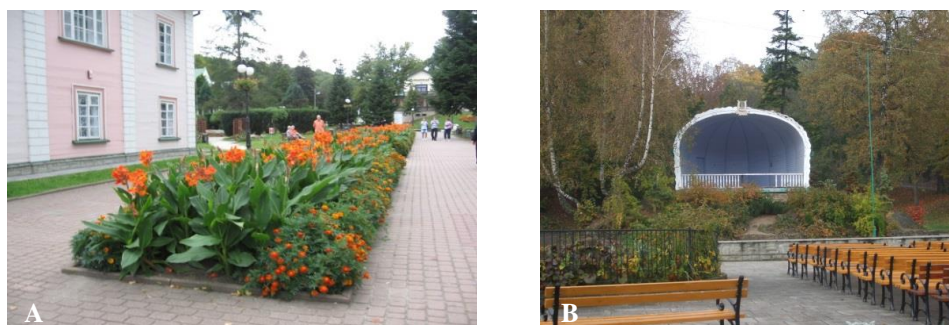


Fig. 1. Characteristic elements for the pedestrian zone in the health resort of Iwonicz Zdrój in 2007. A) Planting the canna in red colors, B) Concert shell. Photo by M. Pisarek, 2007

Ryc. 1. Elementy charakterystyczne dla deptaku w uzdrowisku Iwonicz Zdrój w 2007 roku. A) Nasadzenia kanny w czerwonych barwach, B) Muszla koncertowa. Fot. M. Pisarek, 2007

The greatest interest is currently aroused by the floral carpets, old trees and charming fountains. Many visitors also see the sundial, which is a short distance from the main stretch of the promenade, as a major tourist attraction. The respondents also drew attention to the uniform, decorative surface of the promenade, as well as the harmonious arrangement of the establishment and the aesthetics of the spa area. All these factors undoubtedly influenced the reception and perception of the establishment, as a whole, for which the spa received high marks in the study, in terms of visual perception. Half of the respondents considered the promenade in Iwonicz as nice and the other half as very nice.

The majority of the respondents (80%) declared that they feel safe on the promenade both during the day and night, while only a 20% are afraid to stay there in the evening and at night. The long walking path (fig. 2A) requires the installation of sanitary facilities, which according to the respondents (60%) are undoubtedly lacking. The respondents also suggest the provision of recreational equipment for seniors and the introduction of more decorative street furniture. The users showed a great deal of disapproval for the current stage in form of a tent (fig. 2B). They suggested that this element should be the first to be removed from the promenade.



Fig. 2. A) A view of the pedestrian street, B) The current concert scene in the form of a tent. Photo M. Farajewicz, 2017

Ryc. 2. A) Widok na trasę spacerową deptaku, B) Obecna scena koncertowa w formie namiotu. Fot. M. Farajewicz, 2017

Another problem perceived by the respondents is the disturbance of the attractive appearance of historic buildings caused by numerous advertisements and banners that do not fit into the spa landscape. The respondents suggest the neutralization of colours or their complete removal, because they adversely affect the perception of the space and the visual appeal of commemorative photographs. On the other hand, the users propose the introduction of a varied colour scheme to the flower beds and the introduction of a larger number of plant species.

According to the respondents, the number and layout of benches is adequate (57.5%), while a only 22.5% believe that there are too few or are they located in the wrong places. A major drawback in the opinion of the patients is the a small number of benches located sporadically in the shade of trees. This problem is exacerbated especially in high summer, during family concerts and cultural events in the open air. Regarding the number of rubbish bins, positive opinions prevail, 80% of respondents believe that they are sufficient. Only 10% do not share the majority opinion, and 10% are undecided. Such numbers of answers from the respondents results from the maintenance of order and cleanliness in the spa, which is also confirmed by our own inventory research.



Fig. 3. Street furniture objects in the spa Iwonicz-Zdrój, A) Bench; B) Fountain; C) Bower; D) Sundial. Photo by M. Farajewicz, 2017

Ryc. 3. Obiekty małej architektury w uzdrowisku Iwonicz-Zdrój, A) Ławka; B) Fontanna; C) Altana; D) Zegar słoneczny. Fot. M. Farajewicz, 2017)

Through the whole establishment many small usable and decorative architectural elements have been introduced, thanks to which this space has gained an aesthetic and functional appearance. Analysis of street furniture elements in the

promenade area showed the presence of 96 benches (fig. 3A), 91 lighting points, 61 flower beds and arrangements with flowers, 48 rubbish bins, 18 information boards, 4 fountains (fig. 3B) and 10 other small architectural elements in the form of a gazebo (fig. 3C), a sundial (fig. 3D), sculptures, etc. (Tab. 1).

Tab. 1. Street furniture located on the promenade of the health resort of Iwonicz Zdrój

No.	Type	Number (pcs.)	Description
1.	Bench	91	With armrests and backrest
2.	Bench	5	Without armrests and backrest
3.	Lantern	58	Stylized as a kerosene lamp
4.	Lantern	5	Double, light direction – down
5.	Lantern	2	Single, light direction – down
6.	Lantern	1	Single, light direction – up
7.	Wall lamp	11	Semi-circular, wall-mounted
8.	Lighting point (ground)	10	Level with the ground surface highlighting the gazebo pillars
9.	Spotlight	4	With directional light
10.	Flowerbed	38	Flowerbed planted with annuals
11.	Flowerbed	8	Raised bed
12.	Flowerbed	5	Gabion pot
13.	Flowerbed	1	3D sculpture: Squirrel
14.	Rubbish bin	48	With a large hole for waste
15.	Information boards	11	In an Art Nouveau style
16.	Information boards	7	With tourist information
17.	Fountain	1	Round shape, in the square near the stage
19.	Fountain	2	In the Baroque style
21.	Fountain	1	Octagonal
22.	Gazebo	1	Wooden barrier, building on a platform
23.	Gazebo	1	Octagonal
24.	Pergola	1	At the playground
25.	Garden sculpture	1	Bust
26.	Garden sculpture	1	Angel
27.	Garden sculpture	1	Stone
28.	Playground	1	Near the gazebo
29.	Sundial	1	Made of sandstone
30.	Stage	1	Mobile stage

Source: own work based on field studies

Summary

The research conducted on the opinions of users of the spa area of Iwonicz Zdrój, as well as analysis of small architectural elements, allowed determination of their quality, functionality and visual coherence.

The process of revitalization certainly allowed for an increase in the usable area and improved the aesthetic appearance, and thus increased its attractiveness for tourists. According to the respondents, the promenade is adequately equipped with small architectural elements. They are consistent and complement the historic

sanatorium architecture. The owners' concern for the cleanliness and order of Iwonicz Zdrój is reflected in the patients' opinion that it is a space where one can rest well and safely. The only drawback with the fairly long walking route is the lack of sanitary installations and shade, which is particularly troublesome in the summer months.

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