

SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES OF THE FIRST SLOW CITY IN TURKEY: THE CASE OF SEFERIHISAR

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1 ABSTRACT

The movement of Cittaslow is an alternative approach to urban development and is based on local resources and strengths in terms of natural, economic, cultural and historical aspects (Mayer and Knox, 2006). The movement mainly includes a set of goals and principles such as improving the quality of life, promoting cultural diversity of individual cities and protecting the natural environment (Cittaslow International Network, 2012). Turkey decided to pursue the Cittaslow principles and set up its very first case in Seferihisar in 2009. Seferihisar is now part of the Cittaslow international network that has over 180 members in 28 countries (Cittaslow International Network, 2012).

After becoming accredited, the local government executed some projects to pursue the goals and principals of the Cittaslow movement. The aim of this study was to examine the successes and failures of the major projects that were conducted in Seferihisar. For this purpose, the case study methodology for landscape architecture was used (Francis, 1999; 2001). An evaluation form was designed to investigate both the successes and failures of the projects based on the Cittaslow policies and goals (requirements for excellence). The information was gathered from site visits and literature reviews for the projects. The results showed that Seferihisar was very successful in awareness, successful in environmental policies and infrastructure policies, but moderate for safeguarding autochthonous production, support to slow food activities and projects, finance and maintenance & management. It was poor for technologies and facilities for urban quality and hospitality. Eventually, by learning from its successes and failures, it is hoped that Seferihisar may be able to increase the successes and eliminate the failures.

1.1 Keywords

Cittaslow movement, sustainable life style, case study, Seferihisar, Turkey

2 INTRODUCTION

The Cittaslow international network has 182 members from 28 countries including Australia, Canada, France, Netherland, Italy, New Zeland and the USA. The movement mainly includes a set of goals and principles such as improving the quality of life, promoting cultural diversity of individual cities and protecting the natural environment (Cittaslow International Network, 2012). Founded in 1986, the Slow Food movement has grown into an international association with local chapters worldwide. The movement of Cittaslow is mainly a European concept with member towns primarily in Italy, Germany, Norway, and England. However, the movement can provide urban scholars in the USA some useful ideas about how to pursue an alternative urban development agenda (Mayer and Knox, 2006).

Turkey decided to pursue the Cittaslow principles and set up its very first case in Seferihisar in 2009. Seferihisar is now a part of the Cittaslow international network (Cittaslow International Network, 2012). Seferihisar and its vicinity have many distinctive natural and cultural charecteristics. Therefore, the town proposed sustainable development strategies with the desire to preserve its local values and improve the quality of life. Having joined the Cittaslow network, Seferihisar become a center of interest and was considered a fine example of implementing some alternative development strategies in order to create a more livable and sustainable environment in the country. To pursue the Cittaslow principles and goals, the local government executed a number of projects in different areas in Seferihisar. The aim of this study was to examine successes and failures of the major projects that were conducted after accreditation. To accomplish this, the case study methodology for landscape architecture was used (Francis, 1999; 2001).

3 STUDY AREA

Seferihisar covers an area of 36523.75 ha and is located between the coordinates $38^{\circ} 18' 37''$ and $38^{\circ} 1' 51''$ North, $26^{\circ} 44' 53''$ and $27^{\circ} 1' 40''$ East. It is one of the 29 districts of the Izmir metropolitan area with a population of 27,422 people (TurkStat, 2011a). The town is located 29 miles southwest of downtown Izmir (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The location of the study area

Seferihisar represents a distinctive landscape with its natural features and its historical and archeological sites. It is also a popular tourist destination that attracts many nearby visitors from Izmir. The town and its vicinity present a good blend of tangerine and olive farming, artichoke production, goat

husbandry, and cheese making. The historical district of Seferihisar, Sığacık offers a weekly traditional farmer's market where the locals sell their handcrafts and agricultural products.

Its mild climate, under the influence of Aegean Sea with cool rainy winters and hot sunny summers, (TSMS, 2012) is another aspect of the region that attracts visitors. Seferihisar also represents a notable example of re-emerged suburbanization in the Izmir metropolitan area. It contains primarily Mediterranean forest (18.3%), Mediterranean shrubland (maquis and garrigue) (60.7%), agricultural land (14.1%), olive plantation (3.18%), built-up areas (5.3%), and open space with little or no vegetation (0.9%).

4 METHODS

In this study, the case study methodology for landscape architecture was used (Francis, 1999; 2001) in order to examine the successes and the failures of major projects that were conducted in Seferihisar after accreditation. For this purpose, based on the Cittaslow policies and goals (requirements for excellence), an evaluation form was designed (Table 2). The form consisted of ten parts in total. The first part of the form had baseline information of the study area. The next seven parts included the Cittaslow policies and goals which were: (1) environmental policies, (2) infrastructure policies, (3) technologies and facilities for urban quality, (4) safeguarding autochthonous production, (5) awareness, (6) hospitality, and (7) support to Slow Food activities and projects (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). The last two parts, finance and maintenance & management, were added to the evaluation form.

The required information was gathered from site visits and literature reviews for the projects. The Cittaslow principles in the evaluation form were rated based on a scale from 1 to 5 (1: very poor, 2: poor, 3: moderate, 4: successful, 5: very successful) (Table 1). The evaluation form was assessed based on whether the Cittaslow policies and goals were qualified by Seferihisar Municipality. For instance, if all the elements or topics of a certain policy were addressed, it was considered "very successful".

Table 1. The rating scale of Cittaslow policies and goals

Rate	Definition
1: Very poor	No topic was addressed
2: Poor	Less than half of the topics were addressed
3: Moderate	Half of the topics were addressed
4: Successful	More than half of the topics were addressed
5: Very successful	All the topics were addressed

5 RESULTS: THE SUCCESSES AND THE FAILURES

5.1 Environmental Policies

The livability of a city depends on its environmental quality and sustainability. Environmental policies included eleven topics which were: (1) verification of air, water and soil quality of the city, (2) plans for the promotion and dissemination of differentiated refuse collection, (3) dissemination of industrial and domestic composting, (4) existence of a purification plant for urban sewage, (5) municipal plan for saving energy, with reference particularly to the use of alternative sources of energy, (6) ban the use of genetically modified seeds in agriculture, (7) regulation of advertisements and traffic signs, (8) control of electromagnetic pollution, (9) program for controlling and reducing noise pollution, (10) systems and programs for controlling light pollution, (11) adaptation of environmental management systems (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). Based on environmental policies, Seferihisar was considered "successful" (Table 2).

Table 2. The successes and the failures of Seferihisar by the Cittaslow policies and goals

Baseline information/features	
Location	Located 29 miles southwest of downtown Izmir, Turkey
Size	36523.75 ha
Population	27,422
Environmental policies	Successful 6 out of 11 criteria were met
Infrastructure policies	Successful 9 out of 13 criteria were met
Technologies and facilities for urban quality	Poor 3 out of 9 criteria were met
Safeguarding autochthonous production	Moderate 5 out of 11 criteria were met
Hospitality	Poor 2 out of 5 criteria were met
Awareness	Very Successful 3 out of 3 criteria were met
Support to Slow Food activities and projects	Moderate 4 out of 7 criteria were met
Finance	Moderate
Maintenance & management	Moderate

The successes of Seferihisar:

- ✓ The quality of air of the town was monitored for 2 months by the Izmir metropolitan municipality. The quality of water has been monitored regularly (Keskin, 2010; Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ Segregation of solid wastes has been encouraged. For this purpose, new recycle bins to separate plastics, paper, glass etc. were introduced to the town. A new recycling plant was established (Keskin, 2010).
- ✓ A new biological waste treatment plan was built with a capacity for 50,000 people (Keskin, 2010).
- ✓ Feasibility studies were made particularly on segregation of organic wastes and the possibility of producing manure and biogas to be able to heat greenhouses (Keskin 2010).
- ✓ Three beaches in the vicinity of Seferihisar were rewarded with The Blue Flag after accreditation (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ In order to develop environmentally friendly and sustainable ways, some co-operations and collaborations were initiated with different universities. For instance, in co-operation with Ege University, a 3 wheel bicycle was manufactured that is powered by solar energy to facilitate transportation for the disabled people and senior citizens (Seferihisar Municipality, 2012).
- ✓ Solar powered streetlights were installed on some of the streets of downtown Seferihisar.
- ✓ The city became a member of “no to GMO platform”. It was organized through a series of meetings named “good agricultural practices from field to table” to introduce and promote the locally grown products as well as organic farming (Keskin, 2010).
- ✓ The visual chaos caused by different types of signboards in various shapes, sizes and colors, including traffic signs, billboards etc. was one of the major sources of visual pollution in the city.

To eliminate this, all the existing signboards were replaced by newly designed ones (Keskin, 2010).

The failures of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Plans for the promotion and dissemination of differentiated refuse collection
- ✓ Existence of a purification plant for urban or cooperative sewage
- ✓ Program for controlling and reducing noise pollution
- ✓ Systems and programs for controlling light pollution
- ✓ Adaptation of environmental management systems

5.2 Infrastructure Policies

This second area included elements of urban and landscape design. There is a strong focus towards a priority of alternative forms of transportation and pedestrian orientated urban design (Radstrom, 2011). Infrastructure policies included the following thirteen subjects: (1) plans for improving and for the reclamation of historical centers and/or works of cultural or historical value, (2) plans for safe mobility and traffic, (3) bicycle paths connecting schools and public buildings, (4) plans for alternative transportation including mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle, (5) accessibility of public places and those of public interest, (6) promotion of programs to facilitate family life and social connections, recreation and assistance for those in need, (7) a center for medical assistance, (8) quality green areas and pedestrian accessibility, (9) a plan for the distribution of locally produced merchandise and the creation of 'commercial centers for natural products, (10) agreement with the shopkeepers with regards to the reception and assistance to citizens in trouble, i.e. "friendly shops" (maintaining commercial areas which are welcoming, hospitable and friendly), (11) revitalization of the city including upgrading and redevelopment of urban areas, (12) a program for urban restyling and upgrading, (13) integration of a citizen information office with a Cittaslow information window (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). Seferihisar was found "successful" in infrastructure policies (Table 2).

The successes of Seferihisar:

- ✓ After 46 years, archeological excavations in the ancient settlement of Teos were resumed (Cittaslow Seferihisar, 2012).
- ✓ In the historical neighborhood of Seferihisar, Sığacık, renovation of the streets and surveying-restoration of the ramparts of the Ottoman castle were launched. Some exhibitions and concerts were performed regularly in the castle for creating a socially vibrant atmosphere (Cittaslow Seferihisar, 2012).
- ✓ Seven urban parks, including a promenade-coastal park in Sığacık were designed and constructed (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ There has been an ongoing feasibility study for a light rail as a part of the public transportation system between Sığacık (a coastal neighborhood) and the town center (Keskin, 2010).
- ✓ Although cycling is encouraged throughout the town by providing free bikes, bike routes, parking lots etc., special emphasis was given to particular routes such as the ones between public buildings and schools (Cittaslow Seferihisar, 2012).
- ✓ The disabled were given special consideration in the process of designing new urban furniture and renovating existing public spaces, including sidewalks, toilets etc.
- ✓ In the context of pedestrian accessibility policies, Ataturk Street in the town center of Seferihisar was closed to vehicle traffic during the daytime. Additionally, some streets of Sığacık were closed to vehicles during the entire summer (Cittaslow Seferihisar, 2012).
- ✓ A working committee was set up with a group of artists and architects who had studied in Seferihisar before. They practiced on the facades of buildings to create unity in terms of architectural style and color (Keskin, 2010).
- ✓ The old sunshades of stores and cafes around Sığacık castle were completely renewed. A sculpture of a snail was constructed in the city center. This logo of Cittaslow was used on signboards, bus stops, brochures, cafes and all around the city.
- ✓ Thanks to several local farmers' markets, a direct contact was established between farmers and buyers. The farmers got the opportunity to sell their items (traditional foods, handcrafts,

agricultural products such as locally grown tangerine and artichoke) to the buyers directly (Keskin, 2010; Öztürk, 2012).

- ✓ Using plastic bags is strongly discouraged in the market places (Keskin, 2010; Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ An environmental master plan was prepared (History of Seferihisar, 2012).

The failures of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Promotion of programs to facilitate family life and social connections, recreation and assistance for those in need
- ✓ Center for medical assistance
- ✓ Agreement with the shopkeepers with regards to the reception and assistance to citizens in trouble; “friendly shops”
- ✓ Integration of a citizen information office with a Cittaslow information window

5.3 Technologies and Facilities for Urban Quality

This topic is related to technologies and facilities that provide a higher quality of life to the residents. This principle included nine topics: (1) window for bio-architecture and programs for the training of personnel assigned to the information project for the promotion of bio-architecture (2) equipping the city with cables for fiber optic and wireless systems, (3) adopting systems for monitoring electromagnetic fields, (4) providing refuse containers in keeping with the environment and the landscape and refuse removal according to established timetables, (5) planting environmentally suitable and autochthonous plants in public and private places, (6) providing services for the citizens, including dissemination of municipal services via the internet and plans for creating and educating the citizens in the use of an internet-based civic network, (7) a plan for controlling noise in specifically noisy areas, (8) a plan concerning colors, (9) promotion of telework (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). Seferihisar was considered “poor” for technologies and facilities for urban quality (Table 2).

The successes of Seferihisar:

- ✓ E-municipality projects were implemented to speed up and improve the municipal services. An online problem solution department was also activated for residents (Seferihisar Municipality, 2012).
- ✓ Several municipal services became easily accessible for the people over the internet and cell phones.
- ✓ The municipality formed a website so that farmers and local producers could market their products online, free of charge.
- ✓ The native plant sea daffodil (*Pancratium maritimum*) was used in public and private gardens (Cittaslow, 2012).
- ✓ The municipality had a plan for the use of tents in the same color in the entire town.

The failures of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Window for bio-architecture and programs for the training of personnel assigned to the information project for the promotion of bio-architecture
- ✓ Equipping the city with cables for fiber optic and wireless systems
- ✓ Adoption of systems for monitoring electromagnetic fields
- ✓ Providing refuse containers in keeping with the environment and the landscape and refuse removal according to established timetables
- ✓ Plan for controlling noise in specifically noisy areas
- ✓ Promotion of telework

5.4 Safeguarding Autochthonous Production

This topic focuses on sustaining local, traditional industries and elements that represent the local identity. This policy area relates directly to local context and sense of place (Radstrom, 2011). It included eleven subjects including: (1) development of organic farming, (2) certification of the quality of artisan produced products and objects and artistic crafts, (3) programs for the safeguarding of artisan and/or artistic craft products in danger of extinction, (4) safeguarding traditional methods of work and professions at risk of extinction, (5) use of organic products and/or local products and the preservation of local

traditions in restaurants, protected structures and school cafeterias, (6) programs for educating taste and nutrition in schools in collaboration with Slow Food, (7) favoring the activities of wine and gastronomic Slow Food presidia for species and preparations risking extinction, (8) census of the typical products of the territory and support of their commercialization (updating of markets for local products, creation of appropriate spaces), (9) census of trees in the city and enhancing the value of large trees or “historical trees”, (10) promoting and preserving local cultural events, (11) promoting “urban” and school gardens for autochthonous cultures grown with traditional methods (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). Seferihisar was found “moderate” for safeguarding autochthonous production (Table 2).

The successes of Seferihisar:

- ✓ The women began to play an important role in the local economy by producing and selling locally grown and hand-made products as a result of a series of capacity building efforts. They became producers rather than just consumers and participated more in the daily and economic life of Seferihisar.
- ✓ Local farmers were encouraged to do organic farming. “Eco” certification studies were initiated (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ The restaurants that use locally grown products were opened (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ Some projects were started to promote sustainable fishing and agricultural production (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ Open markets encouraged social interaction among different age and gender groups in Seferihisar.
- ✓ Regular festivals such as the tangerine and seed exchange festivals were organized.

The failures of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Programs for the safeguarding of artisan and/or artistic craft products are in danger of extinction.
- ✓ Safeguarding traditional methods of work and professions are at a risk of extinction.
- ✓ Programs for educating taste and nutrition in schools in collaboration with Slow Food.
- ✓ Favoring the activities of wine and gastronomic Slow Food Presidia for species and preparations that are risking extinction.
- ✓ Census of trees in the city and enhancing the value of large trees or “historical trees”.

5.5 Hospitality

This section focuses on helping both residents and tourists to feel at home in a Cittaslow city. It directly relates to easy livability (Radstrom, 2011). The topic included five subjects that were: (1) training courses for tourist information and quality hospitality, (2) using international signs on the tourist signs at the historical centers with guided tourist itineraries, (3) reception policies and plans to facilitate the approach of the visitors to the city and access to information and services (parking, extension/flexibility of opening hours of public offices, etc.) with particular regards to scheduled events, (4) preparation of “slow” itineraries of the city (brochures, websites, home pages, etc.), (5) making the tourist operators and storekeepers aware of the need for a transparency of prices and the exhibition of rates outside the business establishments (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). Seferihisar was found “poor” for hospitality (Table 2).

The successes of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Some of the signboards that indicate archeological, natural and historical places were renewed.
- ✓ The handbooks that show the historical places of the city and the bicycle routes were published. These books were also available on the website of the municipality. Around the city, seventeen different bicycle roads were designated (Cittaslow Seferihisar, 2012).

The failures of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Training courses for tourist information and quality hospitality
- ✓ Reception policies and plans to facilitate the approach of the visitors to the city and access to information and services (parking, extension/flexibility of opening hours of public offices, etc.) with particular regards to scheduled events.

- ✓ Making the tourist operators and storekeepers aware of the need for a transparency of prices and the exhibition of rates outside the business establishments.

5.6 Awareness

This topic is related to awareness of public education and promotion of the organization. This policy area included three subjects that were: (1) provide the citizens with information on the aims and procedures of what a Slow City is, preceded by information of the intentions of the Administration to become a Slow City, (2) programs to involve the citizens in acquiring the “slow” philosophy and the application of Slow City projects and in particular: educational gardens and parks, book facilities, (3) programs for the dissemination of the Slow City and Slow Food activities (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). Seferihisar was found “very successful” in awareness (Table 2).

The successes of Seferihisar:

- ✓ A project was undertaken to write the oral history of Seferihisar in addition to other books and brochures published for representation of different aspects of the town and its surroundings (History of Seferihisar, 2012).
- ✓ A city council was formed by the local municipality that reflects a participatory process to visioning and promoting the implementation principles of the Cittaslow in Seferihisar and creating a public awareness in the process (Cittaslow, 2012).
- ✓ Seferihisar was rewarded as a child-friendly town after accreditation (Seferihisar Municipality, 2012).
- ✓ Tourist season was expanded from 3 months to almost a whole year (Seferihisar Municipality, 2012).
- ✓ “The Science Store” was opened in order to increase the interests of children and residents to science by collaboration with Yaşar University.
- ✓ “Cittaslow Science Committee” with 30 academics (from 16 universities) was created. It discussed the future of the Cittaslow movement in Turkey (Seferihisar Municipality, 2012).

There were no failure items for awareness for the Seferihisar Municipality.

5.7 Support to Slow Food Activities and Projects

This policy area related to support of Slow Food activities and projects. This topic included seven elements including: (1) establishment of a local convivium Slow Food, (2) education programs for tastes and nutrition for the compulsory and secondary schools in cooperation with Slow Food, (3) set-up of school vegetable gardens in cooperation with Slow Food, (4) implementation of one or more projects of Arca or Slow Food centres for species or products that are at risk of extinction, (5) use of local products safeguarded by Slow Food and maintenance of nutritional traditions in collective food services, schools and canteens with annexed food education programs, (6) support of the typical local area products through implementation of the “Mercati della Terra” in cooperation with Slow Food, (7) Support of the “Terra Madre” project and food communities through joint twinning (Cittaslow International Charter, 1999). Seferihisar was found “moderate” for support to slow food activities and projects (Table 2).

The successes of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Some projects based on the EU standards were executed to promote sustainable fishing in the region (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ A farmers’ market was opened.
- ✓ A restaurant that uses locally grown products was opened (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ Sustainable commercial fishing and production of tangerines and artichokes were encouraged by providing processing facilities (Öztürk, 2012).
- ✓ School vegetable gardens were established in some public schools (Seferihisar Municipality, 2012).

The failures of Seferihisar:

- ✓ Education programs for tastes and nutrition for the compulsory and secondary schools in cooperation with Slow Food

- ✓ Implementing one or more projects of Arca or Slow Food Centres for species or product at risk of extinction
- ✓ Support for the “Terra Madre” project and food communities through joint twinning

5.8 Finance

The Izmir development agency financed nearly \$89,000 to support marketing tangerine and artichoke production and approximately 50% of the cost of landscape design projects, including a promenade and coastal park in Siğacık. The Government provided \$167,000 for the Blue Flag Project, \$139,000 for a street renovation project, \$29,700 for an olive and olive oil factory in the Ulamış village and \$192,000 for a project for SPA-thermal water and accommodation facilities in the Doğanbey neighborhood. The EU funded a sustainable fishing nets project with \$198,000. For the Tangerine and Slow City festivals, it received \$111,000 from the sponsors (Öztürk, 2012).

Although landscape design projects are financially supported by different government agencies, most of the green spaces were not systematically planned and designed after accreditation. Unfortunately, green spaces are mostly designated just to decorate leftover land. More importantly, in the designation process, public participation was generally ignored. Seferihisar was considered “moderate” for finance (Table 2).

5.9 Maintenance & Management

This topic covers the maintenance and management of the projects conducted by the Seferihisar Municipality. Seferihisar was considered “moderate” for maintenance & management (Table 2) because the maintenance and the management of the projects were not good enough.

6 DISCUSSION

Seferihisar, the very first example of the Cittaslow movement in Turkey, together with its location, present distinctive landscape features with its natural, historical and archeological sites. The town proposed alternative development strategies with the desire to protect its local values in a sustainable way. The local government of Seferihisar executed a number of projects for pursuing the goals and principals of the Cittaslow movement after accreditation. This study was designed to look at the successes and the failures of the major projects in Seferihisar and its surroundings using the case study methodology for landscape architecture (Francis, 1999; 2001).

Regarding the 9 main criteria listed in Table 2, it can be stated that Seferihisar had mostly moderate and successful scores except for two poors for “hospitality” and “technologies and facilities for urban quality”. In the criteria of “awareness”, the study area scored very successful. However, this scoring scheme needs to be supported with further elaborations and comparisons to get a better picture of the successes and the failures.

When the slow cities are evaluated in different countries, what is generally seen is the dominance of unique architectural character and/or a well-preserved traditional urban fabric such as Anghiari (Italy) (City of Anghiari, 2013). Seferihisar is generally lacking of these qualities except for some parts of the historical Siğacık neighborhood. In Seferihisar, particularly in the town center, urban development in the form of ordinary and identical concrete apartment blocks has been underway.

Urban squares are the backbones of the urban public spaces. Thus, no open space network is complete without properly and systematically designed urban squares. Seferihisar obviously needs an urban square(s) that would also reflect the town’s traditional values. This is necessary to enhance the image and legibility of the town (Hepcan et al., 2006).

Although the town encouraged the citizens and visitors to use the bicycle by providing bicycles and bike routes, a comprehensive transportation master plan that covers public transportation and bicycle use is needed for Seferihisar like that in Sonoma city (City of Sonoma, 2012). It should also be mentioned that a 3-wheel bicycle that is powered by solar energy is an excellent idea from a sustainability point of view (Seferihisar Municipality, 2012).

Most of the Cittaslows like Chiavenna (Italy) closed their downtowns to cars and designated large pedestrian zones (City of Chiavenna, 2013). Similarly, the speed limit for vehicles was decreased to 20 km/h in Enns (Austria) (City of Enns, 2013). In Seferihisar only a couple of streets were closed to

motorised vehicles. This should be a matter of further concern in the framework of the transportation master plan that was mentioned above.

Obviously, feasibility studies for light rail between Sığacık and the Seferihisar town center would be a very positive step in terms of establishing a sustainable public transportation (Keskin, 2010).

Sustainable energy consumption is one of the major goals of the Cittaslow movement. To accomplish this Sonoma city prepared an energy efficiency plan and sustainability programs (City of Sonoma, 2012). Similarly, the city of Sebastopol has the Solar Sebastopol plan that aims to encourage Sebastopol residences and businesses to switch to solar energy for generating electricity (City of Sebastopol, 2012). Although the climate of Seferihisar is quite suitable both for using solar energy and wind turbines, there was no implementation of any project based on using alternative energy sources except solar powered street lighting along the main artery in the town center.

Attracting more visitors to Seferihisar was one of the priorities and was accomplished by publicizing the town and its unique characteristics across the country. This was successfully done but the existing physical infrastructure is not capable of meeting the needs of the growing number of visitors. For instance, the narrow roadway between Sığacık and Seferihisar town center and the lack of enough parking lots are among the major problems, especially on weekends. These problems became more obvious during the festivals and celebrations where the number of visitors exceeded the city's capability to handle the traffic.

The vegetable waste cycling program in Sonoma city, which handles over 800 tons a week, is recycled into compost (City of Sonoma, 2012). Seferihisar has a recycling program only for glass and plastics. This program definitely needs to be revised and enlarged to include organic waste as well.

The municipality encouraged the farmers to use local seeds instead of genetically modified ones. However, efforts against GMO were not completely successful in Seferihisar because it needed a nationwide policy and supportive legal provisions (Doğutürk, 2010).

What is easily visible is that most of the investments were made in the Sığacık neighborhood rather than other districts after accreditation. It is because Sığacık has been considered as a pilot area and showcase area with its natural and historical characteristics. But this became a matter of discussion and created dissatisfaction in the local community outside Sığacık (Öztürk, 2012).

Although some signboards that show archeological, natural and historical places were renewed after accreditation, the town still needs more signboards to show tourist attractions.

The e-municipality projects, such as the online problem solution department and municipal services that are accessible over the Internet, improved the quality of life for the local people in Seferihisar. Additionally, online shops of Seferihisar provided good opportunities for the local people to market their products.

Olive oil and goat cheese productions, for instance, became more important for town's economy. However, there was no master plan for safeguarding the traditional methods of extracting olive oil and making goat cheese in Seferihisar.

Although Seferihisar is quite hospitable and a welcoming place due to the pleasant nature of the local people, there are no training courses or educational programs that teach the local people about the expectations of the tourists and the skills of quality hospitality.

The Seferihisar Municipality was very successful at creating awareness about Cittaslow and slow food activities. This has resulted in support and active participation by most of the local people in the activities and programs of the Cittaslow movement. It is very important to note that the women began to play an important role both in producing and selling locally grown and hand-made products. They became producers and participated more in the daily and economic life of Seferihisar.

However, besides creating awareness and getting support from the local people, more regular workshops and educational activities should be organized in Seferihisar. For example, in Katoomba Blue Mountain (Australia) the focus is on local production and preparation of various foods, e.g. cheese making and many other interesting items (Blue Mountains, 2013).

Social life is not vibrant for the young people in the town and is a frequent matter of complaint that needs to be addressed by the local government. It's important that the young people enjoy their town and find activities and entertainment here.

Improving the quality of life of the residents lies in the center of the Cittaslow movement. It is equally important that projects should not be rushed to cause irreversible mistakes. Some of the projects

in the study area were rushed without enough research and consultation with the stakeholders (Doğutürk, 2010).

One of the major setbacks in implementing the Cittaslow principles is bureaucracy and the lack of a decentralized planning-management approach in some fields. For instance, since thermal facilities are run by the central government, local government has no authority over these facilities in terms of operational aspects (Doğutürk, 2010).

Maintenance and management of urban public spaces are held only by Seferihisar Municipality. In some Cittaslows some residents are part of maintenance & management of public spaces. Adopting a landscape program that allows individuals or groups to participate in maintenance or management of a public space, like a park area, as it is in Sebastopol would be a good example of public participation of maintenance (City of Sebastopol, 2012).

7 CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that Seferihisar becomes a center of attention after accreditation. Likewise, the recent statistics proved that Seferihisar is the most sought after place to live among the other districts in the Izmir metropolitan area (TurkStat, 2011b). Seferihisar was a pioneer in introducing the Cittaslow movement in Turkey. Seferihisar also encouraged other cities in Turkey to pursue the Cittaslow principles to develop an alternative way of living and an urbanization model. Therefore, it became a source of inspiration for eight other recently accredited towns in Turkey. Eventually, by learning from its successes and failures, it is hoped that Seferihisar may be able to increase the successes and eliminate the failures as well as present a valuable case for other Cittaslows in Turkey.

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