

## “Anthill”

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The architecture of the Urals in all of its aspects is an essential part of our country. It is very pleasant to know that even for small cities architectures were creating real works of art that still keep its history and uniqueness.

Russia. Sverdlovsk region. 50 kilometers west of Yekaterinburg city. Revda is a small town that is famous only as a metal production town, holds memories about postwar history in all its architecture. The beginning of the 1950<sup>th</sup> (XX century) was marked by wide capital construction. It was a time when neoclassicism – developing architectural style – was penetrating the cities. That is the reason why nowadays it is possible to find a great amount of buildings and constructions belonging to this style in Revda town. Neoclassicism is a style relating to Renaissance of classical architecture.

In 1956 “Anthill” (“Muraveinik”) (30 M. Gorky Street) – the biggest house of the town – was put in commission. It is an interesting fact that it is still considered to be the biggest one. The house was built upon the project of “Unipromed” institute and placed in the main street of those times – Stalin Street (nowadays it is called Maksim Gorky Street). There are important names during building of “Anthill”: Ivan Kultishev (under his guidance houses and objects of cultural and social significance were built), Grigory Zhminko (the head of Revda Construction department), Boris Sokolov (He began his working career with this project and later became the chief engineer of SU-5, and then the head of SU-6. He has an award of “Honored Builder of the RSFSR”). As far back as in 1954, the labor of German prisoners was used during the process of laying the house foundation. Workers of the Revda Construction department No. 5 under the guidance of Zhminko G. N. [7] did all other works.

The large volume of the house is a bright architectural accent in a formed space of the main square of the small town. First of all this building is markedly different from previously built houses by its size. Its length is about 180 meters and it occupies almost the whole quarter of Revda city. The building is optimized for 142 apartments. Maybe it is not such a meaningful figure if we compare it with buildings in Yekaterinburg city, “big neighbour” of Revda town, but for a small town particularly this building is considered to be the biggest one.

According to one of the long-term residents during those soviet times, you could see people surprised by the size of the building. “Well, we were as an auxiliary labour for builders mostly working with shovel or taking out the trash. It is what I was doing during weekends in 142-apartment house on Stalin Street. By the way, even at that time people were talking that there will live so many people as in anthill”. People had called it “Anthill” due to its length and occupant load. [5]

A distinctive feature of the house for this city is its functionality as well. The whole first floor is for non-residential premises. In Soviet times, this floor was occupied by post office, shops, dining room "The Seagull", cookery, children's club "Spark" and the city library named after A.S. Pushkin. [7] The height of the first floor is 4 meters that allows to use the area efficiently and gives an opportunity to create unusual interior for public spaces. The remaining space of the building is for residence (142 apartments).

Without any question, the neoclassical style is visible in the architectural appearance of the building. Building mass gives the uniqueness to the building. The building consists of two volumes different in height volumes of uneven adjoining to the U-shaped five-floor block. The difference between the floors and risalit of the main volume advanced forward add strict but expressive silhouette.

On the one hand, the classical style emphasizes its uniqueness, and on the other hand its confrontation to styles of that time. The basis for the house creation was taken from the architectural style of constructivism what is emphasized by strictness and unusualness of three-dimensional composition. The main facade of "Anthill" is decorated with a small number of architectural and artistic elements, but exactly through these elements, appeal to the classical heritage can be traced.

Main facade overlooking the central square of the city is one of the symbols of Revda town image. Neoclassicism is expressed in strictness, simplicity, but at the same time in expressiveness. A small number of architectural elements decorate the building are harmoniously combined in the composition of the whole building. Profile removable cornices impressively enchase facade. It is a final element of gambrel roof around the perimeter of the house. In the central part of the building, there is an interstorey cornice located between the first and second floors, thus highlighting the boundary between residential and non-residential parts of the building.

The central part of the "Anthill" main facade is outstanding by four doubled wall piers and gable, where the patterns of classicism can be traced. There is a medallion with the year of construction – 1956 on the gable of the building and swag decorated with stucco molding. There is another important part under the main composition of the building architecture – trussed Norman arch. It is simply decorated only with architrave, but provides better access to the entrance of the multi-apartment building. The arch allows to connect visually the interior (backyard) and external (street) space around the building and moreover it is a very practical element.

Small balconies with metallic enclosures are visible on the facade. An interesting idea is in balconies setting – each floor has its own peculiarities. The balconies of the fourth floor are decorated with architrave and decorative elements, fielded panels and wall piers are on the third floor, you can see enchased pilaster-strips on the second floor. Sometimes garishness and simplicity are not necessary elements in the architecture.

The side and front facades are made in a strict style, but with the addition of the round windows. Around the perimeter of the whole building stepped and profile cornices are stretching.

Neoclassical architecture is of a real interest, at the same time it gives uniqueness and expressiveness to such a small town as Revda. Apart from "Anthill" there are a lot of houses built in the same architectural style. Nowadays Revda town is still not cluttered with high buildings, that is why the architectural style of the town center adds comfort and individuality.

On the threshold of the 60th anniversary of the multi-apartment building residents of the town express its interest to the history of its creation. It is not a coincidence that "Anthill" is a visiting symbol of Revda town.

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### **Mills of Sverdlovsk region**

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Yekaterinburg is the administrative center of Sverdlovsk region, the largest industrial, cultural and scientific-educational center of the Ural. It is rich of architectural sights, monuments and other amazing places of imagination there.

One of the most exciting periods in the development of urban construction in Yekaterinburg is the second half of XIX –the beginning of XX century. In the architecture of the city the complex interplay of styles and town