



SWITZERLAND

NET STRUCTURE

Da Casa Old Age and Nursing Home, Vella

ADDRESS: Davos Cuort 27d CLIENT: Stiftung Alters- und Pflegeheim da casa val lumnezia, Vella

ARCHITECTS: Allemann Bauer Eigenmann Architekten AG, Zurich

BUILDING PERIOD: 2010–2012 FAÇADE CONSTRUCTION: Constructa Bau AG, Chur

FAÇADE MATERIAL: Swisspearl® CLINAR, NOBILIS Grey N 213

A new old-age and nursing home for fifty-eight residents was created in a remote mountain valley in Graubünden. With deliberate bends in the façade, the architects restrained the major volume and integrated it into the townscape. Small-format cement composite panels finish the wall surfaces.

MICHAEL HANAK The village of Vella is located on a small plateau on a broad slope surrounded by an enchanting Alpine world. The communities in the valley needed new housing for the local aged and infirm. The project by architects Patric Allemann, Martin Bauer, and Marc Eigenmann from Zurich, who had considerable experience with the building type senior center, won out in a public project competition in 2008. As building site, the communities found an undeveloped lot of land facing the valley on the edge of the plateau, not far from the village center.

The new old-age and nursing home was completed in 2012 and two years later, two buildings with senior flats. In early 2013, the communities of the valley merged to become the community of Lumnezia. The new town hall in the center of Vella will likewise be completed at the end of 2014.

Bent building volume

The old-age and nursing home called for a large volume. Yet it maintains distance from the small sectioned village structure and orients on the scale of the school and multipurpose hall at the end of the village towards the valley. A flat hip roof covers four main floors. A further floor rises up from the middle of the roof, but is visible only from afar. The irregular form of the base area is arranged on a pentagon; in addition, every side is bent inward. The entire façade development thus comprises ten sections – a clever move by the architects to minimize the appearance of the building in terms of perspective, and integrate the new structure into the townscape.

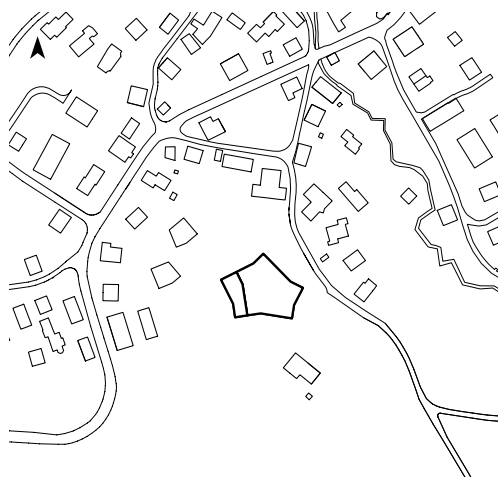
The polymorphous building volume can be explained by its interior structure. The rooms, each equipped with a bathroom unit

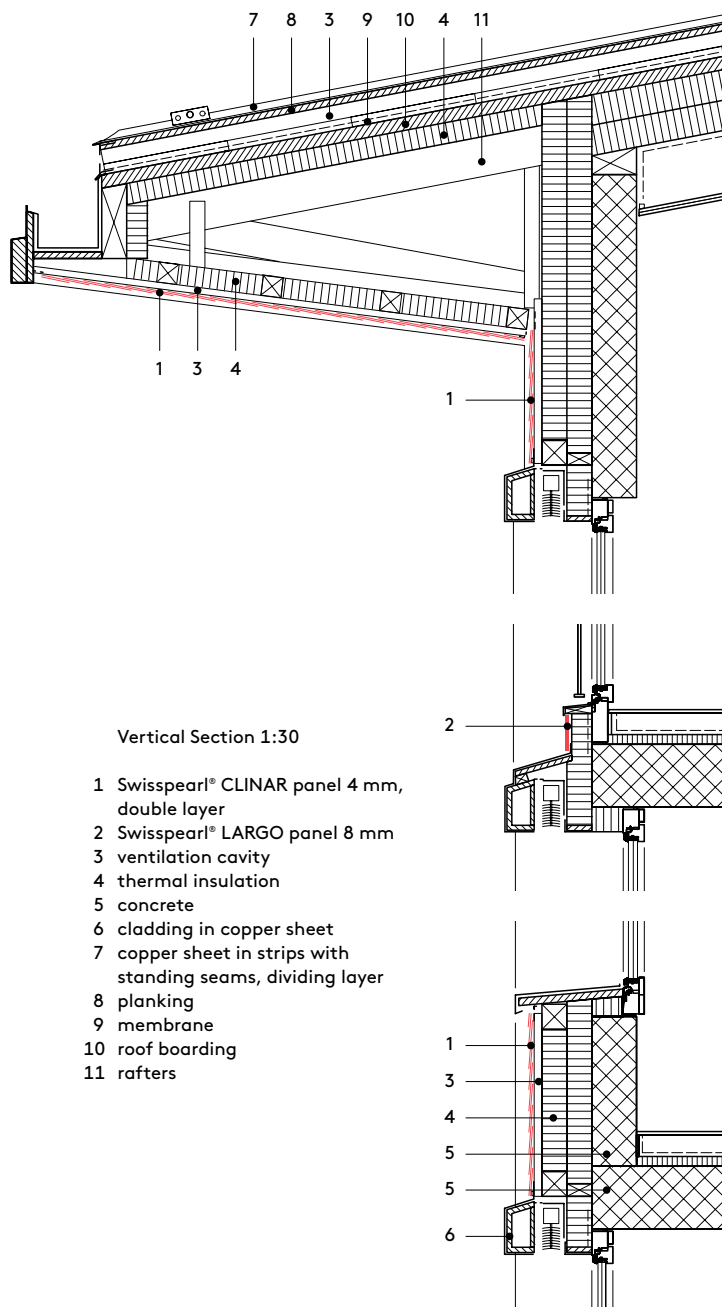
consisting of shower, toilet, and washbasin are lined up along the façades. The service spaces are centralized at the core of every floor. Two adjacent atria direct natural light into the deep floor plans, allowing views via courtyard windows. Since the courtyards change form and position on every floor, the space attains a high quality. The building structure lends the hallways diverse spatial qualities: first, it is possible to circle the core. Second, the cross connections along the courtyards offer further space for the residents of the floors to move freely. And third, cul-de-sacs at the windows of the outer walls, mainly at the position of the bends in the façade, create references to the surroundings.

The remaining spatial program is likewise organized in a richly varied way. The first floor is reserved for common facilities: the cafeteria, a hairdresser, and pedicure salon, among others. The upper stories' recess with regard to the first floor prepares room for a large terrace on the western side of the second floor. And in the attic floor is a chapel.

Woven façade

All façades are furnished with small, grey cement composite panels applied offset from one another in narrow, landscape formats. Broad copper-sheet strips frame the façade openings, but continue the closed wall areas, dividing them into rectangular fields. From outside they form a bracket around the individual rooms, which all have a large window and French doors.





“The new building orients on the scale of school and multipurpose hall and in dialogue with them formulates the face of the community of Vella towards the valley.”

Allemann Bauer Eigenmann



Old-age living in Vella in the village center and in magnificent architecture.

