

President's Corner 會長的話

Community Involvement in the Urban Design Process

It is important for the future of the city that the community becomes involved in matters of urban design. This is central to matters of urban policy and procedures wherever planning is carried out.

In the European Union the principle of subsidiary is generally adopted which supports the concept of participation related to the smallest neighbourhood level. At the heart of this is the term 'Community'. This does not in itself denote one single definition as communities can exist in relation to residence, business, educational organization etc. At a larger scale it is taken to mean the public at large within a specific place or area, but the key element which unites people into a 'community' is a coalition of interests which crosses all other boundaries and which can be personified in a range of purposeful representative bodies and organizations.

The criteria for public participation set out by the British Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions (DETR) is based on a number of characteristics – beliefs, skills, economic position, personal attributes, relationship of local services and identification with place. Community identity will therefore vary in relation to the composition of key characteristics. The European Commission sets out a number of positive benefits for community participation. These include:

- Facilitation of information on local issues;
- A feeling of pulling together;
- Better connection with people's daily problems;
- New ideas and solutions to different problems;
- Co-operation between different bodies; and
- Help in delivery of parts of a programme.

While the specific nature and context is different in Hong Kong, the basic issues are still to bring about environmental improvement, to extend social and economic opportunities, and to gain access to better

urban amenities. In this sense the term 'community' might reflect a number of different factors, not all of which are necessarily related. However a sustainable approach to community planning in the territory is often compromised in terms of achieving sensible urban design solutions. This is primarily because the process itself is overly geared to consultation rather than actual pro-active participation. The end product therefore too often reflects a 'one size fits all' solution rather than an equation of people with place. For a Government planning process, three separate public consultations are carried out, but without any clear means of reconciling different feedback proposals. In other words the process itself becomes the driver, rather than what actually comes out of it.

The participation process requires a common "language of interests" based on a mutual understanding of common issues. In other words a given issue must be perceived along with the avenues for tackling this in a purposeful way. This is based on shared concerns or values, and often reflects organizations set up in response to issues of immediate interest.

It is likely that the benefits that come out of this are commensurate with the inputs. In other words the fostering of community participation and representation will help to improve the urban design process itself and enable better facilitation by authorities and professional representatives i.e. those who experience change and those who help to bring it about. The approach should be to ensure maximum involvement by the key players according to clearly stated aims. Sufficient resources need to be allocated and specialists should assist in facilitating community involvement and training. This is particularly important as there needs to be a careful 'balancing' role to reconcile the views of different stakeholders.

Talking with fellow professionals and occasional business groups I rarely hear a good word said about the consultation process in Hong Kong as it is currently carried out. The complaints generally relate firstly to the fact that each stage of consultation can take months to prepare and present; that proposals are often watered down to their most mundane and functional properties; that few, if any, stimulating proposals come out of the process that might give the community something they had never dreamed of; and that even informed professional participants and institutes are never informed afterwards of the outcome. In fact the most forceful and intelligent feedback from my own experience is through Focus Group discussions.

The planning process itself clearly needs to provide more opportunities for community groups, professional bodies and other representative organizations to be given an early opportunity to contribute ideas on ways in which the city should be developed. This should prove no impediment in pursuing the plan preparation process. It might mean initiating community participation along with urban design workshops at an early stage in the planning process and help to identify key issues as part of an urban improvement agenda. It might also assist various government, business,

environmental and community organizations, many of whom often have seemingly conflicting agendas, to work together in defining what could be achieved in urban design terms and realise certain common objectives. In the process it could offer a vehicle to rejuvenate the roles of professionals and institutions as being concerned with an obligation to the community, outside that of merely expediting the development process.

In a special report some 15 years ago the UK Urban Design Group identified a number of broad issues and methods with regard to participation by the community in the planning and urban renewal process and some of these are set out in a modified form below. The process applied to Hong Kong would depend on local circumstances, conditions and resources, but its effectiveness would depend largely on paying sufficient attention to detail and the way it is integrated within the overall planning and development context.

General Principles according to the UKUDG can apply to virtually all planning situations, and can broadly be set out as follows:

- A commitment on the part of all key stakeholders as early as possible;
- A common understanding by all parties to the approach adopted;
- Views should not merely be sought, but ideas put forward to stimulate positive feedback;
- Value for money in terms of resources;
- Participant roles should be clear and transparent so that no single interest group is overly dominant;
- Those orchestrating group participation should have good facilitation skills, with information presented visually, as far as possible;
- Clear objectives for each participation exercise need to be set, and initiatives closely monitored against these with frequent reviews of progress;
- The processes should present an opportunity to enjoy creativity and learning about the environment, and developing a critical awareness through informal events invigorated with design ideas; and
- The process should help to invigorate what is often perceived as a moribund planning process undertaken through bureaucratic channels.

Peter Cookson Smith

President

Recent Events and Meetings / 近期活動及會議

Launching Ceremony of Benchmarking and Energy Saving Tool - Office Buildings



On behalf of HKIUD, Mr. PY Tam, Council Member attended the Hong Kong Green Building Council Limited (HKGBC), Launching Ceremony of Benchmarking and Energy Saving Tool - Office Buildings on 12 November 2015 for which HKIUD is a supporting organisation.



Dr. Peter Cookson Smith, President, Mr. Ivan Ho, Vice President (Local Policies) and Mr. PY Tam, Council Member as representatives of Harbourfront Commission were invited to attend a site visit to Causeway Typhoon Shelter and New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter on 16 November 2015.

HKIP 36th Anniversary Dinner on 26 November 2015



1. Peter Cookson Smith, President and Stanley Yip with HKIP Awards
2. Raymond Lee Vice-President HKIP, Eunice Mak President of HKIP, Peter Cookson Smith and William Tsang HKIA Vice-President at HKIP 36th Anniversary Dinner.

Adjudicator for students project and delivered a career and membership talk



Mr. Shiu Kee Tang, Council Member was invited to be an adjudicator for students project and delivered a career and membership talk for The Chinese University of Hong Kong Students on 26 November 2015.

HKIUD Meetings Calendar (November)

十一月會議

Date	Time	Meetings	Venue
3/11 (Tue)	6:30 pm	Council Meeting	Immediate Past President's Office
4/11 (Wed)	6:30 pm	PAC Meeting	Vice President's Office
10/11 (Tue)	6:30 pm	COC Meeting	Immediate Past President's Office

Upcoming Events and Meetings / 活動及會議預告

Call for Application: 5-day Intense Programme on Changing Urban Climate and the Impact on Urban Thermal Environment and Urban Living



Croucher Advanced Study Institute (ASI) would like to invite HKIUD members to join **Croucher Advanced Study Institute 2015-2016: Changing Urban Climate and the Impact on Urban Thermal Environment and Urban Living** on 7th –11th December, 2015 in the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The Croucher Advanced Study Institute (ASI) is fully sponsored by The Croucher Foundation and FREE for registration. It is a high-level programme in which the latest findings on urban climate and urban comfort will be reviewed by leading academics. It also aims to bring together professors, academic researchers, environmental scientists, climatologists, meteorologists, wind engineers from different scientific backgrounds as well as architects, urban planners and stakeholders of the construction industry to exchange their experience and views.

I would be grateful if you could publicize this event at your organisation to help us reach the broadest participation possible.

For application and event updates, please visit the event website:

<http://www.arch.cuhk.edu.hk/asi2015>. Should you have any enquiries, please feel free to contact Ms. Sze-wai Wong at szewai@cuhk.edu.hk.

FuturArc Prize 2016 and FuturArc Green Leadership Award 2016



FuturArc would like to invite HKIUD Members to participate in the FuturArc Prize 2016 and FuturArc Green Leadership Award 2016 for which HKIUD is a supporting organisation.

[FuturArc Prize](#) seeks forward-thinking, innovative design ideas for Asia. The Competition offers a platform to professionals and students who are passionate about the environment. Through the force of their imagination it aspires to capture visions of a sustainable future. The brief for the 2016 competition is Small Things, Big Impact.

The website is now open with details on prizes, jury and submission requirements:

www.futurarcprize.com. Closing date for online registration and submission: 21st December 2015.



[FuturArc Green Leadership Award](#) seeks innovative and ecologically responsible buildings in Asia. The

competition recognises the team behind a completed project: developer, architects, consultants and contractors, who have collectively pushed the limits and definition of what a Green building is in Asia.

The website is now open with details on prizes, jury and submission requirements:

www.futurarcgreenleadershipaward.com. Closing date for online registration and submission: 21st December 2015.

RICS Asia Construction Conference 2016

Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors would like to invite HKIUD members to participate in the inaugural RICS Asia Construction Conference for which HKIUD is a Supporting Organisation. Details are as follows:

Date & Time: 9:00am – 5:00pm, 8 January 2016 (Friday)

Venue: The Ballroom, Level 7, Cordis Hong Kong (formerly Langham Place Hotel)
Langham Place, Mongkok, Kowloon, Hong Kong

The RICS Asia Construction Conference looks at critical issues and challenges of the industry. Industry leaders and government representatives will discuss a roadmap for Asia's future development. Topics include construction cost instability, latest methods for lowering carbon emission, the future implications of BIM, and several case studies from the government and projects around the world. Professionals will gather, network and examine how the construction profession is evolving in the midst of volatile market conditions.

For enquiries, please contact the Conference Secretariat, Mr. Miles Wilson at 9rics@kymera.hk. Thank you.

HKIE BIM Conference 2016

The Hong Kong Institute of Engineer would like to invite HKIUD members to the HKIE BIM Conference 2016 with the theme "Engineers and BIM – the Way Ahead" for which HKIUD is a supporting organization. The HKIE BIM Conference 2016 would provide an excellent platform for professionals in the field of engineering to exchange views on the development of BIM in Hong Kong, the possible risks and, technical and legal challenges that the industry may face in the future. Details are as follows:

Date: 18 January 2016 (Monday)

Venue: Wong Gungwu Lecture Hall, Graduate House, No. 3 University Drive, The University of Hong Kong

For enquiries, please contact the Conference Secretariat, Ms. Jocelyn Kwok at 3159 2933. Thank you.

HKIUD Meetings Calendar (December)

十二月會議

Date	Time	Meetings	Venue
TBC	6:30 pm	Council Meeting	Immediate Past President's Office
16/12 (Wed)	6:30 pm	PAC Meeting	Vice President's Office

Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design Limited

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