Shenzhen Coastal Park System Strategic Plan

This project aims to preserve the last ecological jewel found within the territorial limits of Shenzhen, one of the world’s fastest growing cities. In doing so, it creates the first regional coastal parks system in Mainland China. It is guiding the protection of a 300 sq km coastline area on the South China Sea, envisioning a serene island of attractive parklands for public enjoyment despite its larger context, which is the Pearl River Delta Region, an energetic megalopolis of tens of millions of residents and hyper growth. EDAW was brought in by the client - Shenzhen’s planning authorities - to design an open space framework for the future of this area, balancing the needs of conservation and sustainable development given the city's, and the Pearl River Delta region's, larger context.

EDAW’s project team conducted a review and analysis of the overall area’s natural environment, especially focusing on the 150 km of coastline. This review included site visits over a span of half a year where landscape architects, environmental planners, developmental economists, urban designers and architects spent significant amounts of time during different seasons to experience, record and observe the natural resources from land and from water. The teams also collaborated with local experts, including local professional hikers, academics and environmental groups to further understand the existing resources within the study area and how they had been change by recent development. Local villagers and tourists alike were interviewed so the team could better understand the vernacular character of the indigenous human culture, and the expectations of visitors. These field investigations were coupled with extensive use of remote sensing data including satellite imagery, aerial photography, historical and current land-use plans to gain a

Creating the first regional coastal parks system in Mainland China

Development Suitability Map

Acknowledgment:
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comprehensive and integrated understanding of the area.

Based on its comprehensive analysis, EDAW proceeded to develop an overall master plan for the study area. The firm devised a new extensive coastal park and open space system for the city's planning bureau with included parts of existing designated country parks, protected ecological areas, preserved historical sites, special coastal parks and restored wetland habitats. Coastal parks were planned not only as a place for recreation and environmental protection, but also as ‘decoy’ environments that would provide open spaces for people to enjoy outdoor activities, while at the same time drawing them away from the most ecologically sensitive areas. Through the planning of the park system, three key nodes were designated to serve as demonstration phases, these are the Donghsan, Nan’ao and Dongxichong Coastal Parks. EDAW provided further development on these parks with a planning framework, landscape master plans, as well as plans for circulation and activity zones. The entrant also devised different strategies for the management of parks and protected areas, and set down a basic set of guidelines for the effective management of the study area.

The creation of a new system of coastal parks and municipal-level ecological reserves is a profoundly progressive one for China. It offers an aggressive, yet viable, set of guidelines for balancing the needs of preservation and development. Furthermore, these parks and protected areas dominate the large part of Shenzhen’s East Coast study zone and will provide a much-needed natural foil to Shenzhen’s inner city, industrial core, helping to reposition Shenzhen’s identity as a coastal, waterfront city. It will enable Shenzhen’s coming eastward growth to be a much more sensitive, sustainable and ecological process than what the city has experienced until now and will reposition its identity as a coastal metropolis.
The Hong Kong Coalition of Professionals organized the HKSAR 10th Anniversary Forum and Dinner on 12 July 2007. It was a high level multi-disciplinary Forum in which the local professionals of the ten institutes and their Mainland counterparts came together. The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr. Tang Ying-yen, was the Guest of Honour at the Forum, and the Financial Secretary, Mr. Tsang Chun-wah, was the Guest of Honour at the Dinner. Four of our invited Mainland guests came to join us. The theme of the Forum was "Developing Competitive International Professional Practices through Co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong". One of the messages came through from the Forum was that while the Hong Kong professionals are having golden opportunities in the Mainland markets, we should at the same time keep upgrading ourselves to maintain the competitive edge because our Mainland counterparts are persistently advancing themselves.

With the kind co-ordination and help from Mrs. Liz Leven and her husband Dr. Mike Leven, we had a chance to visit Lok Ma Chau Compensation Wetland on 2 June 2007. Dr. Mike Leven, the director of Asia Ecological Consultant Ltd., has been involved in this project from the preliminary mitigation proposal to construction, management and maintenance period. A brief introduction was given with an overview at Lok Ma Chau viewing point first. Dr. Mike Leven, explained to us the major achievement of the enhancement area, construction method, maintenance and management issues for such a large man-made wetland. We were introduced to some wetland plant species, both for the wild life habitat attraction as well as aesthetic purpose. Many thanks again to Liz and Mike. They will share more about their experience in creating and maintaining wetland habitats in the coming issue of "Yuanlin".

A HKILA soccer team was formed after years of endeavors. The new Team played well at the Hong Kong Coalition of Professionals Super Cup 2007 held on 8 July 2007. The Team came in 7th out of 10 teams, receiving the Shield Final Champion. The last match was played against HKIP; the winning score was brought by Dean Tam.

Sincere thanks to Dean Tam for organizing the Team and all players for fighting hard under the hot sun. Their sweat, hard work and support to the Institute are much appreciated.

Our Player List of 2007 HKILA Soccer Team:

- Jason Chan - No. 2
- Mike Yiu - No. 3
- Tony Lam - No. 5
- Joe (Dean's friend) - No. 6
- Dean Tam (captain) - No. 7
- Shun Teo - No. 8
- Xylem Leung - No. 9
- Niki Lai - No. 10
- Cheong (Dean's friend) - No. 11
- Gary Yip - No. 13
- S C Lo - No. 14
- Andrew Wong - No. 15
- Hong (Gary's brother as goalkeeper) - No. 34
Some of our young members were invited by Young Group of the Hong Kong Institute of Engineer (HKIE) in the event to improve the current condition of Fung Yuen Butterfly Reserve. Fung Yuen is one of the most valuable natural reserves in Hong Kong. About 170 species of butterfly can be found in that area. There are 3 major factors that attract butterfly to breed in Fung Yuen. 1) Geographical factor, 2) diversity of plant, 3) plantation activities. We formed a group with the engineers and had a site inspection on 1 April 2007. At the moment, the reserve is lack of an effective irrigation system and most watering is carried out manually. We try to improve the irrigation system as well as environment of Fung Yuen by modifying the current layout and suggesting some plant species which can attract butterflies. Improvement of Fung Yuen is still on-going.

If you would like to access to up-to-date information on arboriculture and tree selection, there are 3 very useful links:

1. Ed Gilman’s website
http://hort.ufl.edu/woody/
Dr Gilman is an internationally renowned scholar in various topics of arboriculture and more importantly he has been generously sharing his years of research work on line. This website contains over 9000 files, 10000 photos/ illustrations, research abstracts, etc. There are all sorts of information on tree/ shrubs/ groundcover selection, palms, footpath design, tree roots, storm (with very useful Powerpoints on preventive pruning of young/mature trees/ developing a tree management program), nursery (including specifications), planting, pruning, transplanting, health concerns, maintenance, portrait gallery and so on.

http://www.arborday.org/trees/pruning/

3. A tree selection guide
http://selecttree.calpoly.edu/
A useful tool was developed by a team of utility, academic, and design professionals to help in selecting the right planting in and around utility corridors. There are around 1500 trees in the database which are sorted by attributes. It will be good if a data base as such will be developed in Hong Kong and South China. In addition, there is also a list of good links. There are limitations in applying the information in Hong Kong since it is developed for use in the USA and the focus is on overhead utility lines. Nevertheless it is a good reference tool in general.

A visit to the Stanley Complex & Stanley Waterfront Improvement Area was jointly organized by the Architectural Services Department Landscape Architects Association (ArchSDLAA) and HKILA on 21 July 2007. Over 20 members were given a guided tour around the recently completed project. We would like to thank Mr. Tony Mui (Project LA of Stanley Waterfront Improvement Project) and Mr. Thomas Wan (Project Arch. of Stanley Complex and Stanley Waterfront Improvement Project) for sharing with the participants their experience in the implementation of sustainable design and the co-ordination with various authorities and local community.
Lands Department has issued a new Practice Note on “Tree Preservation and Tree Removal Application for Building Department in Private Projects” - Issue No. 7/2007. Please take note especially on the option of “Self-Certificate of Compliance” of the Tree Works by Registered Landscape Architects.


HKILA’s Council members including Leslie Chen, Evans Iu, Candy Lau, Patrick Lau, SC Lo, Vincent Luk, Iris Hoi, Lee Ting Au had a lunch meeting with Mrs. Carrie Lam, the new Secretary for Development on 1 August 2007. We exchanged views on issues of common interests, and Council members also took the opportunity to explain to the new secretary the services being provided by the landscape architectural profession. Mrs. Carrie Lam especially acknowledged the lack of representation of landscape architects at policy level when formulating policies related to greening and landscape issues. The Council will continue the constructive communication with the Bureau.

Co-hosted by the newly established M.L.A. Alumni Association and M.L.A. programme of The University of Hong Kong, the M.L.A. Orientation’07 program surely gave a new start to the students’ academic path.

On 1 September 2007, through the sharing and exchange session in the morning and a park visit to Lai Chi Kok Park and the new Ma Wan Park in the afternoon, the experience showed that everyone is eager to help the new students by broadening their horizon.

The Kaiping Excursion Tour organized by the Overseas Excursion Committee of HKIA was held from 6-8 July 2007. It was just a few days after the recognition of Kaiping Diaolou and Villages by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as one of the World Heritage (Ref. 1112). Ms. Selia Tan from the Kaiping Diaolou Research Department introduced the complex and flamboyant fusion of Chinese and Western structural and decorative form. The buildings and overall villages setting itself, tell the stories about the hardship of overseas Chinese. Ms. Tan also shared with us the difficulty of collecting all necessary information, contacting descendents of the building owners, as well as conducting their survey and conservation efforts.

The preservation, does not just solely focus on the building itself. The landscape and villages setting are also preserved. Much effort has been made to regenerate the lotus beds and paddy field in between the villages. Without the surrounding landscape, the buildings themselves didn’t tell much. The backyard orchard garden, welcoming bamboo sideway, entrance Ficus, village front embankment and the back mountain protection provide the basic background for understanding the living style of the local residents and vernacular architecture. However, the pressure of tourists and economic development may change the heritage landscape dramatically.
Creating “Fields” as Landscape Design Approaches

I have read two articles. They echo with each other. I heard the calling that landscape architecture is about creating “Fields” where elements situate in and being inter-related, instead of creating “Objects” that stand alone and be looked at.

The first article is “From Object to Field” highlights the paradigm shift. The concept is outlined by quotes from the article below:

"...A “Field” condition would be any formal or spatial matrix capable of unifying diverse elements while respecting the identity of each... All grids are fields, but not all fields are grids..."

"...Form matters, but not so much the forms of things as the forms between things..."

The second article is “Grid, Casco, Clearing and Montage” in the Landscape Journal “Topos”, which introduces four design approaches. I find that design approaches could be interpreted using the “Field” concept in the first article. In the followings, each design approach is first introduced with my interpretation in relation to the “Field” concept, then followed by quotes from the article.

1. The “Grid” approach is about imposing an orderly man-made field into the landscape.

"...The “Grid” approach stresses a man-made regularity that features an idea of order in opposition to the “organic” character of nature, or to the randomness of the “chaotic” environment around it..."

2. The “Casco” approach is about following the existing fields such as topography, vegetation and hydrology. It makes me think of Mr. Ian McHarg and the concept of “genius loci”.

"...The “Casco” approach hopes to found a concept on the inherent qualities of the site... It reflects the constitutive form of the landscape and is based on local geological and hydrological conditions...The approach requires both a talented eye to perform the necessary scanning of existing landscape characteristics and a poetic ability to express them in a synthesizing new proposal...In this approach, the form and the character of the landscape determine the program..."

3. The “Clearing” approach is about creating a prominent bold landscape field which override the elements in it. This approach honours the embracing and unifying power of landscape.

"...No matter what is built in a natural/generated pine forest, it is the pine forest that determines the overall image. This idea of nature/landscape as an (unifying) backdrop to assure the freedom of the intervention is now used as a systematic planning device... Unlike the “Casco” approach, where the landscape sets the conditions for the program, the “Clearing” approach has the program create the landscape..."

4. The “Montage” approach is about creating a field of relationships among elements, that would otherwise be unrelated.

"...The “Montage” approach assembles basic framework of simple rationalities into a poetic inter-penetration of elementary forms and figures... Instead of standing alone, each element in this new setting exists in relation to neighboring ones... Each element is a part of many others..."

Reference:
(http://www.topos.de/index.php?nav=143&subnav=90&do=artikel&id=17639)

Tabebuia chrysantha and Tabebuia impetiginosa are two spectacular flowering trees that originate from South America. They are closely related and belong to the family of Bignoniaceae.

Tabebuia chrysantha is a deciduous tree that grows to 4-6m tall. It has palmately compound leaves with 5 leaflets. The leaflets are ovate-elliptical in shape, margin entire or sparsely toothed. New leaves are densely covered with yellowish hairs. The flowers are bright yellow in color.

Tabebuia impetiginosa is also a deciduous tree that grows up to 12m tall. It has palmately compound leaves with 5 leaflets. The leaflets are elliptical to oblance in shape with a toothed margin. Contrary to the Tabebuia chrysantha, the leaves of Tabebuia impetiginosa are hairless, and the flowers are purplish-red.

These two trees both flower in early spring. The flowers appear earlier than the leaves, so the flowers are not obstructed and the trees become very eye-catching. The flowering period is short though, with flowers appearing for only one month. Both trees prefer a sunny location. Sufficient water shall be provided when the trees are in flower. Adequate fertilizing is helpful in spring and summer when the trees are growing most vigorously. Both trees need a high temperature to thrive. The trees are susceptible to cold damage when weather is cold and wet, so select a planting area that is sheltered in winter. These species are suitable for Hong Kong and surrounding area. They can be found at some new estates in Tai Po and West Kowloon.

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