

立法會
Legislative Council

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Legislative Council
Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Minutes of special meeting
held on Monday, 14 May 2001 at 10:45 am
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP (Chairman)
Hon LAU Ping-cheung (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon IP Kwok-him, JP

Members attending : Hon NG Leung-sing
Hon CHAN Yuen-han
Hon CHOY So-yuk

Members absent : Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, SBS, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP

Public officers attending : **Agenda Items I & II**
Mr Daniel CHENG
Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning)
Planning and Lands Bureau

Mr Augustine NG
Assistant Director/Territorial & Sub-Regional
Planning Department

Mr Raymond WONG
Chief Town Planner/Sub-Regional
Planning Department

Clerk in attendance : Miss Salumi CHAN
Chief Assistant Secretary (1)5

Staff in attendance : Mrs Queenie YU
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)6

Action

I. Stage II Study on Review of Metroplan

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1186/00-01(01) — Paper provided by the Administration)

The Chairman briefed members that the purpose of the Stage II Study on Review of Metroplan and the Related Kowloon Density Study (KDS) was to formulate an up-to-date development strategy for the Metro Area for the period up to 2016 and beyond. As part of the public consultation exercise, the Administration would like to seek Members' views on the main themes and development opportunities for Metroplan.

2. With visual aid equipment, the Chief Town Planner (Sub-Regional) of Planning Department (CTP/PD) highlighted the main themes for the Metroplan, development opportunities and infrastructure constraints as detailed in the paper. He also pointed out that in view of the changing circumstances, a review of the Metroplan approved in 1991 was needed. Moreover, since the current density controls in Kowloon were imposed under the KDS completed in 1993, it was now necessary to review the density controls to assess if any Plot Ratio (PR) relaxation could be sustained by the planned infrastructure and environmental capacities. The public consultation for the Study was organized in three stages. Stage I consultation had been conducted between July and September 1999. Stage II consultation was in progress and the views obtained would be considered in the generation and evaluation of development options as well as formulation of an overall strategic framework for the Metro Area for the next stage of work.

Basis of assessment

Projected employment levels

3. Noting that the total employment in Metro Area was anticipated to increase to 3.01 million in 2016, Mr NG Leung-sing asked whether assessment had been made on the impact of the development of information technology on the implementation of the home-office concept. The Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning) of Planning and Lands Bureau (PAS/PLB) advised that the home-office concept was an issue being studied under a separate study, i.e. the Study on Hong Kong 2030 — Planning vision and strategy.

4. Referring to the relocation of supporting office to the Mainland by some private enterprises such as banks, Mr NG Leung-sing considered that the Administration should liaise closely with private enterprises and keep track of the implications of this trend on the projected employment levels. PAS/PLB noted Mr NG's view.

Infrastructure constraints

Sewage assessment

5. Referring to paragraph 10 of the paper on the capacity constraint of the Strategic Sewage Disposal Scheme (SSDS) Stage I system, Mr NG Leung-sing noted that the problem would unlikely be resolved in the short to medium terms. He was concerned whether the Administration had put in place any measures to address the limitation. PAS/PLB advised that pursuant to the report of the Review of SSDS by an International Review Panel, the Administration would evaluate the effectiveness of the SSDS Stage I system and draw up long-term measures to address the capacity problem. The Environment and Food Bureau (EFB) and the Environment Protection Department (EPD) would follow up the issue. Mr NG pointed out that provision of an effective sewage system was important in preventing the Victoria Harbour from becoming a “foul-smell” harbour. PAS/PLB undertook to reflect Mr NG's views to EFB/EPD.

Major Themes for Metroplan

Environmental concerns

6. Mr IP Kwok-him, Mr Albert CHAN Wai-yip and Miss CHAN Yuen-han were concerned that the main themes for Metroplan focused on economic considerations and that there was no concrete plan for environmental improvements. Mr IP noted that the Administration would identify suitable sites in the Metro Area for small-scale development particularly for housing purposes, and allow a higher PR to provide greater incentive for re-development. He pointed out that in some other major cities,

such as Guangzhou, sites in the Metro Area were identified for development of green areas rather than new buildings. Citing the old districts in the South East Kowloon region and the former Tai Hum Village Squatter area as examples, Mr CHAN criticized the Administration for not making use of the lands available from urban renewal projects to develop more green areas. Miss CHAN stressed that planning studies should be people-oriented and that improvements to the living environment of residents should be accorded priority especially for new projects. She also urged the Administration to address the noise pollution problem in Metro Area.

7. PAS/PLB and CTP/PD clarified that the Study recommended no blanket relaxation of PR in Kowloon, and the Administration was considering PR relaxation only for large-scale urban renewal projects so that the land use arrangements and layout of streets in old districts could be improved to enable provision of more open space and community facilities. PAS/PLB pointed out that the 20-year urban renewal programme to be implemented by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) aimed to bring about improvements to the living environment of residents in old districts. Details of the programme would be worked out by URA which had just been established on 1 May 2001. In this connection, a balance would be maintained between preserving the natural scenery of the areas concerned and expediting the pace of urbanization. Moreover, EFB, in consultation with the relevant bureaux and departments, was reviewing the green policy and measures. The Assistant Director (Territorial and Sub-Regional) of Planning Department (AD/PD) also pointed out that EFB would implement the measures approved by the Executive Council to alleviate noise pollution problem in residential areas.

8. Mr LAU Ping-cheung criticized that the design of the newly built platform at the Hung Hom Railway Station was not environmentally friendly. He also opined that the Administration should make reference to overseas experience and implement short-term measures, such as the planting of trees and the provision of sitting-out facilities, to bring about immediate improvements to the environment. PAS/PLB reiterated that green measures were being considered by EFB.

Rezoning and employment redistribution

9. Referring to the common trend amongst major international cities to develop a secondary Metro Area to address the development constraints, Mr IP Kwok-him noted that this approach was not mentioned in the Study. Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that during Stage I of the Study in early 1990s, there was general support for the development of a secondary Metro Area. The Chairman considered that this approach might help address the job/population imbalance between Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Territories (NT).

10. PAS/PLB and AD/PD responded that the job/population imbalance had generated major north-south commuting flows and placed heavy burden on the strategic transport network. To address this problem, the Administration was

considering the rezoning of part of the "Commercial/Residential" zones in Metro Area for residential use, and more lands in outer Metro Area such as Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon Tong and Tsuen Wan for commercial use.

Measures to facilitate vehicular and pedestrian movement

11. Mr IP Kwok-him considered it important for the Administration to provide affordable transport facilities for commuters to the Metro Area. Ir Dr Raymond HO expressed concern that the three cross-harbour tunnels and the proposed new rail link from Shatin to Hung Hom might not be able to cope with the demand for transport facilities between the Metro Area and NT. He therefore urged the Administration to re-consider the proposal of constructing a cross-harbour vehicular bridge in the proximity of Metro Area, for example the Lei Yue Mun Bridge previously proposed about a decade ago. PAS/PLB said that the subject was being considered under the Planning Study on the Harbour and its Waterfront Areas.

12. Referring to paragraph 31 of the paper where it was stated that provision should be made for more efficient movement of people, Mr NG Leung-sing suggested the Administration to provide pedestrian walkways linking major commercial buildings in the Central District. Ir Dr Raymond HO suggested the Administration to provide incentives for owners of private enterprises to take part in connecting the basement of their commercial buildings in the Central District. PAS/PLB undertook to reflect members' views to the relevant bureaux.

13. Referring to the development of underground plazas with parking spaces in overseas countries, Ir Dr Raymond HO was disappointed to note that the Administration had turned down previous proposals offered by overseas investors for developing the underground spaces in Wanchai and Jordan. PAS/PLB assured members that the Administration had considered the merits and demerits of individual proposals before making its decision, and that the public would be consulted on the development opportunity for underground spaces under the current Study.

Coordination amongst bureaux and government departments

14. Mr LAU Ping-cheung and Miss CHAN Yuen-han were concerned that the planning objectives set by the Planning and Lands Bureau (PLB) were often not achieved by other bureaux/departments responsible for the implementation of the planning strategy. They urged the Administration to improve the situation. PAS/PLB reassured members that PLB would coordinate and consult the relevant bureaux/departments in formulating a planning or development strategy.

II. Planning Study on the Harbour and its Waterfront Areas

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1186/00-01(02) — Paper provided by the Administration)

15. With visual aid equipment, CTP/PD briefed members on the background of the Planning Study on the Harbour and its Waterfront Areas, Harbour Planning Framework, and opportunities and constraints as detailed in the paper. He said that Stage I public consultation on the Study was in progress and would last until the end of May 2001.

General view

16. Members expressed appreciation of the Study to make the Victoria Harbour more attractive, vibrant and symbolic of Hong Kong. As the Victoria Harbour and its waterfront areas were famous for their skyline, landmark buildings and night views, members considered that physical and visual intrusion into the Harbour should be minimized by stronger urban design at the waterfront, and that no further reclamation works should be carried out in the areas.

Constraints

Competing waterfront uses

17. Referring to paragraph 10 of the paper, Mr Albert CHAN considered that the opportunity should be taken to address the development constraints caused by “incompatible” uses of the harbour and the waterfront. The public cargo working areas and barging points centrally located within and around the Inner Harbour Core were examples of such uses.

Planning principles

The Harbour and waterfront areas

18. To capitalize on the leisure, recreation and economic potential of the Harbour to make it more attractive not only to tourists but also to local people, members encouraged beautification and landscape improvement to waterfront promenades and open spaces. Mr LAU Ping-cheung and Mr IP Kwok-him considered that a greater variety of open space amenities and activities should be provided at the waterfront promenades to attract both local and overseas visitors. Ir Dr Raymond HO suggested that boat cruises be organized for tourists to appreciate the scenery along the coastline of Hong Kong.

19. To provide convenient connections between tourism attractions, Ir Dr Raymond HO supported the development of cross-harbour vehicular and/or road

bridges. Mr LAU Ping-cheung considered that easy access to the waterfront areas should be provided.

20. Mr WONG Yung-kan considered it important for the Administration to address the current and windshield factors of the waterfront areas. PAS/PLB said that to his knowledge, protection against these factors would be taken into account when planning and designing new projects at waterfront areas.

21. Mr Albert CHAN was of the view that too much emphasis had been placed on the economic benefits for turning the Harbour and its waterfront areas into tourist attractions. He said that the interests and needs of local residents should also be catered for.

Water quality

22. Ir Dr Raymond HO and Mr IP Kwok-him were concerned about the water quality of the Harbour and its waterfront areas. They suggested the Administration to put in place measures to address the pollution problems.

23. Mr WONG Yung-kan asked whether the Administration had taken any measures to improve the water quality at Lei Yue Mun, a popular tourism node. PAS/PLB advised that the Commissioner for Tourism had taken short-term measures to improve the situation. The situation was expected to improve further in the long term through better planning for the development of Lei Yue Mun and its neighbouring areas.

Stage II public consultation

24. Responding to Mr IP Kwok-him, AD/PD advised that Stage II public consultation on the Study was expected to commence by the end of 2001 and last for about two months.

III. Any other business

25. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:50 pm.