

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)2023/99-00  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration and cleared  
by the Chairman)

Ref: CB1/BC/9/99/2

**Bills Committee on  
Urban Renewal Authority Bill**

**Minutes of meeting held on  
Monday, 3 April 2000, at 8:30 am  
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon Edward HO Sing-tin, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP  
Hon LEE Wing-tat  
Hon NG Leung-sing  
Hon Ronald ARCULLI, JP  
Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon Christine LOH  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han  
Dr Hon LEONG Che-hung, JP  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon Gary CHENG Kai-nam, JP  
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP  
Hon WONG Yung-kan  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon FUNG Chi-kin  
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP
- Members absent** : Hon HO Sai-chu, SBS, JP  
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
- Public officers attending** : Mr Stephen FISHER  
Deputy Secretary for Planning and Lands  
(Urban Renewal and Buildings)
- Ms Olivia NIP  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning and Lands  
(Urban Renewal)

Mr T K LEE  
Assistant Director/Urban Renewal (Ag)  
Planning Department

**Attendance by invitation** : Land Development Corporation

Dr LAU Wah-sum  
Chairman

Mr Abraham RAZACK  
Chief Executive

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects

Mr LAM Wo-hei  
Vice President

Mr Barry WILL  
President

Hong Kong Institution of Engineers

Ir Patrick S K YUEN  
Vice President

Ir CHOI Yu-leuk  
Fellow Member

Hong Kong Institute of Planners

Mr Andrew P C CHAN  
Council Member

Ms Betty S F HO  
Council Member

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

Mr David C LEE  
Chairman, Urban Renewal Committee

Mr C K LAU  
Member, Urban Renewal Committee

Hong Kong Society of Urban Renewal

Mr CHEUNG Tak-woo  
Vice-Chairman

Mr LAU Tak, Francis  
Chairman, Town Planning & Infrastructure  
Committee

Resource Group on Town Planning of the Hong Kong  
Council of Social Service

Ms Kay KU  
Assistant Director (Development)

Mr Tony PANG  
Senior Project Officer (Substance Abuse and AIDS)

Hong Kong YWCA  
Urban Renewal Social Services Team

Ms YUK Tak-fun, Alice  
General Secretary

Ms LO Chiu-kwan  
Supervisor

Hong Kong People's Council on Housing Policy

Ms IP Chiu-ping  
Chief Secretary

Mr Dicky LAI Wai-leung  
Representative

**Clerk in attendance :** Miss Odelia LEUNG  
Chief Assistant Secretary (1)1

**Staff in attendance :** Ms Bernice WONG  
Assistant Legal Adviser 1

Miss Becky YU  
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)3

---

## **I Meeting with deputations**

The Chairman informed members that the current meeting was the first of the three meetings which had been scheduled to meet deputations. Representatives from nine organizations had been invited to present their views on the Bill at this meeting. They highlighted the salient points in their submissions as follows:

2. Land Development Corporation (LDC)  
(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1272/99-00(01))

- (a) LDC generally supported the Bill and urged for its early enactment.
- (b) There was strong reservation over the proposed executive-chairman model for the Urban Renewal Authority (URA).

3. The Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA)  
(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1287/99-00(01))

- (a) The Urban Renewal Strategy (URS) would serve as a road map for the future urban renewal programme. The Bill should define URS and give details on the way in which it would be formulated.
- (b) The Bill should include details on the mechanism to promote and to implement rehabilitation of old buildings and preservation of heritage buildings.
- (c) The primary role of URA was to facilitate and encourage private sector participation in the urban renewal process.
- (d) Corporate plans and annual business plans of URA should be made public once they had been approved by the Financial Secretary.
- (e) Other relevant legislation and schemes, for example the Buildings Ordinance and the Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme, should be reviewed to facilitate the work of URA.

4. Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE)  
(LC Paper No. CB(1) 585/99-00 & 1272/99-00(02))

- (a) Urban renewal should aim at achieving optimal land use and transportation at both territorial and district levels.
- (b) Rehabilitation of old buildings should be pursued whenever possible. Government should facilitate the development of technology in the maintenance of buildings.
- (c) URA should act as the facilitator in urban renewal process. It should be proactive in the maintenance of old buildings.

- (d) On the planning procedures of urban renewal projects, the Bill should :
  - (i) spell out the criteria for approving development projects and time for the Secretary for Planning and Lands to consider objections;
  - (ii) provide for an appeal channel for development projects;
  - (iii) provide for an objection mechanism for development schemes; and
  - (iv) set out the criteria for compulsory land resumption.
- (e) Compensation for persons affected by urban renewal projects should take into account the redevelopment value of the sites.

5. *Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP)*  
(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1290/99-00(01))

- (a) The Bill only focused at re-structuring of the physical environment of the old urban areas. Little had been said about improving the social and overall environment of the old urban districts.
- (b) Rehabilitation was a major urban renewal tool. The Bill had not mentioned the mechanism for rehabilitation of buildings.
- (c) Social impact assessment should be conducted for each development project/scheme covering a wide range of issues, such as local culture, social and economic ties, employment, provisions of community facilities, rehousing and relocation requirements, etc.
- (d) Transparency in the planning process should be enhanced in order to strengthen the public accountability of URA's work. Public hearings of objections to development projects should be allowed. It would also be important to promote public understanding on the issues related to development projects.

6. Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS)

- (a) A policy paper on URS should be published which should include promises made by Government during the consultation exercise.
- (b) There should be co-ordination between URA and relevant departments on the maintenance of old buildings. Government should render more assistance to facilitate owners in undertaking improvement and alteration works for their buildings.
- (c) Proposals concerning preservation of heritage in the urban renewal target areas should be included in URA's corporate plans and business plans.

- (d) Private sector should play a major part in redevelopment. The Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance (Cap. 545) should be reviewed to lower the threshold for compulsory sale to facilitate redevelopment by the private sector.
- (e) On the general power of URA specified under clause 6 of the Bill, there should be provisions to empower URA to :
  - (i) "improve" buildings;
  - (ii) "license" its land and buildings; and
  - (iii) carry out freezing surveys on non-residential premises.
- (f) URA should adopt a non-executive chairman model for its Board.
- (g) URA should not publish prospective development projects unofficially so as to reduce the adverse impacts on affected parties between the period of publication of a development project and the actual implementation of the project.
- (h) Guidelines on valuation of property should be promulgated in the policy paper on URS. Moreover, the policy paper should include an appeal mechanism for dealing with appeals on Home Purchase Allowance. URA should release the ex gratia compensation payment to affected persons expeditiously.

7. Hong Kong Society of Urban Renewal  
(LC Paper no. CB(1) 1317/99-00)

- (a) The Bill should be enacted as soon as possible to expedite the pace of urban renewal and to arrest the problem of deteriorating urban decay.
- (b) Independent panel should be set up to hear objections to development projects. Criteria for considering land resumption applications should be published.
- (c) The time for processing objections to development projects should be reduced. Redevelopment should be implemented by way of development schemes as far as possible in order to speed up the process of urban renewal.
- (d) The current criterion of compensation for affected owners, i.e. the amount should be sufficient to purchase a ten-year-old flat of a comparable size in the same locality, should be maintained.

8. Resource Group on Town Planning of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1290/99-00(02))

- (a) A people-oriented approach should be adopted in implementing the urban renewal programme.
- (b) Social impact assessment should be conducted for each development scheme/project and the results should be taken into account in the preparation and implementation of the scheme/project.
- (c) Public participation in the planning procedures should be enhanced. The objection period for a development project should be increased to two months. An objection mechanism should be introduced for development schemes.
- (d) Multi-disciplinary supportive agency should be set up to provide necessary assistance to needy people affected under a development project.
- (e) Committees under the District Councils should be set up to monitor the progress of development projects.

9. Hong Kong YWCA - Urban Renewal Social Services Team

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1272/99-00(03))

- (a) The requirement for URA to adopt a people-oriented approach in undertaking urban renewal should be included in the Bill.
- (b) In order to enhance the public accountability of URA, the Chairman and the Executive Directors of URA should attend Legislative Council (LegCo) meetings regularly. Consultative committees should be set up at district level to collect views and suggestions for implementing development projects. Moreover, dissemination of information on development projects should be enhanced by way of Internet and publication at URA offices.
- (c) Owners of premises affected by development projects should be given an opportunity to negotiate with URA on compensation matters.
- (d) Affected tenants should be rehoused in-situ or in nearby districts. Cash compensation in lieu of rehousing should be offered as an option.
- (e) URA should set up Urban Regenerating Integrated Teams comprising relevant professionals to provide the necessary services to residents affected by urban renewal.

10. Hong Kong People's Council on Housing Policy (HKPCHP)  
(LC Paper Nos. CB(1) 1007/99-00, 1170/99-00 & 1287/99-00(02))
- (a) Urban renewal was a people-oriented process.
  - (b) Members of the URA Board should include LegCo Members.
  - (c) Government should inject capital into URA if necessary to ensure that the urban renewal programme would not be disrupted due to shortage in funding.
  - (d) Greater public participation in the planning procedures should be allowed. Social impact assessments should be undertaken for development projects. Public hearings or consultation should be held to gather views on development plans. Corporate plans and business plans of URA should be disclosed to the public.
  - (e) Principles of compensation and rehousing should be stated in the Bill.
  - (f) Affected tenants should not be subject to means test or other eligibility tests for rehousing. They should be rehoused in nearby districts or given an option of cash compensation in lieu of rehousing.

### Discussion session

#### *Structure of URA*

11. Members shared the deputations' concern about the lack of checks and balances in the decision-making process of the URA Board if an executive-chairman model was to be adopted. Representatives of LDC remarked that the current non-executive chairman structure of LDC had been running successfully and should be adopted by URA. At present, the LDC Managing Board was led by the Chairman who assumed an overall responsibility for the Corporation and supervised the Chief Executive of LDC in the daily administration of the Corporation. They stressed that it was an international trend to separate the roles of the chairman and the chief executive officer in the management structure of public organizations to ensure a proper balance of powers.

#### *Public accountability of URA*

12. Members concurred that it was necessary to enhance the public accountability of URA. Representatives of HKIP opined that the provisions in the Bill requiring members of URA Board to declare interests, to make available a register of such declarations of interests for public inspection were not sufficient. They suggested that members who had disclosed their interests in relation to a development project should not participate in the discussion and voting on the project. In order to strengthen public monitoring on the work of URA, representatives of HKPCHP suggested that LegCo Members should be appointed to the URA Board, and that



consultative committees should be set up to enable affected persons to participate in the development projects. Representatives of HKIP also suggested that the Chairman and the Executives Directors of the URA Board should attend LegCo meetings regularly to explain its policies and report its work.

13. As regards the suggestion for URA to hold all meetings in public, representatives of HKIS pointed out that although certain issues could be discussed in the open, it would be impractical and undesirable to open all discussions of URA to the public since sensitive information would be disclosed prematurely. Moreover, holding meetings in public might also jeopardize frank discussion on controversial issues.

#### *Rehabilitation of buildings*

14. Members agreed that rehabilitation of buildings was an essential tool of urban renewal. They enquired about the ways in which comprehensive renewal of old urban areas could be achieved through rehabilitation. Representatives of HKIA, HKIE, HKIP and HKIS responded that urban renewal was a continuing process. Rehabilitation of old buildings, which included proper maintenance, repairs and alterations for buildings, should be pursued simultaneously with redevelopment of old buildings in the urban renewal process. Rehabilitation improved the built environment, reduced the need for redevelopment and hence, lowered the costs of urban renewal. It also avoided social disruptions to the community. They saw a need to introduce a statutory scheme of preventive maintenance of buildings to be implemented by both URA and the Building Authority (BA).

#### Responses from the Administration

15. Members noted that the Administration had been requested to provide written responses to views and major concerns expressed by the deputations.

16. Responding to deputations' concerns about rehousing arrangements for affected tenants, the need for conducting social impact assessments and putting in place a maintenance scheme for old buildings, the Deputy Secretary for Planning and Lands (Urban Renewal and Buildings) made the following points :

- (a) The Administration had reached an agreement with the Housing Society for the latter to provide an annual quota of public rental flats from its existing housing stock and to construct pump-priming blocks for the purpose of rehousing affected tenants in development projects. The discussion with the Housing Authority was in good progress and the Administration was confident that an agreement could be reached before the enactment of the Bill.
- (b) The Administration had accepted the suggestion to conduct a social impact assessment for each development project. However, due to practical reasons, it could not be conducted before the publication of a development project. The Administration would study this issue

carefully and consult relevant parties, if necessary.

- (c) The Administration had formulated a new statutory scheme of preventive maintenance of buildings which would be released for public consultation shortly. Under the scheme, owners of old buildings which were not properly maintained would be required by law to carry out preventive maintenance. URA and BA would share the task of implementing the scheme jointly. Implementation of the proposed scheme would require amendments to the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123).

## **II Any other business**

17. The Chairman reminded members that the next meeting had been scheduled for Friday, 14 April 2000, at 10:45 am.

18. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:30 am.

Legislative Council Secretariat

21 November 2000