

Hong Kong's Disappearing Heritage An Inconvenient Truth

Heritage Watch
Legco Panel on Home Affairs
April 20, 2006

Outline

- What has HAB done from 2004 - 2007?
- Do we have consensus on broad policy issues?
- HAB is not alone
- An Integrated Approach to Heritage Preservation, Urban Renewal and Town Planning
- We need Solutions

HAB 2004-2007

- 2004 Public Forums - Stage One
 - What should we conserve?
 - How do we conserve?
 - How much and who should pay?
- 2005 Way Forward - Proposed Stage Two
 - Never happened
- 2007 Public Forums - Back to Stage One
 - Same questions as 2004
 - Still no implementation measures
 - No Heritage Policy, no Heritage Fund proposals

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What has HAB done?

Gone Way Backward

Do we have consensus on broad policy issues?

- HAB 2004 “no consensus”
- HAB 2007 “no consensus”

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“What should we conserve?”

The Issues	2004	2007
• built and intangible heritage	•	•
• collective memory	•	•
• “point” (built), “line” (street), and “surface” (area)	•	•

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“How do we conserve?”

The Issues	2004	2007
• single heritage authority	•	•
• town planning and development controls	•	•
• sustainability is key	•	•
• adaptive re-use	•	•
• public-private partnership	•	•
• open to public access	•	•
• heritage education	•	•

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“How much and who should pay?”

The Issues	2004	2007
• heritage trust fund	•	•
• balance conservation and economic cost	•	•
• economic incentives, i.e. transfer of development rights	•	•
• whole community contributes	•	•

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Heritage Watch Says

- “We DO have consensus on the issues, we don’t have consensus on the solutions.”
- “Propose and implement the solutions before our heritage disappears in our lifetime.”

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Solutions from the Community

Some Published Papers

In public domain on web

Civic Exchange “Way Forward” 2002

- Step 1: Accept conservation is for Public Good, Compensate Accordingly
- Step 2: Develop Clear & Comprehensive Conservation Strategy
- Step 3: Develop Short List of Priority Sites for Conservation
- Step 4: Identify Possible Mechanisms for Protection
- Step 5: Review Small House Policy

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Civic Exchange “Saving Hong Kong’s Cultural Heritage” Key Recommendations

- Establish dedicated conservation authority
- Formulate and develop heritage conservation policy
- Develop mechanisms to promote private sector participation
- Push initiatives to encourage general public involvement
- Improve effective operation of existing ordinances and administrative bodies

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Culture & Heritage Commission 2000-2003

- High-level **Advisory Board**
- Commissioned by Hon. Tung Chee Hwa in 2000
- 23 Plenary meetings, 80 working group meetings, 4 retreats, 4 study trips, 2 series of public consultations in 2001 & 2002
- Policy Recommendation Report submitted March 2003
- Ex-officio Member, Arts Development Council, **Dr. Patrick Ho Chi-ping** (July 2000-June 2002)

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Culture & Heritage Commission Policy Recommendation Report March 2003

- Promotion of **partnership** and community involvement
- “**Community-driven**” **approach to management** and programming of cultural venues
- Shift of **government** role from “administrator” to “**facilitator**”
- **URA** pay consideration to **cultural landscape** in planning of new towns and redevelopment of urban areas
- Use of historic buildings for **culture and arts**
- Promote **cultural tourism** to bring economic benefits

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HAB Response to CHC Policy Report Feb 2004

- “We **recognise and accept the six strategies** put forward by the Commission for promoting the long-term cultural development in Hong Kong.”
 - People-oriented
 - Pluralism
 - Freedom of expression and protection of intellectual property
 - Holistic approach
 - Partnership
 - Community-driven

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Promises made by HAB

HAB Response to CHC Policy Report Feb 2004

- “...any policy needs to be timely and readily adaptable to the changing social environment”
- “We will follow up...”

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Good-bye to CHC

- Cultural & Heritage Commission - **GONE**
- Dissolved in 2003
- Reason?
- Ask HAB

Conservancy Association Report on Heritage Conservation - We All Gain, June 2005

- Survey of stakeholders
- Sponsored by Lord Wilson Heritage Fund
- 6 sessions, 2 focus groups, 4 regional workshops, 11 exhibitions, 18-district outdoor survey, post questionnaires, citizen hearing.
- **10,000 opinions** on heritage conservation

(p.3)

Conservancy Association Report on Heritage Conservation - Survey Results 2005

- 75% said need **legislation** or legal enforcement for long-term tool and need **heritage trust**
- 63% said offer **incentives** to heritage owner
- 54% agreed to **transfer of development rights**

(Question 1, pg. 12)

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Conservancy Association Report on Heritage Conservation - We All Gain, June 2005

- 54% willing to pay \$35 per year for heritage conservation (p.13)
- **\$35 x 7M HK people = \$245 Million**
- CHC 2003: "This (Government's) funding level (HK\$40 Million a year) in no way reflects the government's emphasis on heritage conservation and should be adjusted"

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Do we have consensus on broad policy issues?

- HAB 2004 “no consensus”
- HAB 2007 “no consensus”

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HAB at AAB Meeting

March 6 2007

- Public Opinion Telephone Survey: 25 questions for 1,000 respondents (in April 2007) - seek AAB views
 - 50-minute discussion
- Built Heritage Conservation Policy Review (Summary of 2007 Consultation)
 - 5-minute discussion
- Paper AAB/7/2007-08 and AAB/6/2007-08

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HAB 2007 Summary to AAB

March 6 2007

- AAB needs to review current assessment and grading criteria
- Setting up heritage trust fund
- Co-ordination among Government bureaux and departments
- Widening statutory protection in Antiquities & Monuments Ordinance
- **No time frame, no commitment**

Paper AAB/6/2007-08

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Why can't HAB get the job done?

Conflict of Interest within
Government and Statutory Bodies

HAB is not alone

Figure 1: Organisation Chart of the Government of HKSAR's Bureaus, Boards and Departments Involved in Cultural Heritage Conservation **

As at 2002

The chart illustrates the organizational structure of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) as of 2002, focusing on the entities involved in cultural heritage conservation. At the top is the Chief Executive, who oversees the Financial Secretary and the Chief Secretary for Administration. The Chief Secretary for Administration oversees the Department of Administration, which includes the Central Policy Unit and Policy Bureaux. The Policy Bureaux include the Secretary for Works, Secretary for Treasury, Secretary for Economic Services, Secretary for Planning and Lands, Secretary for the Environment and Food, and the Secretary for Heritage, Antiquities and Monuments (HAB). HAB oversees the Heritage Affairs Bureau (HAB), the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB), and the Antiquities and Monuments Department (AMD).

* Not all government bureaux, departments or personnel which report to this level, are listed

** There may be other government entities involved in Cultural Heritage Conservation which are not listed

Source: Summarised from "Organisation Chart of the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" at http://www.oll.gov.hk/govhk_english

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Note: Chart from Civic Exchange "Saving Hong Kong's Cultural Heritage" p. 63

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Report from Panel on Planning, Lands and Works duty visit Sept 2002 to Singapore, Berlin and London : "the integrated approach to cover urban renewal and heritage preservation in the town planning process should be explored."
LC Paper CB(2)1215/06-07(03)

Heritage Preservation

Wo Cheung Pawn Shop, Johnston Road



Pre-URA

Post - URA

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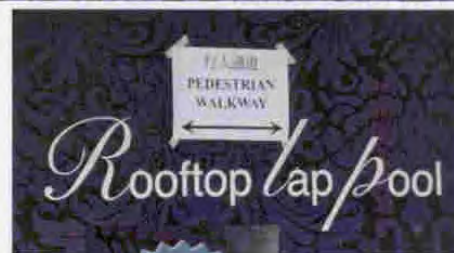
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Urban Renewal



URA

Token
Preservation



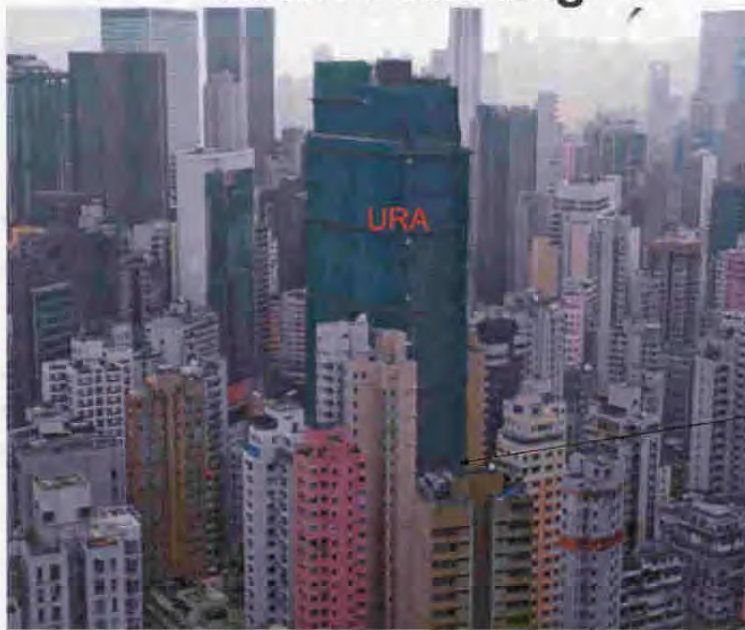
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Wo Cheung Pawn Shop

Ads of URA-sponsored Developer

Town Planning



Wo Cheung Pawn Shop

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More Messes Every Day

P2: 4 Lanes (Dual 2)



QuickTime? and a TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor are needed to see this picture.

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Comprehensive Review of the Town Planning Ordinance July 1991

SDA

Special Design Area

"Areas which were of special architectural or historical interest would be designated as "Special Design Area" on a statutory plan, within which planning permission would be required..." "The public would be able to make representations on the designation of the SDA and the design objectives..."

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Comprehensive Review of the Town Planning Ordinance July 1991

SDA

Special Design Area

Proposed in 1991 (16 years ago)

Not included in Town Planning
(Amendment) Ordinance 2004

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Legco - We Need Your Help

- HAB is wasting time we don't have
- Heritage is disappearing at an alarming rate
- Legco needs to step in
- NOW !

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Solutions: Immediate

- Legco to set up Special Committee for Heritage Policy
 - Get solution proposals from HAB
 - Monitor government for concrete actions
 - Get Government to engage the public in participatory planning
 - Get Government to adopt integrated approach to heritage preservation, urban renewal, and town planning
 - Push for legal and administrative measures

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Solutions: Immediate

- **Immediate moratorium** on heritage sites short-listed by HAB on March 6, 2007 (Paper AAB/6/2007-08)
 - Stop demolition and apply the Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China:
 - Former Police Married Quarters at Hollywood Road
 - Central Police Station Compound
 - Queen's Pier
 - Wan Chai Market
 - Blue House
 - Lee Tung Street
 - Tai Yuen Street
 - Cross Street

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Heritage Belongs to Everyone

Value Our Heritage

"When our heritage runs out, we cannot buy it back."



www.heritagewatch.hk

Presentation made by Cynthia Lee on behalf
of Heritage Watch, April 20, 2007.

Any questions, please direct to
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