

Public Participation in the Urban Landscape and Park Development Process in Kuala Lumpur: 'Planning for Real' in Datuk Keramat Lake Garden 2011

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Abstract

Public participation, in urban landscape planning and design within Kuala Lumpur, is in its infant stage of development. Despite the efforts made by scholars and practitioners, public participation initiatives in Kuala Lumpur are viewed by planners, landscape architects, and scholars, as being characterised by varying degrees of weakness and ineffectiveness. Since the inception of Kuala Lumpur city, as a Garden Nation in 2005, the city has been forced to seek more appropriate public participation techniques, for ensuring the development of urban landscapes that integrate the potential for public involvement in decisions, which consider the public's needs.

The purpose of this study was to investigate public participation techniques that might address the existing issues and weaknesses, in relation to public participation in Kuala Lumpur. The first stage was to identify a technique of public participation, which is appropriate for incorporation into urban landscape planning and design processes, in Kuala Lumpur. 'Planning for Real' was chosen. The research then investigated the appropriateness of the Planning for Real technique in Kuala Lumpur. Datuk Keramat Lake Garden was selected as a case study. An open session of Planning for Real was organised for the Kuala Lumpur City Hall. Experts involved in the Planning for Real open session were interviewed in order to obtain their opinions on Planning for Real and public participation, with regard to Kuala Lumpur. Direct observation was used to validate these interview results. Research over three months confirmed that the Planning for Real technique could be useful in Kuala Lumpur, in order to solve several critical issues regarding public participation within urban landscape design and planning. The major contribution of this thesis is the highlighting of the Planning for Real method, as an appropriate participation technique, for incorporation into the urban landscape development process in Malaysia, in order to achieve better quality of life for people.