

Collaborative workshop and community participation: A new approach to urban regeneration in China

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ABSTRACT

Public participation has been widely playing a very critical role in facilitating urban regeneration. However, the public frequently lacks a channel to participate in urban regeneration practices in developing countries in China, the government is paying more attention to public participation in urban regeneration, and the public is also concerning the participation for their interests. By taking Shenjing village in Guangzhou, China as a case study, this study develops a community participation model and a collaborative workshop toolbox; analyzes how multiple stakeholders are unutilized through a collaborative workshop to participate in decision-making; explores how collaborative workshop was successfully carried out in the achievement of consensus; and argues the need for a new planning scheme. The roles played by the government and planners are changing and become the catalysts for community participation. As a combination of top-down and bottom-up methods, the collaborative workshop is a useful model for community participation in urban regeneration, which promotes the co-action of the government and the public through consultation and negotiation. The collaborative workshop ensures the appeal of stakeholders' interests and the equal allocation of resources. Also, a supplementary planning system is necessary for promoting community planners for China and other developing countries.

Keywords:

Urban regeneration
Community planning
Collaborative workshop
Public participation
Shenjing
Guangzhou

1. Introduction

Urban regeneration has been an enduring theme in globalization and urbanization, from the developing countries to the developed countries (Barnett, 1986; Li, Hui, Chen, Lang, & Guo, 2019). Past urban regeneration practices since the Second World War have mainly focused on physical restructuring and economic growth and then have neglected social issues; consequently, long-established neighborhoods or community networks are destroyed (Bottini, 2018; Healey, 1991). Nowadays, urban regeneration in Western countries has transformed from the physical environment upgrading to neighborhood regeneration in respect of the physical environment, economy, and social dimensions (Roberts, 2000; Lang, Chen, & Li, 2016). The ideology of urban regeneration is to emphasize multi-party cooperation among the government, private sectors, and community; solve regeneration issues from social, economic, and physical environment aspects; and improve human settlements and protect the historical resources of the community (Biondi, Demartini, Marchegiani, Marchiori, & Piber, 2020; Jones, 2003; Tallon, 2013). Thus, community participation is now making up an essential part of urban regeneration, which is viewed not only as an inherently necessary practice but also as a panacea to regeneration failure.

With the development of globalization and the increasing attention on building the modern governance system, public participation is becoming a decisive factor in China's urban regeneration practices. As early as the Urban-Rural Planning Law (2008) that clearly states the basic requirements for public participation in the planning process, the Chinese central government unveiled the New-type Urbanization Plan (2014–2020), which prioritizes public participation, strengthens and innovates social governance at the community level in urban and rural development, and achieves positive interactions between the government, society, and residents (State Council, 2014). Meanwhile, the issue of community participation in urban regeneration in China has drawn the full attention of international scholars. Existing studies focus on investigating the interaction among stakeholders, such as the government, private sectors, and residents, and its influence on the final results in urban regeneration (Li, Li, & Wang, 2014; Sonn, Chen, Wang, & Liu, 2017; Tan & Altrick, 2016; Zhang & Li, 2016); showing the local government has more clout in China than in the Western countries in forming growth alliances with companies and developers for property-led redevelopment (He & Wu, 2005; Zhang & Li, 2016); revealing the large-scale, top-down redevelopment projects undermine community neighborhoods (Liu, Wu, Liu, & Li, 2017), which triggers a passive “petition” of the community residents (Zhai & Ng, 2013).

The mechanism of community participation and its impact on social-spatial regeneration of the community has attracted the attention of many researchers. The participation of the government, private sectors, and community remains an important, yet unclear, issue that deserves empirical studies in the context of China (Li et al., 2019; Zhang & Li, 2016). The community participation model in China is a combination of bottom-up and top-down, which is different from Western countries. The difference between Chinese cities and their Western counterparts also requires a thorough investigation. Based on the existing Western theories of participatory planning, a framework and method of participatory community planning for urban regeneration in China need to be developed suitable in the Chinese context.

By taking Shenjing village as the case study area for an in-depth analysis, this paper aims to explore the community participatory planning method in the process of urban regeneration in the Chinese context. Compared to other cases we have conducted, the regeneration project of Shenjing village takes longer practice time and has more extensive and in-depth involvement. It is located at the forefront of the urbanization area in Guangzhou, and thus, is greatly affected by the collision between globalization and localization. Based on more than three years' survey and interview with government agencies, social organizations, residents, businesses and tourists in Shenjing village, in this paper, we try to answer the following questions: what is the difference of participation in community planning between China and Western countries; what are the characteristics of the collaborative workshop as a community participation model in Chinese context; what role does the collaborative workshop play in community participation? This paper contributes to the literature on exploring the mechanism of community participatory planning for regeneration, developing the collaborative workshop method for community participation, developing a community participation model and a collaborative workshop toolbox, and proposing the reshape of urban and rural planning systems for China and other developing countries.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: the second section reviews public participation in planning internationally and community participation in urban regeneration in China. Furthermore, the third section identifies the research gap, presents the community participation model from the perspective of the collaborative workshop, and introduces a toolbox for the collaborative workshop. The fourth section takes Shenjing village in Guangzhou, China, as the case study area, analyzes the practices of community participation in urban regeneration. The fifth section discusses the form of participatory community planning in the regeneration projects and implications of our findings, followed by the conclusions drawn from this study.

2. Literature review

2.1. Community participation and collaborative workshops

2.1.1. Public participation and participatory planning Public participation in modern urban planning originates from Britain's planning system (Taylor, 1998). The basic model of participatory planning became popular in Britain in the 1940s and 1950s, the planning system of which was created by the British "Urban and Rural Planning Act" in 1947. It enables and encourages the public to express their opinions towards urban development in the planning progress. By criticizing the disadvantages of symbolic participation in planning at the time, Arnstein (1969) proposed eight forms of public participation, named the ladder theory. According to the theory, public opinion can make a real difference only if a joint mechanism for planning and decision-making is established among all social interest groups, such as the local government, private companies, neighborhoods, and community non-profit organizations. Later on, the transactive planning proposed by Friedmann (1973) shifts the discourse of planning theory from a control tool to a communication medium, which also foreshadows a subsequent "communicative turn" in planning theory and practice. Then, Forester (1982) combined Habermas' "communication theory" and proposed that planning is a negotiate process that carries "ethics of communication". Innes (1996) further proposed "communication behavior and interactive practice" as an "emerging paradigm" of planning theory, emphasizing information generation and consensus building in communication planning practice. Against the backdrop of globalization in the 21st century, drawing on Habermas' concept of communicative rationality and Giddens' structuration theory, collaborative planning emphasizes on achieving common goals through the cooperation of stakeholders (Healey, 2003). Inspired by 'communicative rationality,' public participation is used to achieve 'communicative democracy,' which is not just a means but also an end for stakeholders to shape places and construct the system (Healey, 2003). With the systematization of "communicative planning" and "collaborative planning" theories, planning theory and practice have completed the transformation from a "rational comprehensive paradigm" to a "collaborative communication paradigm" (Healey, 1996).

Over the years, community participation in planning has been increasingly recognized as a consensual system of decision-making. So far, participatory planning is frequently considered as a part of community development (Creighton, 1992). However, community participation has yet to be translated into a "revolution in practice" (Davies, 2001), especially in developing countries, where citizens' awareness of participation is low. In participatory planning, factors such as an individual's living environment, economic status, race, family, and faith, potentially affect the degree of people's participation (Baum, 1998). When we look into the developing countries, the participatory planning theory formed and developed in Western countries typically lacks considering the potential influence of political, social, and economic contexts (Choguill, 1996; Jones, 2003). From this perspective, increased attention should be paid to the "institutional background" for adaptation and specialization in community participation. That is to say: a participatory planning method can be successfully applied in developing countries only under the circumstances of considering the political and social backgrounds (Kotus & Sowada, 2017; Mattila, 2016; Swapan, 2016).

2.1.2. Charrettes and workshops as participatory methods in community planning

Participatory methods are used to empower residents in community planning by incorporating local knowledge, perspectives, and demands (Sanoff, 2000), to bridge government and communities in developing countries (Lang et al., 2016) response to highly centralized, top-down approaches to community planning (Ericson, 2006). With an appropriate participatory method, people could have an active role in the planning process, and multi-stakeholder may involve in finding practical, locally-based, and long-term solutions to community regeneration and conservation programs (Ericson, 2006).

Among many techniques, the participatory methods can generally be summaries as design charrettes and workshops. In the contemporary planning context, the charrette is typically an intensive multi-day planning process during which a team of professionals and stakeholders create a holistic growth or development plan that reflects the input of a community that is involved via a series of feedback loops. The workshop is another way of participation (Sanoff, 2000), which involves brainstorming, design gaming, visualization, and provides flexible and efficient means to engage large groups, facilitate collaboration and consider diverse issues.

In recent years, the focus of the workshop gradually shifted from participation to collaboration; stakeholders are actively working together to reach the best compromise (Sieber, 2006). The essential goal of developing a community workshop is to archive public cohesion. This collaborative workshop usually consists of three interrelated phases: design, analysis, and negotiation (Arciniegas & Janssen, 2012). The collaborative workshops, as a critical participatory method in community planning, involve multiple-day, collaborative sessions for various stakeholders in group work to consult and evaluate planning scenarios. Feasible solutions to a planning problem are reached in the stakeholders' group work (Innes, 1996; Lennertz & Lutzenhiser, 2006). Recent studies pay more attention to the innovation of visualizations methods for the interactive process (Lang, Chen, Chan, Yung, & Lee, 2019), such as digital tools, 3D visualization based on traditional visualization media such as plans, sections, and physical models (Gill, Lange, Morgan, & Romano, 2013).

2.2. Community participation in urban regeneration

2.2.1. Urban regeneration in China

Research on urban regeneration in China can be traced back to the 1980s. Following the remarkable industrialization and urbanization in the 1980s and the dramatic urban expansion since the 1990s, the urbanization process has shifted to a stage of redeveloping cities within the existing built-up areas to improve the efficiency and intensive use of land resources (McGee, Lin, Wang, Marton, & Wu, 2007). Urban regeneration in China has been officially designated as an essential approach to urban development in the coming decades (Li et al., 2014). Since the 1980s, cities have been experiencing large-scale spatial expansion and economic growth, such as the construction of new spaces for development zones and new towns (Chen, Lang, & Li, 2019). Simultaneously, cities are faced with congestion and environmental degradation. Thus, urban regeneration has become a necessity of resort for the government to contain sprawl, especially in large cities. With the transition from a planned economy to a market economy, the state's administrative and fiscal decentralized and privatized the land and housing markets. The local government was endowed with financial independence in urban planning and economic development (Wu, 2002). Thus, in order to gain sufficient capital investment, the local government redevelops cities through large-scale real estate development, i.e., property-led redevelopment, which has become a prominent feature in China (He & Wu, 2005; Shin, 2009).

Similar to the government entrepreneurialism in the Western countries, China's local governments control administrative monopoly and resources (land, environment, and tax) in the urban renewal process and promote cooperation among multilateral organizations to pursue the maximization of economic benefits, which characterize local state entrepreneurialism and influence the redevelopment of Chinese cities (Li et al., 2014; McGee et al., 2007) as dominated by real estate developers, local governments, private developers, and foreign investors form a growth coalition or a growth alliance in China (Yang & Chang, 2007; Zhang, 2002; Zhu, 1999). The existing profit-driven urban redevelopment has led to unsatisfied relocation and compensation of local communities and increased the conflicts between residents and the government.

Existing studies mainly focus on the relationship among stakeholders, such as the government, enterprises, and residents, and the influence on the final results in urban regeneration in China (Li et al., 2014; Sonn et al., 2017; Tan & Altrock, 2016; Zhang & Li, 2016).

However, multiple stakeholders do not have equal rights and powers in urban regeneration (Zheng, Shen, & Wang, 2014). The government plays a vital role in the practice of urban regeneration, which calls for community participation in mediating various stakeholders (Brownill & Carpenter, 2009). Although real estate developers who invest in and rebuild the communities have greatly influenced urban space and residents' lives (Kriese & Scholz, 2011), the residents' satisfaction is the ultimate goal in urban regeneration, who have a significant impact on the decision-making of government and real estate developers (Seo, 2002). In response to this, it needs a bottom-up approach to the sociospatial impacts on neighborhoods' redevelopment projects through community participation and collaborative planning (Li & Song, 2009; Liu et al., 2017; Verdini, 2015; Zhai & Ng, 2013).

Public participation and collaborative planning are in rising demand in China's current urban planning practices. The New-type Urbanization Plan (2014–2020) puts the people-oriented urbanization as the core ideology for long term urban development in the country, which attaches importance to the positive interaction among multiple stakeholders, such as the public, developers, and the government. (Tian, 2016). In recent years, “micro-renewal (wei gai zao or wei geng xin)” as one type of urban regeneration method has been applied in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Xiamen to ensure the balance of multiple stakeholders' interests in urban regeneration process, which emphasizes the participation in improving community environment, protects and inherits its history and culture. Compared to the situation in Western countries, considerable attention has been paid to the micro-renewal at the neighborhood level to promote public participation and social justice in China (Li et al., 2019; Zhang & Li, 2016). At this point, a bottomup approach takes in form and makes-up the absence of public participation and collaborative planning in the previous urban planning system in China.

2.2.2. Community participation in urban regeneration between China and the West

Taking the urban generation experiences in Western countries, the local government in China also takes advantage of authority and subsidies to attract largescale private or quasi-private investment in urban regeneration projects. This so-called economic regeneration and property redevelopment have been the main driving force in urban regeneration around the world (Couch & Dennemann, 2000). On top of political, socioeconomic, cultural, institutional, and historical differences, the distinctions between China and the Western countries also root in causes of problems, markets, property rights, and institutional structures. One key difference is the role of local governments in urban regeneration between China and the West (Zhang & Fang, 2004). In the West, urban regeneration took place in a mature capitalist society in which public and private sectors were well established and defined (Couch & Dennemann, 2000; Dargan, 2009). The early establishment of private economic development organizations has a privileged role in exercising their interests through state power (Zhang, 2002). When developers and local business groups realized that the profitability was not feasible, the effectiveness of government mobilization began to fade or less response from the investment side (Chen, Hui, Lang, & Tao, 2016). In contrast, in China's transitional economy, the distinction between private and public capital is often ambiguous. Local state-owned enterprises or other government spin-off companies that are closely linked to the government have primarily involved in the urban regeneration process. With land resource ownership, local governments took the lead in shaping the urban regeneration agenda (Zhu, 1999, Fang 2000, Zhang, 2002).

Community participation in urban regeneration has a long history in the West. The issue of public participation in urban regeneration is a significant concern for policymakers, scholars, and the public, and is considered as a foundation for the success of community planning (Jones, 2003). Many initiatives have been implemented to strengthen community participation in urban regeneration, such as New Deal for Communities in England, Urban Regeneration Programme in Denmark, Community Action Program in the United States, the Machitsukuri in Japan 1983, etc. Multi-sectoral partnerships establish collaborative and supportive roles in community participation, such as the public sector, the private sector and the third sector (residents and organizations), among which the participation of residents is the most important. The active participation of local inhabitants is vital in the successful promotion of urban regeneration projects (European Commission, 1997). However, the progress and techniques archived in the Western countries, which is somehow based on institutionalized reciprocity and communal self-help, has limited conduction effects to the developing countries because of the communities' social, political, and economic context (Midgley, Hall, Hardiman, & Narine, 1986). Therefore, community participation needs to evolve within a country's social, political, and economic environment, considering the transferability and adaptation from one country to another.

In developing countries, community participation is largely associated with the emergence of development project partnership schemes as well as the implementation of a participatory approach in urban planning (Midgley et al., 1986). In examining various community projects in developing countries, scholars have found that local government efforts to foster community participation are often linked to the initiation of social service programs (Abatena, 1997). As for China, compared to the role of government in the West, the Chinese government undertakes a more specific responsibility, e.g., providing infrastructure and

public service facilities (Li et al., 2019). The government does not conduct specific work in detail in the West in construction or services because the privately-owned enterprises and organizations have already taken the full lead in community planning in most developed countries (Zhang & Fang, 2004). Different from the bottom-up operation in the Western countries, China's community development has long been characterized by top-down leadership since its beginning. To administrative efficiency, the government usually promotes community redevelopment from top to bottom and influences community development through policies, funds, and other measures. Local governments, such as subdistrict offices, provide community public facilities, public space, and other public goods. Thus, the government remains the dominant factor and supportive resource in community development for a long time.

There is a significant disparity among the community participants for decision-making in China. On the one side, the local government dominates almost everything and makes joint decisions with developers. On the other side, there is a lack of effective communication channels between the government and the community residents (Zhai & Ng, 2013; Zhang & Li, 2016). The local department makes decisions, announces the results, and then informs the community residents, where processes, discussions, and negotiations about the interests of community residents are neglect or less paid attention. In other words, community residents cannot effectively participate in daily affairs in the past. With the development of localization and globalization, the government and the public are realizing only when local communities are involved in decision making, can their benefits be ensured, and their traditional lifestyles and values respected.

3. Analytical framework

3.1. Collaborative workshop for community participation

The development of urban regeneration projects involves discrepant interests. The representatives of these interests are referred to as the project's stakeholders. The stakeholders who participated in urban regeneration most refers to "those who can influence the project process and final results, whose living environments are positively or negatively affected by the project, and who receive associated direct and indirect benefits and losses" (Li, Ng, & Skitmore, 2012). Many scholars define the key stakeholders in urban regeneration as the government, local communities, local professionals, and private sectors (Zhai & Ng, 2013; Zhang & Li, 2016; Li et al., 2014), whose relationships significant influences on urban regeneration policies, processes, and its project implementation (Zheng et al., 2014).

Communicative planning theory believes that public participation is more than just providing legitimacy for planning decisions, but rather as building consensus for local community planning through the cooperation of multiple stakeholders (Innes, 1996; Healey, 2003). In the participatory context of communicative planning, the partnership between stakeholders is a dynamic relationship among diverse actors, based on mutually agreed objectives and shared understandings (Li, Hui, Lang, Zheng, & Qin, 2020). This partnership is changing with the 'ladder of citizen participation' (Arnstein, 1969), which illustrates the varietal degrees of participation along a gradient of power-sharing between citizens and service providers. The cooperation is essential for partnership in the ladder and public opinion makes the difference, when a joint mechanism of planning and decision-making is established between stakeholders, including local government, private companies, neighborhoods, and non-profit organizations. However, achieving meaningful participation may not be accessible in front of paternalism and resistance of power holders as well as social, political, and psychological factors related to low-income communities (Arnstein, 1969). Meantime, scholars also discuss and consider the modification of Arnstein's model to an alternative typology in the developing countries' context (Choguill, 1996; Swapan, 2016).

The collaborative workshop has been progressively composed by the government, the public, planners, and social groups as the community participation model in the context of China's urban regeneration (Fig. 1). Based on Arnstein's "ladder of citizen participation," the types of interaction occurring between stakeholders represent various degrees of participation. Although some studies show that citizen participation in developing countries mainly turns out at the degrees of tokenism (Swapan, 2016), the degrees of citizen power can end up at a high level through the collaborative workshop in China, for example. It can stride over the "decision-making" degree of citizen power to ultimately reach the "co-action" degree of multiple stakeholders, where the public and government reach consensus. On the one hand, one of the significant works of the collaborative workshop is to conduct in-depth research to understand the residents' needs through information, consultation, then give feedback to the government, promoting real interaction between the public and government in the local community. On the other hand, the collaborative workshop works as an intermediary for the government to provide support for community public facilities, public space and neighborhood environment improvement through policies and funds, and for the local community to actively participate in planning, design, and policies for urban regeneration projects. Thus, with the integration of bottom-up and top-down community participation in the collaborative workshop, the public and government take co-actions to make use of their advantages, to produce feasible solutions to community issues, and reach consensus on community development.

3.2. The collaborative workshop toolbox

In the practices of collaborative workshops in China's urban regeneration projects, we developed a comprehensive toolbox for participatory community planning, which regularly updates information through the Internet (www.oursla.com), WeChat (a social media for online chat), posters, and other publicity channels (Fig. 2). The toolbox users are not only community residents but also the government, planners, social organizations, and other stakeholders, providing guidance on each type of participation tool for different types of participants. The contents of the toolbox include mobilizing participation, institutional establishment, and environmental construction, etc. For example, field investigation, symposium, questionnaire, publicity, interview, map, are designed to mobilize community residents and social organizations to actively participate in community affairs, providing effective ways for the public to participate. Negotiation, assessment, management, subsidies with rewards, and policies are settled for the local government to promote community development. Besides, the regeneration of the community environment in terms of public space, building reconstruction, and landscape revitalization provides a vital carrier for the public to participate in community affairs. Based on the analytical framework and the collaborative workshop toolkit, this study examines the development of theories and practices discussed above by taking Shenjing village as a case study area, which is a typical regeneration project of the traditional village community in Guangzhou, China.

Level of participation achieved	Arnstein's ladder of participation		Collaborative workshop's perspective towards community participation
Degrees of citizen power	Citizen control	↑	Co-action <i>The public and government reach consensus</i>
	Delegated power		Co-decision making <i>The public shares decision-making powers with government</i>
	Partnership		Co-designing <i>The public takes an active part in developing policy or designing projects</i>
Degrees of tokenism	Placation	↑	Discussion <i>Real interaction between the public and government</i>
	Consultation		Consultation <i>The views of the public are sought</i>
	Informing		
Non-participation	Therapy	↑	Information <i>The public gets access to information</i>
	Manipulation		

Fig. 1. Community participation model from the perspective of collaborative workshop. Source: Authors adapted from the ladder theory of participation from Arnstein (1969).

4. A case study of Shenjing village in Guangzhou, China

4.1. The study area and background of regeneration In this paper, Shenjing village is taken as a case study, which has a total area of approximately 2.54 km².

Shenjing village's unique location makes it has been the frontier area of globalization and localization. As early as the Ming and Qing dynasties, Shenjing village is at the junction of the Pearl River Estuary in the east of Guangzhou, which served as an essential gateway for trade between China and the West. Nowadays, laying at the southernmost of the new central axis of Guangzhou, Shenjing village is in the center of future development areas such as International financial city, Haizhu Eco-city, Huangpu Lingang Economical Zone and Panyu International Innovation city. At the same time, urban expressways and subway lines are surrounding this traditional village, with a symbolic image of the historical heritage (Fig. 3).

Adjacent to Shenjing village, Xiaozhou village and Huangpu village were redeveloped and reconstructed in a complete rebuilding model by the government under the influence of fast urbanization in the early days. Per the New-type Urbanization scheme recently, the government decided to take an urban regeneration model with an emphasis on public participation in Shenjing village. In like manner, a series of

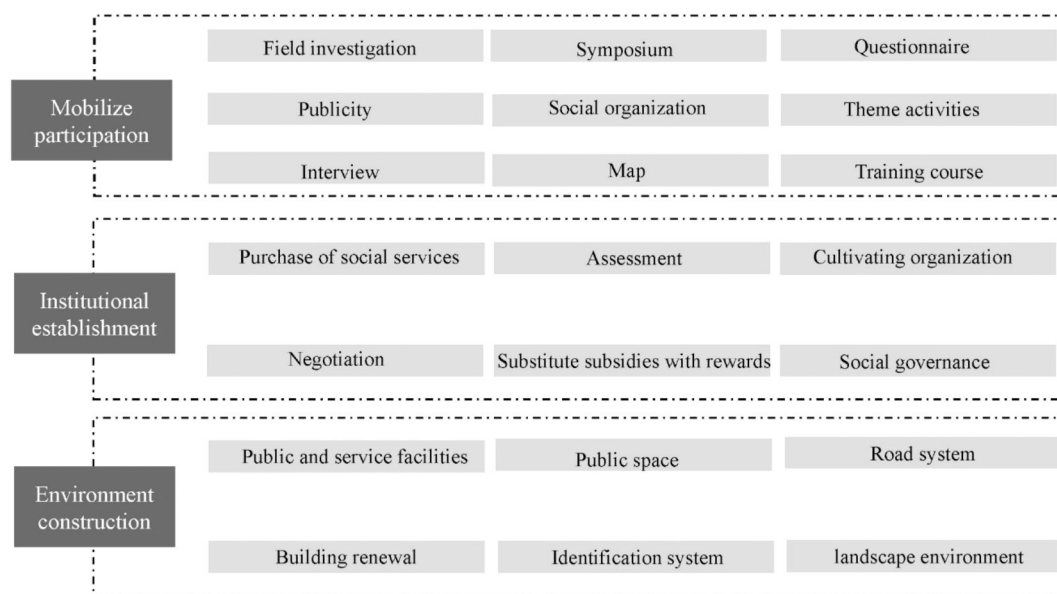
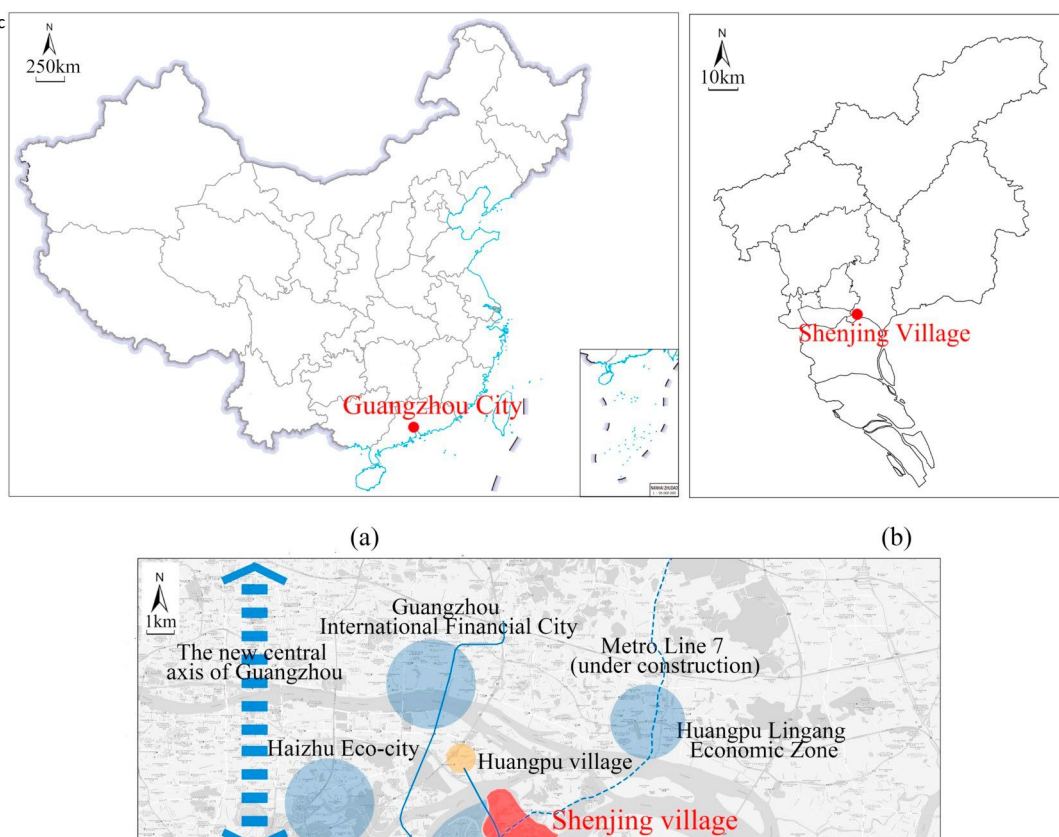


Fig. 2. The contents of the toolbox to guide community participation in collaborative workshop. Sources: Prepared by authors.

Fig. 3. Geographic loc



Sources: Prepared by authors, (a) and (b) is adopted from the Administrative Map of China downloaded at www.tianditu.gov.cn; (c) is adopted from Google Map 2019.

participatory planning in the village community regeneration is seen in many cases, examples of which include the Mudan community in Shenyang, Gulangyu community, Lujiang community, Yuanqian Village in Xiamen, and Beidi community in Zhuhai. In comparison with other cases, the practice in Shenjing village has been more than three years. Thus, we chose Shenjing village as a case study for an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of participatory planning in community regeneration issues.

The undergoing urban regeneration project of Shenjing village is facing the dilemma of one side of historical and cultural resource protection, activation of space, and buildings on the other side. Because of its rich historical heritage, Shenjing village was designated as a primarily historical and cultural preservation community in Guangzhou City (2000), the first traditional village in Guangdong province (2014), and the fifth traditional village in China (2018). In recent years, a large number of residents in Shenjing village have outflowed due to the impact of rapid urbanization, leaving only 30% of its residents remained in the village at present, most of which are mainly elderly. Meanwhile, the severe hollowing out has left many ancient buildings in an idle state. According to statistics, out of 1538 buildings in the current situation, 282 are vacant. Among them, 75 are of traditional style and historical buildings. Shenjing village is facing the challenge of how to excavate and activate the historical and cultural values of this ancient village while protecting the space and buildings through planning?

Given the protection and renovation of traditional villages, the municipal government enacted “Guangzhou City Urban Renewal Measures” and proposed “micro-renewal (wei geng xin or wei gai zao)” in 2016, as an urban regeneration approach to the complex issues. In this context, the district government has determined the micro-renovation as the regeneration method for Shenjing village. On the one hand, a small-scale asymptotic transformation and regeneration are carried out to protect the historical and cultural resources of Shenjing village. On the other hand, the reconstruction process involves various stakeholders, e.g., village collectives, villagers, developers, small businesses, tenants, and others, to participate in the reconstruction process through the collaborative workshop, and to reach consensus on the future development of Shenjing village through negotiation.

4.2. The dilemma of community participation

The dilemma of community participation in Shenjing village lies in interactions between the bottom-up and top-down approaches. The villagers' cognition of public participation is limited, and usually, they lack active public participation consciousness. Most villagers believe that village reconstruction is to demolish houses and rebuild new houses, who pay little attention to the historical and cultural preservations of traditional villages. Most of the time, the self-motivation for the villagers to get themselves involved in community regeneration comes typically from their economic interests. If there is no direct interest related, few residents will actively participate in the regeneration process. However, in the meantime, some villagers, individual businesses and social organizations, such as the owners of historical buildings, embroidery club, home tourism managers, are willing to participate in the renovation of Shenjing villages but do not know the ways of participation due to the lack of support for policies, funds and publicity channels. Even more paradoxical, the low willingness of the villagers to participate in the community regeneration is mostly because the villagers did not know the history and culture value of Shenjing village, not to mention how to protect and utilize it.

The government is also encountering obstacles in promoting community participation in the top-down promotion process. The primary challenge is how to keep the decision-making constant. For example, the director of Changzhou subdistrict office has been transferred frequently, four directors of whom have been transferred from 2016 to 2019. Each director works in the office for a short period and lacks a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of Shenjing village. Shenjing village has a total population of 12,356 people and 14 economic cooperatives, including the village committee, village collective, villagers, external tenants, individual businesses, and other stakeholders. The total number of households is 3053, with residents 3921 and migrant population 8435 that counts for 1294 households. The involvement of diverse stakeholders in the regeneration process is complex, which makes the government challenging to balance the interests of multiple parties in the process of a top-down approach to regenerating Shenjing village.

4.3. Community participation in collaborative workshop

4.3.1. Consultation between the public and the government In December 2016, the research team, in collaboration with the Guangzhou Urban Planning and Design Survey Research Institute, and the Guangdong Chengyin Urban Renewal Institute worked together with the Changzhou subdistrict office, and the Economic Association and Neighborhood Committee in Shenjing and initiated the Shenjing village collaborative workshop. This co-organized workshop and generation project was commissioned by the Guangzhou Urban Renewal Bureau, Huangpu District Urban Renewal Bureau, and Huangpu District People's Government, which aims to improve the living environment of the community and revitalize Shenjing village through multi-participation effort.

The primary data collection for the workshop establishes a preliminary understanding of Shenjing village, including extensive village records, genealogy, population, industry, and other related materials. Since the second half of 2016, we have conducted many field surveys for the collaborative workshop to understand the population, industry, and spatial development and problems in Shenjing village. Based on the field research, the village committee, villagers, and social organizations were invited for interviews to elaborate further on the history, cultural knowledge, folk customs, traditional handicrafts, and other contents of Shenjing. The interviews are planned to encourage the residents to share their current viewpoints towards problems and ideas of future development.

We have carried out more than 20 collaborative workshops for public participation since 2016. The series of activities aims to let the public know the historical and cultural resources, as well as the ways to protect and activate it in Shenjing village, such as exhibition of planning and design for Shenjing village by Sun Yat-sen University and South China Agricultural University (Fig. 4), the exhibition of Shenjing village history, the exhibition of the centennial urban planning history of Guangzhou, etc. There are also some school activities, such as community planner class, competition activities, such as historical building revitalization design competition, theme activities, such as hand-painted postcards and hand-made models of the village, etc.

The collaborative workshop also provides technical support for the public to express their views and demands to the government. For example, there is a well-preserved traditional house in the village, named the Daxingli No.2 building, which is in the central place of the community and is now left vacant. In the beginning, the owner of this house is willing to provide its usufruct for free for about 10–20 years to the government. It will be used as a community public library and public space after renovation. However, because the house is not within the primary area of regeneration projects designated by the government, it lacks professional design and financial support for the renovation. Thus, faced with the difficulties and limitations, the collaborative workshop played organizing and coordinating role in this case. On the one hand, the collaborative workshop with the joint members of research groups prepared the architectural design and construction drawings, transforming the old house to be the community library (Fig. 5). On the other hand, the collaborative workshop transmits summarized information to the government in the form of proposals and reports. It serves as a mediator to motivate the government to raise special regeneration funds and give policy support. The renovation of this building is under construction, which will benefit the owners, the public, and the government, by enhancing the building living environment for the owner, increasing the public space for the residents, preserving the historical building, and inheriting the culture of Shenjing village for the government.

The collaborative workshop established an external publicity channel and a communication platform for small businesses and community organizations. Handmade embroidery is a traditional handicraft in Shenjing village. With the modernization of people's lifestyle, manual embroidery is gradually replaced by machine embroidery, and traditional handicraft is gradually lost. Many women workers who used to be the Shenjing Village Embroidery Factory now form embroidery club spontaneously, hope to popularize, and inherit the manual embroider. The collaborative workshop tries to promote the embroidery handicraft of Shenjing village by introducing the public with the history of handmade embroidery on the website of "Finding in Shenjing." Furthermore, the collaborative workshop worked together with various stakeholders and managed to provide a few places for the local embroidery association to open a manual embroidery teaching course for the public for free every Saturday (Fig. 6). Besides, regarding the lack of sufficient communication among the local social organizations. The collaborative workshop in cooperation with the local social organizations held cultural and creative salon, which provides a platform for all businesses to communicate with each other (Fig. 6). Those individual businesses and social organizations in Shenjing village include artists of root carving, calligraphy, painting, leather carving, home tourism, etc.

The collaborative workshop did not only mobilize the public to participate in the regeneration project, but also consult with the government, such as Huangpu District Urban Renewal Bureau and Changzhou Subdistrict Office, assist in the renovation design and scheme (e.g., building design and transportation planning), conduct policy research related to public participation activities (e.g., cultural creativity), and finally deliver a working report to the government, including community work logs, needs, and feedback of the residents, etc.

4.3.2. Collaborative participation of the public and government

Residents gradually changed their attitudes towards community regeneration projects from passive participation to co-designing and codecision-making. Many villagers are becoming more willing to communicate with planners and the government to jointly discuss solutions to problems and explore reasonable paths for future development. In

Fig. 4. Public participation activities organized by the collaborative workshop. (a) The planning and design exhibition of Shenjing village; (b) Hand-made model of summer camp for Shenjing primary school.

Note: Photos were taken by authors in 2017 and 2018.

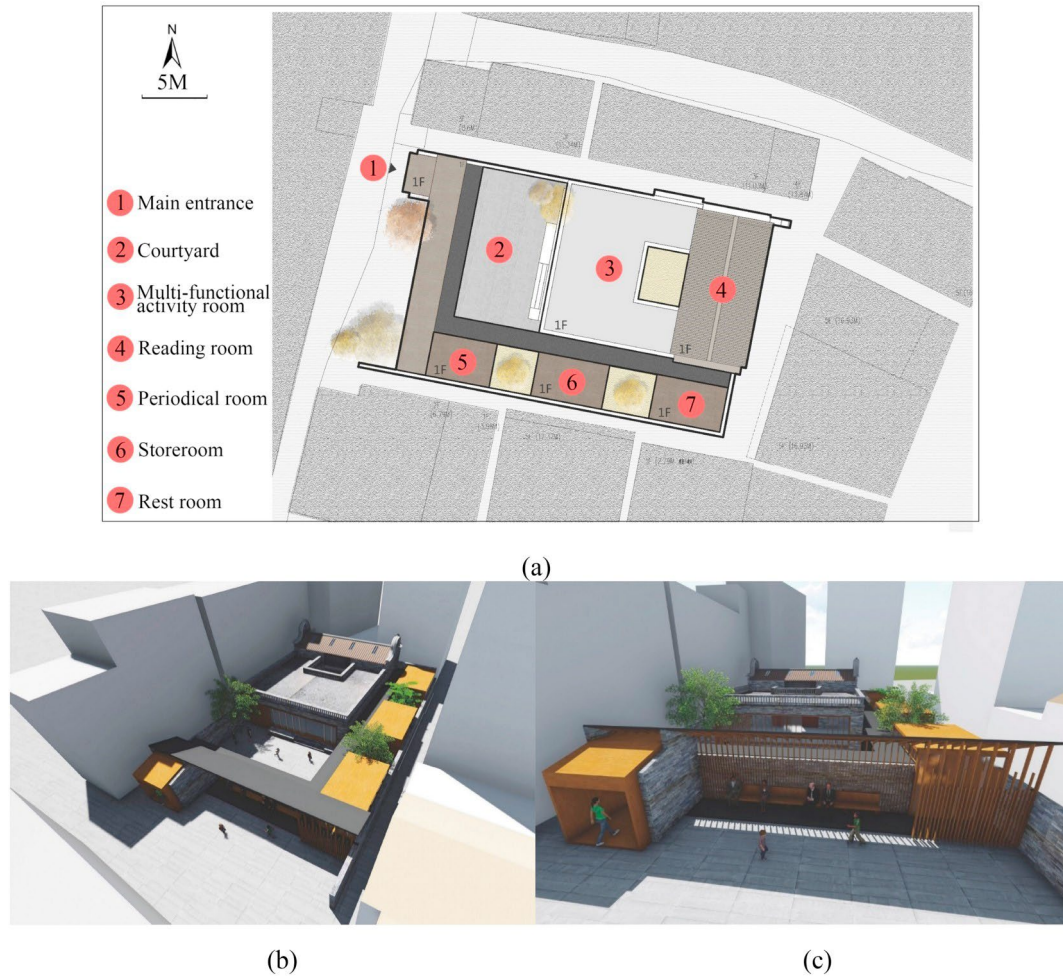


Fig. 5. The design scheme of Shenjing village community library. (a) The site plan of community library; (b) and (c) Aerial view of community library.



Source: From Guangzhou Design Institute.

April 2017, the village committee, town planners, social organizations, and media reporters gathered in the Xiaolanling ancestral hall to participate in the workshop, which is in the form of a tea party with a theme of “having a chat together for Shenjing” (Fig. 7). In this themed workshop, students, teachers, planners, social workers, aging people, and new villagers expressed positive views on various aspects of Shenjing's future development. All the involved people came to reach a consensus that the traditional image and atmosphere of Shenjing village should be like “green slabs on the ground, stripes of houses, red sandstone walls” and “clean, quiet, and tranquil.” Besides, a public seminar was organized by the collective workshop about the plan and scheme of reconstruction, held at the

same place a month later. Through communication between the government and residents within the workshop, they both recognized that culture-oriented regeneration is vital for succeeding in the revitalization of rural areas. Thus, the related architectural renovation and built environment rejuvenation were also carried out smoothly and quickly.

Based on the consensus reached by the government and the public

Fig. 6. Propaganda and communication activities organized by the collaborative workshop. (a) Handmade embroidery class in Xiaolanling ancestral hall; (b) Cultural and creative salon for merchants.

Note: Photos were taken by authors in 2018 and 2019.



Fig. 7. The consultation between the public and government. (a) “Have a chat together for Shenjing” tea party; (b) The public seminar of Shenjing village re-



generation program.

Note: Photos were taken by authors in 2017.

after many consultations, multiple stakeholders take collaborative actions in the community rebuilding. For example, in September 2018, the riddles guessing campaign for Mid-Autumn Day (a traditional Chinese holiday) was jointly supported and organized by the residents, the Changzhou Subdistrict Office, Shenjing Village Committee, and Changzhou Integrated Family Service Centre. In this activity, the participants learn more about old streets, historical buildings, traditional culture in the process of guessing riddles, collecting seals, and collecting prizes. In February 2019, another activity, “village open market,” was jointly organized by Shenjing Village Committee, Changzhou Integrated Family Service Centre, and Yangcheng Social Work Service Centre for Chinese New Year, which provided booths for the villagers and individual businesses to participate. In the middle of this activity, the Cantonese Opera Club and Embroidery Club of Shenjing village were also invited to perform and share “products.” The multiple stakeholders did not only provide material and workforce support but also involved in planning the activity and on-site cooperation. In April 2019, Changzhou Subdistrict Office, Shenjing Village Committee, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, and South China Agricultural University assisted and facilitated the students from Shenjing primary school to participate in the renovation activities, such as wall painting and grow plants (Fig. 8). After a long series of such jointly organized activities for community regeneration, interaction and collaboration, and social relations are firmly built up among the participants and organizers.

5. Discussion

Compared to community participation in urban regeneration in the Western countries, the local government in China plays a crucial role in community participation. In the case study of Shenjing village, its upper-level administrative government, Huangpu District Urban Renewal Bureau initially promote the regeneration project through community participation for historical preservation and activation of Shenjing village, which is different from the bottom-up approach to public participation in the Western countries for participatory planning. Also, with a series of difficulties encountered and overcome in the process of Shenjing village regeneration, the importance of the government in community participation is marked. In certain circumstances, the residents, individual businesses, and social organizations in Shenjing village hope to participate in the community regeneration process actively, but due to the lack of government-related funding and policy support, community participation for them is difficult. In other words, the government is a critical catalyst for the success of community participation in China by providing resources, workforce, policies, and financial support. For example, Huangpu District Urban Renewal Bureau provided funds for the collaborative workshop to carry out a series of activities involving villagers in the development of cultural and creative industries in Shenjing village. In contrast, the Changzhou Subdistrict Office provided a range of workforce and material support to ensure that public participation activities were carried out smoothly.

The collaborative workshop is a combination method of top-down and bottom-up approaches to community participation. The practice of the collaborative workshop for urban regeneration in China has effectively solved a series of social problems caused by the previous topdown rapid urbanization and construction.

The collaborative workshop in China primarily aims to promote participation from the public and the actions of the government. With the consensus reached through mutual communication and collaborative interaction, the government, villagers, social organizations, and other stakeholders bring their views and experiences into the dialogue to deal with community development issues. The collaborative workshop put efforts into respecting the

Fig. 8. Community participation by the public and government. (a) The “Chinese New Year” market in Shenjing village; (b) The activity of wall painting and grow



plants in Shenjing primary school. Note: Photos were taken by authors in 2019.

stakeholders' interests and ensuring the allocation of resources on the basis of fairness and justice in the regeneration project.

In the dynamic progress of balancing interests and reaching consensus, each stakeholder plays its role in promoting community regeneration. In urban regeneration, the need for improving the urban living environment is always associated with considering the residents' daily life and balancing the interests of multiple parties to achieve the development goals. For example, the government manages the community's land use and financial resources to support regeneration. The enterprises or developers make an investment in public space improvement or public buildings renovation, providing a favorable living environment for the community. Individuals and local community organizations are closely related to community regeneration, who loudly express their demands in the process of public participation in the planning.

Throughout the community participation process, urban planners also play an essential role in promoting participatory planning for communication between the government and the public. The role of urban planners has changed from planning and design professionals to diversified mediators and coordinators, being as the first line moving actors for coordination, intermediary, matchmaking, organization. At present, Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Wuhan, Chengdu, and many other cities have carried out participatory planning model at the community level in combination with community planning practices to form a system of community planners. Different from the traditional professionals who have been educated and trained in planning and design since the beginning of higher education, the community planners are from ordinary citizens, not even aware of what planning is before. The community planners are selected and appointed by the government and obtain the basic training of professional knowledge. Then, they take root in the community and help for communication and consultation between the government and the public. At the same time, community planners provide relevant technical support to the community to form community development plans and assist residents to give feedback on the planning and viewpoints on improving the living environment. However, there are no documented policies in the existing planning systems to make community planners work as a regular term in China, which is almost at the exploratory stage. In the near future, we will see a well-established and complete system of community planners, when the legal status of community planners is legitimized in the urban and rural planning system. Along with that, the preparation and approval procedures of participatory planning, a unified community planning norm, and a technical indicator system are to be formed and improved in the new agenda.

6. Conclusion

The collaborative workshop is an innovative practice for participatory planning in the Chinese context. The current community participatory planning model is found to be adaptive and effective in the process of urban regeneration for cities in China. China's urban regeneration model reconciles both top-down and bottom-up approaches to a new compatible mechanism take shape, which emphasizes the multiple participations of the government, private sectors, and the community. The collaborative workshop is a combination of topdown and bottom-up approaches to community participation. This compatible model is also quite different from the “citizen control” model for public participation in Western countries. Besides, the collaborative workshop takes public participation as the core and build an interactive platform with the government, the public, and other actors. Furthermore, the appeal of public interest is fully expressed and considered in this participatory planning process. The collaborative workshop is utilized to avoid partial interests in the formation of the planning scheme and ensure the overall allocation of resources in the process of urban regeneration based on fairness and justice. The collaborative workshop helps to establish social contacts and achieve a consensus on planning schemes through consultation and negotiation. The experiences of collaborative workshops in both theory development and planning practice are and will continue benefiting community development in developing countries as well.

This study investigates the development and practices of collaborative workshop in China by taking Shenjing village in Guangzhou as a case study, which analyzes how the collaborative workshop facilitates various stakeholders to participate for community planning and regeneration in a diversified manner, develops a community participation model from the perspective of the collaborative workshop, and summaries a collaborative workshop toolbox to guide community participation in urban regeneration. This study implies that the traditional means of planning for growth and new development is no longer continually conform to the new agenda of urbanization in China and cannot satisfy the public's will and interests in urban regeneration practices. Thus, at the turning point, public participation in planning becomes an objectively indispensable requirement and serves as an emergent solution for urban regeneration in China. The successful experiences of participatory planning in China providing a valuable reference for the urban regeneration practices in many other cities abroad in developing countries, who are also undergoing the transitional period of urbanization from growth to regeneration.

The changing roles of the government and planners are the catalysts for public participation. The role of government in community regeneration and participatory planning is much difference between China and the Western countries. Although multi-cooperation is emphasized in the urban regeneration process, the local government in China has to take much more specific work and decision exercises compared to the Western countries, in guiding and organizing community participation by providing resources, policies, financial support, etc. In this situation, the urban planners play an important role in succeeding in the

collaborative workshop to break the barriers between the government and the public, build-up equal dialogue, negotiation, and cooperation platform for multiple stakeholders and promote the coactions from the government and the public. A new institution of community governance is taking shape, and the community planners are becoming the key pioneers to promote community participation in the restructured urban and rural planning system. In future studies, the formulation of a workable approach to participatory community planning needs to be further investigated, including exploring a legal role of participatory planning in the planning system and building a long-term mechanism of engaging more community planners in addition to the existing professional system.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Xun Li: Conceptualization, Investigation, Funding acquisition. **Fan Zhang:** Writing - original draft, Formal analysis. **Eddie Chi-man Hui:** Supervision, Validation. **Wei Lang:** Visualization, Writing - review & editing.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by a grant from National Natural Science Foundation of China (No. 41571118, 41801163), Natural Science Foundation of Guangdong Province, China (No. 2018A030313221), the Soft Science Research Program of Science and Technology Planning Project of Guangdong Province, China (2018A070712019), and the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities in China (Ref. 18lgpy12). The authors would like to thank Guangdong Chengyin Urban Renewal Institute and Guangzhou Urban Planning & Design Survey Research Institute, who participated in this research, contributing their valuable time to give comments and support. The authors declared no conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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