Abstract

Landscape architecture has played an important role in urban development worldwide for many years. It is now becoming an even greater necessity in the burgeoning cities in southeast Asia, where globalization and free trade are stimulating rapid urbanization.

In the past two decades, many infrastructural "mega projects" initiated by multi-disciplinary organizations have bloomed in Bangkok and other big cities in Thailand. These projects have created ribbon development along transportation corridors, divided the urban fabric into pieces, developed on flood plains and wetlands, and have largely responsible for the imbalanced ecology of the region. Because many of these organizations are created for a single purpose, land utilization decisions are made without regard for neighbors, other involved organizations, or essential needs.

The best example in Thailand of this type of development is, of course, the nation's capital and principal city, Bangkok. Bangkok's registered population increased from 1.6 million in 1958 to 5.4 million in 1986, and was almost 8 million in 2006. The urbanization of Bangkok has deteriorated in size, due to unplanned sprawl along major roads and canals, which occurs in a finger-like pattern. This results in insufficient land use that makes it difficult to lay down systematic and interconnected infrastructure networks. The Bangkok Comprehensive Plan (initially written in June 1999 and updated in May 2006) is targeted to accommodate a population of 10.2 million by the year 2017 and 11 million by the year 2022. It is, however, already out of date, and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) is trying to propose a new plan for the longer-term future.

The roots of the problems are the government's urban development policy, the limited capabilities of local authorities in regulating efficient land use, and the lack of coordination regarding infrastructure management, land-use, and environmental protection. Additionally, there is poor enforcement of the city master plan, serious traffic congestion problems, lack of comprehensive master plan, controversies among stakeholders, and increasingly serious pollution problems that lower residents' quality of life. As Bangkok and other Asian "Megacities" grow rapidly, the question is whether they can balance development and environmental protection in a sustainable way.

This is where landscape architecture can play a significant role.
Landscape Architecture and Urban Development

Recent Situations in Thailand

- Royal flora expo, Chiangmai
- Suvarnabhumi (new) Bangkok International Airport and the (proposed) Aerotropolis
- Tourism Facilities: Hotels, resorts, Boutique Hotels
- Real estate
- Parks, Public space and urban re-development
- Natural landscape & Ecology
- In the globalization ➔ Cultural landscape and controversies.

Royal Flora Expo
Landscape Architects: around 300 landscape architects, and 30 firms registered.
SBIA & the Aerotropolis

Rafa Design

Peter Walker
The Proposed Aerotropolis

Axis Landscape

Noble Development

Real Estate
High-medium Income Housing

NANTAWAN HOUSE by PL Design

Tourism Facilities

Mandarin Oriental Dharadhewi
Resorts

Zolitude by Tectonix

Naka Boutique Resort & Spa

By Group 3
Resorts

By: Wood Bagot

By: JPLA
Golf courses

By Duforgreen
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
By L-49

Thai Life Insurance
By Rafa
Doi Tueng Arboretum

Benjakitti City Park
The 3 city parks @ Chatujak

By PL-Design

Siam Paragon
Shopping stores
@ CBD

By PL-Design
Urban Voids and The wonderful proposals

Makasan & Pahonyothin

Still many.. Urban voids existed
Poor Visual quality: Need an Urban landscape architect?

By Kraisak Choonhawan (Politician)

Cultural Landscape?

World Heritage
To The River Kwai Bridge
Conserve the rich bio-diversity & Ecology
The Village that learn

The Fear?!

Source:
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[Non-commercial education use]
A Popular CSR activity:
Mangrove reforestations

..Way to go..