

合和二期改規劃創「三贏」

攘擾已久的灣仔合和二期發展計劃取得重大進展，發展商合和公司已同意以新的發展規劃，包括大幅削減地積比率、降低樓宇高度取代原有方案，新規劃將於稍後正式提交政府，如獲通過，明年即可動工上馬。

此一消息，無論對政府、對發展商、對市民以至環保團體來說，都是一個「三贏」結局。一來，有關發展計劃早於一九九六年已經提出，但一直因樓宇高度、交通評估、環境保育等問題而被擱置，期間環保團體抗議、發展商發火、政府左右為難，事情陷入僵局；二來，當前正值金融海嘯導致人心惶惶，商界投資意欲低落，失業率上升，合和二期在這一困難時刻宣布「解凍」上馬，是令人振奮的好消息。

合和二期最終能以發展商主動修改規劃的方式取得解決，在多方面都具有重要意義。首先，作為發展商的合和地產公司，此次能夠主動降低發展密度，住宅樓宇高度由原來的九十三層減至五十五層，酒店房間數目由二千間減至一千間，總樓面面積大幅減少近三成，其調整或讓步的幅度可以說是相當「震撼」的。而這一「震撼」其實來自於務實的考慮，事實是如果原方案不作出一些修改，面對激烈的環保壓力和交通問題，合和二期要想取得城規會的批准也是不太可能的。如此長時間「內耗」下去，只會兩敗俱傷，而發展商的損失當然最「入肉」。如今作出調整，不但工程可順利開工，還可贏得重環保、順民意的美名，正是何樂而不為呢？

當然，總樓面面積降低了近三成，作為發展商，荷包進賬是要「唔見一大概」，但一來發展是大前提，二來在補地價方面也可作出一些掙掙，三來原材料成本有降，整體來說還是利大於弊的。

而事情亦使人看到，在一些大型城市規劃上，如何更好地平衡發展與環保之間的關係，平衡發展商與民眾之間的利益，的確是一個值得進一步探討的問題。

就以合和二期來說，如果發展商堅持原先的方案，九十三層的樓高的確會對灣仔半山的「山脊線」造成破壞，這是令人非常惋惜及難以接受的。從維港的另一邊望過來，蜿蜒起伏的山脊線是香港自然景觀的寶貴財富，港英時期一座座拔地而起的半山高樓，已經對美麗的太平山山脊線造成無可補償的破壞，今日特區政府不應再重蹈此覆轍。但本港市區土地面積有限，私人業權和發展權亦應該得到尊重，破壞環境固不可取，「因噎廢食」亦非發展



合和二期更改規劃創「三贏」，樓高由原來的93層減至55層，合和實業聯席董事總經理胡文新（左）表示最快明年底動工，於2014至15年完工（黃洋攝）

之道，只有在兩者間取得恰當平衡，才真正是市民福祉之所在。

同樣，政府因應市民及環保團體對所謂「屏風樓」效應的批評，日前也宣布大幅修改深水埗南昌和元朗港鐵站上蓋物業的地積比率，樓宇由一排十幢改為三幢一組，中間留出通風地帶，如此樓面面積減少近兩成，地價收入自然也會減少。但對政府此一修改，一些環保團體昨日仍批評改得不夠，說「大屏風沒有了但多了小屏風」……在此亟待發展經濟、鼓勵投資、創造就業的關鍵時刻，「小屏風」就請環保團體「將就」一下行不行？只有工程早日上馬，才會更符合市民大眾的利益。

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Editorial

Hopewell revised plan to achieve win-win-win

The long-proposed and debated development project of Hopewell Centre II has made significant progress. Hopewell Holdings, the developer now agrees to replace its original plan with a new one that sharply lowers the plot ratio and reduces the height of the tower. The new plan will be presented to the Government later. If approved, construction of the project could kick off next year.

This is a "win-win-win" result for the Government, citizens and environmental groups. Firstly, the development project was proposed as early as in 1996, but has been shelved due to controversies over height of the tower, evaluation of its impact on traffic and environment. During the period, environmental activists protested and the developer lost its temper, with the Government being caught in-between and the project reaching an impasse. Secondly, now, in face of the financial tsunami, people are panicky and investors are losing their appetite for investment. At such a difficult time, the announcement to "defrost" the Hopewell Centre II project is really a piece of good, inspiring news.

It is of great significance in several respects that the deadlock over Hopewell Centre II project could finally be broken by the developer initiating revisions to its original plan. In the first place, the developer Hopewell Holdings, on its own, has initiated scaling down the project, reducing the tower from 93 stories to 55 and hotel capacity from 2,197 guestrooms to some 1,024. As a result, the project's gross floor area will be reduced by 31%. Such large-scale adjustment or concession could be said to be rather "shocking". But this "shocking" result in fact was reached out of practical considerations. The fact is that if the original plan was not revised, the Hopewell Centre II project would unlikely be approved by the Town Planning Board out of environmental and traffic concerns. Both sides will suffer losses in a long-lasting standoff and the developer will be the biggest loser. Now, with adjustments made, the project can get started, and the developer can also win the reputation for caring for environmental protection and listening to "public opinion". So why not do it?

Of course, with the gross floor area cut by 31 %, the developer's profits will be reduced considerably. Nevertheless, getting the project started is of utmost importance. Furthermore, the assessment on land premium can be re-negotiated. Thirdly, the costs of raw materials have dropped. On the whole, therefore, the advantages outweigh disadvantages.

The whole episode reminds people that for some large-scale urban planning projects, how to better balance development and environmental protection, and to better balance the interests between developers and citizens, is indeed an issue that deserves further study.

Taking the Hopewell Centre II project for example, if the developer had insisted on its original plan, a 93-storey tower would indeed break the ridge line of Wan Chai Mid-levels, which would be very regrettable and unacceptable. Seen from the other side of the Victoria Harbour, the zigzag ridge line is an invaluable treasure of Hong Kong's natural scenery. High-rises erected in Mid-levels during British rule have already caused irremediable damage to the beautiful ridge line of Victoria Peak. The SAR Government today must not commit the same error. But urban land in Hong Kong is very limited, and thus private property ownership and

the right to develop must also be respected. It is certainly undesirable to damage the environment, but neither is it proper, when development is concerned, to "throw out the baby with the bathwater". Only an appropriate balance between the two will truly benefit citizens.

Similarly, in response to citizens and environmental groups' criticisms of the so-called "wall effect", the Government earlier announced it would sharply reduce the property projects' density above MTR's Yuen Long and Nam Cheong stations, changing the number of buildings in a row from 10 to three to leave more room for air flow. Total gross floor area therefore will drop by about 20% and land premium will also be reduced. Despite the revisions, however, some environmental groups yesterday insisted it was not enough, saying "While big walls are gone, there are more small walls," At such a crucial moment to develop the economy, to encourage investment and to create jobs, can environmental groups please make do with "small walls"? An early start of the projects is more in accord with citizens' interests.

20 November 2008

Idioms :

(I) Throw out the baby with the bath (water) – To discard something valuable along with something not wanted. Originally from a German proverb, Das Kind mit dem Bade ausschütten ("Pour the baby out with the bath")

Examples:

- 1) I know you don't approve of that one item in the bill but we shouldn't throw out the baby with the bath water by voting the bill down.
- 2) Hasty action in this major plan will result in throwing out the baby with the bath.
- 3) In his haste to talk down a project that had only a few disagreeable points, he has thrown the baby out with the bath.
- 4) There were some good things about the old system of management. It was stupid to say it was all bad – the baby was thrown out with the bathwater.

(II) Make do (with sth/sb): make (sth/sb) do – To manage to live without something or somebody that you would like to have or with something or somebody of a worse quality than you would like.

Examples:

- 1) We don't have cupboards so we make do with boxes.
- 2) I didn't have time to go shopping, so we'll just have to make do.
- 3) We'll have to make do with less money next year. The economy is pretty bad.
- 4) You'll have to make do with Tom, though he is a slow worker.

通識記憶體

合和二期輾轉拉鋸26年

合和中心二期，前稱Mega Tower，為香港合和實業獨資項目，位於灣仔南部堅尼地道和船街之間。今年11月19日，合和決定大幅修改，使總樓面面積減少31%，樓宇層數由93層減至55層，地積比率由15倍減至10.3倍。而樓宇層數由93層減至55層，酒店房間由2197間減至1024間，但發展商承諾提供的休憩空間，沒有改變。

合和中心二期原計劃與位於荃灣的九龍悅來酒店同步發展，並稱為香港悅來酒店。不過，由於計劃龐大，投資額達45億港元，以約15倍地積比率作高

密度發展，其中更改規劃用途的涵蓋土地一半為政府官地，並牽涉到交通改道需要，計劃提出至今超過20年，進展並不如意。

1982年至1993年間，合和實業曾8次向香港城市規劃委員會申請合和中心二期的發展計劃，其中6次獲准，2次遭否決。1994年，合和再度提出申請，項目提出興建樓高93層的大樓，該方案獲城規會批准。這個方案包括108萬平方呎酒店，共2197個房間及68.7萬平方呎寫字樓。然而當時因為地產市道很好，合和一直未能完成收購地皮上所有私人物業，因此一直未動工。

我國比美國還年輕？

看到曾蔭權施政報告「國民教育」部分有「二零零九年為我國建國六十周年」之語，不禁想起二零零九年也是美國建國二百三十三周年。照曾先生的說法，我國比美國年輕了一百七十三歲，這樣，我國還能說是文明的古國嗎？

看到曾先生強調「國民教育是特區政府的既定政策」。我又覺得政府必須讓下一代了解我國幾千年文明史的輪廓。

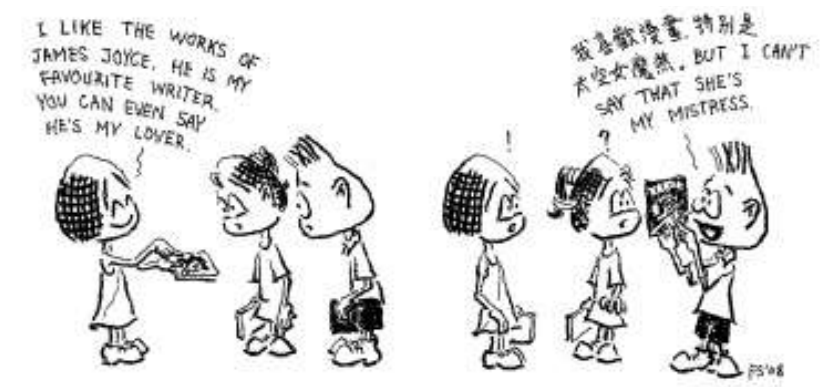
雖然我國進入文明時期比古埃及、巴比倫甚至比印度都遲；但當我國進入文明後有四大發明，足以趕超上述古國。其中指南針、造紙發明於二千年前；印刷、火藥也發明於一千年前。四大發明使我國在漢、唐、宋、元四個朝代的科技領先於世界。可惜的是，明朝加強專制，又推行封閉政

策，我國開始落後於西方；清朝把專制推向極端，封閉又甚於明朝，我國文明於是被西方遠遠拋離，乃至失去抵禦外侮之能力！自從一八九四年孫中山提出「振興中華」，國人經過百多年的努力，我國已走出窘境，而日趨興盛。幾千年來無數的成功經驗與無數的失敗教訓，是國民教育內容所不可或缺的！

曾先生說明年是「我國建國六十周年」，即是由一九四九年算起。那一年中華人民共和國成立，我國進入新階段；但畢竟是縣長的中國歷史的一個階段，不能割斷歷史！因此，我懇求特區政府徹底改變輕視中央的政策，改變現行中學中史課程的「斬件」狀態；曾特首更要帶頭學好中文中史，給我們做個榜樣。

容若

五星級英文



不僅識字 還要嚼字

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是女性的愛人。

還有次讀到的文學作品說一群人玩遊戲，這個遊戲有點特別意義。教授問：究竟那集體活動是game還是ritual呢？

Game是我熟悉的字。當時我玩過一些早期的手提遊戲機，輸了便有game over的字眼，也就是遊戲已結束。到了英國，住宿舍，偶然也會自己煮食，煲罐頭湯，見到有些罐頭湯寫着game。再看看說明，原來是打獵的獵物，即中國人所謂的野味。

對於ritual這個字，認識，但少用。印象中是指一些禮儀，例如祭祖，總之是有一定的來源，也有一定的出發點，甚至有特別的期望。最近有朋友結婚，告訴我他們要「上頭」。對「上頭」這種習俗了解不多，照我所知是和梳頭差不多，但充滿了象徵意義，例如一面梳一面說：「一梳兒孫滿地」。梳頭的人也不是一般人，而是有福之人，所謂有福就是有父母兄弟姊妹而且都在世。這大概就是ritual了吧！

上那教授的課，發覺自己雖然識很多字，但並沒有好好思考每個字的含義。

社經「數」描

經驗加科技 港商謀轉型

今年初，國家實行新的《勞動法》，港資廠商勞動力成本提高，此時人民幣升值，加上原材料價格因歐美國家對產品環保要求有一定標準而提升；以OEM (original equipment manufacturing, 原始設備生產) 為主的生產商變得無利可圖，開始看淡前景。

年中，金融海嘯形成，歐美市場不景氣，市場消費轉弱，出口訂單減少，價格不能堅守，不少廠商來不及轉型已無法經營。

國家鼓勵港資廠商由OEM變到ODM (original design manufacturing, 原創設計生產) 甚至是OBM (original brand manufacturing, 自有品牌生產)，但在轉型的過程中少不了有緩衝期；今時今日OEM仍有可圖，毋須急於轉型。以玩具製造為例，OEM在過去10年取得驕人成績，出口及轉口數值每年達港幣1000億，

佔全球65%，近年亦有不少大型玩具廠商成功地由OEM轉型到ODM，轉型的基本元素多是收購和合併，這些成功例子其實是香港廠商轉型的藍本，國家政策理應配合。

經濟要復甦，製造業不能少，香港不能再以工業作主打，卻可以作為工業支援的平台。以港商經驗，加上科技的輔助，可令生產線轉型，將整套研發及管理技術轉移到內地製造，說不定是港商的路路。

生產力促進局計劃發展3個範疇以支援內地港商轉型，包括生產飛機零部件、醫療儀器和提升紡織業物料技術；內地正自行研製飛機，雖云香港沒技術製造飛機，但發展零部件以及飛機配套等器材譬如餐車、多媒體系統、微波爐等，卻是綽綽有餘吧！

專業教育培訓顧問 呂康