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The Evolution of Historic Streetscape in Adapting Modern Demand in Achieving the Quality of Life

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Abstract

The study look at the changes made to the streetscape to adapt to the requirement of a better quality of life for the occupants. The different approach to regeneration scheme of Melaka could provide insight into modern demands for the city. The idea of integrating all the streets within the historic core area to form a synchronised pedestrian route system is plausible as it will help the users to experience the historic area as a whole may portray the trend of local economic growth and provide opportunities for improvement of the area.

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1. Introduction

Places evolve through times due to the demand of the occupants. Changes took place to accommodate the need for a better life. The study look at the changes made to the streetscape in Melaka to adapt to the requirement of a better quality of life for the occupants. Melaka a well-known historic area (recognized as Malaysian World Heritage Sites by United Nations Education, Scientific and Community Organisation – UNESCO since 2008 together with

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George Town in Penang). Both cities are known for their uniqueness as the melting pot of multicultural heritage from all over the world that set them apart from other places. The cities retain its distinctive architectural style of different periods of rulers from Malay Sultanate to colonial time. The area thrives with its rich cultural resources that have been, and certainly could become, assets for economic regeneration schemes. Almost (thirty percent) 30% of the land use in Melaka is for culturally related businesses and has become centre of activity besides the wealth of culture and tradition can be seen throughout the city in the form of cultural built heritage and daily religious ritual of the residents.

The different approach to regeneration scheme of which was carried out in stages could provide insight into modern demands for the city. Theoretically, regeneration scheme focuses on introducing activities conducive to a place to offer opportunities for economic and social development of the area. Urban renewal, revitalization and redevelopment are part of the major urban regeneration scheme. Regeneration in context on Melaka, emphasis on redevelopment of areas which encompass modern development, while maintaining as much as possible of the historic fabric by local acts and policy (Said, S. Y et al; 2014). The proposal for the economic improvement of the streets by the local authorities was aimed to add variety to the current local economy of the area, by providing opportunities for traditional small businesses.

Streets in Melaka are well-known for their individual characteristics. The idea of integrating of those streets within the historic core area as a heritage trail is to form a closely-knitted continuous circuit of pedestrian route system. The purpose for this integration is to enable tourists and visitors to navigate quickly from one street to another in exploring and grasping the existing urban space. It is plausible as it will help the users to experience the historic area as a whole – lively street shopping place as the business streets, the residential streets and the cultural streets. Comparison were made on the quality of streetscape through townscape evolution score marks from assessments carried out in 2010, 2013 and 2016, where the local authorities had made improvements to the area. Comparisons are also made using photographic evidence to the place and also through an inventory of the changes of use of the buildings. The result of this study will represent the growth pattern of the area or vice versa. The longitudinal data helps to portray the trend of growth and provide opportunities for improvement of the area.

2. Literature review

Urban heritage streets revitalization in most heritage streets is not an impromptu situation since the urban physical setting is a result of the implementation of idea and policies based on thinking process from heritage committee supported by local authorities (Samadi, Z. et al., 2015). The process of “living up the almost dead of outdoor space” of space in between heritage streets requires heritage awareness and full participation of heritage shop owners. The creation of cultural shopping street is a “renewal of shopping style” that enlivens the streetscape. It is not enough just to conserve individual heritage shop lots, but the efforts need a pro-active resolution in taking care and regenerate of the outdoor activity and quality. On the other hand, an unattended space in between heritage buildings needs public attention rather than just left as no man’s land (Samadi, Z. et al., 2012). There are positive activities for city citizen and visitors in occupying the leftover spaces especially through on streets shopping, jamming and marketing.

The physical change with conservation approach supports the public space revitalization program has been designed to bring intercultural communities together (Ramlee, M. et al, 2015, Bagwell et.al, 2012). Urban public spaces with the renewal of physical property as valuable assets to the urban economy, social and environment should become part of the vision and mission of the historic city manager. A continuous effort in enhancing the physical and spiritual aspects of the outdoor ambience will support the urban renewal and regeneration process to ensure the heritage assets meets physical needs and trend rather than just symbolising the contemporary city. A proper revitalization tool for re-charging historic cities through renewal and regeneration process is necessary measures to be conducted within urban public space of the historic streets. It is hopeful will generate a sense of place, sense of belonging as well as a sense of community, by encouraging local activities and special events that are an integral part of urban heritage streets.

Urban regeneration schemes for Melaka have been carried out since the 1990s. The latest project was the result of the proposal outlined in the Conservation Management Plan (2011) submitted to UNESCO as part of the management plan for the WHS. The vision of the Plan is ‘to generate a suitable development, a safe and calm

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