Idea Notes from Class 06, Sep 23, 2013

Note #01.

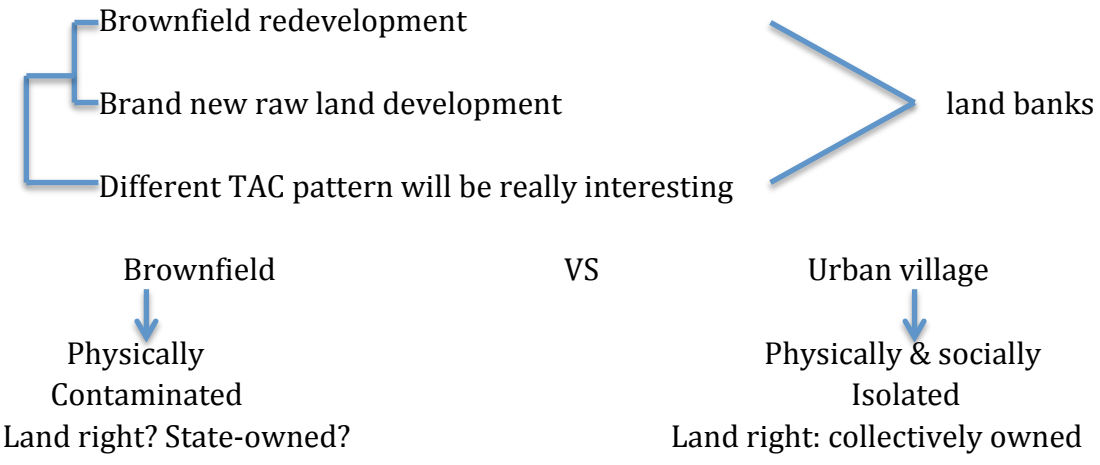
Dr. Xin Li was mentioned that industries was moved away from the central urban area and lands reused to commercial land use and bring revenue to government, this made me think about a similar situation of Beijing Central Business district, the government committee is now forcing many financial enterprises to move in this area, due to the high popularity of this area's resources, the office rents of CBD was rose 75% in 2009, according to a survey, some IT enterprises cannot afford the rents because of the challenge of developing they faced, so they moved out of this area now. These kinds of problem also became a concern of government recently.

Note #02.

1. The brownfield is more desired by developers due to rapid urbanization. The available land in the city boundary is so limited to the redevelopment can "produce" more vacant land.

2. The relocation of factories may result in pollution in other places, where the residents might mot be aware of what they are going to face.

Note #03.



Note #04.

I was interested in the process after the land value overrated, since the developer end up paying 4 times the amount, wouldn't they build in order to get back their money and hence cater only to the rich?

Mumbai, India had a lot of mill land in the city that they auctioned off and the developers built only high ??? housing which was used only for ???

Should the aim be to reduce the land value so that people can build affordable houses?

Note #05.

If I were to conclude Xin Li's presentation, it is interesting to note that the process of the auction through land centers create a regulatory intermediate framework that creates consensus though a market based system i.e checks and balances are created by market demand. This works because of the moral obligation of the intermediary agency (state land centers).

I see this in relation to Richard Sennett's recent lecture on "The Open City" which talked about a hybrid method that will negotiate between the bottom up (market based, localized decision making) and the top down (regulations, laws, etc.) I see this system of land center and land transfer as an open system that allows for other variations, interpretations and innovative to occur through the cities or market while having a top down framework.

Perhaps it is also a reflection on China's need to negotiate a highly centralized government and a rapidly divergent, globalized market.

Note #06.

Redeveloping the Brownfields into urban re-uses is an interesting topic. From the timeline of how land sales were made, we have been learning a lot of important and significant lessons of how the land trade system changed. By comparing how local governments (land use center) developers industrial plants worked with the contaminated land, we will see the brownfield redevelopment mechanism in general.

Note #07.

Follow-up questions:
1. Land auction happened before the rezoning request. In the Beijing chemical factory case, therefore, the parcel of the original site was sold to a single developer. My questions are:

Whether this is a typical case?

Apparently, the original land use is industrial and offering job opportunity to residents. The rezoning process will change the land use pattern, maybe more mixed-use and multi developers will be involved. What could happen if rezoning happened before hand? What could be potential alter natives?

Note #08.

As I know, large part of public participants actions organized by non-profit organization or groups. Do you think found more related NGO is workable in China?

Why the public participation is weak in urban planning area in China?

Note #09.

A very urgent problem is going on, in my opinion.

I hope there was more disclosure on the detailed procedures/reactions of different stakeholders in the presentation.

Note #10.

The most interesting aspect of the presentation for me was the land center. (What's the Chinese name for this?) Do only SOEs have to go through the land centers? How does purchase by the land center work? What are the determinants of relocation for SOEs? Which actors are satisfied and dissatisfied with this system?

Note #11.

It seems land centers are certainly a step forward in dealing with not only brownfields, but in public participation as well. Disclosure of contamination information, rezoning of industrial sites raises public awareness of their immediate surrounding since people who live there are the most affected by redevelopment process.

One of the concerns that come to my mind is that how does the relocation of plants affect workers. Since a lot of plants move out of cities, and expanding, a lot of workers have to communicate out of the city. The redevelopment of Brownfields affect not just locally, but citywide as well. It might put a lot of strain on transportation and infrastructure of the city.

Note #12.

w/o name

I think the rapid urbanization process of China will help to address the browning field problems because:

1. Will help to increase the value of the land, and with this there will be enough money to clean up the land;
2. The relocation of the industrial land will increase the value of the properties nearby the browning land and it would be a good way to have more money for “clean up” the polluted land.
3. It would be possible to increase the contamination rules for the companies who moves to new places.

Note #13.

I was pondering the justice of the relocation of Beijing factories. From a utilitarian standpoint, it seems like a great thing to remove the worst polluting factories from areas with the greatest population density. However, it seems that

the poorer rural areas will get the short end of the stick, just like developing countries as the developed world exported the majority of its polluting industry. As one student pointed out today, it seems that a lot of the industry is being concentrated in specific rural locations. Given the realities of rural poverty and lack of easy mobility in the hukou system, these recipient communities may be in an even worse position to defend themselves and cope with the healthcare challenges and other problems that will arise from being next to the newly relocated factories. Furthermore, from what I read, it sounds like many of these newly relocated factories still don't have any serious emissions limits, which seems like a missed opportunity as upgrades could be done as the plants rebuild.

Note #14.

Looking at the problem of dozens of relocating enterprises, how does the brownfields redevelopment process fit into the planning regime? It seems that these brownfield sites are redeveloped in a piecemeal process. Then, in part due to location and the cost of the land to the developers, developers (who often outrank the local authorities) take advantage of the situation to not only neglect the brownfield cleanup (or try to transfer costs to the future investors by requesting a higher FAR), but also to maximize profits and not necessarily consider the needs of the district/neighborhood as part of a larger plan. So, in many cities, this process leads to a patchwork of isolated, high-end housing estates.

The case in Beijing was a special case of an extended process, so how does brownfield remediation fit into the more rapid development timeline of just about any city beyond the capital? (Jinhua asked this at the end.) Many of the SOEs causing problems in urbanizing areas are still too powerful and disinterested in relocation. Are the land banks nearly as powerful in lower-ranking cities?

Note #15.

One of the most interesting things about our selection of readings is the more modern way that America is approaching brownfield redevelopment and the

increasing role of states and localities after a period of stronger federal enforcement and regulation. In the context of China, Xin Li mentioned mainly the local Land Center's role in the industrial site's redevelopment, how does that relate to an effort that might be undertaken by the centralized government in encouraging clean up and redevelopment?

Note #16.

I can say that the same process is going on in the Russian cities. The reasons for moving are the same – shortage of the free land inside the cities and the low profitability of the enterprises. But we don't have the system of the land centers and all such activities are carried out only by the enterprises and developers. The role of the city in only in controlling the quality of soil, air, etc for the future inhabitants. But this process is active only in the cities with the high land prices. And so I have a question about the process in another cities except Beinjing.

But I still have questions about using of the territory and objects on the ex-industrial parcels. Who decides what will be built on the parcel? Developers themselves or the city administration?

And also I am interested in the economical assessment of the price of such relocation. If the city covers all the expenses for the cleaning of the industrial plot what will be the price of the land? What if the basic price for the auctions will be too high and nobody will buy it? Do the city administration make such assessments?
Also II have a question about the possibility of the enterprise owners the change their enterprise themselves? Is it possible?
And also a question about the allocated enterprises. Was the sum of money which they got from the land center enough for them to relocate and to modernize the production lines?

Who choose the land plots which will get the new enterprise?

Note #17.

While I understand the Beijing population data of 11.74 million used by Xin is the sum of the six major districts (Dongcheng, Xicheng, Chaoyang, Fengtai, Shijingshan and Haidian), the number may not well capture the size of the functional urban area, i.e. single labour market. In particular, the population densities of some additional districts, all of which host 6 million people, are more than 500 people. In that sense, the total population of Beijing might well be around 17 million.

The second item is regarding the mapping of constructed area over the years. I will be particularly interested in how to obtain the data, and also how to digitalize the dataset. I would be loved to analyze the spatial change together with empirical urban economic analysis. For instance, how did the boundary evolve over the years through urbanization, and how such has affected the land market and urban labour market?

An interesting idea emerged from today's lecture concerns how such mechanism affect urban expansion. Have the expansion been mainly driven by industrial site relocation or the real estate development?