

Encouraging Citizen Participation in the Process of Townscape Planning

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Recently, the urban policy paradigm in Korea is shifting its focus to provide better public spaces and enhance the community's quality of life. In this context, the Townscape Act was enacted in 2007 introducing a new procedure of the Local Townscape Agreement and the Local Townscape Improvement Projects. The act has granted local governments a legal basis to support citizens' participation activities in order to create, improve, and maintain the townscape quality of their neighborhood environments. The degree of utilization of this particular process, however, is far below the expectation. Partly, it is due to the lack of field experience and concrete guidelines for preparation and implementation in actual townscape planning process.

This study aims to suggest a conceptual framework and practical steps to encourage citizen participation in the process of urban landscape planning. For this purpose, we conducted a series of investigation: we compared data from previous surveys in Gyeonggi Province and Japan, examined degree of citizen participation at home and abroad, and reviewed related institutional measures and successful cases. The result suggests 6 policy guidelines to encourage citizen participation in the process of urban landscape planning. They can be summarized as follows:

- a. Citizens should be aware of the importance of participation, not only because the landscape may affect their everyday lives, but the landscape itself is defined, or can be changed significantly by their activities.
- b. Initiatives for local townscape improvement should include representatives from various groups, and the role of each group should be defined clearly.
- c. The first priority of landscape improvement projects is to improve safety and quality of public space.
- d. Sufficient public investment or profit model is required to activate landscape plans and project implementations.
- e. The law, institution, and measures should be articulated over long term consideration.
- f. Proper promotion, information and education programs should be provided to urge and support citizen participation.

Keywords: Townscape planning, Citizen participation, the Townscape Act, Townscape improvement projects, Townscape Agreement