

Urban Design Lab.

interpreted by Yahara, thanks to Jack Farris

Magazine

Urban Design(Nishimura & Kitazawa) Laboratory,

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“Kurahaku

—exhibition of community-based planning” was held in Kitakata



It has been seven years since our urban design lab took on the Kitakata project, the impetus for which came from a survey of the area done by the Ministry for Cultural Affairs in 2001. As part of machizukuri community building efforts our lab sponsored a city-wide exposition, dubbed “Kurahaku”, to showcase the city’s assets.

People came from many places (including our own lab) to see the exhibition. As many as 1500 people participated in the events that took place between the 5th and 14th of October. All of the exhibition venues around town were actually inside historical kura—the storage houses for which Kitakata is famous.

Machizukuri Exhibition:



The exhibition included not only displays of historical Kitakata and some of our strategies for the city’s future, but also panels displaying the opinions of locals.

In addition to the main exhibition hall, there were two other halls and satellite exhibition venues throughout the city. In all, there were around 200 different panels posted at the different sites around town.

The Kura Garden Experiment



The areas surrounding some kura and other green spaces in the center of the city became simple areas for resting during the Kurahaku event.

Some were simply chairs in the shade with flowers and other plants, but others were used by people to sell snacks and other things.

Kurahaku Events



At night, the exhibition didn’t end. Some kura were used as bars, bicycle taxi tours were available as were illumination events and flowers were placed along a historical street connecting two important parts of town, with the help of local residents.

Kurahaku Machizukuri Forum



Four times during the ten-day period, local residents gathered to hear presentations by scholars and discuss the various issues that confront the city’s future.

Second stage has begun guidebook of landscape

- Shinjuku project

The first stage of Shinjuku project started on April 24th, 2006 was finished by submitting the direction of landscape planning to Shinjuku ward on October 5th, 2007.

Though it was planned short project for one month at the beginning, it took one and a half year to complete so our heart was full. The second stage to make "guidebook of the Community-based landscape in Shinjuku ward" was started on November 2nd. We organize results and proposals what we had done to inform residents of meaning or characteristics and attractions of landscape as a book. Please expect our next breakthroughs.



"guidebook of the Community-based landscape in Shinjuku ward"

We make one book in all areas (Yotsuya, Tansu, Enoki, Ochiai daiichi, Ochiai daini, and Kashiwagi) in the end of 2007.

We show contents below based on results of research we had done.

- the characteristics and meanings and attractions of landscape
- proposal for landscape

Naramachi workshop making regeneration plan for machiya



Students of our lab were invited for the regeneration machiya workshop with Masui lab of Nara Women's University in Naramachi, for one week from September 24th.

The participants are five students; Ishii, Pornsan, second year master's course, Kitamura, Daido, Nattapong, first year master's course, lead by Naoto Nakajima.

The purpose of Workshop is to propose regeneration plans around Matsuya's house(machiya) which remains Naramachi by ten participants divided into three groups.

Each proposal added new function such as seminar house, children's house, or office to machiya concerning the structure of machiya. The complete proposal were presented at the symposium on September 30th.

In fact, proposals in three days have many faults, but it was worth expiring seeing regenerate machiya and measuring machiya which inexperienced in Tokyo.

I thank for everyone supported in Nara.



Reaching the Climax of Community-based Planning University in Yatsuo

We held the 2nd seminar on October 13th and 3rd seminar on October 20th following 1st seminar in the Community-based Planning University in Yatsuo.

Differ from 1st seminar, we used workshop style so that participants discussed more positively. In the 2nd seminar, the theme was sightseeing, we discussed why we needed to think sightseeing exchange in Yatsuo, and discuss concrete proposals(we made over 100 ideas as "proposal cards.") in the 3rd seminar, we dealt the theme of "life," and discussed the present condition and problems of how to face declining birth rate and aging society more eagerly.

We are planning more practical workshop hoping residents to flourish as leaders for community-based planning in the 4th seminar.

