

**Stakeholder Analysis of Community Planning in Shanghai:
A Case Study of Caoyang New Village**

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Abstract

Community planning is a rather new concept in China that did not really arise until the beginning of the 2010s. Shanghai, in recent years, launched its “*Community Planner System*” which institutionalized community planning and provides us with a channel to understand how this concept is localized and implemented in China. This study strengthens knowledge of community planning by selecting Caoyang New Village as a case study and conducting a stakeholder analysis of the planning process. Interviews are made with different stakeholders, which help identify the stakeholders involved, examine their roles and positions, and investigate their interactions and dynamics. The results show that although having an intention to practice community-based planning and engage multiple entities, the current approach to community planning in Shanghai is dominantly top-down with centralized power, and is short of communication and collaboration channels. This has led to failure to meet the community’s most practical demands. Meanwhile, community planners are found at a central position in the stakeholder network, yet are not given the space to assist negotiation among entities. The author thus recommends power decentralization, collaboration establishment, and transformation of planners’ role as guidance for the future.

Keywords: community planning, stakeholder analysis, stakeholder dynamics, Shanghai.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Community Planning in Shanghai	2
1.2 Research Questions and Objectives	3
1.3 Research Design	4
1.4 Structure of Thesis	6
Chapter 2 Literature Review	8
2.1 Community Planning	8
2.2 Stakeholder Analysis	11
Chapter 3 Case Overview: Community Planning of Caoyang New Village	18
3.1 Background of Caoyang New Village	18
3.2 The Caoyang Community Planning Project	23
3.3 Stakeholder Identification	26
Chapter 4 Stakeholder Analysis: Stakeholder Differentiation and Dynamics	30
4.1 Stakeholder Differentiation	30
4.2 Stakeholder Relationships	39
Chapter 5 Conclusion	47
5.1 Summary of Stakeholder Analysis	47
5.2 Policy Recommendations	49
5.3 Limitations	53
References	54
Appendices	59

List of Tables

Table 3-1: Categories of stakeholders. -----	27
Table 4-1: Interview questions asking about power and interest level of interviewees. -----	32
Table 4-2: Power level of stakeholders. -----	33
Table 4-3: Interest level of stakeholders. -----	44
Table 4-4: Interview questions asking about interactions among stakeholders. -----	40
Table 4-5: Interactions between stakeholders. -----	41

List of Figures

Figure 2-1: Differentiation of stakeholders by power, legitimacy, and urgency. -----	15
Figure 3-1: Location of Caoyang New Village. -----	19
Figure 3-2: Master plan of Caoyang New Village in the 1980s -----	20
Figure 3-3: Shared kitchen which is complained for being unsanitary. -----	22
Figure 3-4: Degraded façade of residential buildings. -----	22
Figure 4-1: Power-interest matrix of stakeholders in Caoyang community planning project. ----	35
Figure 4-2: Social network graph of stakeholders. -----	43

Chapter 1

Introduction

City planning is not only about seeing the city through planners' celestial and totalizing eye, but also about walking in the city and grasping people's everyday life and practices (De Certeau, 1984). Communities, as places where people live and spend most of their time, are thus considered as an important geographic and social unit for organizing planning efforts (Rohe, 2009). As a matter of fact, there has been extensive research on theorizing and practicing community planning in the Western world, yet literature on it in the Chinese context remains rare.

In China, neighborhoods and communities once played fairly important roles in terms of urban governance in Qing dynasty (Wu and Gaubatz, 2013). However, during the socialist era, there was extraordinary focus on the central authority with insufficient understanding about how grassroots communities might contribute to the city's development (Qian and Niu, 2017). In contemporary China, communities (*shequ*/社区) are defined as subdivisions of subdistricts (*jiedao*/街道), and usually consist of several residential quarters that are close to each other. It was in 2011 that a national five-year plan was released by the State Council to establish community service systems, in which communities are seen as basic units to provide essential

public services (Xinhuanet, 2011). Since then, the concepts of community and community planning began to popularize, especially in several large cities including Beijing, Shenzhen, and Shanghai (Smith, Abramson, and Shih, 2019). Among them, this research selects Shanghai as the city on focus and examines community planning in it.

1.1 Community Planning in Shanghai

As described above, Shanghai is one of the pioneer cities practicing community planning in China. In 2017, Xi Jinping, President of China, gave a speech in Shanghai and emphasized that “city management of Shanghai should be as exquisite as embroidery”, which presented the demand for finer-grained urban governance and city planning (CNR, 2017). The city’s master plan of 2017 - 2035 then explicitly states the intention to create “a city of happiness and humanity”, in which a “15-minute life circle”, where integrated social services and amenities (e.g. employment, education, healthcare, recreation etc.) should be accessible within 15 minutes’ walk, is expected to be a basic unit for organizing urban life (Shanghai Municipal People’s Government, 2018a). Past efforts also include the Three-Year Action Plan for Building “Beautiful Homes” for Residential Quarters in Shanghai released in 2018, which was devoted to improving physical living condition and transforming the mechanisms of community governance and management (Shanghai Municipal People’s Government, 2018b). These, in general, have pointed towards a trend of city planning in Shanghai from a conventionally large-scale, top-down approach to a more micro-scale and human-centric one. In 2018, these brought to life the

“Community Planner System” (*shequguihuashizhidu/社区规划师制度*). Under this system, professional planners from universities and planning institutes were invited and designated by the district government to each subdistrict as community planners for a three-year term. These community planners are expected to draft community plans about upgrading public amenities, re-designing open spaces, improving living condition, as well as providing professional knowledge for community governance. It is meanwhile required that the community planners should communicate with subdistrict offices to understand communities’ situation and integrate demands from neighborhood committees and residents, in order to address “the most urgent, difficult, and anxious issues” (Shanghai Municipal People’s Government, 2018c). Since January 2018 when Yangpu district pioneered the introduction of this scheme (Shanghai Municipal People’s Government, 2018d), eight other districts have so far followed this practice. Therefore, beyond being merely an advisory policy or a recommendation, community planning for the first time gets practiced on a large scale and is institutionalized in the city. Furthermore, this system has extended the traditional focus of community planning on the deteriorated physical environment of old communities to broader aspects including community welfare and long-term development. Though still at its early phase, this *“Community Planner System”* in Shanghai provides an opportunity for us to understand how community planning is interpreted and practiced in Shanghai.

1.2 Research Questions, Objectives, and Significance

With the launch of the *“Community Planner System”*, this paper seizes this chance to

investigate community planning in Shanghai. While the “*Community Planner System*” has clearly stated the importance of collaborating with different entities from subdistrict offices to neighborhood residents, I decide to take a stakeholder approach to examine it. In this research, two questions are raised. First, who are the stakeholders in Shanghai’s community planning and what are their roles in it? Second, how are these stakeholders interacting and related to each other? Through examining the roles of stakeholders and the dynamics among them, this research hopes to provide an insight into how community planning is interpreted, organized, and practiced in this city. Furthermore, while communities in China play a primary role of providing services and assisting central governance, they differ from those defined and formed in many of the developed countries in the ways of being organized and managed. In this sense, this community-based research will contribute indigenous ground knowledge to better understanding community planning in the Chinese context. Overall, it is hoped that this study can help guide the future work of community planning in China and contribute Chinese local knowledge to the global discourse on this issue as well.

1.3 Research Design

In order to study community planning in Shanghai, this research selected a case study from the community planning projects conducted under the “*Community Planner System*” in recent years. After considering the comprehensiveness and the reputation of these projects, I selected the project of Caoyang New Village community planning as the case study here. This project was initiated by Putuo District Government in 2018, and urban planners from Shanghai Urban

Construction and Design Research Institute (SUCDRI) were chosen as the community planners for Caoyang subdistrict (which is equivalent to Caoyang New Village in this thesis). From February 2018 to September 2019, the community planners co-worked with a variety of entities and drafted a comprehensive plan for the community (Caoyang subdistrict). In 2019, this project won the Jane Jacobs Award for Community and Regional Planning as well as the Special Award for Excellence in Advancing Social Equity from the American Planning Association's International Division (Yang, 2019). This project is therefore considered as an appropriate representative and an ideal model of community planning in Shanghai. In addition, Caoyang New Village is the first “Workers’ Village” (*gongrenxincun/工人新村*) in China which was initially built in 1951, and thus has been recorded and studied world-widely, mostly from historical and sociological perspectives. The historic image and identity add another layer of complexity to the community planning project. Therefore, Caoyang New Village is chosen for the case study which embeds complex interests and demands, and serves as a good field for investigation on stakeholder dynamics.

With the case being selected, this research conducts a stakeholder analysis on this case which consists of three steps: stakeholder identification, stakeholder differentiation, and stakeholder relation analysis. In order to collect relevant data and information, I did a total of nine interviews in December 2019 and January 2020 in Shanghai. Two of them are the community planners who worked for the plan throughout the process. They also introduced me to a subdistrict official who directly co-worked with and assisted them in the project, and a professor at Tongji University who researches in community planning and helped assess the

community plan for this project. I also interviewed three residents and two neighborhood committees' workers during my site visit, yet interviews with them were relatively brief. Some basic information of the interviewees is also listed in appendix A. The interviews were mainly about the stakeholders' visions and demands for the community, their participation in the planning process, their communication and interaction with the other entities, and their comments and thoughts on the project and the current plan. The detailed interview questions can be found in appendix B. With responses from them, the stakeholder analysis identifies the key players first, then differentiates their positions and salience using the power-interest matrix, and finally uses social-network analysis to assess how they relate to each other. These tools will be explained in the literature review section.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

The thesis consists of five chapters. After this introduction, the second chapter is a literature review on two topics. It firstly traces how community planning has been understood and practiced in a global context. After these, procedures and tools for stakeholder analysis will be introduced that inform this research's methodological framework. The third chapter provides an overview of the selected case, by introducing the background and history of the neighborhood Caoyang New Village, the status and progress of the project, and the important stakeholders in the process as an initial step for the analysis. Based on these, a stakeholder analysis is developed further in the fourth chapter, which discusses firstly the differentiated roles of stakeholders, and secondly their relationships and dynamics. In the final chapter, I conclude this case study with

discussion on the pitfalls with the current structure and provide policy recommendations for the future practicing of community planning in Shanghai. Limitations of this study and its implications on the further research will also be included. Before shifting our focus to Caoyang New Village, it is important to understand why there is a need to have this discourse and how we may unfold it.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This section reviews extant research of two strands: community planning and stakeholder analysis. It will firstly explain how community planning has been practiced and researched both in a global context and specifically in China briefly. Following this, it reviews methods and metrics for stakeholder analysis, which will inform the analysis framework adopted later in this study.

2.1 Community Planning

Community is indeed a fluid concept with multilayered connotations. In 1997, Chaskin defined community as both a geographical area and a sociological construction, which is locally-based units where some set of social, functional, cultural, or circumstantial connections is concentrated. Because of such believed existence of spatially-delimited connections, many policies and interventions have been targeted at local communities, and among them is community-based planning. Community planning has a rather long history in the United States. Rohe once summarized six major forms of community planning in America: (1) the neighborhood planning unit presented by Clarence Perry in 1923, (2) the urban renewal program

from 1949 to 1973, (3) the community action plan, (4) community development corporations, and (5) municipally sponsored neighborhood planning programs starting from the 1960s, and (6) planned unit development (PUD), traditional neighborhood development (TND), and transit-oriented development (TOD) which are recently emergent (2009). Notably, these six forms are different in their nature: neighborhood unit, urban renewal, and PUD, TND, and TOD primarily involve neighborhood (re)design and improvement to the built environment in order to enhance the quality of life, yet the community action plan and community development corporations are approaches to empower and enable communities for self-management and development. Such dual tracks can also be found in the U.K. According to Popple and Quinney, there has been juxtaposition of the “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches in British Community Work – the top-down approach is used to integrate disadvantaged groups into mainstream society and make services and resources available and sensitive to their needs; and the bottom-up approach is where collective attempts are made by groups to achieve changes in policy and practice (2002). Therefore, in the global context, there are generally two types of community planning: the first type is neighborhood planning which emphasizes neighborhoods’ physical design and provision of infrastructure and amenities; the other is more about community empowerment that focuses on self-governance and autonomous organization. This suggests the need to understand the position of community planning in China within this spectrum.

Community planning in China, though is a rather new concept in planning terms, actually has its traditional roots. Friedmann pointed out the traditional local governance of everyday life in China by discussing the *jiefang* (gated streets) and *baojia* (neighborhood control of streets)

systems in Qing dynasty (2006). Wu also identified *danwei* (单位), a once prevalent cellular structure of Chinese cities that were composed of work-unit compounds where urban life was organized around them and public services were provided inside (2012). As these community structures before acted as approaches to entrench central governance on the grassroots level, comprehensive planning and long-term development of urban communities per se had hardly gained any significant attention until the 2010s.

As community planning started to appear on the table in contemporary China, much research has been conducted to understand it, especially in terms of its content, form, and mechanism. Liu, Zhang & Zhang (2014) reviewed community planning mechanisms in the country and concluded three typical approaches of it. The first one is making development strategies for communities, which involves a visioning process regarding communities' physical improvement, socio-economic development, and management. The second is drafting comprehensive community plans, which compared to the development strategies, emphasizes more on the design of physical environment, and usually plans specific actions and implementation mechanisms. The last type is problem-oriented action plan that is concentrated on a clearly identified problem or target. This typology shows us the common ways of community planning in China. On the other hand, Smith, Abramson, and Shih interpreted community planning in China based on the role of the state and communities in the process. They mentioned four classes: planning *of* communities, planning *for* communities, planning *with* communities, and planning *by* communities. According to them, planning *of* communities is visioning of communities that do not yet exist; planning *for* communities indicates a paternalistic

state concerned with the health and governability of existing environments and populations; planning *with* communities refers to a collaborative mode that acknowledges different interests; and planning *by* communities has a degree of community autonomy and self-determination reflected. From this perspective, they believed that the current community planning work in China remained somewhere between planning *for* communities and planning *with* communities, and has not really reached the level of planning *by* communities, as it does not offer a viable grassroots alternative to state intervention (2019). This research suggests a need to examine community planning in China with a lens of state-society relations, which then supports the importance of studying stakeholder relations in this study. In addition, while many of studies on community planning in China are limited to theoretical discussion, this research shows its significance in providing case-specific, ground knowledge.

2.2 Stakeholder Analysis

The concept of stakeholder actually has its origin in the business world and did not gain its widespread acknowledgement until Freeman published his work named *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach* in 1984. In his book, Freeman criticized the deficiency of the static and isolated value-maximization approach to corporation management, and advocated for a paradigm shift in response to the changing external environment where the globe became so connected that an organization can be affected by factors at all levels (1984). He thus proposed a stakeholder approach, where he defined stakeholders as individuals or groups “who can affect, or are affected by, the achievement of a corporation’s purpose” (1984, p.46), and considered understanding of

their relationships and integration of them towards collaboration a real necessity (Freeman, Wicks & Parmer, 2004). Without any doubt, the concept becomes very influential in project management field. The Project Management Institute (PMI) has “stakeholder management” specifically included in their guidebook and offers instructions on effectively engaging different stakeholders. It is argued by Garvin that “the ability of the project manager and team to correctly identify and engage all stakeholders in appropriate way can mean the difference between project success and failure” (1996, p. 504). The significance of taking a multi-stakeholder approach to management and problem-solving is thus very notable.

After Freeman’s put-forward of the stakeholder theory, a great amount of research on how to conduct stakeholder analysis in practice has been made on this basis. Yang (2013) summarized two key components of such research: stakeholder identification and stakeholder prioritization. While stakeholder identification refers to “development of a list of stakeholders and identifying their interests”, stakeholder prioritization refers to “analyzing stakeholders’ influence on the project, and decisions about which stakeholders’ interests should be addressed preferentially” (p. 839). Reed et al., however, supplemented this with investigation on stakeholder relationships (2009). He argued that “only by understanding who has a stake in an initiative, and through understanding the nature of their claims and inter-relationships with each other, can the appropriate stakeholders be effectively involved in environmental decision-making” (p. 1935). Therefore, this research decides to take the three steps for the stakeholder analysis, and the following text will review methods and tools for these three steps respectively.

2.2.1 Stakeholder Identification

While Freeman has defined stakeholders as those who can affect, or are affected by, the project (1984), it remains a problem how to identify the key stakeholders in practice. A common approach to identify them is by pre-defined categories empirically. Aaltonen and Sivonen divide stakeholders into two groups: internal and external stakeholders (2009). Internal stakeholders are defined as those who “are formally members of the project coalition and hence usually support the project” (p. 132), while external stakeholders are, accordingly, not formal members but may affect or be affected by the project. However, this typology, which was born in the business world, may not suit urban planning problems well because of the difficulty in defining the so-called formal members of any urban planning project. McQueen et al. (2008) then uses a better classification method when envisaging shared future strategies for urban development, which considers stakeholders from private sector, public sector, community, independent organizations. Compared to Aaltonen and Sivonen’s typology, this method is much more explicit and comprehensive in defining and including the diverse stakeholders in urban problems.

Such empirical methods are, as shown above, classical ways to find out key players and are convenient to use. However, they are often criticized for being essentially top-down so that they cannot overcome the cognitive limitations of the researchers and the core stakeholders, and therefore may miss those groups of stakeholders that are less visible or active during the process (Yang, 2014). Reed et al. (2009) has thus reviewed a number of methods that are devoted to overcoming this issue. For example, Prell et al. (2008) proposed an iterative process comprising scoping interviews, focus groups, and follow-up interviews to expand the spectrum of

stakeholders. Rowley also put forward a snowball sampling method in 1997 that aims to get a complete picture of the stakeholders via connections among them. Yet in this study, due to the time constraint and the relative clarity of the stakeholders involved in this project, McQueen's typology will be used to identify and categorize the key players.

2.2.2 Stakeholder Differentiation

Stakeholder differentiation further focuses on defining the roles played by different stakeholders and the salience of them – since a project involves various stakeholders, it is important to know the way they are related to the project and their influences. Mitchell, Agle and Wood developed a widely-used framework to evaluate the salience of stakeholders, which takes into account a stakeholder claim's legitimacy, power, and urgency. Briefly speaking, legitimacy depends on the stakeholder's right and interest in the benefits and harms; a stakeholder's power refers to its ability to influence the organization's behavior and decision; and urgency is the degree to which a stakeholder's claim calls for immediate action (1997). Based on these three attributes, Mitchell et al. classified stakeholders into seven categories (dormant, discretionary, demanding, dominant, dependent, dangerous, and definitive) which indicate the position of them in the project (see figure 2-1). Mitchell's framework has become a cornerstone for the later research, while many scholars have built more specific indicators or matrices to illustrate the position of certain stakeholders in a project. In 2001, De Lopez conducted a study on stakeholder management for a nature conservation project of Ream National Park in Cambodia, and applied a power-interest matrix to analyze their roles and interactions. In this matrix, stakeholders were

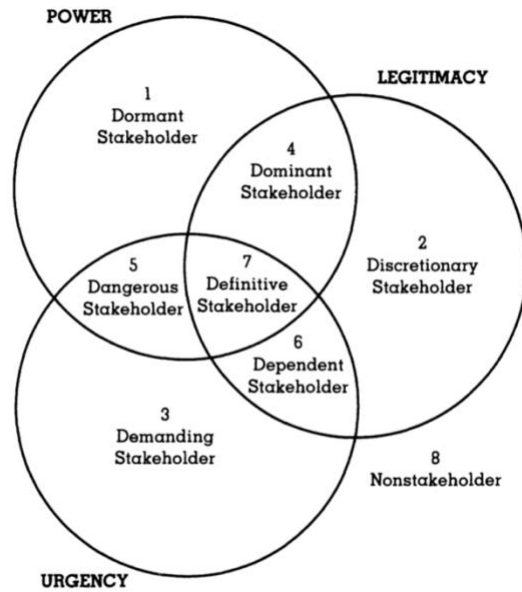


Figure 2-1: Differentiation of stakeholders by power, legitimacy, and urgency. (Mitchell et al., 1997)

divided along two dimensions: the first dimension assessed the potential of stakeholders for the conservation of natural resources, and the second measured the influence or power of stakeholders on the project. The matrix can be visualized to illustrate the different categories of them, as different positions of stakeholders in the matrix indicates different combinations of power and potential.

While the previous examples explored the problem in a qualitative approach, in 2018, Li, Zhang, Ng, and Skitmore did a piece of research with a quantitative method that evaluates stakeholders' salience and influences in the decision-making process of "sustainable construction" in China. In their research, they defined eight stakeholder groups which are respectively government organizations, owners, designers, contractors, end-users, and non-governmental organizations, and through interviews and a Delphi survey quantified their influences in the form of the Factor of Stakeholder Influence (FoSI). The factor is calculated partially based on the legitimacy-power-urgency framework that was introduced before, and

partially on the vested interest level and the level of impact. In their findings, they concluded that the government is the most influential entity, and the highly-rated influence level of end-users indicates need for a more transparent and inclusive approach. In addition, balancing the interests among different stakeholders still proves to be a challenge (Li et al., 2018). In summary, their research shows that taking a stakeholder perspective to investigate planning projects, in this study of community planning, may allow clearer understanding about the complex relations among them and create opportunities to realize who are possibly being under-represented and how to balance the interests.

In this study, I adopt a power-interest matrix to evaluate the roles and positions of each stakeholder in the process. Power is, again, the ability to influence the process, and interest is the project's effects on the stakeholder. I will explain in detail how they are operationalized and measured later.

2.2.3 Stakeholder Relationships

Last but not least, relationships between stakeholders is also significant in understanding the structure and organization in planning projects. As the third step, there are a variety of tools that can be used to investigate interactions among them. Actor-linkage matrices are the easiest and most explicit one: stakeholders are listed in rows and columns of a table that create grids so that interrelations between them can be described using keywords such as conflicting, complementary, or cooperation (Reed et al., 2009). Biggs and Matsuert (1999) once studied the research and development (R&D) capabilities in natural resource system through this matrix and

identifies major actors in an R&D system and the flows of information between them.

Based upon the matrix, a more advanced method is invented, known as social network analysis. While social network theory has its origin in sociology and anthropology, Wasserman and Faust were, in fact, pioneers who applied it to analyzing human behavior and interaction (1994). While social network analysis also uses matrices to reveal the relational ties, it uses numbers instead of keywords to indicate (1) the presence of a tie and (2) the relative strength of the tie (Reed, 2009). Such quantification may allow substantially larger-scale and more in-depth analysis on the network. In this study, both of the tools will be combined for use. The actor linkage matrix will be applied to describe and reveal the type and strength of relations between pairs of stakeholders, and a network will be built upon it to visualize the relations in a more explicit way and provide a more holistic sense of the system. Although quantification is believed to be helpful, the amount of data collected in this study does not support robust quantitative analysis, yet this may leave us a new direction for future research.

2.4 Summary

Through reviewing the literature discussed above, this section reveals the importance of and practices for community-scale planning which underscores the value of this study. In addition, the past research on stakeholder analysis informs the theoretical and methodological framework of this piece of work. With such knowledge in mind, the following text takes Caoyang New Village as an example and conducts stakeholder analysis on this case. The next chapter will briefly introduce the neighborhood and the project under discussion.

Chapter 3

Case Overview: Community Planning in Caoyang New Village

In February 2018, Putuo District Government of Shanghai launched the “*Community Planner System*”, where a team of planners was hired for each subdistrict to conduct a local, comprehensive planning project. As mentioned above, the “*Community Planner System*” was among the early efforts to institutionalize community planning and therefore, such projects are a good field for studies on community planning practices and performance. While Caoyang New Village is chosen as the case study here, this chapter will provide an overview of the case. It specifically introduces the history and background of the community, the procedures and status of the project under discussion, and, as the first step of the stakeholder analysis, starts to identify the significant stakeholders involved here.

3.1 Background of Caoyang New Village

Caoyang New Village is located in Putuo District of Shanghai, and is equivalent to Caoyang subdistrict in terms of the administrative division (see its location figure 3-1). Caoyang New Village today consists of nine villages, from Village I to Village IX, and occupies a total area of 158 hectare with over 107 thousand residents (see figure 3-2). Village I, the first section of



Figure 3-1: Location of Caoyang New Village in Shanghai

Caoyang New Village, was built in 1951 and was then the first workers’ village across the whole country. In 1951, Pan, the deputy mayor of Shanghai at that time, said “in order to serve the working class, the most urgent work in the city is to solve the housing problem for workers”. (Chen and Liu, 1998). Therefore, with Caoyang New Village as a beginning, the city started to construct an increasing number of workers’ villages and offer them to workers in industrial districts to improve their living conditions which were extremely poor at that time (Fu & Cao, 2019). Yang (2019) in his book researched on workers’ villages quite thoroughly, and stated that these workers’ villages were, due to the scarcity, a means to reward good-performing workers, known as “model workers” (*laomo*/劳模), so as to support and encourage industrial production in Shanghai. Living in workers’ villages was thus an honor, as a sense of identity and belonging was cultivated among the residents. From 1951 to 1953, Village I to VI were built in Caoyang, and till 1978 the number reached nine, which then constituted the entire Caoyang New Village

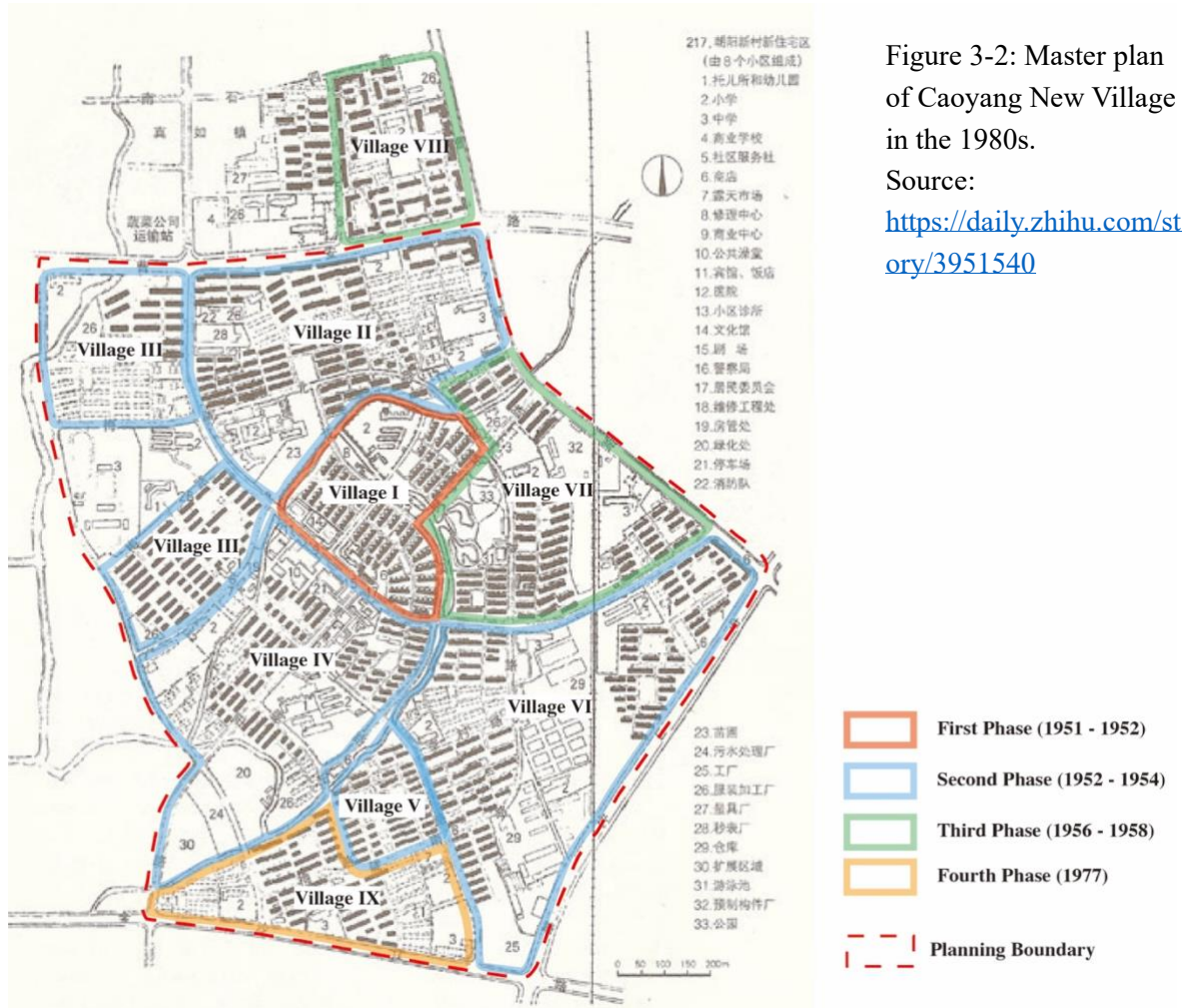


Figure 3-2: Master plan of Caoyang New Village in the 1980s.

Source:

<https://daily.zhihu.com/story/3951540>

today. As Fu and Cao wrote in the book, when constructed, Caoyang New Village is deemed to be a perfect model for the construction of residential areas in Chinese industrial cities, and till the reform of the housing system in the late 1990s, it remains the largest workers' village in scale, the longest in duration, the most complete in facilities, and the most typical and the best-preserved one (2019). In 2005, Caoyang Village I was designated as the “excellent historical buildings” in Shanghai. In other words, Caoyang New Village is a community having many significant historical traces and social symbols embedded, which are both opportunities and challenges for the community at the same time.

In contrast to the honored identity in the past, Caoyang New Village today confronts a wide spectrum of problems, ranging from severely deteriorated housing quality to constant economic stagnation. Residences built back in the 1950s now have extremely poor quality, crowded situation, and floor plan that is not considered suitable for the modern life. According to data collected from the neighborhood committees by Yang, the residential area per capita in Caoyang subdistrict is 6m², around 1/3 of the average across Shanghai, while 86.7% of the households have to share kitchens and bathrooms (2019) (see figure 3-3 and 3-4). These not only adversely affect residents' life in the community, but furthermore undermine neighborhood relations and aggravate their conflicts. With this being said, most of the model workers' descendants moved out of Caoyang New Village once they gained the ability and resources, as people with relatively low mobility and socio-economic status got left behind. As shown by the demographic data collected from the subdistrict office by community planners, in 2018 over 40% of the residents living in Caoyang New Village are over 60 years old, ranking the fourth highest among the ten subdistricts in Putuo district. Meanwhile, among the 107 thousand residents in the community, only 32 thousand, or 30%, of them are home owners, while the rest of them rent apartments, mostly because of its proximity to the well-known Caoyang No.2 High School. Data from the neighborhood committee of Caoyang Village I further suggests that in 2010, over half of the registered households in Village I are with difficulties (*kunnanhu*/困难户)¹, and around 34% of the registered residents have to rely on the minimum living security (*dibao*/低保)² (Yang, 2019).

¹ Households with difficulties (*Kunnanhu*) in Shanghai are defined as households who have less than 15 m² of living area per person.

² The minimum living security or *dibao* is a type of subsistence allowance offered to households who have income level lower



Figure 3-3 (above): Shared kitchen which is complained for being unsanitary.

Figure 3-4 (below): Degraded façade of residential buildings.



While these data only consider registered households and residents with local Hukou, the economic condition of Caoyang New Village can be worse if taking floating population and than the local threshold.

tenants into account. The deteriorated environment and housing quality as well as the poor socio-economic profile of residents have formed a loop in the community, which is a great challenge that Caoyang needs to address today.

3.2 The Caoyang Community Planning Project

Because of the glory past and the current suboptimal situation of Caoyang New Village, there were actually a lot of community renovation efforts made before 2018. As a matter of fact, Caoyang New Village remained as “*Public Housing*” (*gongfang/公房*) that is owned by the state and gets renovated and refurbished by the government every ten years according to the policy. However, such refurbishment was largely limited to improving physical outer appearance by painting building façades and upgrading necessary amenities, without solving the residents’ most urgent problems with the living condition. It is also noticed that starting from 2016, a number of small-scale public space design projects unfolded in the community by teams of planners and designers from various universities, institutes, design and construction firms. Yet most of these projects only focus on the physical design of a small piece of public area in the community with rather limited impact on the whole neighborhood.

The community planning project now under investigation was, in this sense, fairly different from them. As introduced before, the project was launched in 2018 by Putuo District Government under the “*Community Planner System*”, whereas planners from SUCDRI were invited to be community planners for Caoyang subdistrict with a three-year contract, sharing a mission to comprehensively evaluate the community condition, identify key problems and issues,

and draft a holistic plan for the community's long-term regeneration and development. The community planners started working on this project in February 2018, and the last time they presented the plan to the government was September 2019. There was no known connection between community planners and the governments afterwards, according to both of their responses during the interviews. As the community planners are glad to share their final plan, I will introduce the main content of their plan as follows.

The community plan consists of three sections: community assessment, development plan, and implementation schedule and mechanisms. The plan firstly made overall evaluation of the community in a variety of aspects including amenities, public space, walkability, landscape, housing quality, and community management. In order to complete the evaluation, community planners conducted site visits, held seminars with neighborhood committees and subdistricts, and did interviews with, as well as (through neighborhood committees) administered questionnaires to the community residents. They together identified a number of key issues with the community that require solution, including the aging infrastructure, poorly designed public space, monotonous and dull landscape, and substandard housing quality. The development plan thus set three objectives: (1) improve the community environment, (2) enhance the life quality, and (3) (re)build the community identity. With these objectives being stated, recommendations were provided accordingly, covering topics of public space and amenities, street design, waterfront spaces, landmark design, landscape color scheme, and renovation inside residential quarters. In the last section, the plan suggests short-term and long-term actions that may be taken and, in addition, briefly discusses strategies and approaches to engage the public into community

planning and put collaboration into reality among government agencies, scholars, planners and designers, as well as the community residents.

As the interviewed planners and the scholar have commented, this plan is fairly comprehensive and nearly all-inclusive. It has successfully diagnosed a number of crucial problems with the community and suggested a variety of methods to deal with them. It is, however, also noted that most of the recommended strategies and methods are applied either to the design of public spaces, such as streets, plazas and parks, or to the outer appearance of the residential quarters, such as gates, entrances, walls and façades. On the other hand, only a small section of the plan discusses the most practical and the everyday-life-related problems such as housing, environment, sanitation, and infrastructure. The interviewed planners have also acknowledged this during our interviews, and attributed the lack of such discussion to the constraints on their authority and duty. Specifically saying, such issues are not considered to be within the planners' responsibility but are taken charge by the corresponding departments of the district government. Planners noticed these problems and had them reported yet were not expected to discuss solutions other than physical design in this plan. In this sense, this plan was considered more as a design proposal for this residential neighborhood than a long-term development plan of the community. In addition, after presenting the final version of this plan to the government in September 2019, the community planners were no longer informed of the status of the project and have little idea about what is being done. As a matter of fact, only a few recommendations in this plan have been or are being implemented today, including housing renovation in Caoyang Village I and of the Lanxi Youth Park, whereas the rest of the plan

remains under consideration by the district government. This plan therefore plays little more than an advisory role for the district government's work. "One pity we have about this project is that we cannot really track its progress actively, if not invited by the district government", said a planner during the interview.

Therefore, while the community plan of Caoyang New Village is applaudable with its comprehensiveness and clear-defined objectives, it is anything but perfect – It fails to meet the most urgent local needs and might probably have to stay on the paper for a long time. Hence, in the following text, I would like to focus on the mechanism of community planning by looking at the different stakeholders involved in the planning process and the dynamics among them. As argued before, such analysis can help reveal the successes and pitfalls with the current structure, and may then guide future practices. Serving as a first step of the stakeholder analysis, the last section of this chapter will introduce the stakeholders in this case and briefly explain their duties and roles.

3.3 Stakeholder Identification

It all starts with a simple question: Who were the stakeholders? According to the definition discussed above, stakeholder refers to those who can affect or can be affected by a project (Mitchell, 1997). Using the four categories of stakeholders put forward by MacQueen et al. (2008) which include public sector, private sector, community, and independent groups, stakeholders in this case of Caoyang New Village are evidently Putuo district government, Caoyang subdistrict government, community planners from SUCDRI, and neighborhood

committees along with residents in Caoyang New Village (see table 3-1). Among them, the district and subdistrict governments belong to the public sector, and the neighborhood committees and community residents fall into the category of the community. Community planners are however special. They are hired as community planners for Caoyang New Village with a three-year contract from SUCDRI, which is a state-owned enterprise that is operated by the municipal government but financially independent. Therefore, it seems more proper to consider them as an intermediary in this case. While there are certainly other stakeholders such as the homeowners' association that can also be subject to the project's influences, these five stakeholders are deemed as the key players here who are most directly related to this project and have been fairly active and visible during the whole process. In the following text, I will briefly explain how each group of them is involved and what their roles are in general.

Table 3-1: Categories of stakeholders.

Category	Stakeholders
Public Sector	Putuo District Government and Caoyang Subdistrict Office
Intermediary	Community planners from Shanghai Urban Construction Design and Research Institute
Community	Neighborhood Committees and residents

Public sector: Putuo District Government and Caoyang Subdistrict Office. The district government, as introduced before, is the initiator of the “*Community Planner System*” and also of this specific project. In practice, the district government provides fund for hiring community planners, and is responsible for implementing the plan with its financial and administrative

resources. During the process, the community planners had to consistently present the plan to the district government and collected their opinions. Their thoughts were considered very important and had great influencing power. The subdistrict office, according to the Regulations on Shanghai subdistrict offices, takes charge of providing community services, conducting community management, and ensuring public safety (Shanghai Municipal People's Congress, 2017a). With its main duty as serving and managing the subdistrict, their revenues are largely reliant on the district government. In this project, the subdistrict office is closely involved in the plan-making process as well via meeting regularly with the planners and district government officials.

Intermediary: planners from SUCDRI. The planners from SUCDRI were hired to conduct community planning for Caoyang New Village, with a three-year term. According to the planners, they were paid by the district government, yet with relatively low amount of rewards. In the planning process, they were required to holistically assess the community condition and the main duty is to make the comprehensive community plan with facilitation from other stakeholders. Their role in this project is by any means significant.

Community: residents and neighborhood committees in Caoyang subdistrict.

Neighborhood committees are the autonomous self-governance organizations of neighborhoods in urban China, with their presidents and vice-presidents being elected by the residents inside. There are 20 neighborhood committees in Caoyang New Village. They are responsible for providing services as well as organizing activities and events for the neighborhood (Shanghai Municipal People's Congress, 2017b). In most cases, neighborhood committees also need to

facilitate the work of the subdistrict office and district government. Similar to the subdistrict government, the neighborhood committees are also financially dependent on the district government. In this project, leaders of each neighborhood committee were consulted at least once to state the neighborhood's needs and interests. Finally, residents in the community are probably the most directly affected stakeholders by the community planning project. While the project is intended to improve the living environment and life quality of them, they are the stakeholders who are the most relevant and have the most urgent need.

With an overview of the case under discussion and the stakeholders deemed significant for this project, the next chapter follows this by conducting the next two important steps for stakeholder analysis. The analysis is mostly based upon my interviews with the planners, government officials, neighborhood committees, residents, and scholars during December 2019 and January 2020. The upcoming analysis on the salience of and dynamics among stakeholders is key to understand how the structure works.

Chapter 4

Stakeholder Analysis: Stakeholder Differentiation and Dynamics

After contextualizing the project and introducing the key players, this chapter will make more in-depth stakeholder analysis while inheriting the analytical framework from Reed et al. (2009). It consists of two major sections: stakeholder differentiation and stakeholder relation analysis, which firstly explores how different stakeholders are involved in this process and then how they interact with each other. Through this analysis, it expects to reveal which stakeholders are more dominant in the planning process and which are being possibly under-represented, and which of them have close interaction while which of the others are relatively marginalized. As argued previously, this analysis will help indicate the potential weaknesses of the current institutional structure and the planning mechanism, which will then be discussed in the final chapter.

4.1 Stakeholder Differentiation

After having the key stakeholders identified, it is helpful to differentiate them in terms of their degree of salience and significance shown in the current system. A power-interest matrix is then a classical and effective tool for this purpose by showing who of the stakeholders are more

affected while who are, on the other hand, more powerful. It should be noted that mismatch between the level of power and degree of interest may arouse problems about equity and justice, and may lead to failures to meet the most urgent and real demand. Therefore, with the power-interest matrix being applied at this stage, stakeholders are evaluated on these two dimensions. While there lacks a universal indicator system for these two concepts specifically, they are defined and measured as follows.

Power refers to the ability of the stakeholder to *contribute thoughts, cast influences, or make decisions* about the plan, in spite of potential opposition from the other stakeholders. Therefore, when evaluating power of stakeholders against each other, the criteria is that (1) whether the stakeholders are given the channel and opportunities to be shown with and comment on the plan, and (2) the influence level of their opinion compared to other stakeholders, especially when there is conflict. As for the stakeholder's interest, it means in what aspects are the stakeholders affected or expected to be affected by this project. When comparing interests among stakeholders, *the urgency of the (expected) effects* are considered as important indicators. It is thus critical for evaluation to examine how urgent are their need for this project and whether this project remains a top priority for them. The table below (table 4-1) provides the detailed interview questions that were asked to the stakeholders, which imply how relevant information was extracted from the subjects to assess these two attributes of them.

Table 4-1. Interview questions asking about power and interest level of interviewees.

Power
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do you know about this plan? How did you get to know about it?• Have you ever attended any meeting/forum/seminar or other events where the plan was presented to you and discussed?• Have you ever expressed and discussed your thoughts on this project with any other people? In what occasions and how?• Is there any occasion when you have conflicting opinions against the other stakeholders in terms of this project? How did you solve that?
Interest
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your vision for this community?• What is your most urgent need from this community planning project?• What kind of issues do you consider are the most important for this community and for you (physical environment/social well-being/quality of life...)?

By searching through their responses to these questions, it can be told which stakeholders are more influential and which are more affected. In order to present the results explicitly, interview responses are summarized in the following tables (table 4-2 & 4-3), in which quotes from the interviewees are organized according to the stakeholder under discussion, and are then concluded as high, medium, or low level of power or interest based on the criteria mentioned before. The two tables below show the two attributes respectively.

Table 4-2. Power level of stakeholders

Stakeholder under discussion	Quotes from interview responses	Level of power
District Government	<p>Planner [1]: “If the district government has any opinion, we should try out best to integrate their opinion into our plan...We should show changes based on our reflection on it when presenting the plan next time.”</p> <p>Neighborhood Committee Worker [1]: “The plan of the whole community is the district government’s business...It’s only when they have orders to take action that we can do something.”</p>	High
Subdistrict Office	<p>Planner [1]: “We listened to the opinions from the subdistrict officials as well.”</p> <p>Planner [2]: “The subdistrict government does not have the power to implement this plan either.”</p> <p>Scholar [1]: “After the subdistrict government was deprived of the financial duty, they are only service provider and are subordinate to the district.”</p>	Medium
Community Planners	<p>Planner [2]: “The district government decides on the direction of our plan. What we can negotiate with them is the detailed actions and design...We try to be objective in the planning process.”</p>	Medium
Neighborhood Committees	<p>Neighborhood Committee Worker [1]: “I didn’t hear about this project...There is currently a re-construction project ongoing and we are required to cooperate with the subdistrict government to persuade each household to agree on the project.”</p> <p>Neighborhood Committee Worker [2]: “I know there are problems, but I cannot report these problems...We can only passively receive command from the upper-level government.”</p>	Low
Residents	<p>Resident [1]: “We know nothing of the plan...In previous renovation projects, we were only informed that the park would be closed for a while and there would be renovation work inside.”</p> <p>Planner [1]: “At this stage we did not show residents the plan...The interviewed residents have many different thoughts on the project and on their community. We simply cannot satisfy every one of them. We can only sort out some useful ones to take into consideration.”</p>	Low

Table 4-3. Interest level of stakeholders

Stakeholder under discussion	Quotes from interview responses	Degree of Interest
District Government	<p>Planner [1]: “Caoyang was very famous in the past. The district government wants us to revitalize the community, so that they can compete for better resources.”</p> <p>Planner [1]: “This project is one of the numerous duties of the district government. For example, waste sorting and recycling recently has attracted most of the attention, and therefore there is not much energy spared to this project now.”</p>	Medium
Subdistrict Office	<p>Subdistrict official [1]: “We are working hard to ameliorate the environment of the community.”</p> <p>Planner [2]: “The subdistrict office mainly takes care of residents’ life and services in the community.”</p> <p>Scholar: “Many of the officials in the subdistrict government are also residents inside. They care a lot about the community’s development.”</p>	High
Community Planners	<p>Planner [1]: “It is not so profitable as the other project we usually do... We are not from the community and we will leave after finishing the plan. I think a potential change to the current system is that they should hire planners who came from the community originally.”</p>	Low
Neighborhood Committees	-	High
Residents	<p>Resident [2&3]: “There are many problems with my life here. The housing quality is really bad. We have very poor sanitation, and renovation of our housing is a must.”</p>	High

By looking at these responses, the power-interest matrix can be plotted as the figure 4-1. As shown in this figure, the stakeholders are divided into different quadrants, which represent different positions of them in this project. In the following text, I would like to summarize the figure and discuss its implications.

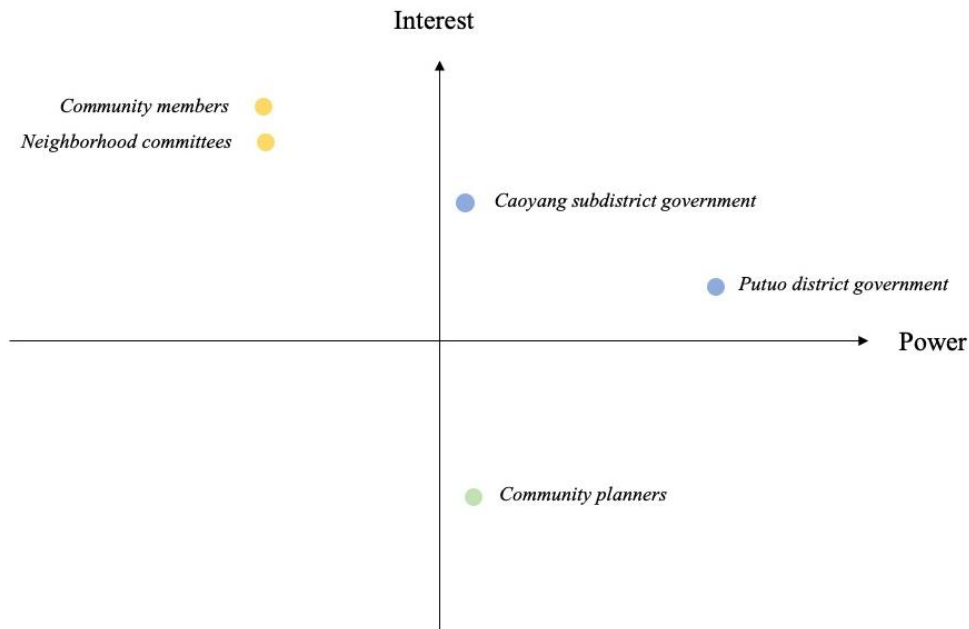


Figure 4-1. Power-interest matrix of stakeholders in Caoyang community planning project.

High power and medium interest: Putuo District Government. According to the interview responses and the description of the district government’s duties in the institutional framework, it is explicitly shown that power in the planning process is very centralized, held almost solely by the district government. As mentioned before, the district government provides both the financial and administrative resources for initiating the project and implementing the plan, and the

subdistrict office, neighborhood committees, along with the community planners are financially dependent on the district government in this case. Therefore, the district government is, to large extent, playing a dominant role, while the other stakeholders only passively follow requirements from it for the most of time. The interviewed planners have both recognized that it is almost a must to integrate the district government's suggestions in their plan. Yet on the other hand, the district government's interest in this community planning project is not among the highest. Revitalizing the community can certainly bring economic profits as well as political rewards to district government officials, yet Caoyang is only one of the nine subdistricts in Putuo district, and thus this project will not always be their priority. As argued by one of the interviewed planners, it is not likely that the district government will keep sparing so much effort to one single project. Therefore, the district government does not share interests in this case as urgent as the other stakeholders.

Medium power and high interest: Caoyang Subdistrict Office. As introduced before, the subdistrict government's duty is to help manage and provide services for the community, largely following commands and policies given by the district government. While they do not have a decisive power in this project, they were, however, presented with the plan regularly, when the community planners collected and absorbed their opinion so as to best meet their demands. In this sense, the subdistrict office was in fact given the channel and some degree of power to influence the plan-making process, though being inferior to the district-level government. In terms of the interest, while the subdistrict office has the most significant duty of them as improving the life quality inside the community, the attention to this community planning project

paid by them is thus much more intense and longer-stayed than the district level. In addition, many of the subdistrict government officials are found to be residents living in Caoyang New Village themselves (Yang, 2019). Therefore, their need for the community regeneration and their interest in this project can be relatively more intense and urgent compared to the district government.

Medium power and low interest: community planners. Planners are the direct producers of the plan. While the district government has strong power to influence the plan and the subdistrict governments have their interests to be considered as well, there did exist space for planners to inject their values and apply their knowledge. As mentioned by one of the planners, as they should always keep consistent with the government in terms of the general goals and strategies of the plan, they were actually encouraged to wield their professional knowledge and skills to put these goals into practice. Another planner also stated that they were trying to play an objective role during the process and strike a balance between the government's and the community's interest, by negotiating with both entities, specifically on the details of the plan or the design. It implies that these planners did take a significant position in the discourse, especially in providing the expertise knowledge. Nevertheless, it has to be recognized at the same time that the community planners were selected by the subdistrict government and were paid insufficiently (less than the other same-scale projects). With that being said, neither do they share emotional links with the community, nor are the rewards sufficient enough to keep motivating them. Therefore, it is very likely that community planners do not have strong interests in the project under the current system, which may hinder them from making the best out of it.

Low power and high interest: neighborhood committees and community residents.

According to the interviewed planners and the subdistrict official, they have administered over one hundred questionnaires and conducted around ten interviews at the beginning of the planning process, in order to collect the community's demands and concerns. However, among the three neighborhood committee workers and the three residents that were interviewed, none of them has heard about this community planning project. This may indicate the insufficiency of the research work on the community, and the poor engagement of the community members in the process. Furthermore, during the planning process, there was simply no notification about this plan to the community, let alone forum or seminar where committees and residents might be invited to discuss freely on this issue. Without being informed, neighborhood committees and residents apparently have the lowest power in this project. Yet as argued before, they are nevertheless the ones with the highest and the most urgent interests. For neighborhood committees, not only is their duty exactly to ameliorate the living condition of the neighborhood, but have most of the workers lived in this community for a long time. For the other residents, the demand to solve their problems with living here is, again, true and urgent. Their interest in this planning project is closely related to the everyday life they have to lead.

From the description above, one may observe a mismatch between the stakeholders' power and interest levels: stakeholders with more intense and urgent interest tend to have less power in the plan-making process, while in contrast those who are dominant have their interest in this project replaceable and thus do not usually take this project as a priority. Such mismatch is problematic, as the entities with the right, capabilities, and required resources to address the

problem can fail to catch the most basic and urgent demands from the grassroots, and may not have the energy and time as well as passion and motivation to implement these changes. The disempowered community, the neighborhood committees and the residents, can only then wait for decisions and actions from the slow-responding upper-level governments. In addition to hindering the community's problems from being resolved accurately and promptly, such mismatch will greatly deprive the community members of the passion to proactively seek for changes and improvements. When being interviewed, the residents and the committee workers often argued that the community-scale issue is none of their business, but is taken charge by the subdistrict office and the district government. The lack of channels and approaches to express their concerns and push forward transformations have damaged their awareness of being part of the community, which will then reinforce the imbalanced power relation.

4.2 Stakeholder Relationships

Following the stakeholder differentiation analysis that evaluates the stakeholders' power and interest in the process, it is then important to explore the relations and dynamics among them in order to reveal how they connect and interact with each other. As introduced in the literature review, the actor linkage matrix and social network analysis are chosen as tools here. For the purpose of investigating the presence and strength of ties between pairs of stakeholders, there are several questions in my interviews asking about the (1) frequency, (2) approaches, and (3) occasions of communication that happen among them (see table 4-4). The results are firstly summarized in table 4-5, which is in a matrix form that depicts in text the types of interactions

between the corresponding pair of stakeholders. Figure 4-2 is then a network graph that shows the relations with nodes and edges. Each node represents a stakeholder group and the width of the edge indicates the strength of the tie. In addition to relations between each pair of stakeholders, the network graph can help provide a better sense of the position of each stakeholder in this interaction and communication network.

Table 4-4. Interview questions asking about interactions among stakeholders.

Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How many times have you met with the other stakeholders for discussing this plan? On what occasion?• What are the normal procedures of your meetings with the other stakeholders, if any?• When having concerns about some community issue or ongoing work in the community, how do you usually report them and express your thoughts?

Table 4-5. Interactions between stakeholders.

	District Government	Subdistrict Government	Community Planners	Neighborhood Committees	Residents
District Government		Had five official meetings with all the relevant departments in the district government, and officials and community planners from other subdistricts		-	-
Subdistrict Government			Had five official meetings. Planners also asked the subdistrict office for information of the community in the early phase; The subdistrict office helped organize the seminar where planners solicited opinions from with neighborhood committees leaders.	Had 1 seminar where neighborhood committees conveyed their demands and concerns.	-
Community Planner					Community planners conducted interviews with over 10 households and administered questionnaires to residents through neighborhood committees.
Neighborhood Committees					Neighborhood committees collected residents' opinion by

					administering questionnaires from community planners; Leaders and works of neighborhood committees usually have close relation to the community residents.
Residents					

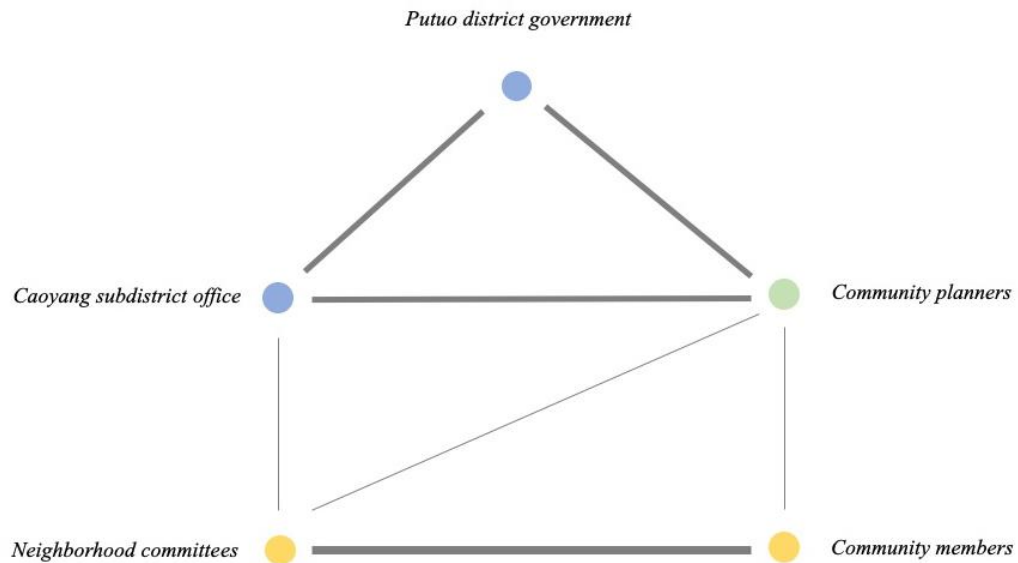


Figure 4-2. Social network graph of stakeholders.

A very hierarchical system with few cross-level interactions. As suggested by the power-interest matrix in the previous step, there is a power hierarchy existing among the stakeholders, while the district government occupies the highest level, subdistrict government and community planners are at the medium level, and neighborhood committees along with community residents are at the bottom. The relations among them prove to be consistent with this hierarchy.

Interactions mostly happen between groups positioned at adjacent levels, while cross-level interaction, between the district government and the neighborhood committees and residents in this case, is rather scarce and at most indirect. In this case, the neighborhood committees can only express their concerns through community planners and subdistricts, without any direct communication with the real decision makers. As the social worker from the neighborhood committee has mentioned, there is no easy way for them to report problems directly to the

responsible entities in the district, and because of the difficulty, they seldom think of doing it.

This suggests a need for a flatter and more accessible platform for collaborative management and planning of the community. Such platforms can take advantage of the rising digital technologies and create a virtual common space for broad discussion on community issues.

Planners as key mediators. It is shown in the network graph that community planners play a strategic role in this stakeholder network. They have direct connections and interactions with all of the other stakeholders, and are therefore considered as key mediators in the planning process. However, though being connected to the other stakeholders, the frequency and approaches of planners' interactions with others are quite limited and may not be the most efficient ones. The community planners have around five meetings with the district and subdistrict government, all in a quite formal manner. During the meetings, they presented the plan to officials from the district government and subdistrict office, then received comments and feedbacks from the audience. With the frequency being relatively low (once per one to two months), this form of interaction may not encourage more in-depth discussion. On the other hand, community planners have also got in touch with neighborhood committee presidents and community residents through the seminar and interviews. Yet the number of them are both few – there was only one seminar with the neighborhood committees and around ten interviews with the residents. There exists possibility that the community planners can have closer interaction and stronger ties with these stakeholders, so as to have more in-depth discussion on the critical issues, and probably in some more casual ways. As mediators, planners are exposed to the most variety of opinion and interests, and they need sufficient time as well as chances to understand

these different voices, can they then facilitate the negotiation and trade-off among them. By taking the advantage of this strategic role, planners are likely to have the greatest ability to promote more effective public engagement in the planning process under the current system.

Marginalized residents and neighborhood committees. It is found in the interviews that the residents and the neighborhood committees are almost unaware of the project ongoing. They seem very marginalized in the network, and can only be heard by the community planners with rare chances. As discussed above, there apparently lacks an accessible channel and platform for these grassroots organizations and community members to freely participate and defend their interests. Yet there is another problem that is about the quality of their interaction with the community planners. As both of the community planners have mentioned, some of the residents' demands and interests are "impractical and unrealistic", and are very often conflicting each other. The current approach to address this issue is that the community planners have to sort these opinions and select to preserve the "valuable" ones based on their own judgement. Such relatively low-quality interaction may undermine the planners' further willingness to actively seek for advices from the community, and the planners are also likely to miss the key targets when selecting based on their own experience. The interviewed scholar shared his comments on this issue by pointing out the necessity to have self-managed autonomous organizations in the community that may better lead discussion and represent the community's demand. Hopefully, this approach can largely enhance the efficiency of the community's interactions with the other stakeholders.

The power-interest matrix has shown a problematic mismatch between stakeholders' power

to influence the project and the urgency of their interests in it. The relation analysis then reveals problems with connections among them, which suggests the need to engage the marginalized group more effectively and create an accessible platform for smoother and more efficient collaboration. In addition, planners, in this case, are key and are expected to take advantage of their strategic role to approach participatory community planning. This stakeholder analysis is thus a functional approach to examine the current mechanism. In the final chapter, I would like to conclude this thesis by summarizing this case study and providing policy recommendations for the future community planning projects in the city.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Since the beginning of the 2010s, community planning has been gaining increasing attention in China's urban planning field. While many cities have put it into practice, Shanghai is one of the pioneers that institutionalize community planning through the "*Community Planner System*". This research selects the community planning project of Caoyang New Village in Putuo district, Shanghai as a case study. In order to explore how community planning is practiced, organized, and implemented in this case, I conducted a stakeholder analysis of this case and revealed the roles of and dynamics among the different stakeholders involved in this process. This final chapter will firstly summarize the results of the analysis and point out problems with the current structure, and then make a few policy recommendations for the future improvement on it. There will also be brief mention on the limitations of this study and possible directions for the future research at the end.

5.1 Summary of Stakeholder Analysis

By examining who are the stakeholders, what are their roles, and how they interact with each other, the stakeholder analysis has shown a number of problems with the current system.

The first one is the mismatch between the stakeholders' power and interest level. This mismatch can cause lag and even failure for decision-makers to meet the basic and the most urgent needs of the community. Such disempowerment of the community can in addition deprive the community of the agency to actively seek for changes. There is, therefore, a vicious cycle. While the centralized power structure prevents problems from being solved promptly, residents then have worse experience living in the community. As they do not have the resources to resolve the problems by themselves either, they share less interest in managing and maintaining the community, which then brings more problems.

Second, interactions among stakeholders are unfortunately weak and few. With the hierarchical structure, the current approaches to communication between stakeholders are limited to a few which are rather formal, such as seminars or meetings with officials. While stakeholders from the community simply have no access to such formal communications, the frequency and the form of these meetings are, in fact, insufficient and inappropriate to support in-depth understanding about the different needs and interests, let alone negotiation and compromise. Meanwhile, the rare interactions between planners and residents are of suboptimal quality, as the residents have drastically different opinions that the community planners are reluctant to incorporate them all. For this reason, a flat, accessible, and efficient platform is needed, which may allow for broader, prompter, and more cross-level interactions among them.

The last problem lies in the role of planners. Community planners in this project, though at a strategic position in the stakeholder network, has played the role which is little more than designers. Their duties are defined by the upper-level governments as experts at physical design,

and are thus not given the right and resources to organize multi-lateral efforts to address the community issues. With this being said, their agency, beyond design techniques, is restricted. However, given their key role in this process, they are most likely to connect stakeholders and mediate among them. There should hence be more opportunities for them to get in touch with these stakeholders, and make negotiation and try to achieve consensus among them. With these problems revealed, policy recommendations are provided in the next section.

5.2 Policy Recommendations

Responding to the problems identified above, there are ways to change the current structure so that a more balanced power relation may be achieved and wider communication can be realized. Below are the three policy recommendations: (1) power decentralization, (2) establishment of a collaborative platform, and (3) transformation of planners' roles.

5.2.1 Power decentralization

As argued above, there is a need to decentralize the decision-making power. While the current plan is critiqued as failing to meet the most basic needs of the community, allowing those who have close interests in it to comment on and control the plan can greatly help address this problem. This also indicates a movement upward along the Arnstein's ladder, where the public are given greater power to influence the process as well as outcomes. As a matter of fact, such empowerment is being practiced in many other projects. In Yangpu district, a community planning project led by a scholar from Tongji University, though still having a focus on public

space design, actually had the residents engaged in both the design and implementation process (Chinadaily, 2018). While this is one possible way to change the power structure, another aspect, which is more fundamental, is to decentralize the financial and administrative power from the district government. It should be noticed that the subdistrict office has the most appropriate alignment of power and interest among the various stakeholders, which gives them the chance to reflect the community's demand and, to some extent, influence the planning process. In this sense, the district government should delegate a higher degree of self-determination and financial autonomy to the subdistricts, so as to reduce the financial and administrative burdens on themselves. Such decentralization shall also be extended to more grassroot organizations, such as the neighborhood committees. By delegating the right of making decisions, the community may share stronger power in the structure as well as better capabilities to implement changes for their own community. This also echoes the concept of “collective governance” (gongtongzhili/共同治理) in recent policies. To realize this, institutional reforms are needed.

5.2.2 Establishment of a collaborative platform

While power decentralization may require more serious structural changes, there are also chances for improvement given the current system, especially regarding the effects and efficiency of communication. As argued above, there still lacks an accessible and efficient approach for stakeholders to communicate and cooperate, which leads to the insufficient connections among them. Therefore, a more collaborative platform should be created to address this issue. The platform can take advantage of the technological advancements such as

community kiosks and online forums. This is an effective way to make the planning process visible and mobilize the public participation. Residents and government officials who are responsible can then exchange their concerns directly and smoothly with each other, and residents may see and realize each other's diverse, sometime conflicting, needs as well. There are a number of successful precedents for this. For example, in Barcelona, Decidim is a website for city-wide participatory democracy, where information of the city's work ongoing is released for comments and the public are also welcomed to initiate their own discussion and programs (Macher, 2020). In Boston, there is also a city-led experiment with deploying digital kiosks in communities. "This gives the city a chance to work out whether they serve the City of Boston's goals or not", said by a smart city research specialist (Barrett, 2019). Hence, such technology products can hopefully facilitate the collaborative planning process by transparentize information and invite communication. In addition, policies and regulations should be enacted to guarantee the frequency and content of such communication, so that a baseline for engagement and participation can be formed where different entities are guaranteed to have sufficient exposure. Such platforms and mechanisms can contribute to a more collaborative environment, and may also assist cooperation among different departments and agencies.

5.2.3 Transformation of community planners' roles

The final recommendation is a transformation of the community planners' roles. Perlstein and Ortolano (2015) have defined the role of planners in China in three ways: (1) negotiating for a middle ground between their opinions and the priorities of officials, (2) providing technical

analysis that can both inform and legitimize government decisions, and (3) deliberately advocating for a position in the face of a conflicting agenda. In this case, one can view the community planners more as the second role who offered technical support and design expertise to address the government officials' appeal, yet were given little right to interfere with other issues, which may be more relevant for the community. However, it has to be recognized that in the stakeholder network, community planners are found to have a strategic role and therefore enjoy the most chances to get in touch with stakeholders. It is thus important to give community planners the duty, resources, as well as opportunities to achieve a more collaborative, participatory, and democratic planning process. Instead of being treated simply as technicians or design experts, they can be the central nodes, as mediators and negotiators, and attempt to mediate between the government order, the community's demand, and their own values. If given the power, planners can help strike this balance and achieve social justice. This however requires a deep reflection on the definition of planners as a profession, and may furthermore calls for revolutions in education for planners.

These recommendations are made to overcome the weak points of the current structure based on my analysis. Some of the recommendations are radical, involving reforms of the institutional framework of city management and division of labor among different levels of government. Yet some of them, especially creation of a collaborative platform and mechanism, are comparatively close to be realized and implemented. After all, changes need to be incremental, and advancements have to be made with multilateral efforts.

5.3 Limitations

Constrained by the time frame for conducting interviews with stakeholders, the number of interviewees is quite limited. Meanwhile, I did not get the chance to interview the district government officials, who are actually extremely important in this process. Expanding the spectrum and number of interviewees will definitely enhance the comprehensiveness and thus add more value to this research. In addition, while the interviews are all conducted in a one-to-one manner, a focus group can be organized in the future so that they can have exchange of ideas with each other, as suggested by previous studies. Lastly, there lacks a universal indicator system for the stakeholder analysis. Although power-interest matrix and social network analysis are found to be commonly-used tools, there is not any fixed set of indicators to measure the key attributes used by them. Creating an indicator system may allow more longitudinal studies and comparative analyses, which can trace the evolution of community planning as well as learn from other cases. This may suggest a direction for further research.

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Appendix A
Information of Interviewees and Interviews

Community Planner [1]	a member of the community planner team for Caoyang subdistrict; interview conducted in person, lasting 45 minutes
Community Planner [2]	one of the leading members of the community planner team for Caoyang subdistrict, who took the main charge of the project; interview conducted over the phone for around 30 minutes
Subdistrict Official	an official from Caoyang subdistrict's management office, who has been in touch with and assisted community planners to collect information and organize meetings; interview held in the interviewee's office for around 30 minutes
Neighborhood Committee Worker [1]	interviewee working in Yuanyuan (源园) neighborhood committee within Caoyang village I; interview conducted in the committee office for 10 minutes
Neighborhood Committee Worker [2]	a social worker who specifically provides services for people with physical disabilities, working in Yuanyuan neighborhood committee within Caoyang village I; interview conducted while walking in the neighborhood for around 15 minutes
Neighborhood Resident [1]	a resident in Caoyang village I who has resided in the community since 2006; interview conducted while walking in the neighborhood, lasting 30 minutes
Neighborhood Resident [2]	a resident in Caoyang village I who has resided in the community for over thirty years; interview conducted in Yuanyuan neighborhood committee office for 20 minutes
Neighborhood Resident [3]	a resident living in Caoyang village IX; interview taking place in Caoyang Park for 20 minutes
Urban Planning Professor	a professor at Tongji University who researches in community planning and has participated into the assessment and evaluation of the community plan in August 2018; interview conducted in the interviewee's office for 45 minutes.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Community Planners

- When did this project start and who initiated it?
- How did you get selected and designated? How many members do you have in your team?
- What were the reasons for launching this project? Was there any request from the district government or subdistrict office?
- When did you start to work on this plan? What did you do for researching and understanding the community? How did you get the information?
- What was your main direction and goal for this project? Did you discuss these with other stakeholders?
- To whom you presented your plans? How many times and how often did you meet with them and on what occasions?
- What kind of feedback did you usually get from different stakeholders? Were they integrated in the plan?
- Were there any conflicting interests in the planning process? How were they resolved?
- What is the current status of this project? Is any part of the plan being implemented?
- How would you comment on this plan? Do you think this plan will help address some crucial problems with the community? If not, why?
- What are your thoughts about the community planner system? Is there any possible improvement to the system?

Subdistrict Office

- What is the socio-demographic profile of Caoyang New Village today? How are the neighborhood relations in the community? Is there a strong sense of belonging among the community members?
- When did the renovation projects of Caoyang New Village started? What were the proposals in the past like? What were their main focuses?
- How were the community planners selected and designated?
- What were some of your requirements and expectations towards the community planners? What problems did the subdistrict office think were the most critical and you hoped the community planners may help address?
- How did you participate in this process? What were your major duties?
- Did you meet with the other stakeholders regularly? What was the frequency of such meetings? How were they organized and arranged?
- Was there any time when you have conflicting interests against each other? How were they resolved?
- How did you deal with conflicts among residents in the planning process?
- Do you think the current plan can address the critical issues in the community? Are they responding to the community's demand?

- Is there any plan currently to implement the plan?
- What was your thought about the community planner system? Is there any possible improvement?

Neighborhood Committees and Residents

- How did you come to this neighborhood? Why did you choose to live here?
- What do you think of the living condition here? Do you often use community facilities? How is your relationship with your neighbors?
- What do you think are the most critical problems living in this community? Did you report these problems to any agency?
- Did you notice any renovation work in the community in recent years? How will you comment on them?
- Are you aware of the community planner system and the current community planning project? How did you get informed of this?
- Were you ever invited to any forum or meeting where you can express your opinion toward the plan?
- Do you anticipate to participate into the regeneration of the community? In what ways may you prefer to participate?

Urban Planning Professor

- When did you start to research Caoyang New Village? What attracted you?
- What is the current socio-economic status of Caoyang New Village? What about the physical environment, public amenities, and neighborhood relations etc.?
- When did renovation of Caoyang New Village started? What were the proposals in the past like? What were their main focuses? Did they get implemented?
- What are the government and district office's vision for Caoyang New Village?
- There have been conflicting interests between different stakeholders, and also among the residents. How should planners deal with them?
- How would you comment on the community plan made by community planners from SUCDRI? Do you think it can address the community's need?
- How much do you know about the community planner system in Shanghai? Do you think there is any possible improvement to it?