Design Conceptof New Urbanism for Planning Second Renaissance in Developing Fringes of Metropolitan Cities: Case Example of Pune, Maharashtra, India

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Abstract

Cities are changing the world over. Most are becoming worst places to live. There are many interesting forces causing this decline such as increase in population, failing infrastructure, sprawling development and an inability to provide adequate housing for lower and middle income class people. Today in the world of globalization and privatization, Indian cities are neglecting the inherited traditional design features and their planning concepts, which have played important role in revival of city's culture and today, are adopting American planning principles which have led to the failure of American cities. Today after going through the ill effects of this American planning principles & related social issues, sociologist, anthropologist, designers like Jane Jacob, Lewis Mumford, Richard Senatte are stressing onto the need to 'Humanize the cities' This has led to thereformation of the idea of planning in the western world. Today western planners have put forth various concepts and models like of 'New Urbanism' 'Smart Growth Development', 'Pedestrian Pockets', 'Community participation' which are based on principles of pedestrianisation, mixed use development, strengthening public transportation, originally inherited by traditional Indian cities. The main aim of this research paper is to put forth the American concept of New Urbanism, predominantly observed and originally existed in traditional Indian cities and reflected in traditional street and built-unbuilt spaces which can form the base of Second Renaissance in planning of new or developing areas in metropolitan cities. This is illustrated in case of Pune city, Maharashtra, India.

Keywords: New Urbanism, Design Principles, Second Renaissance

Introduction

New urbanism is an American urban design movement that arose in the early 1980s. Its goal is to reform many aspects of real estate development and urban planning, from urban retrofits to suburban infill. New urbanism neighborhoods are designed to contain a diverse range of housing and jobs, and to be walkable. It is a reaction to sprawl, based on planning and architectural principles working together to create human-scale, walkable communities. It is rooted in the work of architects, planners, and theorists who believed that conventional planning thought was failing.[1]

New Urbanism is urban development model, which reflects the features of planning of *Traditional Indian city* that made city physically and socially livable. It is also considered as a philosophy for revitalizing or reinstating traditional architecture and the quality of life in old core of the cities. Cities are much complex things which we humans make. For the past fifteen years the congress for New Urbanism has been aiding public and private sectors by employing or introducing following design principles for improving the quality of life in the cities, especially in older areas of the city, which initially inherited these principles [2]:

1. **Pedestrianisation of streets:** segregation of traffic corridors and pedestrian areas. The streets are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees. This slows traffic, creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicycles.Streets within the neighborhood form a connected network, which disperses traffic by providing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination.

2. **Mixed Land Uses:** For vibrant city life at all times of the day neighborhoods should be planned to accommodate diverse land uses in such a way that they are occupied round the clock. Eating, shopping, working, socializing and recreation merged with residential areas are mutually reinforcing and flourish in each other's presence. The key concept is to stop building single use zones such as 'Nariman Point', 'BandraKurla Complex' which are predominantly commercial and 'Gated Communities' which are treated as Residential enclaves; which is currently the trend or passion in 'Builders and Government Organization'. These places lack security aspect due to lack of vibrant social activity.

3. **Planned Demarcation or Allocation of parking lots:** In urbanized areas there is nothing more boring than walking past a parking lot whether they are open air or six storied tall. These must be banished along any residential or pedestrian's street. Planned parking lots, properly screened off visually with comfortable accessibility must be demarcated in city development plan. Easy accessibility and visual screening is the main aim of this demarcation.

4. **Small is beautiful:** People are small when compared to automobiles and most world class walkable cities acknowledge this fact with small blocks, small streets, small buildings and small increments of investment. Traditional Indian cities like Peth areas of Pune, Residential core of Jaisalmer, Walled City of Jaipur and so on reflect fine grain and fine texture creating incredible porous networks of streets. Pedestrians like crisscross movement through urban fabric, intelligently

looking for shortest routes between the two points. Unfortunately government planners propose development roads that create obscenely large blocks that make the city impenetrable. Tall buildings place undue stress on small plots of land, where population gets concentrated at a single point within the city, pressurizing all the systems including accessibility, parking, garbage removal, water and utility supply. Current Real estate developments in majority of Indian metropolitan cities are not considering this issue in land development.

5. **Building Affordable Housing:** Affordable housing remains crisis in majority of Indian cities and the solution is not to build housing in suburbs, which taxes the poor residents with longest commute. There are a variety of dwelling types — usually houses, row houses, and apartments — so that younger and older people, singles, and families, the poor, and the wealthy may find places to live.Mixed-use streetscapes with corner shops, front porches, and a diversity of well-crafted housing. The neighborhood is organized to be self-governing. A formal association debates and decides matters of maintenance, security, and physical change. Taxation is the responsibility of the larger community.

6. Consistent Check on development control pattern & their policies, rules & codes.

Social philosopher and historian Lewis Mumford criticized the "anti-urban" development of post-war America. The Death and Life of Great American Cities, written by Jane Jacobs[3] in the early 1960s, called for planners to reconsider the single-use housing projects, large car-dependent thoroughfares, and segregated commercial centers that had become the "norm." In the 1970s and 1980s, New Urbanism emerged with the urbanvisions and theoretical models for the reconstruction of the "European" city proposed by architect Leon Krier, and the "pattern language" theories of Christopher Alexander. These eventually coalesced into a unified group in the 1990s.The New Urbanism includes traditional architects and those with modernist sensibilities. Some work exclusively on infill projects, others focus on transit-oriented development, some attempt to transform the suburbs, and many work in all these categories. All believe in the power and ability of traditional neighborhoods to restore functional, sustainable communities.

Urbanization:

The past 150 years have witnessed the fastest change that human civilization has undergone. With post-industrial modernization, advanced modes of communication and technology have launched new forms of culture, value systems, beliefs and ideas. One of the major problems before us today is the rapid urbanization of the cities, the phenomena that occurs in a manner overcoming the architectural totality of the urban environment as well the integrity of the surrounding natural landscape. Characterized by large voids of undifferentiated space, the new city is devoid of a strong identity and character and becomes non-specific in nature. The city then fails to address physical issues of connectivity, services, infrastructure, landscape and ecology as well the psychological issues of orientation, identity and character.

Today new cities that are planned on a purely rational basis offer a monotones experience of roads &Sectors devoid of any character & specificity. On the other hand unplanned cities are characterized by haphazard visual – physical appearance & a lack of orientation. Such cities have nothing to offer to its inhabitants except for a space to build their house.

Indian Scenario:

If neatly observed traditional Indian cities like Walled City of Jaipur, Golden City of Jaisalmer having unique social character inherits these principles of New Urbanism. On the same lines old core of Pune city-the Peth Areas reflect the same principles but eventually these areas are subjected to tremendous pressure of privatization and traffic congestion with lack of other infrastructure facilities and services, leading to either deterioration or rapid transformation of these areas.

This research article puts forth the study of traditional elements and their characteristics, their principles of organization and planning in old core (Today which America has defined the process or movement as New Urbanism)-Peth areas of Pune city in 18th century, which if incorporated or regenerated in planning of modern city areas especially fringe areas of Pune city will definitely lead to the 'Second Renaissance' of old core in developing fringes of Pune city. The article will cover in brief the aspects of urban morphology, urban linkages, housing pattern, architectural style, and community structure, and activity pattern, townscape qualities of traditional old core of Pune city, which will contribute to the future planning of new or developing areas in the city.

Pune City Background:

In Pune past meet present. Pune is one of those rare cities with a twin image- that of traditionally bound place generally considered as the quintessence of Maharashtra Culture and of modern industrial metropolis. Pune is known as cultural capital of Maharashtra owing to its rich culture and heritage. It has also earned the reputation for its esteemed colleges as educational institutions and thus referred to as 'the Oxford of East'. Due to favorable location, pleasant climate, vibrant culture and incentives it has become a prominent place for I.T. sector and hence it is also a well-known 'IT-BT centre' in Maharashtra. This is resulting into transformation of traditions into cosmopolitan culture due to migration of people from adjacent states and foreign countries, which is further reflected, in the built form of developing fringes of Pune City. The loss of traditional touch, which is the heritage as well as climate responsive architecture, can be prominently observed in new areas of Pune city.

The inner older core of Pune city is divided into several wards or Peth areas depending upon their era of evolution, which though are rapidly transforming and deteriorating, still retain the traditional character, which strongly reflects the cultural aspect. The typical features of traditional Peth areas are listed below, which if implemented in planning of fringes will definitely contribute to the 'Second Renaissance' of Pune city. The main features are:

a) **Urban morphology:** The cultural core area of the city has organic close grain structure. The network of main linkages has created urban blocks that are irregular but functional in pattern, more from pedestrian point of view. These building blocks house a variety of building types. Structures are built

to edge with traditional streetscape qualities. Public realm spaces follow a hierarchical pattern moving from public to private realm.

close interaction between the occupants and passer bys on the streets. The traditional residential buildings are mostly medieval ones from 18th and 19th century with few temples, mosques and dargahs before 18th century. Late Mughal features like cusped arches, niches, pillars can be widely seen. Wooden elements like door window frames, shutters and brackets are beautifully carved motifs of flowers, birds, gods and goddess. Colonial features like vaults, segmental arches, jack arch roofs have been incorporated in the buildings of the later period. There are also traces of art deco features in buildings post-independence. However the character of contemporary development is placeless.

Peth	Year Founded		Peth	Year Founded
1 Kasba	Around 1300	10	Ganesh	1755 (Redev. 1789)
2 Shaniwar	Before 1610	11	Narayan	1761
3 Raviwar	Before 1610	12	Bhawani	1767
4 Somwar	Before 1610	13	Muzzafarganj	1768-1831
5 Mangalwar	1663	14	Sadashiv	1769
6 Budhwar	1703	15	Ghorpade	1781
7 Shukrawar	1734	16	Rasta	1783
8 Guruwar	1750	17	Nana	1789
9 Nihal	1755	18	Ganj	1789

Figure 1: Plan of old core of Pune city showing evolution of peth areas [4]

b) Urban Linkages: The historic core is an organic mesh of streets and lanes locally known as aalies punctuated by squares and open spaces. The streets are developed with pedestrian scale with narrow widths sufficient to allow palanquins, handcarts and other slow moving means of transport. Primary streets have the character of boulevard leading to important nodes and public buildings.

c) Architectural Style/ Character: The built form has developed a built to edge character, responding to the street in the form of chabutras, balconies and verandahs, fostering

Figure 2: Streetscape of old Pune city during 17[th]century [4] and 19th century respectively [5]

d) **Community Structure:** Strong community structure, close knit and vital social life is the unique feature of Peth areas which is one of the important aspect of New Urbanism. The communities are of mixed category-Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Marwaris etc. People from the same community stay together. For example certain pockets of Peth areas are dominated by particular category of community – muslims, marwaris, marathis etc.
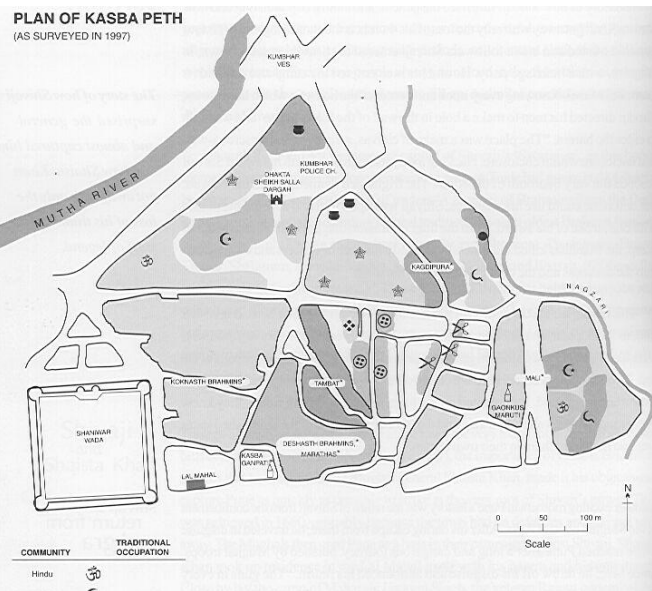

Figure 3: Mixed Community Structure [4] and Streetscape during Ganesh Festival [5]

e) **Activity Pattern/ Land Use:** There are multiple usages of urban space with mixed land uses properly integrated and confirming with each other. The residence and work place of the people are close by and often coincide with each other. At certain places there is concentration or specialization of certain activity within the streets, for example: Sonya Maruti Chowk specializes in gold jewellery work, Laxmi Road in textiles and clothing etc. The interconnecting network of primary, secondary and tertiary streets fosters close community living. Apart from being major arteries of commutation, primary streets reflect variety of everyday human activities of work, recreation, commerce and informal

interactions making them public places. They also function as a place of social gatherings during festivals.

f) **Townscape qualities:** The inner core of the city has distinctive townscape qualities. The legibility of the area is strengthened by visual cues such as major landmarks like Mandai, Shaniwarwada etc., gateways, olfactory and character areas. There are nodes of public spaces such as water tanks (hauds), tree canopies (paars), market areas (bazzars) along vibrant city networks. The urban forms in city network are traditional and distinctive in nature but under constant pressures of encroachment.

Figure 3: Kumbharwada: Node of specialized activity [4]

Figure 4: Major landmarks and nodes of public spaces: Shaniwarwada, Mandai-market place, tree-pars [5][4]

Conclusion:

The history of architecture in India has a rich and diversified legacy, not only in the classical examples but also as seen in the display of vernacular traditions of building. They are spread in several regional environments in the form of a variety of settlement patterns, institutions and dwelling types. Compared to modern Indian cities, traditional urban or semi-urban settlements display a degree of homogeneity and an overall order achieved through certain rules of thumb and controls. They express the totality of a relationship between man and society. The vernacular design process is one of typological models and, of modifications and variations therein, where the individual unit and not the house type is adjusted, adapted or personalized. The vernacular urbanity has an underlying structure within its overall organic attitude that leaves room for human expression and creativity.

On the threshold of new millennium, Pune's landscape reveals mix of kuccha and pucca elements, interspersed with authorized and unauthorized structures. Modern Pune's urban sprawl and built up development is controlled by theoretical rules or mechanisms of floor space index. However in practice they are blatantly ignored. The existing planning policies of development rules and implementation need to be modified. The reality is that there is serious mismatch between socio-economic structure of the population and the speed in which inward migration outgrows infrastructure. This has been the reason why the quality of the urban environment is steadily deteriorating and haphazard growth is taking place. At this juncture we need to take a stock of where we are now and where we are heading. New Urbanism is one of the hopes to organize the future of Pune City and its upcoming areas in traditional pattern.

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