

Research on collaborative construction mechanism of urban community public space

-- Taking Foshan community co-construction Garden in Guangdong Province as an example

Miaomiao Wang

(School of Public Administration, Guangdong University of Finance & Economics, Guangzhou 510320, China)

Abstract: The construction of “everyone has responsibility, everyone is responsible, everyone enjoys the social governance community” is an important requirement put forward by the Party twenty Ten, is the key content of innovative social governance, but also provides the direction for urban community governance. Community governance is the smallest unit of national governance, promote community consultation, co-construction, co-governance and sharing, improve the quality of the social environment. This paper takes Foshan community Garden in Guangdong Province as an example. Through the concrete practice of Foshan community garden collaborative construction, it proposes that the top-down policy of “government overall planning -- residents leading -- community support -- social participation” and the interaction of bottom-up social forces can jointly promote the collaborative construction mechanism of community public space. In order to enhance the residents’ sense of belonging, identity, sense of acquisition and happiness of the community, promote the formation of a social governance community of consultation, co-construction, co-governance and sharing, and provide experience reference and decision-making reference for other urban communities to jointly build gardens.

Key words: community construction; Collaborative mechanism; Community co-construction garden; Foshan City

I. Origin and literature review

In 2017, the report to the 19th CPC National Congress pointed out that China has entered a new era, and proposed to strengthen and innovate social governance and build a social governance pattern featuring joint contribution, joint governance and shared benefits. The “Implementing Urban Renewal Action” issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, PRC in 2020 calls for residents to play the main role and jointly build a better homeland for all. In 2022, the report to the 20th CPC National Congress calls for improving the social governance system featuring joint contribution, joint governance and shared benefits, and building a community of social governance. At present, the people’s aspiration for a better life has become the main goal of community-level governance, and meeting the people’s needs for a better life is the starting point and goal of community-level work. We must constantly translate the achievements of development into quality of life. All these important statements demonstrate the CPC Central Committee and the government’s firm commitment to working for the people’s happiness and the great importance they attach to them, reveal that high-quality development is about meeting the people’s aspirations for a better life, and point out the direction of our efforts to ensure and improve people’s well-being in the course of development. Since the reform and opening up, people’s lives have improved significantly, and their longing for a better life has become stronger. Ordinary people have shifted from pursuing “whether or not” to “whether or not” in their daily lives. Traditional community public space can no longer meet residents’ diversified and multi-level needs for material and spiritual aspects. How to reconstruct urban “lost space” and restore its vitality and value is a major challenge facing urban development, and also an important part of the Party and the government to meet people’s yearning for a better life.

The transformation of community “lost space” should change the previous paradigm which is only led by the government or completed by design companies alone. In the transformation process, more diverse subjects such as social organizations and residents should be introduced to participate, and the diverse subjects should work together to create community public space. The early studies on the concept of “public space” were mostly based on urban planning and cities

With architecture as the focus, the study focused on its physical properties. From the perspective of political science, Habermas (1999) believed that public space is a place for citizens to freely communicate and participate in public affairs, independent of political construction. From the perspective of sociology, Jane Jacobs (2006) believes that city is a complex system with complex structure and diverse functions, and urban public space plays a key role in promoting social interaction and reproducing social vitality. Since the 1990s, many scholars have paid attention to the dual properties of physical space and society in community public space, that is, an open place where residents can freely enter and enter and engage in social activities (Yang Hongshan, 2014), and that community public space is an important place to meet residents’ spiritual, cultural and social needs (Tan Liman, 2014). 2019), community public space has materiality, publicness, subjectivity and sociality (Jiang Yan and Guo Qiang, 2022). Community public space is the core and dynamic element of a community. To achieve sustainable development of community public space, community construction and pluralistic co-governance are required, including the

participation of multiple stakeholders in preparation, planning, design, construction, maintenance and management (Hou Xiaolei, 2019). It can be seen that collaborative construction is a new model of community public space governance with innovative and practical significance. The participation of multiple entities such as the government, grass-roots governance organizations, market entities, social organizations and citizens in the construction of community public space can, to a large extent, stimulate the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of local residents or other entities to participate in the community, so that all parties can give full play to their own advantages, help promote the effective link and integration of multi-resource, and create a space that truly brings vitality (Gu Dazhi, Qu Jiilin, Huang Limin et al., 2020; Zhu Mingjian, TONG Lulin, Shang Yuan et al., 2021; Zhou Li, 2022). At present, the best output of multi-subjects' participation in the construction of community public space is community co-construction garden, which activates the "lost space" in the community, constructs a new green community public space, provides a platform for local residents to activity and rest, and provides new ideas and experiences for the renovation of public space in surrounding communities. At the same time, community garden construction also reflects the concept of "low carbon" and "green", providing community residents with an opportunity to get close to nature and experience planting. Therefore, this paper takes the community co-construction garden in Foshan City, Guangdong Province as an example, and tries to explore the cooperative construction mechanism of community public space with local applicability based on the concept of "consultation, co-construction, co-governance and sharing".

2. Foshan Community co-construction garden practice of urban community public space collaborative construction

Foshan City, the third largest city in Guangdong Province, is located in the hinterland of the Pearl River Delta. It is an advanced manufacturing base in China and an important manufacturing center in Guangdong, and has created its unique Foshan model. In 2021, Foshan has a total permanent resident population of 9,612,600, a population density of 2,531.1 people per square kilometer, a GDP of 1.22 trillion yuan, a per capita disposable income of 62,942 yuan for permanent residents, and an urbanization rate of 95.21%. According to Northam's three-stage urbanization theory and Chenery's industrialization stage theory, Foshan's urbanization has entered a stable stage, its economic development stage is in the stage of pursuing quality of life, and citizens' demand for leisure, tourism, education and other services has increased. Obviously, the construction of community garden in Foshan originates from the needs of citizens, and meets the needs of citizens at the same time. The Foshan community garden mentioned in this paper is selected from Jiaxin Urban Garden Community in Shunde District, Foshan City. This community garden is the first community garden with public participation and multi-party cooperation in Shunde District, Foshan City, and has typical characteristics. Secondly, the community garden won the first prize of the best sharing action and creativity selection activities in Shunde, and was well received by the society. It is very representative and demonstrative, and can provide reference and experience for the community garden construction in Foshan city or other cities.

Jiaxin City Garden in Shunde District of Foshan City is a mature community of about 20 years, with a resident population of about 10,000 people. Jiaxin Community co-construction garden project is originated from awakening the warmth and vitality of the neighborhood. Delin Social service works with residents to build Delin's "Little Spring field -- Xiaitanxuan Micro Garden" in front of Xiaitanxuan. After this renovation activity, the residents have strengthened their determination to transform the public space of Jiaxin Club II, with a view to expanding the community's shared public space, promoting the development of community natural education, and realizing the shared governance and sharing of the community environment. With the support of Shunde Social Innovation Center and led by Delin Social Service, the project of Jiaxin Community Co-construction Garden was completed with the community residents as the main body, the university team, the community property management center and other resources. The project will be officially promoted in July 2020, and the construction and construction will be completed in June 2021.

2.1 Concrete practice of multi-party participation in the construction of community co-built garden

Shunde Jiaxin Community co-construction Garden project through the residents as the main body, multi-party cooperation model, linking professional teams to empower residents with relevant professional knowledge, on the basis of meeting the real needs of residents, jointly negotiate, jointly build, jointly manage and jointly enjoy the community garden.

1. Cultivate a sense of community

Delin Social Service promotes the idea of community garden construction to residents through community garden brochures and display boards, wechat groups, community bulletin boards, information sessions, popular science classes, community garden consultation and exchange meetings, etc., sows the seeds of community garden construction in the hearts of residents, and mobilises residents to participate in community garden construction through various ways. At the same time, Delin Social Service invites university teams to explain the connotation and value of community garden co-construction to residents, and introduce the cases of community garden co-construction in other areas, so that residents have a deeper understanding of community garden co-construction and lay a solid foundation for the construction of community garden co-construction.

2. Jointly build and optimize the community public space

(1) Participatory planning and design workshop

Based on the design concept of “Consultation, co-construction, co-governance and sharing” and the actual situation, Delin Social Services invited university teams and residents to hold an expert-residents exchange meeting and a series of workshops of “Co-creation of Rooftop Garden, Colorful Ideas You SHOW”, to attract and guide residents to actively participate in the discussion and concrete construction of community co-construction garden with open and interesting workshops. To promote the transformation of residents from “onlookers” to “builders”. At the same time, through the interactive opportunities of in-depth communication in the workshop, the distance between the academic teams of colleges and universities and residents is narrowed, and more ideas that meet the needs of residents can be put into practice.

(2) Participatory and progressive empowerment

In order to enable residents to have a deeper understanding of community garden building and professional knowledge related to empowering planting, members of the academic team conducted a series of “Community Garden Night” sharing lectures online, sharing in-depth topics such as “sustainable garden building”, “Secrets of soil”, “How to turn waste into treasure for composting”, “urban garden cultivation technology” and “edible plant cultivation”.

(3) Participatory community garden building

Although many residents have no experience in garden construction, the extensive participation and joint efforts of residents under the guidance and assistance of Delin Social Service have made the transformation project of Community garden co-built by Schwab successfully implemented. The whole process of transporting soil, setting up planting boxes, hoeing and turning soil, watering and composting, and planting plants were all completed by the residents themselves. Every brick and tile of the garden jointly built by the Jiaxin community is a witness of the unity of the community residents. In addition, many materials of the community garden also come from the community residents. In the community market held by Delin Social Services, many residents responded positively by donating idle or discarded flower POTS and other containers at home, as well as seeds and seedlings cultivated by themselves, free of charge. Some residents voluntarily provided wood boxes discarded by their own factories as compost boxes for community gardens.

3. Joint operation and maintenance to achieve sustainable development of the community garden

Through consultations and discussions in the form of workshops, the residents jointly formulated the community garden convention and the community garden operation and service mechanism. Through a series of community garden construction activities, a group of community experts who are enthusiastic about community affairs have emerged in the community, and a group of community experts who are good at plant planting and maintenance have been excavated. Together with the initiator of the project, Delin Social Service, they have become the core force of community garden operation and maintenance. In order to mobilize more residents to participate in the follow-up operation and maintenance of the community garden, Delin Social Service tries to carry out volunteer service claim activities in the form of “volunteer service list”, which is updated every Tuesday. Residents can register online through wechat mini program “Delin Hui” or contact the person in charge offline to fill in the claim form to claim volunteer activities. At the same time, the strategy of points system is adopted to arouse the enthusiasm of residents to participate in the community. The points system will record the participation of each participant in the community activities in detail, and record it in the residents’ “behavior bank” account in the form of points. The points obtained by the residents can be used for exchanging goods, community public welfare market, participating in the selection of public welfare stars, etc. Especially, the children in the community also participate in the co-construction and co-governance of the community garden.

2.2 Shunde Jiashin Community Garden collaborates to create a multi-party participation mechanism

Shunde Jiashin Community garden construction involves many stakeholders, that is, the formation of a “government guidance, residents as the main construction, social organizations as the main organizer, university academic teams as the design, property companies as the coordinator, linking various forces, and jointly promote the construction of community public space” multi-stakeholder collaborative construction mechanism. First of all, in the current community construction, the government is gradually realizing the role change from “leader” and “controller” to “guide” and “supervisor”. At the early stage of the project, it provides policy and financial support for community construction, guides and mobilizes more social forces to participate in the community construction project, and provides guidance and supervises the implementation of the project in the middle and later stages of the project. Secondly, the residents are the initiators, builders, users and owners of the community garden. They participate in the whole process from the proposal declaration, program design, planning, construction, operation and maintenance of the community garden through workshops, symposiums and other forms at multiple levels to realize the true sense of “building their own homes”. It fully reflects the residents’ participation in the community garden’s consultation, joint construction, co-governance and sharing. Third, the organizer and operator of the community garden, Delin Social Service, links resources of all parties and coordinates the interests of all parties to carry out various community construction activities with community culture and education as the core in the community Garden, and is committed to promoting the development of community public welfare undertakings. Fourth, the academic team of the university is the designer and important co-builder of the community co-built garden, providing professional knowledge support and technical support for the transformation of the community public space, including the program design, promotion and implementation of the community garden; Assist the project team in planning and carrying out community

discussion workshops and exchange meetings; Work with community residents to design community garden planning schemes, and help residents put their needs into practice. Fifth, the community property is the coordinator and assistant of community garden construction. It is mainly responsible for the maintenance and management of the place where the community garden is located, providing logistical support services for the smooth implementation of the activity, and assisting the project sponsor to carry out the activity and carry out the activity publicity.

3. Analysis of multiple collaborative construction mechanism of urban community public space

Based on the practice of collaborative garden construction in Shunde Jiashin Community in Foshan, this paper attempts to establish a collaborative construction mechanism of “government overall planning -- resident leading -- community support -- social participation” with top-down policies and bottom-up social forces acting together to promote the construction of community public space. While meeting the residents’ needs for a better life and promoting the effective use of community public space, it also promotes the construction of a new pattern of shared social governance through consultation, joint construction, co-governance and sharing.

3.1 Government: the leader of community public space creation

In the mode of cooperatively creating community public space, government departments mainly refer to people’s governments at all levels and various departments related to the renewal and transformation of community public space, including urban administration Bureau, Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau, Civil Affairs Bureau, etc. In the collaborative construction of community public space, government departments make overall plans, and relevant functional departments issue relevant policies to provide corresponding policy and financial support for community public space governance; Establish a connectivity platform to promote the integration of resources. Street offices and town governments are directly responsible for community public space construction projects, and are responsible for the promotion, implementation and supervision of the projects.

3.2 Residents: the leaders of community public space construction

Residents are the builders, users and supervisors of community public space. As the main body and core of community public space creation, residents participate in every stage of planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of community public space as individuals, families or small teams. Community garden construction helps different participants to think about their abilities and roles in the process of joint transformation of community public space, deepen the understanding of the unity of responsibility and rights, thus promoting the transformation of the relationship between different participants from serving and being served to collaborative cooperation, and enhance the sense of belonging to the community. And thus effectively promote community autonomy (Fu Jianjun, 2023).

3.3 Community: the coordinator of community public space creation

Community grassroots party organizations, community neighborhood committees, community self-organizations, and community property management companies are the leaders, coordinators and guides of community garden construction. For example, community grassroots party organizations give full play to their leading role in the collaborative construction of community space, including narrowing the distance between multiple subjects, linking social capital, and cultivating residents’ community awareness. At the same time, give full play to the leading role of party members, and mobilize more people to participate in the construction of community public space through the form of party members driving residents. As a grassroots self-governing organization, the neighborhood committee is an important medium linking the government and residents. On the one hand, it is responsible for the implementation of relevant policies, giving guidance and supervision; On the other hand, because the neighborhood committee is familiar with the community residents and has a better understanding of the community situation, it plays an important role in mobilizing residents to participate in building, linking residents’ emotions, organizing activities and coordinating resources. The community property management company plays the role of coordinator in the construction of community public space. It is mainly responsible for the early coordination and follow-up maintenance management. For example, in the preparation and construction stage of community public space, it helps the project team to carry out workshops by using the resources in the community; In the operation and maintenance stage, it works with residents to maintain the community public space.

3.4 Society: resource linker created by community public space

Social forces include social organizations, design teams, university teams, enterprises, volunteers, etc. that directly or indirectly participate in the construction of community public space. They are resource linkers, professional enablers, and resource providers of community garden construction, providing professional technology, capital, human and material resources and other support for the construction of community public space. For example, social organizations include social work organizations that provide professional community services and public welfare organizations that provide resources to support the construction of public Spaces (Liu Yuelai, Yin Kejiao, Sun Zhe et al., 2022). Public welfare organizations often act as initiators together with residents or government departments, and are also important coordinators of project operation. They link multiple resources for the project, participate in the construction and subsequent operation and management of community public space, and continue to empower residents and carry out various forms of activities to promote the sustainable development of community public space. University teams, design teams and scientific research institutions can provide professional guidance on the theoretical and technical aspects of community public space construction. On the one

hand, professional guidance can make the design scheme of community public space more scientific, feasible and operable on the premise of meeting the needs of residents to the greatest extent. On the other hand, professional knowledge enables residents to learn skills such as planting and composting, so as to better realize autonomy in the subsequent operation and maintenance of community public space. Enterprises are important resource providers in the collaborative construction of public space with diverse and co-governance in community governance. Based on their own social responsibility and the need for sustainable development, enterprises provide funds, resources, technologies, market operation experience, employees and volunteers for the collaborative construction of community public space through donations, sponsorships, partnerships and other forms of support.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

Making the community better is the main driving force for local residents to participate in the collaborative construction of community public space. The government, residents, community and society all have differences in participation motivation, role and play in the collaborative construction of community public space. In general, it has formed a mechanism of “government overall planning -- residents leading -- community support -- social participation”, in which top-down policies and bottom-up social forces interact to jointly promote the collaborative construction of community public space. The construction of community co-construction garden is only the starting point of the collaborative construction of community public space. The collaborative construction with the participation of multiple subjects on the one hand helps to give full play to the strengths of all parties and promote the effective use of resources; on the other hand, it helps to meet the spiritual needs of all participants and improve the sense of community participation and community belonging.

In fact, the participants in the construction of community public space are diversified, but there are still problems such as the insufficient role of each participant, the insufficient development of community power, and the ineffective exploitation and utilization of social resources. In the collaborative construction of community public space, first of all, the government should formulate relevant guiding opinions and relevant management rules and other guiding documents on multi-party participation in the construction of community public space according to the actual situation of the place, clarify the power and responsibility of multiple subjects to participate in the construction of community public space, and provide institutional guarantee for the participation of multiple subjects in the construction of community public space. Secondly, residents, as the main body of community public space construction, should conduct comprehensive publicity through online and offline channels to ensure that all residents have access to information and channels of participation. In conjunction with social organizations, university teams and other social forces offline, various forms of participatory workshops and follow-up activities are held, the value concept of “consultation, co-construction, co-governance and sharing” is conveyed to residents through gamification and immersive experience, and residents are attracted to participate in community public space governance in the form of community issues and creative play. Establish an online point system and set up a “point bank” for each resident. Points in the point system can be used to exchange prizes and participate in the star evaluation of points, so as to motivate residents to participate in the governance of community public space. At the same time, explore and cultivate community leaders, improve their leadership and comprehensive quality through training, learning and commendation incentive mechanism, give full play to their role of vanguard, resource linkage and problem solving, so as to mobilize and guide more community residents to participate in community activities and community public affairs consultation, and promote the realization of community autonomy. Therefore, more residents should be mobilized to participate in the various stages of community public space construction as much as possible, which is an important guarantee to promote the effective construction and sustainable development of community public space. Third, the comparative advantages of social organizations in participating in community garden construction have not been effectively converted into innovative advantages. In the future, the autonomy of social organizations should be further enhanced to fully release the power of social organizations in grassroots social governance; Fourth, enterprises participating in community garden construction should balance business model and social model in community public space governance. The above is not only the problem that the reality needs to end, but also the hot topic of the academic circle’s follow-up attention and discussion.

The construction of community public space should be based on the local and avoid the problem of homogenization. Making full use of the unique geographical location and historical and cultural heritage, combined with the local natural environment and folk customs, can help stimulate the local memory of the community residents, increase the emotional connection between the residents and the community, enable the local residents to have a deeper understanding of the local culture, customs, history and other aspects of the content, and enhance the local residents’ sense of identity and belonging to the community. The collaborative construction of community public space provides a place for community residents to rest and play, but also enhances the feelings among neighbors, enhances the interest and enthusiasm of residents to participate in community governance, helps cultivate residents’ sense of community community, and makes the concept of co-consultation, co-construction, co-governance and sharing more deeply rooted in people’s hearts, promoting the realization of community sharing, co-happiness and common growth.

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About Author: Wang Miaomiao (1985-), female, born in Tianshui, Gansu Province, lecturer and postdoctoral fellow. Her research interests cover urban and rural governance and urbanization.