

Influence of Citizen's Voice and City Planning to Private Company's Plan

Case of Post "Mukogaoka-Yuen Amusement Park" Planning

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1. Background

Japanese railway companies were important actors for development of cities. In early 20th century, Japanese developers took in ideas of "garden cities" or "neighborhood unit" ideas to develop Japanese cities. Many developers tried to build a railway in the middle of rice field to develop cities. At this stage, they were also necessary to make cities to by themselves to collect enough users of the railway they developed. Building housing sites were the one of the common scheme to accommodate newly emerged middle income class families, who works in the newly developed modern industry and services located in the major cities of Japan. Some railway companies tried to develop amusement spots to collect weekend users of the trains.

Odakyu Electric Railway Co.,Ltd (Odakyu) company opened an amusement park called "Mukogaoka-Yuen Amusement Park" (MYAP). It now is closed but its land is planned carefully. This paper reviews how citizen's opinion influenced city planning and a company's planning of large scale vacant land. The material used for review is administrative documents opened according to Information Disclosure Ordinance.

2. Outline of Mukogaoka-Yuen Amusement Park (MYAP)

Odakyu started to offer railway service in 1927 from Shinjuku to Odawara. 82.8km railway service was big intercity project connecting Tokyo and Old Castle town of Odawara. MYAP opened at the same time with railway service started. It was located on the hill close to Inada-Noborito station (present: Mukogaoka-Yuen station), and had about 29ha area with amusement rides and flowers to attract different age groups. Its purpose was to attract residents along the Odakyu railway and increase number of user of the railway.

A little after this opening, Tokyo City government designated Mukogaoaka Amusement park and surrounding hills as a scenic point in Tokyo Green Plan (Tokyo Ryokuchi Keikaku) even it is not in Tokyo City. Kawasaki City, where Mukogaoka Amusement Park is located, also designated Major part of Mukogaoka Amusement park and surrounding area as Ikuta Green Park in its city planning. Muokgaoak Amusement park was nicely used by many families, but was closed in 2003 because of financial management reasons.

Unlike many other closed amusement parks^{*2)}, MYAP has not been developed for commercial purpose of Railway Company, even after 12 years of close down. Some part of the area has been already opened public as museums by cooperative effort of Odakyu and Kawasaki city. Major part is still planning There is a strong pressure of housing development in surrounding area of MYAP, but is still under planning by Odakyu Company. It is under control of basic agreement that has been signed between Odakyu and Kawasaki City in 2004. There was

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a citizen's opinion.

This paper shows process of planning of vacant land after MYAP, and how designation of green park and citizen's opinion influenced to planning of private company's project.

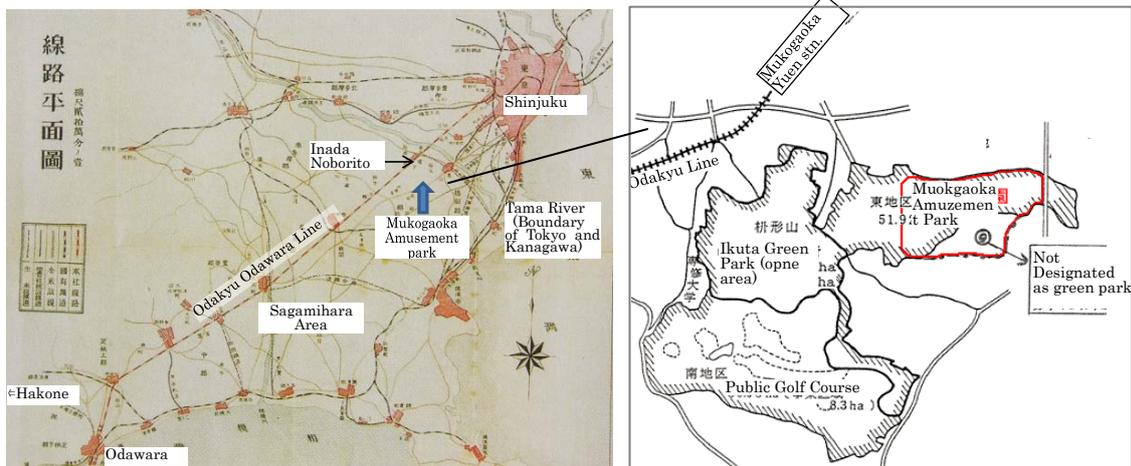


Fig 1 Location of Mukogaoka-Yen Amusement Park *1

3. Movement of citizen

3.1 Basic Agreement

Soon after the announcement of closing of MYAP, many people have raised their voice to reserve green for the area. Over 50 thousand people sent signature to Kawasaki city, wishing to reserve green. This action of citizen influenced Kawasaki city. Fig 2^{*3)} shows dialogue on publication procedure of basic development plan by Odakyu. There is comment by environmental division of Kawasaki city that points out importance of listening to people's opinion. Based on this remark, practitioner level meeting was held between Odakyu and Kawasaki City. After these meetings, top of Odakyu and Kawasaki City made an agreement to keep the green of MYAP and make a place of public use. (Fit 3)

Basic agreement between Odakyu and Kawasaki City	
1.	Odakyu reserves precious green of MYAP
2.	Kawasaki City Supports reservation of Green.
3.	Odakyu shall open to public its green designated as city planning green, and inherit history of flower and green of MYAP.
4.	Kawasaki city designate neighboring green spot as city planning green, and exclude amusement space where play equipment were located.
5.	Plan of post MYAP shall contribute to the Machizukuri (city planning) of the area.
6.	Kawasaki city and Odakyu should pay respect to individual land owner's mind.

Fig 3 Major Points of Basic Agreement publicized in Nov. 24, 2004

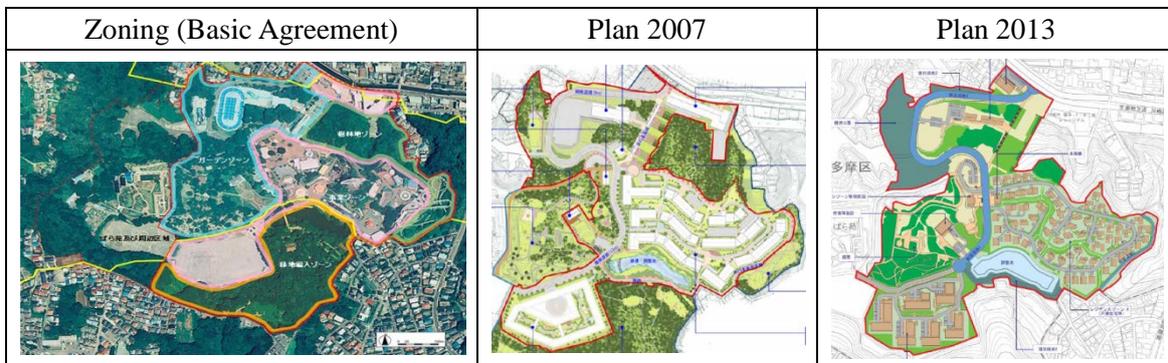
3.2 Basic Planning of MYAP

Odakyu was renting Rose Garden area land from local land owner, and inheritance of this land occurred. Kawasaki City quickly decided to buy Rose Garden part in Feb. 2004. It is now temporary open as a part of Ikuta Green Park in Rose Flower Season. It is planned to be open permanently in the future, when other part of MYAP is developed and offered a proper access to the Rose Garden.

Rest of the MYAP is in hand of Odakyu, and the 1st Basic plan was publicized in 2007 in the procedure of environmental assessment. It was a plan to develop a housing complex with 850 units. Many citizens were not happy about this plan, because it will not be the place that people can enjoy green, and judged that it is not following to the Basic Agreement. 6959 opinions from 874 people were sent to the city through procedure of environmental assessment. Meanwhile, Odakyu announced that they will cancel this plan because of economic trend has changed. Odakyu publicized another new plan in 2013, which is basically housing development but has been diminished the size of development, and is better quality environment plan compare to 2007 plan. Fig 3 shows that there was a certain pressure from Kawasaki city to diminish the development size. There were also citizen's opinions to the city.

4. Conclusion

In Japan, it is very difficult to influence citizen opinions to private company's development plan. Thus citizen's actions regarding development of MYAP affected Kawasaki City, and the municipal officers could give opinions using citizen's words. We can say that citizen's opinions directly and indirectly affected the private company's development plan. This may be the result of designation of City Planning Park, but also result of change in citizen's power regarding planning. This may become one of the new planning style in the 21st century in Japan.



Remarks:

- *1 rearranged from fig. on P9 of ref.1)
- *2 Many other amusement parks are turned to be used as condominium or other development sites to contribute to the benefit of companies.
- *3 Fig 2 is picked up remarks from papers that were offered to us by information disclosure of Kawasaki City. Regarding MYAP.

Keywords:

Railway companies, development of along railway, citizen participation, Green Park, Environmental Assessment,

Reference:

- 1) Tatsuya KAMATA, A Century of Odakyu Line, Sekaibunkasha Publishing Inc., 2009 (鎌田達也、小田急線沿線の1世紀) in Japanese
- 2) Odakyu Electric Railway Co., Ltd, "Odakyu Electric Railway", <http://www.odakyu.jp/>, 10 April 2014

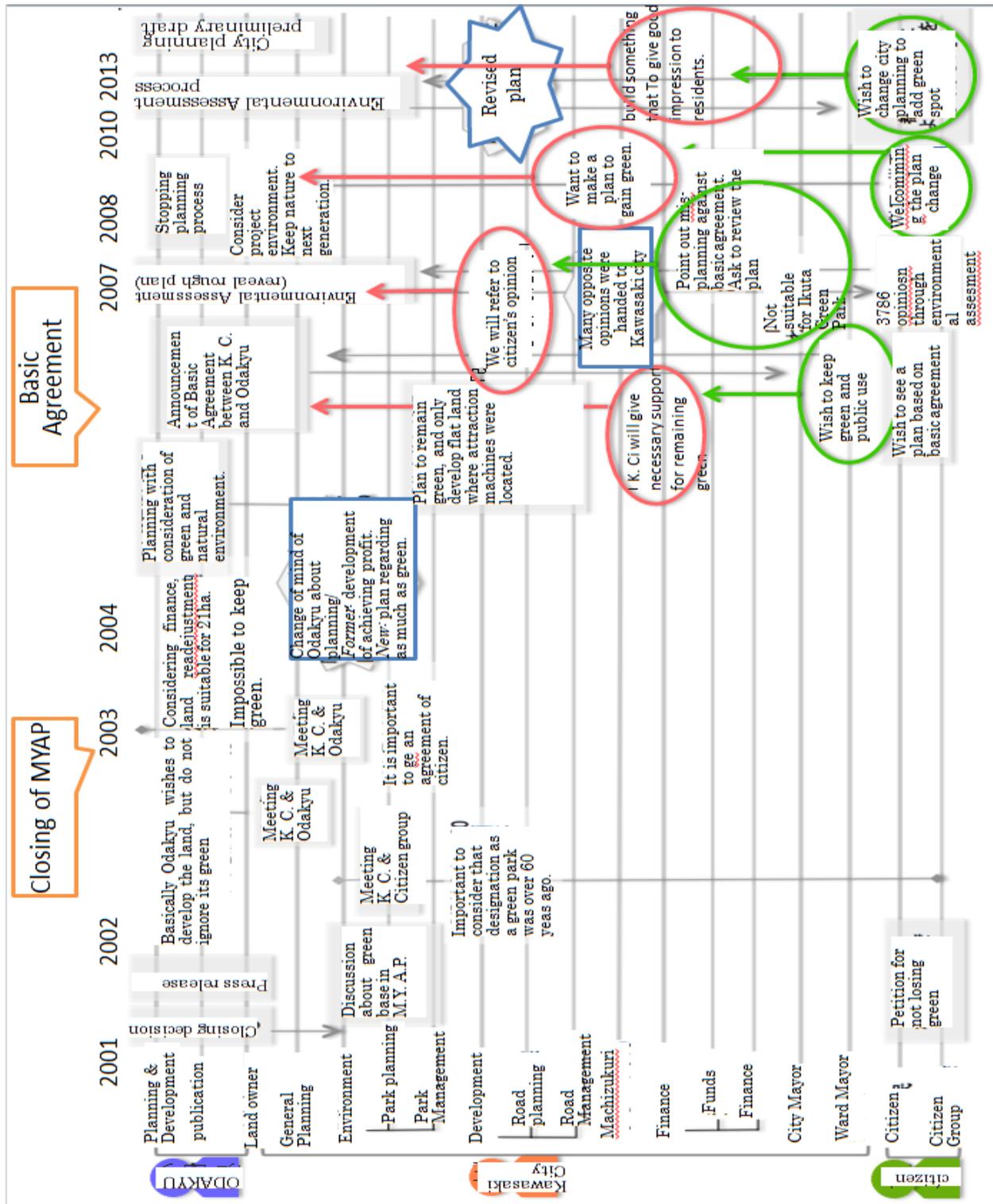


Fig 2. Dialogue between actors regarding basic development plan by Odakyu