

Refining and Reappearance: Shanghai South Bund Revitalization

Foreword

The functional transform of modern city and the rapid development of information communication make traditional industries of shipping docks and warehouses hollowed out. This makes waterfront area reconstruction imperative. It also brings fresh air to the exploration and development of urban social economy and its functional structure reform. Fuxing Dock of the South Bund, the subject of this article, has gone through its early prosperity, its later decline and the present reform. It serves as a good example to show the development process of all the many waterfront areas of the world.

1. Brief Background Introduction: Interactive Development of Shanghai City and Huangpu River

As the biggest river in Shanghai, Huangpu River acted as a natural port and a lifeline of the city at the beginning.

This 114-kilometer river originates in the southwest of Shanghai, runs through the whole city and joins Yangtze River at Wusong. Most of the waterfront areas on both banks of Huangpu River resulted from the industrialization of Shanghai from the late 19th century and the early 20th century. Docks, factories and warehouses cover most bank lines of the river. With the reconstruction of city industrial structure and city functional structure, these waterfront areas need immediate reforming.

In the 1990s, the city of Shanghai crossed Huangpu River and started a new development stage, resulting in the exploitation of Pudong and later the rising of Lujiazui Finance and Trade Zone.

The outward moving of ports and the adjustment of city industrial structure provide an opportunity to renovating and reforming the waterfront areas on both sides of Huangpu River. On January 10th, 2002, a strategic plan was made to carry out overall development on both banks of Huangpu River. Bureau for Municipal Design of Shanghai made a conceptual urban design for the waterfront area of Huangpu River, which is 20 kilometers long and covers an area of 22.6 square kilometers. The Bureau also made a detailed design for the four core areas on the banks. This plan, together with the adjustment of city industrial and functional structures, will gradually change the banks of Huangpu River into public open areas and greenbelts and at last into the core of city space of Shanghai. (Figure 1)



Figure 1: Comprehensive development on the banks of Huangpu River
(Source: Shanghai Shenjiang Group)

The reconstruction plan for the banks of Huangpu River consists of five basic objectives. The first is functional reform. It aims at moving all docks, factories and warehouses on the banks and building public waterfront open space integrating residence, work, culture, recreation, tourism and other functions. The second is environment protection. It aims at treating the industrial pollution and at the same time building greenbelts on both banks to improve biological diversity in the city environment. The third is to improve life quality and traffic condition. In particular, connection between the city and the waterfront areas should be enhanced and the river bank areas should be pleasant and easy to reach. The fourth is to protect the historical cultural heritages of the city. The fifth is to reconstruct the space landscape of the city.

2. City Reconstruction: The Reconstructed South Bund after Functional Transform

As the symbol of Shanghai, the Bund, which is located in the core area of Huangpu River, bears a century's romances of the city. The North Bund, the Old Bund and the South Bund have written a long scroll of history of the river together. The site of the 2010 Shanghai Expo is located on the bank of Huangpu River in the city center of Shanghai. This again attracted more attention to the development of Huangpu banks. Thus, the reconstruction of the South Bund, which lies between the Old Bund and the Expo Park, deserves more careful consideration.

Fuxing Dock, the core area of the South Bund, is located on Zhongshan South Road. It reaches Huangpu River in the east, Baidu Road in the north and Dongjiadu in the south, and covers an area of 13 hectares. It has the only large-scale man-made waterfront platform on Huangpu River. Fuxing Dock extends to the north to connect Shiliupu (Water Tourist Center), the Old Bund (the Financial and Trade Center) and the North Bund (the International Shipping Center). Its south end is less than 2 kilometers away from Expo Park. It lies next to the Old City Area (Historic Reserves Zone) and Dongjiadu, the biggest old city construction area in Shanghai now, in the west. (Figure 2)

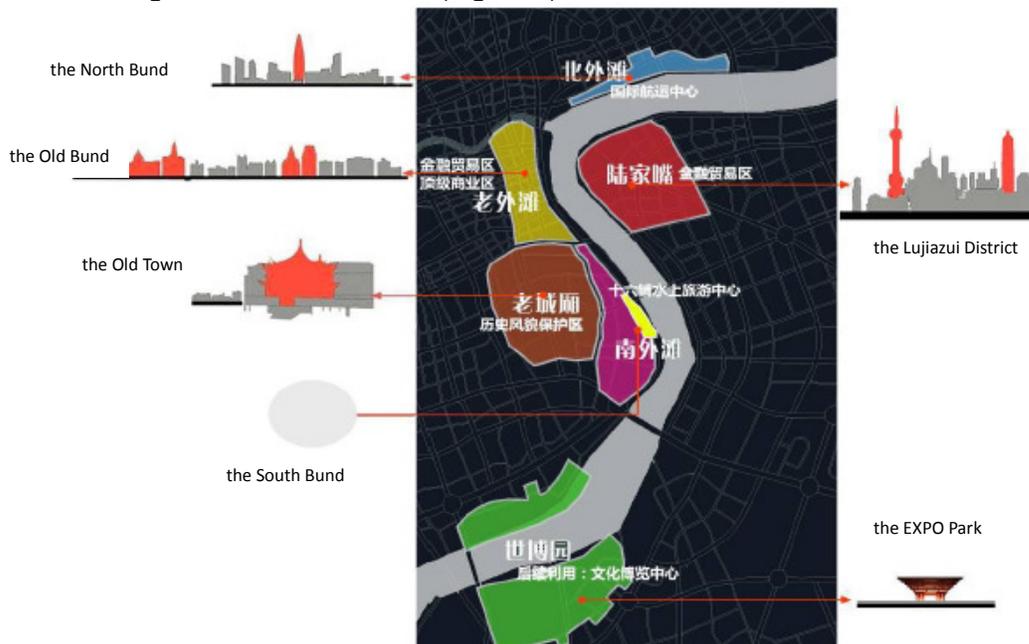


Figure 2: Location of the area (Source: Shanghai Shenjiang Group)

Fuxing Dock Block has been a place rich in dock culture and tall buildings since it became a port. It played an important role in the city development and the advance of industrial and commercial civilization of Shanghai. It's a unique historical block. Thus how to protect the

material and nonmaterial heritages of this area becomes the first task. This was why the reconstruction plan was based on a “protective development” idea when it was first put forward. A single building can be protected as a cultural relic. But you can’t do the same to a block, as its existing surrounding and people’s lifestyle have become history and can be found no more. It’s only a spirit carrier of a time. Thus, the plan is designed to represent the space of the whole block and abstract its spirit by improving its material space and boosting its nonmaterial culture. We will create a new block which not only bears historical memory but also has the vitality of time. (Figure 3)



Figure 3: Bird eye view of the whole area (2006)

3. Strategic Decision: Refining of Historical Spirit

The nonmaterial cultural value of the area lies in its “historical spirit”. Interpreting and discovering the “historical spirit” of this area is the precondition of accurately researching the symbolic characteristics of this area.

3.1. Modern --- Lead Emerging Economies

Shanghai is a city nurtured by the river in modern China.

As traditional river navigation gave way to seaborne trade, Shanghai became a central port for shipping transfer between Chinese south and north oceans, and between the river and the ocean, as well as a collecting and distributing centre for shipping trade. The rapid progress of water transportation transfer and the shipping industry brought manpower, materials and capital to the bank lines of Huangpu River. Fuxing Dock rose as a port and later became a “new economic zone” outside the Old City Area of Shanghai. There was the description of “grabbing dock” in history records, which perfectly reflected the prosperity of Fuxing Dock as the “water and land hub” of old Shanghai.

How can we represent this “golden waterfront” under the situations of new economy today? To regain its collecting capacity of manpower, materials and capital, we should first develop it into a waterfront that aims at internationalization, provide first-class living condition, and attract emerging industries. Then, we should take full advantage of its regional feature to equip it with abundant public facilities and activities so as to make it a center for emerging economic activities again.

3.2. Open --- Reconstruct City Window

An industrial and commercial center nurtured by port economy.

Adventurers, investors and entrepreneurs from all over the world came to Shanghai through Fuxing Dock. The collection of capital nurtured the local industries of Shanghai. Unlike farming civilization, which is typical in traditional north cities, the rising of Shanghai and other modern port cities really represented the process of modernization of China. Various stores, industrial associations and societies appeared accordingly, thus giving chance to a series of new social classes. This was how open modern cities began.

Today, these traditional ports and streets will become public recreation spots for modern people of all kinds. Moreover, we will turn these historical streets and building containers into the city window of Shanghai again. Over time, it will become an irreproducible new city

center integrating the new port economy with historical heritages.

3.3. Diverse --- Develop Compound Functions

A new city construction model nurtured by the new economy.

As the only “Chinese dock” in Shanghai, Fuxing Dock broke the traditional Chinese city pattern. It was full of old and new elements at the same time and various functions coexisted. With the western city development concept being brought in, the “Chinese port --- warehouse trade --- residence vendors --- supporting service” mixed development mode appeared on the traditional streets old Shanghai. (Figure 4)

The future development of Fuxing Dock should also be centered on the function of waterfront landscape recreation and supplemented by the functions of modern commerce, recreation, culture, leisure, office work and residence. It will satisfy people’s need for a diverse modern city lifestyle and at the same time realize its concentrated composite land function.

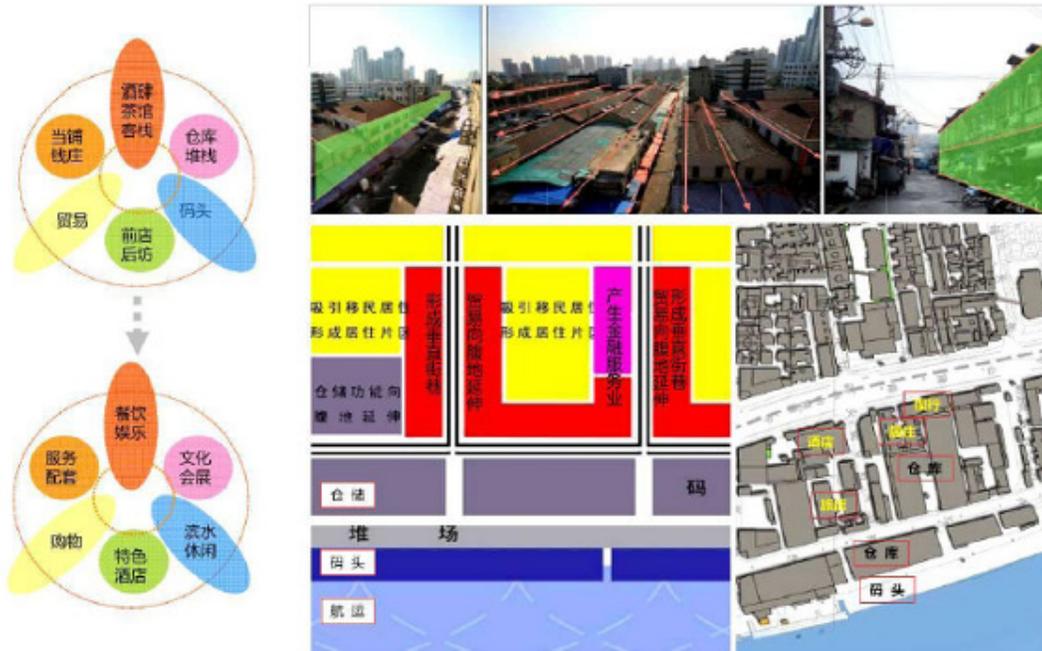


Figure 4: Design sketch for the compound function of this land

3.4. Indigenous --- Promote Regional Features

New city features born in a diverse construction model.

As one of the most international cities of the world, Shanghai still has many city features integrating Chinese and western cultures, which makes its city space and architectural style diverse. Fuxing Dock has witnessed the process of “developing the city from its port and bringing prosperity to all industries” of Shanghai. It is also the center for Shanghai dock cultural relics and Shanghai culture.

As the only “Chinese dock” in Shanghai, Fuxing Dock should be rich in historical and cultural features after being reconstructed. Old ports, boats and building relics should be preserved and used in the overall modern landscape design. It will be reconstructed into a modern, fashionable and industrialized area rich in regional features, which not only meets the needs for the mixed development mode but also helps the creation of a healthy and vigorous public place carrying the culture of the city.

4. Strategic Plan: Reappearance of Place Space

Compared with the western leased ports in the Old Bund, Fuxing Dock is the most regionally featured trade, material and living center and a typical old dock of Shanghai. With so abundant spatial elements coexisting, the strategic plan abstracted four features based on

thorough interpretation of its space value, which are “bund”, “warehouse”, “store” and “neighborhood”. These features well reflect the space combination relations of the area and the historical reasons. (Figure 5, Figure 6)

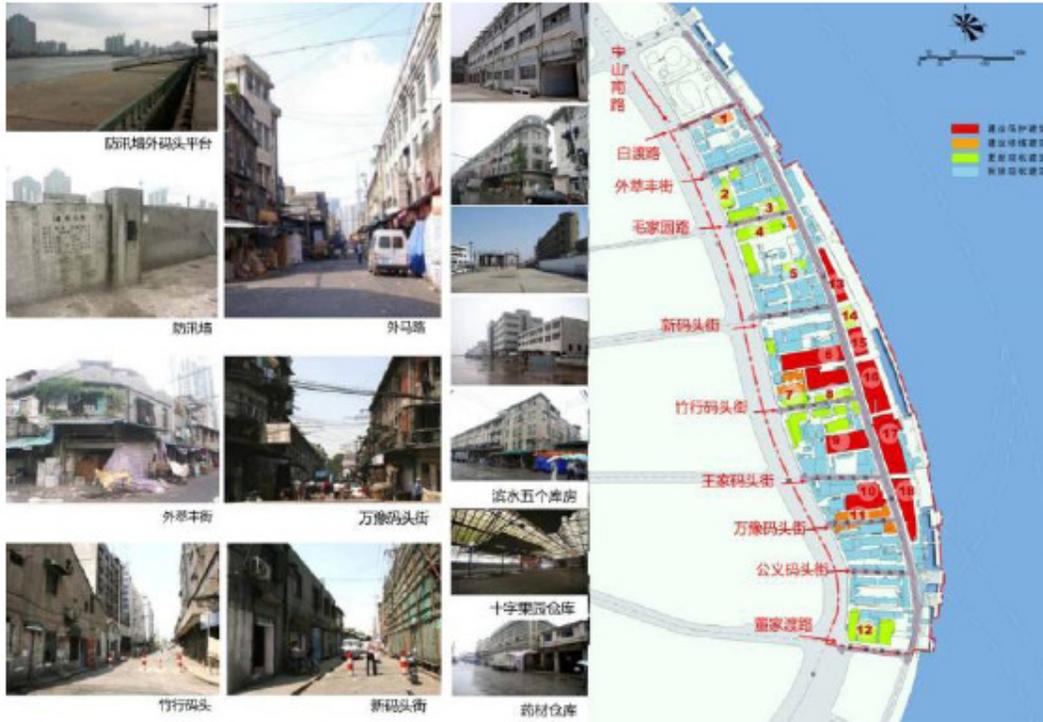


Figure 5: Analysis of present spatial elements



Figure 6: Abstraction of spatial elements

4.1. The Bund: Shorelines/Ports --- Base Spatial Element on Huangpu River banks

Fuxing Dock area is considered as the real Shanghai “bund” mainly because it has the only large-area waterfront platform outside the flood prevention walls of Huangpu River. It extends about 800 meters from Baidu Road to Dongjiadu Road. The waterfront platform is not only a symbol for past prosperity but also the base spatial element of the present river landscape and modern life.

The bund can be divided into two parts.

The north part, a platform starts from Waicufeng Road to at the 4th warehouse. It’s about 500 meters long and 20 meters wide. As the elevation of the platform is about 1.5m lower than the flood prevention wall, different spatial features form inside and outside the wall. Outside the wall is a public waterfront activity area featured in the connecting old warehouse buildings, where yachts and tourists can come and go. Inside the wall is a nine-meter-wide

continuous passage, a relatively quiet and half-public space. (Figure 7, Figure 8)
 The north part lies next to Gongyi Dock Road and is where Dongjiadu Maritime Affairs Office and the Ferry Station lie. According to the plan, relatively independent yacht and official duty ship landing lines will be constructed based on present warehouse functions. This will bring diversity to the dock line activities.



Figure 7: Design sketch of 1# Warehouse waterfront platform reconstruction



Figure 8: Design sketch of 2# Warehouse waterfront platform reconstruction

4.2. The Warehouses: Material Remains of Shipping Trade

Chinese Business Warehouse is the remains of the most representative buildings in Fuxing Dock. (Table 1)

| Name | Number on Waima Road | Original name and function | Year of building |
|------------------------------|----------------------|--|------------------|
| 1# Warehouse | No. 453 | Dongtai Fruit & Aquatic Product Market Shanghai Xingqiao Fruit Sales Office | 1936 |
| 2# Warehouse | No. 579 | Shanghai Suofude Fruit Wholesale Market | 1965 |
| 3# Warehouse | No. 601 | China FAW Bund Yangtze Service Center | 1949 |
| 4# Warehouse | No. 653 | Shanghai No.2 Aquatic Product Supply and Marketing Company | 1984 (rebuilt) |
| 5# Warehouse | No. 725 | Shanghai Grain and Oil Goods Composite Market | 1949 |
| Medicine Warehouse | No. 574 | Waima Road Warehouse of Shanghai Huayu Medicine Ltd. | 1958 |
| Shizi Fruit Garden Warehouse | No. 656 | | |
| Refrigeration house | No. 690 | Shanghai No.2 Aquatic Product Supply and Marketing Company Refrigeration Plant | 1984 (rebuilt) |

Table 1: List of remaining warehouse buildings

According to researches on the building quality, history, landscape and implementation of five warehouses, the plan puts forward the overall reform for eight historical buildings. These include the five waterfront warehouses. The first three warehouses have the best landscape and will be reconstructed into a comprehensive commercial area featured in waterside catering. The fourth and the fifth warehouses will be changed into exquisite

hotel-style apartments. The sixth building is Medicine Warehouse. It will be turned into a culture exhibiting and experiencing center. The seventh, Shizi Fruit Garden Warehouse, will become a center for creation, exhibition and sale. The last, the Refrigeration House, will be a feature commercial service complex. (Figure 9)



Figure 9: Design sketch of Medicine Warehouse and New Dock Road

4.3. The Streets: Extension of Transportation Network Boosted by Trade

The prosperous shipping industry has gestated city construction of Old City Area waterfront area.

Ports and the streets connected to ports are the lifelines of material flow, warehouses and trade activities. The streets, densely distributed on the banks of Huangpu River, have developed into a system of streets named after different industries, families and regions. (Table 2) (Figure 10)

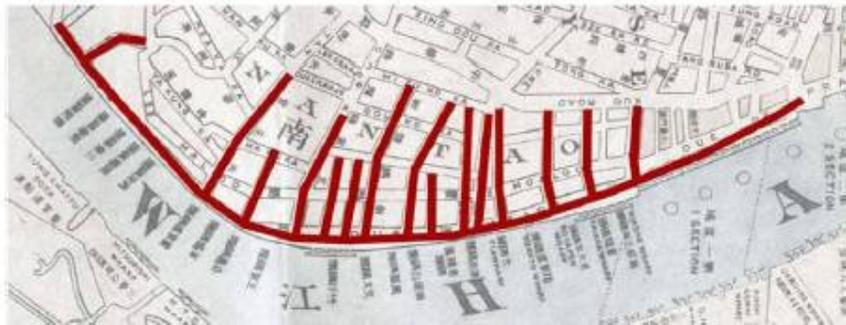


Figure 10: Port and street pattern of the South Bund area Fuxing Dock in 1932
(Source: Shanghai Shenjiang Group)

| Name | Road width (m) | Road length (m) | Planned type |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Waima Road | 12.8~17.6 (planned 18.0) | 920 | Branch road (vertical) |
| Pubin Road | 8.0~11.6 (planned 8.0) | 528 | Walking road (vertical) |
| Baidu Road | 12.9~19.7 (planned 20.0) | 99 | Branch road |
| Waicui Feng Road | 6.3~6.4 | 106 | Walking road |
| Maojiayuan Road | 10.2~13.8 | 115 | Branch road |
| Jiqing Road | 5.0 | 122 | Walking road |
| New Dock Road | 6.4~7.8 (planned 16.0) | 127 | Branch road |
| Shengmao Dock Road | 8.3 | 110 | Walking road |
| Zhuhang Dock Road | 9.6~11.2 | 136 | Branch road |
| Wangjia Dock Road | 9.1~10.0 | 134 | Branch road |
| Wanyu Dock Road | 9.2 | 117 | Walking road |
| Gongyi Dock Road | 10.2~13.9 | 112 | Branch road |
| Dongjiadu Road | (planned 20.0) | 122 | Branch road |

Table 2: List of road planning



Figure 11: Road traffic planning and timeshare traffic guidance

Buildings in the neighborhood also extend from the waterside towards inland along with the streets to form the shape of a comb. There is “one vertical line (Waima Road) and seven horizontal lines” for vehicles and “one vertical line (Pubin Road) and four horizontal lines” for pedestrian, thus forming an interlaced “double comb” pattern. To ensure the city activity quality in the core area, the plan also puts forward a core activity protection area and timeshare traffic management. In one section of Waima Road, from Maojiayuan Road to Wangjia Dock Road, there are Maojiayuan Road, Jiqing Road, New Dock Road, Zhuhang Dock Road and Wangjia Dock Road surrounding the core block of 608, 609, 610 and 611. Afternoons and evenings on weekends and holidays are the climax of activities, during which time motor vehicles are prohibited to ensure pedestrian traffic and city activities. (Figure 11)

4.4. The Neighborhood: Continuous City Land Development

The traffic needs and city features form the shape of a “comb” facing westwards and this is just the commercial dock neighborhood space of Shanghai. The neighborhood consists of different industries, associations and families, each covering an area of less than 1 hectare. The land is characterized in small size, mixed functions and dense buildings. Each unit has “a store in the front and a workshop at the back”, having the full functions of storage, exchange and settlement. But there is a lack of public service facilities. The development mode of mixed function and self improvement has long been carried out.

After careful analysis of the land’s present situation and consideration of its protective development needs, the plan puts forward a “T-shaped” space structure, dividing it into seven functional areas and nine neighborhood units. Additionally, many greenbelts will be opened based on the activity lines to improve the environment. The neighborhood units will have major functions and supporting functions, integrating living, leisure, work and recreation. (Figure 12, Figure 13)



Figure 12: Design sketch of Jiqing Street reconstruction

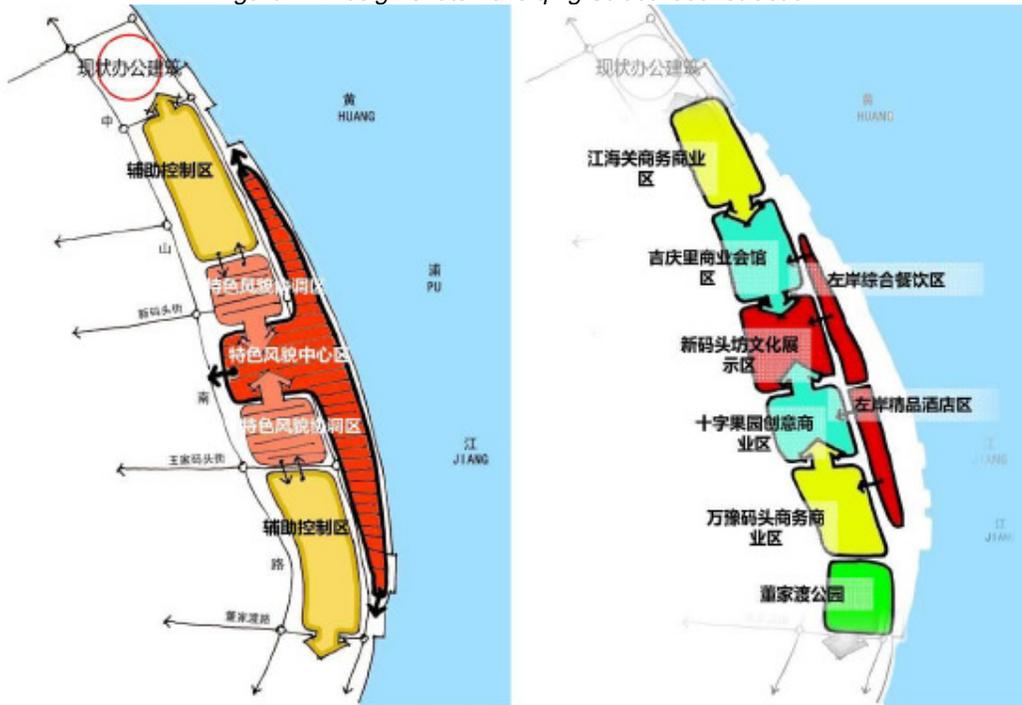


Figure 13: T-shaped structure and the seven functional areas

5. Project Implementation: Realization of Dreams

In the 1990s, the city boundary water routes of Shanghai on Huangpu River began to return to the city center. Thus the industrial function of the waterfront area gradually turned into living landscape. The city core functional pattern of “the Three Bund” (the North Bund, the Old Bund and the South Bund) became obvious and new opportunities for social economic transfer appeared.

However, compared with the North Bund, which has recently been transferred into an international shipping service center, and the Old Bund, which is aimed to become an international finance and trade center, the South Bund is slow in space planning and reconstruction. The plan is just a primary exploration for the development of the South Bund. The plan concerns more about the vitality reconstruction of this city historical block than its protection. Thus the planning methods are based on the purpose of history recalling and culture recovering. It’s intended to realize the communication of the old time and the modern time and the interaction between the waterfront environment and city development in this block.

After years of recovering and improving and with the advance of the Bund integrating and

Huangpu River bank comprehensive developing, the South Bund, a land bearing the forever memory of Shanghai, finally showed people its riverside landscape and positional value in 2010 when Shanghai Expo successfully ended.(Figure 14)(Figure 15)

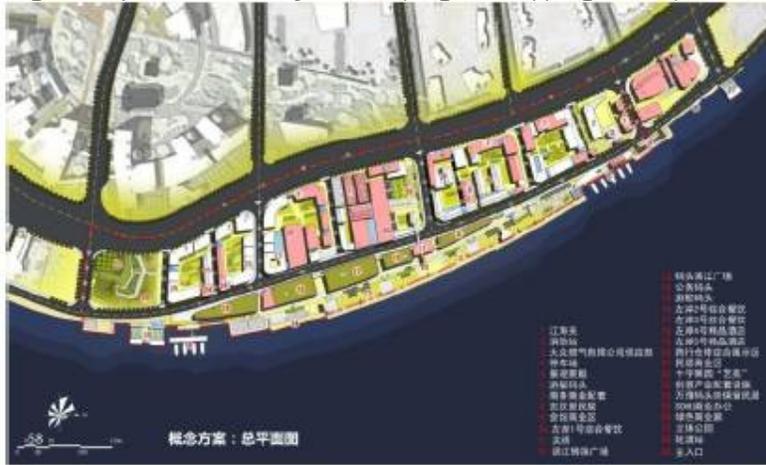


Figure 14: Design sketch of the overall plane layout



Figure 15: Photos of present reconstruction (May 2010)

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