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# Investigation of Villagers' Participation in Village Planning

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## Abstract

Village planning is an important component of the new socialism village construction. How to make village planning scientifically and protect the interests of the villagers puzzles the planners. This article studies on the status quo of the public participation in village planning and explores the method of public participation in the process of village planning. With the public participation becoming the way of decision-making, the practical problems may be solved effectively and the planning may be carried on smoothly.

## Keywords

Village Planning, Public Participation .

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## 1. Introduction

For a long time, China's implementation of urban and rural planning legal system is the "People's Republic of China Urban Planning Law" and "villages and market towns planning and construction regulations" (referred to as "one law one case"). "A method for a Regulation" The planning system established by "one law one case" cannot meet the real need for an integrated development of urban and rural areas.

In 2008, The Urban and Rural Planning Law of the People's Republic of China, hereafter referred to as the urban-rural planning law, was officially formulated and promulgated. The basic principle of carrying out public participation in the process of urban-rural planning was established in the form of state law for the first time. It indicated that China will change the urban-rural dual structure and go into the urban and rural harmonious.

The urban-rural planning law not only puts village planning in the statutory planning, also emphasizes to respect the wishes of the villagers in the plan and determines the principal role of farmers in the village planning clearly. [1] At the same time, the urban-rural planning law also provides "before the rural planning submitted for approval, the organ establishing should announce the draft urban planning less than 30 days soliciting the views of experts and the public with the way of argumentation, hearing or other means. The organ establishing should take full account of the views of experts and the public, accompanying the adoption of opinions and the reasons in material submitted for approval [1]. It highlights the public participation in the whole process of urban and rural planning from the organization to the implementation, to give legal protection of public participation and reflect the breadth and necessity of public participation in social affairs.

## 2. Status of Public Participation in the Whole Process of Village Planning

The whole process of village planning can be divided into three phases: decision-making, planning and implementation stages. Public participation is different in different planning stages.

## 2.1 Public Participation in Decision-making Stage

The work of decision-making stage in village planning includes project decisions, determination of planning value, targets and other related work. The current village planning workflow is a top-down linear model of "target - research - planning - implementation "with decision-makers determining planning targets and publicity and planners making countermeasures for the problem according to the plan targets. [2]In this linear model, the decision-making of village planning is essentially a government action, depending on the will of the leadership of the government, and not reflecting the needs and aspirations of the villagers. The guidance and operability is not strong and the system cannot be scientifically guide the construction and development of the village. This phase almost has no public participation with planning largely ignoring the wishes of the masses.

## 2.2 Public Participation in Planning Stage

Village planning stage is a process of planning preparation units making village planning, including six stages: the investigation on current situation, the initial program, the official program, the results for review, approval of outcome and the final outcome. The current situation of public participation in all village planning stages is shown in [Table 2](#) below.

Table 2 List of Public Participation in all Village Planning Stages

Numble	Planning Stages	Details	Villagers Participation	Participatory Nature
one	Information collection	Collected relevant biography	Non-participation	Planning unit operation
two	Status survey	Village investigation collection and verification relevant information	Participation	Seminars home interviews questionnaires passive participation
three	Initial program	Formation the initial program in accordance with relevant basic information and investigation on current situation	Non-participation	Planning unit operation
four	Initial program discussions	Preliminary discussions with the Party ,clarify questions, exchange views, common understanding and solve problems	Non-participation	Planning unit operation
five	Official program	According to preliminary opinion to revise and improve the program, formation a official program	Non-participation	Planning unit operation
six	Official program discussions	Report official program for the Party, discuss and exchange	Non-participation	Planning unit operation
seven	Planning draft for review	Adjusted the official program according to review comments ,form draft for review programs send to experts and departments to examine, collect comments and suggestions	Non-participation	Planning unit operation
eight	Review committee	Organization experts committee to seek expert advice	Non-participation	Government operation Experts participation
nine	Planning commission review	Organization relevant departments committee to discuss the comments	Non-participation	Government operation
ten	Convene village meetings or villagers'	Discuss planning reviewed by review committee and planning commission review	Participation	Participate in discussions, put forward opinions

	representative conference reviews			and suggestions Indeed inform and notify the villagers
eleven	Approval before the announcement	Before submitted for approval, published the plan at least thirty days	Participation	Submit opinions and suggestions on the plan Indeed inform and notify the villagers
twelve	Submitted for approval	The organ tissue submit the next higher level people's government for approval	Non- participation	Government operation
thirteen	After the announcement of approval	After the level of the people's government plan (county governments) to be published after approval	Participation	After approval to inform villagers

From Table 2, in the thirteen stages of village planning above, the villagers involved in a total of four links. In fact, the villagers only involved in Investigation on Current Situation and the village meetings to review two aspects. In the Investigation on Current Situation, the villagers are surveyed, providing information through workshops, household interviews, survey questionnaires, etc. When the villagers held meetings or villagers' representative meeting to review plan, the villagers can participate in discussions, put forward opinions and suggestions. However, the villagers are involved in the discussions by experts in advance of the plan, it is more like a form of going through the motions, an ex post notification and collection of the villagers' opinions [3].

### 2.3 Public Participation in Planning Implementation Stage

The implementation of Village planning is to put the nature, scale, development, construction layout, the road system, landscape system, infrastructure and other development goals into reality, including the implementation and management of planning and other related work.

Currently, the public participation in village planning implementation stage is mainly rights protection due to direct conflict of interest. And the public management of the affairs of the village planning is basically no participation.

## 3. Problems of Public Participation in the Whole Process of Village Planning

Currently, the country's village planning and implementation is still in the exploratory stage practice, for the villagers participation in the whole process of planning there are still many problems. This article will explore the problems of public participation in the whole process from planning decisions, planning and planning implementation three aspects.

### 3.1 Problems of Public Participation in Decision-making Stage

Currently the village planning is actually a government-led decision-making behavior. Government policy makers make unilateral decisions in village project planning, site selection, planning objectives and other decision-making. In the decision-making stage, there is too much government control authority, arranged village planning decisions affairs issues in public participation.

### 3.2 Problems of Public Participation in Planning Stage

The process of villagers' participation in village planning is a necessary interaction between villagers and government. However, there are many problems in the current village planning process.

Villagers participation late

According to the above we can see, in the whole process of village planning, the villagers participation began in the investigation on current situation stage. Before the project, there are no participation in project decisions, determination of planning value, targets, site selection etc. It is visible that the time the villagers involved in relatively is late.

Villagers participation links less

Table 2 above shows that the villagers' participation in the 13 session village planning stages involved only four links. In fact, genuine participation is only investigation and village meetings to review two aspects. It is visible that the villagers' participation links is less.

Villagers participation process simple

After the village planning stage, the villagers actual participate in village meetings to review and investigation two areas. In the approval before the announcement and the announcement after approval, villagers' participation is more like a purely procedural public, which cannot meet the needs of villagers' participation. Although the urban-rural planning law affirmed the public participation, the participation ways and the process did not in detailed provisions. The villagers' participation process can be simplified.

### **3.3 Problems of Public Participation in Planning Implementation Stage**

In the village planning implementation stage, the villagers only participate in the relevant part of their own interests, and less participation in aspects of public interest.

Lack of regulatory mechanisms in the villagers participation

The village planning implementation stage is a long-term, phased and dynamic process. Public oversight and constraints in the implementation and management process can avoid the abuse of power and corruption. However, due to the lack of an effective monitoring system of villagers in village planning implementation process, the behavior of damaging the villagers vital interests have occurred.

One-sided content in the villagers' participation

In the village planning implementation stage, due to the weak voice, the villagers involved in only part of their own interests closely related. The participation content is in a single-sided comparison.

## **4. Inspirations and Reflections**

### **4.1 Change Ways in Decision-making Stage**

The urban-rural planning law determines the dominant position of the villagers to participate, providing an important legal basis for participation in decision-making stage for the villagers. Therefore, the government should change the traditional top-down "command" work to "participatory" decision-making. First, the government should mobilize villagers' initiative. Secondly, through the villagers' participation in the village planning decision-making process, you can better clarify the issue of local village development, to better identify and formulate relevant policies village planning and development objectives.

### **4.2 Construction Multi-channel Participation in Planning Stage**

Currently, in the village planning level, it is necessary to establish advocacy planning strategy in line with China's national conditions. However, since most villagers restricted by education level and other factors, there are many obstacles to their participation. Therefore, in order to protect the dominant position of the villagers in the village planning, we must build the multi-channel system in villagers' participation, to better reflect the wishes of the villagers' body. First, take congresses, village seminars, on-site interviews, questionnaires and other forms of participation in the village planning, while taking the "prize survey" means to increase with the degree of enthusiasm and farmers. Second, take full account of local customs and social and economic development in designing surveys and questionnaires in plain language for communication. At the same time, try to increase the number of random surveys and interviews to ensure the objectivity and validity of the survey data and information.

### **4.3 Construction Feedback Mechanism in Planning Implementation Stage**

In order to avoid the ignorance of villagers feedback in village planning implementation stage, the long-term interaction feedback mechanism between implementation administrations and villagers must be built up (such as "mayor hotline", "green window" to plan ,village planning exhibition hall and

feedback network platform, etc.) [4]. In all aspects of planning implementation, it is necessary to take fully consideration of the villagers' views, to give reasons for adoption or non-adoption. Through the construction of feedback mechanisms, farmers' active role, the right of participation and the main interests of the villagers can be protected in the planning implementation stage.

## 5. Conclusions

Based on the research of public participation in village planning process, the analysis of the status quo and problems of public participation, the public participation recommendations can be put forward in decision-making, planning and implementation three stages, which can improve operability and enforceability in village planning.

## References

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