

Present Status of Walled City Project

Kamil Khan Mumtaz, Architect, Urban Planner and activist of Lahore. He has also had a leading role in Lahore Bachao Tehreek (Lahore Conservation Society). Firstly, he explained the prime purpose of Walled City project which is to conserve historical heritage of the city. Therefore, Government of the Punjab established Walled City of Lahore Authority to attain this objective. The authority could not show considerable results. Resultantly, residents of Walled City filed a case against poor performance of authority. To solve the issue, the Court asked Mr. Kamil for his services. This was a brief introduction that how he involved in this project.

To understand the present situation at Walled City, he told that land use is going to change due to increase in commercial activities. These are highly dense areas and this rapid commercialization is disturbing the lives of residents. The physical structure of buildings is very dangerous having one basement and six stories. The political influence is very high here and it is quite difficult to stop developers and traders to work here. If it continues with the same pace then this historical place will ruin. Therefore, it is highly needed to figure out how we can deal with these issues otherwise we will be nowhere. He also proposed community meetings to know their perspective clearly. This forum helped us to understand the problems in Walled city and gave a different perspective about the conservation of urban heritage in walled city. This thing explained further that this is going to destroy the whole fabric of the walled city if they are going to continue this, those families/clans that are living here from more than 100 or 200 years they will leave and some of them already left, so this looks very absurd that government is trying to save walled city without its natives. This was very helpful argument about urban conservation projects that rejecting people in conservation is not help full in any ways so this understanding need sharing with people government and organizations.

In response of a question regarding the availability of previous data, e.g. socio-economic surveys, maps, drawing, etc. He said that all the data can be approached after some time. PURC also accepted his invitation to attend all the community meetings and lobbying & advocacy for the better of this project.