

Agenda for presentation regarding the Akira Tamura Memorial – A Town Planning Research Initiative NPO  
(hereafter “NPO Tamura”)

at the IGES seminar in Hayama on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018

*Toshio Taguchi*

1. Brief explanation regarding the pre-eminent Japanese urban planner, Akira Tamura
2. Origin of our NPO and our objectives
3. Relationship with IGES and future possibilities

### **A brief introduction of myself and the NPO**

Hello, my name is Toshio Taguchi, and I am vice-president of the Akira Tamura Memorial – A Town Planning Research Initiative NPO. We often abbreviate this as “NPO Tamura”.

On behalf of my research colleagues, I would like to express my pleasure to have this opportunity to talk about our organisation and also our evolving relationship with IGES. I acknowledge that this meeting has been arranged by Mr. Fujino and Mr. Asakawa, and would like to convey many thanks to the two of you.

Our organisation is a voluntary research institution which was founded in 2015 by retired members of the Yokohama city government including me, other scholars and citizens concerned with the history of the pre-eminent Japanese urban planner, Akira Tamura. The objectives of our organisation are to research the work of Tamura from an objective and scientific perspective, and then disseminate the results of our activities to global audiences through the internet in English.

### **1. Brief explanation regarding the pre-eminent Japanese urban planner, Akira Tamura**

I want to start my talk by explaining why our organisation is named “Akira Tamura Memorial”. For this purpose, I had better explain who Akira Tamura is by reference to the panel proposal for the upcoming international conference of the IPHS in Yokohama next month. The IPHS is the International Planning History Society, headquartered in London. It is an organisation of scholars or practitioners in the field of town planning all over the world. Every two years it has a global conference, and this year it will occur for the first time in the Asia region.

#### **A panel entitled “The Genesis of Yokohama’s Strategic Planning Environment: Reflecting on the Contribution of Akira Tamura and His Work”**

This panel concerns the work of Mr. Akira Tamura, and focuses on his vision and work as a representation of Japan’s post-war town planning practice. Tamura’s career is considered comparable to that of Daniel Hudson Burnham, a renowned Chicago city planner, who dedicated his life to the town planning of Chicago.

Under Tamura’s stewardship, Yokohama experienced a golden age in Japan’s town planning history. In 1977, the Planning and Coordination Bureau of Yokohama headed by Tamura was awarded an honourable prize from the Architectural Institute of Japan (“AIJ”) to commemorate the series of distinguished town planning projects in Yokohama as a model of integrated processes in the creation of city space. The AIJ is said to be the oldest scholarly association in Japan. In 2000, Tamura received the highest accolade, he was named the only planner in Japan by the AIJ.

Besides physical planning, Tamura developed a philosophy and rationale towards city management and town

planning. He was committed to making old administrative machinery evolve into an active and independent one. We are delighted that the IPHS has chosen to hold its conference in Yokohama with which Tamura has deep and enduring ties.

The panel consists of four theses as follows;

1. Profile of Akira Tamura-A Planner of Yokohama: A biography of Akira Tamura, pre-eminent town planner of Japan  
Chihiro Tamura, president of our organisation
2. The adoption and abolition of the local development exaction system by the city of Yokohama: a story regarding formation of local initiative by independent local governments in highly constrained town planning environment  
Toshio Taguchi
3. A study of unorthodox town making by Akira Tamura: the transmission of Tamura's vision to younger generations  
Atsuhiko Aoki, post-graduate student of Tokyo University
4. The status and use of soft law in municipalities' management of urban development: restructuring the logical framework of administrative guidance on impact fees for housing development in 1970s Japan  
Kenji Asakawa, programme manager, city taskforce, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

The conference presents an important opportunity to disseminate the work of Tamura and its meaning to the world. Following the IPHS conference, international research interactions such as visits from overseas scholars to Yokohama or joint research activities are expected to increase and we are ready to welcome them.

## **2. Origin of our NPO and objectives**

Our NPO will enter its fourth year in 2018. We hold regular research meetings on at least a monthly basis, attended by a limited number of members. However, in April of 2016 on the first anniversary of our NPO, we welcomed nearly two hundred attendees including eminent scholars, government officials, planners and architects, and citizens all over Japan.

We will study Yokohama's town planning since the 1960s under the stewardship of Akira Tamura, from an objective and scientific perspective. Yokohama, which ran at the forefront of town planning innovation in Japan, is also expected to be studied from the perspective of global planning history and accordingly to become a hub of international exchange in terms of planning research and practice. This is the primary objective of our NPO. Its secondary objective is to utilise the results of our research activities for future generations.

We emphasise the need for objective and scientific study because the people who have worked with Tamura tend to boast, i.e., to speak too proudly of their successes or their roles. From an academic point of view, it is necessary to have an objective stance in our research. However, documents and data regarding the planning processes and backgrounds during Tamura era are limited or not yet available. Anecdotes of the planning history are sometimes useful, while the content of our research is subject to empirical analysis.

Based on the results of our research so far, one member is enthusiastically pursuing the innovative application of our research results in other countries and regions. As the essence of Akira Tamura's organisational management lies in human resource development and utilisation, a sociological research initiative focused on this aspect has already been launched by a young member. Future developments in this

field are expected to continue apace.

Since the inauguration of the NPO, many members have addressed our meetings, left us with records of their research, and we have also opened the website of the NPO. Valuable material and data obtained through cooperation with related organisations during our research has been published on the website, too.

In summary, I would like to state the objectives of the NPO as follows:

1. Empirical research on Akira Tamura and his work in a global context
2. Dissemination of research materials and results to the public
3. Utilisation of research results for the next generation and overseas countries
4. Progressive interaction among people concerned with Akira Tamura all over the world

### **3. Relationship with IGES and possible future**

I believe that the progressive relationship between our organisation and IGES is now well underway, and we are delighted that Mr. Asakawa will deliver a speech regarding soft law theory at the IPHS Yokohama 2018 conference.

As an organisation, we would be very pleased if the results of our historical analysis could be meaningfully utilised for future application. We have members who personally experienced Tamura's era as city government officers and stayed at the city under successive mayors. Since the Asukata/Tamura era, forty years have passed. The social and economic situation has drastically changed, from a period of a youthful and expanding population to one of an aging and shrinking population. However, this is also precious experience for us to obtain a different perspective. Therefore, it may be useful to reflect on the work done during the previous era from a contemporary perspective.

I understand that IGES has a profound resource in its staff members who are engaging in environmental issues, and who have a wide network of research activity across the world. On the other hand, our organisation's resources are derived from experience in management and planning in Yokohama, especially during the Asukata/Tamura era in 1960s and 1970s. It is said that the local government of the Asukata/Tamura era had neither financial resources nor planning power. Nevertheless, they had a courageous wisdom and also an independent attitude towards numerous issues they had to tackle. I hope that your organisation and our NPO can initiate a joint venture towards the transfer of knowledge and experience to people who may need or benefit from it. Thank you for your time this afternoon.