

Resurfacing the Spirit of the Place;An Urban Design Study of Historic Santa Ana Streetscapes

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Abstract:

Santa Ana de Sapa, known today as Santa Ana is an old pre-colonial settlement in Manila and is the first Franciscan Mission Town outside of Intramuros. It houses rich records of tangible and intangible heritage of old Manila that has been passed down for generations and generations up to the present date. Unfortunately, these historical records may it be the built or intangible is in peril. Santa Ana was one of the oldest residential districts in Manila located at the banks of the Pasig River. It used to be a busy marketplace, where cascoes (small wooden boats) traversed the Pasig River to sail all the way to the Laguna de Bay. The old Kingdom of Namayan once stood here. Before the Spanish conquistadors arrived, this was the kingdom that ruled over what is now Mandaluyong, Makati, Pasay, and the Manila districts of Pandacan and Paco. During the Spanish period, this could have been Manila’s Forbes Park. The home of landed Manileños and prominent personalities, wealthy families built grand houses near the Pasig River, attracted by the cool breeze and the proximity to what was once the main artery for travel. The study aims to: (1) Resurface its historical and social significance through investigation and research of its historical context, its heritage structures and its overall physical and urban design fabric, (2) Identify the modern issues enveloping its heritage conservation, and (3) Develop conservation policies and design guidelines specifically in its major heritage core. The study utilized the quantitative and qualitative methods. To pursue the objective of the study, the researcher conducted documentation procedures. Archival resources were reviewed to establish the historical context. Review of varied sources, SWOT Analysis as well as Mapping and Inventory that dealt with the Santa Ana Heritage. Historical, social and cultural records as well as the existing conservation management plan were also studied. Conclusively, Santa Ana is in the brink of decay from the researchers’ perspectives. What can be done is highlighting its historical significance and bringing in the community to partake in the conservation and stewardship efforts of Santa Ana. A conservation policy and design guideline were proposed to guide stakeholders and the community in general as to how its present and future development would be. An urban design visualization is also done to support the proposed design guidelines.

Keywords — historical, preservation, guidelines, conservation

Introduction

Before the Spanish conquistadors grab hold of Manila, there used to be a kingdom that ruled over what is now Mandaluyong, Makati, Pasay, and the Manila districts of Pandacan and Paco. This is the Kingdom of Namayan (a tagalog verb phrase for an established residence) or more appropriately termed as the Lakanate of Namayan.

This chapter presents the early beginnings of Santa Ana as a pre-colonial settlement and its rise to glory under the Spanish rule, witnessing decades of war and peace, to its decline and imminent lost and degradation amidst the modernization of Filipino society and the pressure of economic forces.

The Kingdom of Namayan (Lakanate of Namayan), a pre-colonial settlements located along the banks of Pasig River. Fray Felix Huerta, a

Franciscan Historian documented these settlements from the period of colonial contact (1570) back to three generations of its ruler. This is written in the records of the Histories of the Franciscan Mission called Estado geográfico, topográfico, estadístico, histórico- religioso de la santa y apostólica Provincia de San Gregorio Magno ("Geographical, topographical, statistical, historical and religious state of the holy and apostolic province of St. Gregory the Great") which is now a primary resource of local history in Philippine municipalities. (Scott, W.H., 1994).

Pre-colonial history showed that Namayan was a flourishing community known for trading, agriculture, fishery, pottery and iron work products with other communities along Pasig River (Peralta, Agcaoli, 1974).



Figure 1: The Stone Church of Santa Ana de Sapa. (Image Source: Sarmiento, A.D., 2018)

The Franciscans established a parish at Sapa in 1578. It was then the capital of the NamayanLakanate. The Franciscans dedicated the parish to St. Anne (the mother of the Virgin Mary); hence the parish name was known as Santa Ana de Sapa (St. Anne of the Brooks). It was the first missionary settlement outside Intramuros.

Valencia, Spain a tiny brown image statue of Nuestra Señora de Desamparados (Our Lady of the Abandoned), which has since been the patroness of Tondo, Santa Cruz, Quiapo, Sampaloc, San Miguel, Malate, Ermita, Muntinglupa, Pandacan, San Felipe

Neri (Mandaluyong), San Juan del Monte, Marikina, San Fernando de Dilao (Paco), Pineda (Pasay), Paranaque, Las Pinas, San Pedro (Makati), Pasig, Pateros, Taguig, Caloocan, Tambobong (Malabon), Navotas, Novaliches, San Mateo, Malibay, and Montalban became part of the municipal districts of Manila as a result of administrative reforms.



Figure 2: Map of the extent of the Kingdom of Namayan (Image Source: google images)

Foreigners like merchants and even diplomats found the community an ideal place to build their houses with orchards and gardens (Ira, 1983). Santa Ana and other communities over the left bank of the Pasig River became a favored site for summer villas of the rich. When the Americans came as a new colonial power, the once rustic communities gradually transformed into a veritable urban area (Camagay, 1996).

However, during the Philippine Revolution against Spain, the Spanish-American War, and the Filipino-American War in the early years of the 20th century, many of these houses were destroyed. At the tail-end of the Japanese occupation in 1945, during the Battle of Manila, Santa Ana was spared from the atrocities of the battle and served as a place for refuge to thousands of fleeing civilians from other parts of Manila. The remaining pre-war houses served as refugee center (Laya, 2010; Gamil, 2010).

In pre-war Manila, the city tramline or streetcar popularly known as “*tranvia*” had its end terminal in Santa Ana which meant that one had reached the end most part of the city, the most distant suburb. The tramline tracks ended before the elevated portion of Santa Ana where the church was located amid wooded greenery and fresh cool of the air emanating from the nearby Pasig River (The Pasig Line - Guadalupe to Pasig, was an 11.6 km. extension starting from Santa Ana Junction Station near the Paco Station (Liongson, 2003)). The district then had only ten principal streets; *Herran* (the main street now *Pedro Gil*), *Lamayan*, *Panaderos*, *Havana*, *San Roque* (now *Suter*), *Calderon*, *Tejeron*, *Inverness*, *Revellin* and *Medel*, and an access from *Barrio Punta* across the Pasig River. In the 1920s, large tracts of marshlands were bought by wealthy families and subdivided them into lots. Thus, grew modern Santa Ana (Ira, 1983).

Today, Santa Ana can be accessed through *Pedro Gil Street* coming from the district of *Paco* on western side, via *Makati City* through *Tejeron Street* on the southern end from *Mandaluyong City* on the northeastern part crossing *Pasig River* via *New Panaderos Street* and northern part via *Pandacan* through *M. Carreo Street*. Although a few remaining trees are still in existence, the streetcar tracks and the terminal have long vanished (Ira, 1983). The district had undergone a distinct transformation brought about by the changes of lifestyle, both the people and the place (De la Torre, 1991).

Methodology

The study utilized the quantitative and qualitative methods. To pursue the objective of the study, the researcher conducted documentation procedures. Archival resources were reviewed to establish the historical context. Review of varied sources that dealt with the Santa Ana Heritage. Pertinent documents were gathered and reviewed from the Local Government to identify the past and present plan of actions if there’s any in safeguarding and preserving the heritage district. Historical, social and cultural records as well as the existing conservation management plan were also studied to determine the impact of development in Santa Ana Heritage District. Communities, organizations, conservation advocates and other stakeholders were interviewed before the pandemic and through google meet for the top to bottom and bottom-up approaches in the intensification conservation of Heritage District Zone. With the use of the comparative historical method, local historic towns with successful and non-successful conservation approaches were compared to serve as guide in determining applicable preventive and corrective action to guaranteed success of the resurfacing the heritage district.

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Photo-documentation was used in order to assess the current physical conditions of the heritage structures within the Inner and Outer Core. Actual Pictures of selected structures were taken before the pandemic and compared during the pandemic through google map, street view. Pictures were labelled properly. Data were analysed about the commonality of details were done to isolate the factors of the significant and the common details

and features of the significance architectural edifice. Mapping and inventory records were revisited/ updated to be able to gather necessary data that can only be achieved through the conduct of mapping and inventory of all significant structures relevant to the study.

Results Analysis and Discussion

Sta. Ana is a prime location—it is very near Makati and Mandaluyong, and it is very accessible from those areas as well.

Santa Ana is the only district in Manila which was spared from destruction during World War II. Civilians fleeing other parts of Manila sought refuge in this district during the war. Thus, many ancestral houses are still standing up to the present time. Dubbed as the "Forbes Park of Manila", some houses were owned by prominent personalities and wealthy families.

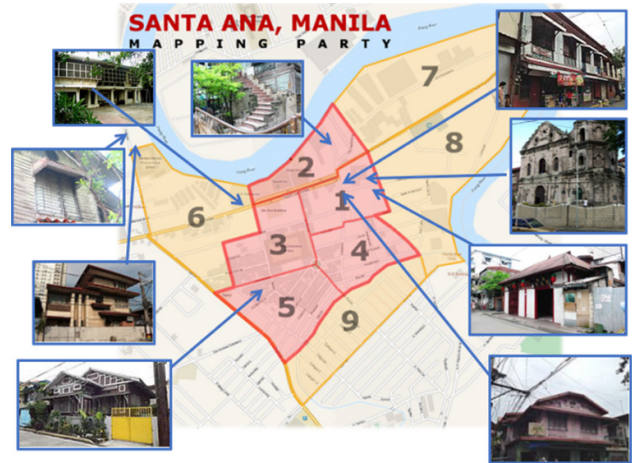


Figure 4: Map of heritage structures
 Summary of Findings

Cultural Aspects

The Sta Ana cultural heritage in Manila, situated along the equally historic Pasig River, provides heritage structures with the fusion of Spanish, Neo-vernacular, and Art Deco styles. They are named and designed based on, and predominantly, Spanish and Art Deco styles. After conducting documentation and assessment around the area, majority of these structures manifest signs of several beautification and material replacements from the previous construction projects. But the physical deterioration brought by natural causes is still present which requires repair and interior renovation as to consider the structural integrity, possibility to reuse them, and the preservation aesthetics which makes the heritage zone usually known. The pre-war houses in the Conservation Zone have the most number of structures being threatened by impending commercialization, and are being blocked by new developments which are used for commercial purposes. The structures within the heritage zones need improvement. There are structures particularly Amparo-Santos Ancestral House, Areopagita Ancestral House, Batungbacal Ancestral House, Bautista-Rodil Ancestral House, Bernardo Ancestral House, Cahayon



Figure 3: Map of heritage structures

Ancestral House, Cobangbang Ancestral House, Cojuangco-Ocampo Ancestral House, De la Merced - Panis Ancestral House, Fernandez Ancestral

House, Gawat Residential House, Leiva-Syquia Ancestral House, Lichauco Heritage House, Morales Ancestral House, Nerecina Ancestral House, Pascual Modernist House, Perez Ancestral House, San Juan Ancestral House, Santaromana Ancestral House, and the Sta Ana Church also known as the Our Lady of the Abandoned. Meanwhile, the streetscape character of the Pedro Gil particularly the Plaza Calderon differs per zone in which uniformity is a concern. There were some portions of the area where the elements are absent, unmaintained or destroyed by the locals for scrapping. The presence of flora to the specific area makes it as an additional feature to the natural heritage as they provide habitat for wildlife, and different environment that is surrounded by urban developments. The application of the adaptive reuse and contextualism in this aspect is essential as the adaptive reuse, the most common approach for the heritage structures, help to identify the possible strategies on how it will prolong the cultural heritage life and determine its new use without affecting the architectural and cultural identity of the structure. These topics were observed in the cases of the Heritage District of San Fernando in Pampanga, Cubao X in Quezon City and The Row in Malaysia. Whereas, the essence of contextualism revolves on determining the quality of compatibility and differentiation of the character, which is classified into: strategies of addition, alteration and infill, and; approaches of contextual uniformity, contextual continuity, and contextual juxtaposition.

Social Aspect

Santa Ana was one of the oldest residential districts in Manila located at the banks of the Pasig River. It used to be a busy marketplace, where cascoes (small wooden boats) traversed the Pasig River to sail all the way to the Laguna de Bay.

Santa Ana is where the cultural zone is situated, has its main contribution to the growth of population and prosperity of Manila as early migrants went to this historic town to work for the iron works, embroidery and fishing along Pasig River. Furthermore, the cultural heritage houses, tramvia and the Our Lady of the Abandoned Church make the sense of place of the community became the

nucleus for cultural, recreational, and social gatherings. This manifested on the visitors counter provided, where it reflected that the most prominent locals, visitors and tourists who are visiting the Sta Ana Church of Our Lady of the Abandoned and the Ancestral Houses are the students who live nearby and from other places within the Philippines and workers who want to stay for refreshments and other gatherings. However, with the proliferation of drastic demolishing of ancestral houses that plays significant contribution in the formation of the history of Sta Ana due to construction of commercial establishment, these affect the social environment not only in the area but also in the surrounding sitios. Without any strong sociocultural attributes for the then urbanized town, it hinders the sense of identity of the locals, and also limits the opportunities of the community to contribute for the deteriorating heritage context of the area. The development of Pedro Gil relies only on the informal sector through store ownership, much worse is the cannibalizing of structures and fixtures on the plaza calderon. Thus, the effects of the social environs to the town reflect on the present condition of Sta Ana.

Other behavioral factors made by the outside forces also imposed threats to the Cultural Core Zone environment and negative perception to visitors, thus security controls were made. Despite these factors, Sta Ana remains being a community for all but only limits the social activity, provision of public spaces and vehicular flows. Apart from all these, architecture with an approach to social sustainability focuses on the design of spaces that are compatible with the culture, behaviors and methods of human life for the maximum time possible and is considered to be suitable for human life for prolonged times.

Economic Aspect

From the primary data gathered, it is observed that there is a stronger requisition of considering the needs and interest of the commercialization in the cultural heritage zone of Sta Ana. In addition, many opportunities have shut when the commercialization of some parts of the ancestral houses occur, the open public spaces for gatherings have become

limited. Thus, as its surrounding environment have developed to house their interests, inhabitants started to go more often to other recreational places than the plaza Calderon which later on became the reason why there are now a lot of people whose not aware of the presence of the place.

During the Spanish period, this could have been Manila's Forbes Park. The home of landed Manileños and prominent personalities, wealthy families built grand houses near the Pasig River, attracted by the cool breeze and the proximity to what was once the main artery for travel.

To continue the promotion of the Cultural Heritage Zone of Sta Ana towards long-term preservation, the application of cultural tourism will utilize the heritage products and processes of the Complex as form of consumption, while creative tourism will promote experiences and transformation through creativity of a place, for example, the craftsmanship of the locals. The examples of these approaches are the Escolta Heritage District in Manila and Art Deco District in Miami, USA.

The gathered information and identified situations in Sta Ana and its users came up into a set of needs and recommendations that will support the classified aspects – cultural, social, and economic – for the preservation of the cultural heritage zone. In the aspect of culture, it requires the preservation, enhancement, and protection of the natural and built heritage, thus will result to spaces that concentrate on reusing, contextual development, and incorporation of relevant cultural undertakings. The social aspect concerns on the security and safety, and social intact, thus the proposals will focus on developed social environment, and organized spaces to administer and control the site. Lastly, the economic aspect regards the tourism management for the users that is still relevant for the resurfacing of the historic Sta Ana streetscape, thus a vibrant development is envisioned that will accommodate their interests and showcase the essence of the cultural heritage of Sta Ana as a declared.

SWOT Analysis

The analyses of present condition and implications of the preservation of cultural heritage site zone and its environment were merged as to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and connect their relationships for possible strategies to be integrated in the proposal.

The determinants of this analysis are focused on: the location and land use which are essential in considering the accessibility and level of awareness of the users towards the Sta Ana District, as well as how the possible development will function, despite having conflict between the general zoning as utility, and the actual land use as mixed-use; streetscapes that will determine the quality of site development planning based on the character and visual accessibility of the users; topography, vegetation, and climate of the site that are important to the exceptional “naturalness” in an urban area; and the road networks and transportation that considers the circulation flow of both passersby and vehicles in Pedro Gil Street along Plaza Calderon.

The corresponding strategies for the site involve on the relation of heritage structures and mixed use development, preservation of its natural environment and revitalization of streetscapes, and consideration for the circulation and security of the physical elements and the users.

Other legal matters, accreditation, inspection, and approval of developments of the Complex will involve the agencies and public and private institutions:

The Fundacion Santiago Organization

Fundacion Santiago executive director Chaco Molina is pushing for a strategy that can preserve heritage and promote livelihood. It's called community-based heritage tourism (CBHT), a strategy that involves adaptive reuse and the conservation of cultural assets. By working on the sustainable care of their shared heritage, residents can find ways to boost their livelihood too.

Manila City Ordinance 8244 declaring Santa Ana a Histo-cultural Heritage Overlay Zone, Manila City

Ordinance 8192 declaring Xavier House as a historic structure and Manila City Resolution 75 requiring Archaeological Impact Assessment prior to the issuance of a building permit.

The Lichauco Organization

The National Commission for Culture and Arts (NCCA) and Heritage Conservation Society, the non-government organizations which concerns on the legality of the project proposal in terms of the intervention involving the heritage structures in the site

SAHTA has been working to have Santa Ana declared as a heritage zone. By virtue of Resolution No. 1 s. 2014 issued by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines on May 12, 2014, Santa Ana has finally been declared as a heritage zone.

Local ordinances and resolutions have also been passed, namely: Manila City Ordinance 8244 declaring Santa Ana a Histo-cultural Heritage Overlay Zone, Manila City Ordinance 8192 declaring Xavier House as a historic structure and Manila City Resolution 75 requiring Archaeological Impact Assessment prior to the issuance of a building permit.

Conclusions

Santa Ana moves in a fast pace modernization and urbanism, with it is the destruction and conversion of its built heritage. The identified historical houses are in the verge of decay and deterioration primarily because of age, most of which are being torn down and sold out to be eventually converted to a new commercial establishment because of lack and high cost of maintenance and repair.

It is not just the houses that needs protection but the overall context of its built heritage, this means that the streetscapes and the overall urban design should also be included in protection and conservation efforts.

Old time residents of Santa Ana understood the importance of its historicity however because of the strong pull of economic forces and the lack of support by the implementing agency the residents have little choice but to give in.

To make Santa Ana tourist-friendly, major overhauls in the environment and waste management need to be done as well, something the Santa Ana group cannot do on its own. It took 20 years and political will for Vigan to be promoted as a heritage tourism site and their initiative in Santa Ana has just begun.

Recommendations

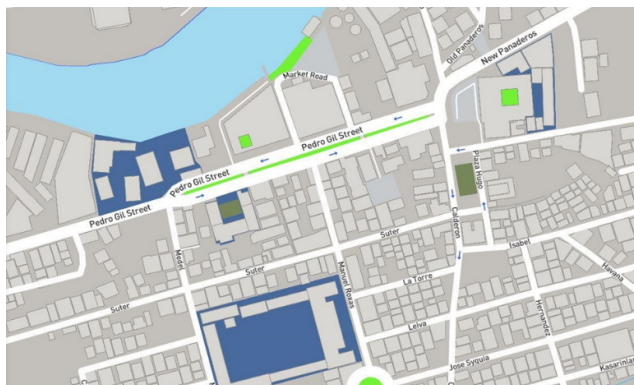
Preserving the built heritage of Santa Ana, the following are the study recommendations:

1. The District of Santa Ana, now classified as a Histo-Cultural Heritage/Overlay Zone (OHCH), needs Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).
2. While the O-HCH IRR is being promulgated, existing local ordinances regarding demolitions of old houses, diggings and excavations in the district should be strictly enforced. i.e., the City Council Ordinance No. 75
3. The stakeholders should have involvement/participation in any planning and decision making regarding built heritage preservation and conservation matters.
4. Barangay officials should have programs on heritage conservations like annual summits, conferences, workshops, etc. to keep them abreast of conservation developments.
5. Educational campaigns or promotions should be done, especially for the information of the youth sector regarding Santa Ana's cultural significance.
6. Campaign and/or activities for community-based heritage tourism should be undertaken with proper management because uncontrolled and unsupervised tourism activities can result to degradation and exploitation of the physical fabric of the historic district.
7. Built heritage tourism should be promoted together with the revival of local culture and tradition.
8. Tax incentives or tax holidays should be given to heritage house/structures owners who opt to preserve their properties on their own initiative.

9. A local cultural center must be built that will house a tourist information center, archives and museum.

10. The IRR of the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 (RA 10066) should be promulgated to effectively implement its legal mandate (to date The IRR needs to be issued yet).

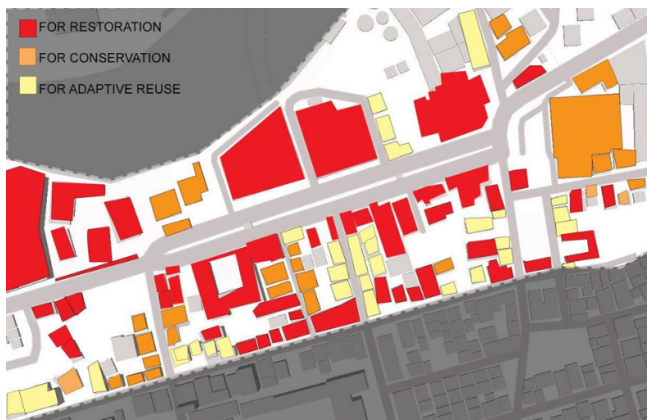
11. A conservation management plan is needed to protect and preserve the built heritage (houses/structures and sites) of Santa Ana.



Proposed Masterplan

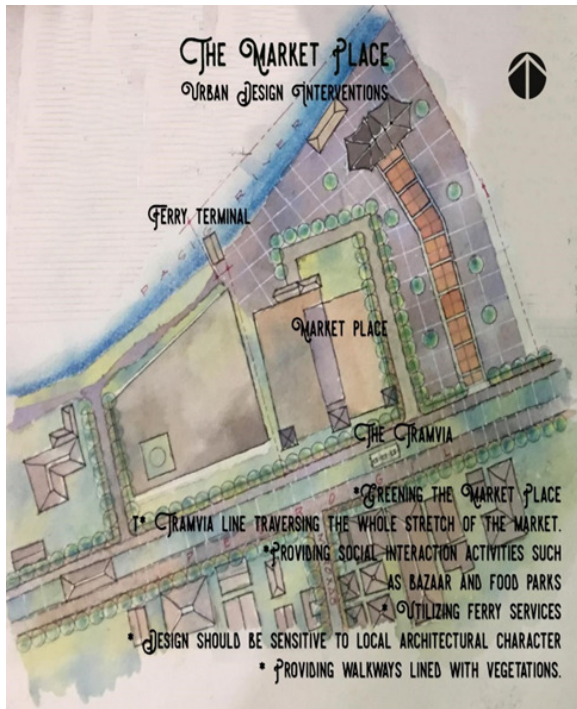


The Proposed development in Plaza Calderon along Pedro Gil Street



The Proposed Map of Development





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