Where is the future of the city downtown of Wuhan?

Social background:

Location: Wuhan

Name: Central Park, pedestrian mall called Xi’yuan

History: Zhongshan Park was originally the private garden of Liu Xinsheng, the king of Hankou, built in the early 20th century. around 1914, Liu in order to enlist Li Huatang, director of finance of the Hubei military government, gifted this garden to Li, who named it "West Garden". The garden was only 1680 square metres in area, that is, from the current park gate to the original management office, the east side of the door to the library north public toilets at the rectangular terrain. 1927, Hankou Special Municipal Government of the West Garden as enemy property confiscated. Near the West Park, there is a large piece of open space belonging to the Wu Peifu Fellowship.

In the early summer of 1928, Wu Guoshang, an architectural expert, returned from his studies in England and took charge of the construction of Zhongshan Park. Immediately, the place was surrounded by a wall, soldiers and prisoners were used to dig lakes and pile up mountains. The park area reached 12.5 hectares. The park has an artificial lake connected by bridges from several small islands. There is also a sports ground, a swimming pool, an ice rink, a public education centre and a memorial to the Prime Minister.

After partial completion, the park was first opened to the public on 10 June 1929, and officially opened to the public on 10 October of the same year (the anniversary of the Xinhai Uprising). The park was officially named "Hankou Zhongshan Park" in honour of Dr Sun Yat-sen. The main gate of the park was designed according to the British Palace Buckingham, and the stone piers on both sides of the gate were engraved with the four seal characters "Zhongshan" and "Park".

In 1931, when Hankou flooded, the park was submerged, and only the lake and the swimming pool platform remained.

In 1932, Wu Guoshang presided over the renovation and construction of the park.

In 1934, the original facilities have been completed, and the new "Zhang Gong Pavilion", "Lake Pavilion", the Water Pavilion, the Roman-style building "Sigu Xuan" and the branch-shaped railing reinforced concrete bridge and so on. Particularly worth mentioning, the restoration of the new "sundial". People only know the Forbidden City in Beijing sundial, Zhongshan Park sundial at the time is a remarkable initiative. After the completion of this sundial, not only played a role in telling the time, but also for the park added an attraction. After somehow failed to save, only left an empty sundial platform (after liberation has built a goat statue on the platform).

In 1938, the Japanese invaded Wuhan and ordered the demolition of the bronze statue of Chiang Kai-shek, and dug up the park's rockery to build a motor depot, and tied military horses to the trees. Trees were nibbled by horses and withered, and some were cut down to build fortifications, turning the park into a military barracks.

After the victory in the war, on 18 September 1945, General Sun Weiru, Commander of the Kuomintang government, acted as the Chief Surrender Officer of Hubei and Wuhan area, and accepted the surrender document presented by Japan in Zhongshan Park in Hankou.

After the liberation of Wuhan, Zhongshan Park was completely renovated several times, the area was enlarged, and the number of attractions and amusement facilities increased. Every holiday, the daily flow of visitors to the park up to more than 100,000 people. Zhongshan Park deserves to be called "the first park in Hankou".

Before the establishment of PRC in 1949, this mall was a beautiful private garden for a wealthy family. After the government retrieved it and established it as a public park, it witnessed hundreds of years of history of the development of PRC. It held city sports competitions, gathered revolution movement, witnessed the end of the war. It is in the heart of the city and documents the city’s development over decades.

Personal history: I used to go for a walk through the park every day after school. The animal and water there taught me what is ecosystem, the people there taught me how to enjoy life, and the plants and changes there taught me what is seasons and what is time.

I lived closer to the park for the three years of high school. I went to a British IB program that just collaborate with the traditional Chinese high school for years. To fit more students for the new program, the school build an extra floor on top of the previous two building. Every day we climb on stairs nonstop to the top floor and watch other student in the floor on our way. We go to the same school but learn in a different way. But in the noon, we share the same place to eat. The pedestrian mall was my second home.

Wuhan: city slogan: Wuhan, Different Everyday!

people: Hubei is called the province of a thousand lakes. However, Wuhan people’s characteristic are often opposite from what people normally expected to be raised beside a water; they are well known for their outspoken and straightforward characteristics. They fight the floods every year and win, RIP to my middle school graduation ceremony that was defeated. They greet each other in the morning by asking, “how’s breakfast?”. And they eat breakfast while walking.

In 2020, pandemic lockdown knocks down many local restaurants and small businesses. Many familiar faces are gone, and I can’t even picture their future.