

Headline	Why fancy building designs are passé		
MediaTitle	EdgeProp.my		
Date	16 Apr 2021	Color	Full Color
Section	News	Circulation	4,562
Page No	17,18	Readership	13,686
Language	English	ArticleSize	1126 cm ²
Journalist	Natalie Khoo	AdValue	RM 12,343
Frequency	Weekly	PR Value	RM 37,029



Khaw (from left), Loh, Yeo and Au at the panel discussion.

Why fancy building designs are passé

●Text Natalie Khoo

There used to be a time when building designs with the most superlatives were coveted amongst homeowners, but it is no longer the case today.

Instead, simple, thoughtful and sustainable buildings are some of the main attributes homebuyers and investors are looking for now. This is especially more so since the Covid-19 pandemic has driven many to spend more time at home.

This was one of the points highlighted at the annual EdgeProp.my symposium on Excellent Property Management 2021 with the theme “Future-proof your investment in the new norm” on April 10, 2021.

Addressing this topic were Westside III @ Desa ParkCity Joint Management Body (JMB) chairman Ken Yeo Kian Ing, Kiara Park Condominium Management Corporation (MC) secretary and past chairman Lawrence Loh and Sri Penaga Condominium MC past chairman Khaw Chay Tee.

The panel discussion was moderated by EdgeProp.my editor-in-chief and managing director Au Foong Yee.

Yeo said while the design of the building is important, it must, more importantly, be pragmatic and practical.

“Designers sometimes design fancy buildings, but in the end we cannot even clean the windows because they are too high to reach. It becomes a burden instead of beauty. And then sometimes, the developers hire foreign designers who may not understand our Malaysian climate because they have never experienced the rain and humidity in our country and they may not design the building to [last in our country’s weather].”

“So, my note to architects is to design buildings which are practical and easy to maintain in the long run,” Yeo stressed. He added that you must be able to accept and adhere to the strictness and high standards of good property managers, which in the long run, are beneficial for all.

Loh concurred, saying that an important thing to look at is whether the building is designed sensibly and for long-term sustenance.

“Yes, the building design is important because it takes a lot of effort to maintain, clean and repair a building. Also, look at the density of the building. If the community is too small, you may have to bear a bigger sum in your maintenance fee,” Loh pointed out.

Au highlighted that this responsibility ultimately sits with the property developer because they are the ones who have the last say when it comes to the final approved design of a building.



“**The building design is important because it takes a lot of effort to maintain, clean and repair a building.**”

— Loh

Headline	Why fancy building designs are passé		
MediaTitle	EdgeProp.my		
Date	16 Apr 2021	Color	Full Color
Section	News	Circulation	4,562
Page No	17,18	Readership	13,686
Language	English	ArticleSize	1126 cm ²
Journalist	Natalie Khoo	AdValue	RM 12,343
Frequency	Weekly	PR Value	RM 37,029



“

Designers sometimes design fanciful buildings, but in the end we cannot even clean the windows because they are too high to reach. It becomes a burden instead of beauty.
— Yeo

Mitigating the pandemic

When the Movement Control Order (MCO) was first implemented on March 18 last year, it was an unprecedented time for all, including the property managers and JMB/MC committee members. How did these JMBs and MCs handle the reported Covid-19 cases in their buildings?

Khaw said the residents are alert against the disease, and it boils down to dealing with strangers and contractors who are coming into the building.

“You have to set your own rules and regulations within the condominium, and at the same time make sure the residents understand and know what is going on. You have to assure them (the residents) not to be afraid to report if there are any cases and that you will help them. It is important to treat them with humanity,” Khaw shared.

He noted that the residents must also trust the property managers to handle the cases in the most efficient manner possible together with the MC committee.

Meanwhile, Yeo added that the fear of the Covid-19 disease is definitely there but it is important to continually communicate with the residents and it is not just about merely handing out notices.

“Make yourself visible and show that you are sanitising the place and taking steps to address the issue. Also,



“

Always ask yourself, are we acting in the best interest of the owners and residents?”
— Khaw

respect the privacy of the patients. Some residents ask which floor the infected patient stays at, but we do not disclose it. We understand some schools have the rule that if you are staying on the same floor as a confirmed Covid-19 patient, you are to refrain from going to school. We understand the situation, so if the confirmed case is not on their floor, we will just tell them so but we will not reveal the exact floor,” Yeo noted.

Additionally, the JMB of Westside III go above and beyond their call of duty by sending fruit baskets to the Covid-19 patients out of their own pockets and helping them out with their food and grocery deliveries and even the disposal of their trash.

As for Kiara Park’s Loh, no cases have been reported in the development, but vigilant steps have been taken to prevent outsiders from coming into the development from the start.

“You have to be flexible when you set the rules, but the law is the law. Also, it is important to address certain fake news and address them with solid evidence. If not, the news will keep circulating,” Loh cautioned.

He cited an example whereby they had to set their foot down on closing the common facilities, such as the pools, during the MCO.

“It is tough because we are telling people you cannot exercise or use the swimming pools, which to them, is

alright. So, we need to keep on explaining to our residents the reason we are doing this,” Loh added.

The makings of a successful committee

Kiara Park and Westside III were both accorded Gold in EdgeProp Malaysia’s Best Managed and Sustainable Property Awards 2021, for the Multiple-owned Strata Residential – Below 10 Years, and 10 Years and Above categories respectively, while Sri Penaga was awarded Gold in the 10 Years and Above category in 2018. The Awards recognises real estate that is managed with excellence.

Sri Penaga’s Khaw practises an interesting management rule he called the “Sunlight Test”. Essentially, all decisions should be able to withstand the glare of “the sun”, or public scrutiny.

“Always ask yourself, are we acting in the best interest of the owners and residents? If somebody questions your decision, are you able to answer them with confidence and truthfully? If you cannot, then you better rethink that decision,” Khaw elaborated.

As for Loh, he believes that the key to success is constant communication with the residents and working hand in hand with the property management company.

“We’ve worked with our property management company (Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd) for the past 18 years. Nobody is perfect but the most important thing is the willingness to try and to give your very best in anything you do,” Loh shared.

As for Yeo, he believes it is important to set a strong foundation as early as possible so that it is easier to maintain a property rather than to fix the problem later on.

“Always work hand in hand with the developer, property managers and the committee because trusting and working with each other is the key to a property which appreciates in value over time,” said Yeo.

The half-day event was organised in partnership with Nippon Paint Malaysia while the supporting partner was Panasonic Malaysia. The event held at a hotel in Petaling Jaya was also supported by The Edge Malaysia. 📍



Malaysian Institute of Property & Facility Managers president Adzman Shah interacts with the speakers during the panel discussion.



One of the participants posting her question during the panel discussion.