

National historic preservation act of 1966

Law



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The National Historic Preservation Act is a law that serves to create the “ National Register of Historic Places, the list of “ National Historic Landmarks and the posts of “ State Historic Preservation Officers” of the United States which aims of preserving the entire national and archeological site in the said country (nps. gov, 2007). Enacted in 1966, it has already been to a lot of amendments since then, this law mandates government agencies to determine the effects of various government funded construction projects (fema. gov, 2002). In other words, this act encourages the government agencies to safeguard their preservations programs alongside with the advisory council on Historic preservation.

The reason of the existence of this act is due to the fact that year after year, historical sites and other national heritage places has been experiencing degrading concern and of less priority as a government sponsored public works projects. There have been a lot of national heritage sites and historical places that needs major attention, and only the government could help them to be preserved and maintained.

Currently, National Historic Preservation Act serves as the basis of most of the government policies concerning on historical preservation in America. With the aid of this act, the role of the Federal preservations was expanded which gives way for the birth of the “ National Antiquities Act” which gives the president the power to restrict the use of any public land owned by the government through executive order.

With this, the government authorities would now have the authority and the means of further protecting and preserving the historical site in the United

States. Moreover, the federal power could now also be distributed to various states and from the state going to the localities to ensure the effectiveness of the said act. In addition to this, the Historical preservations already widened its coverage by including even the places with no significant historical value.

The Effects

With the implementation of this act, the definition of a “ Historical value” was broadened. Before the said law was enacted in 1966, only the historical places are being valued by the government or the only one who’s having attention to most of the government officials. But after the birth of the National Historic Preservation Act, it is already being included in the lists of National Register of Historic Places the sites, buildings, objects and all the structures that has of great significance and value to American history, architecture, archeology and culture may it be of a national, state or local significance.

In addition to that, the word “ district” is also already being included in the scope of this act. This only means that neighborhoods can already be now included in the preservation program of the government as mandated by law. With the inclusion of the word “ district” in the scope of this law would rationalize any endowment that the secretary of the interior for rehabilitation and exterior restoration in historic districts gives to individuals from various sectors which have identified any neighborhood that is of great importance to them (Murtagh). Moreover, the confusion between the grants for house rehabilitation and the current programs of the secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development can now be clarified.

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The said law is also the one responsible for making the Department of Interior takes the responsibility of planning and rehabilitating historic districts which was being handled by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. With this, there would be more efficient implementation of the said law since it is not the forte of the Department of Housing and Urban Development the said responsibility.

Furthermore, it is through the aid of this law that most of the citizens now understands that there are still other means of ensuring the quality of housing projects in the state and local levels aside from the destruction of urban renewal.

Government officials could now get funds for the replacement of the existing housing stock not only from the secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development but also to the secretary of the Department of Interiors. This means that there are already more government agencies that could serve as a source of funds to finance the rehabilitation activities of various agencies and groups.

The said act also give way for the establishment of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation made by people from the cabinet of the president and a selected number of private citizens which would serve as the group of people responsible in determining the effects of the federal tax to the cultural properties of the country as well as on the proper treatment of the cultural properties existing in the United States.

Case Study

Back in the 1990's, Texans had some hard time in convincing the Texas government to make the Washington-on-the Brazos, the site where the Texas Declaration of Independence had been signed, to be considered as a historical site. What the Texan government tried to consider was the Alamo and San Jacinto battlefield. There were three reasons why the government chose the said two places as a historical site and not the Washington-on-the-Brazos. First was that Washington-on-the-Brazos has little a number of ruined houses that are far from major roads and towns whereas Alamo was situated in downtown San Antonio and San Jacinto battlefield was near from Houston.

Secondly, the signing of the declaration of independence was not a concrete physical place or even related not to mention that the document was not in Washington but already placed in the State Archives at Austin. The last but not he least would be that only the local people are the one who is considering the said town site a place valuable of preservation (Trujillo, 2000). This clearly gives us the idea that there is a big discrepancy between what is to be preserved and what is important to the community. Before, as stated above, only those places that are within reach and accessible are only being granted with preservation like Alamo and San Jacinto and not considering those places that has of significant value to the locals as well as the community as a whole.

References

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