Free essay on ethics in architecture

Ethics can be defined as a set of rules established and held by a unique group. Poorly defined contracts can give the architect an opportunity to violate work ethics. The most common violations include improper attribution of credit, inaccurate presentation of qualification papers, misinterpretation of a project's budget or expectation and inability to obtain work samples from colleagues. These violations may result to an upset client an angry colleague or a dissatisfied employee. To avoid these violations, the Architects council of Europe (ACE) developed the European deontological code for providers of architectural services.

The Deontological code constitutes of four principles for the ethics and conduct in provision of Architectural services within the European Union. The first principle named ' General obligations' comprises of individual architects obligations to their profession and protection or the professions image in the market. This principle stipulates that members should maintain and advance their knowledge in the architectural profession, Respect the accomplishments of architecture and positively contribute to its growth, consider with critical thought the social and environmental impact of their profession and exercise unbiased professional judgment.

The second principle ' obligations in the public interest' mentions individual obligations of the architect to make sure the profession gets public approval. In this principle's context members are supposed to embrace the spirit follow the letter of law that governs their professional affairs. Members should uphold and serve the public interest not only in their professional but also personal activities. (Fisher 28)

In the third principle ' obligations to the client' rules for improving the image

of the profession are clearly laid out. This principle implies that architects should serve their clients in a competent and professional manner. It also states that architects should conduct unbiased and unprejudiced judgment while implementing professional services. The ethical standards entailed here are truthfulness, confidentiality, competence, avoiding conflict of interest and candor. (Fisher 31)

In the fourth principle ' obligations in the interest of the profession' Architects are entitled to upholding the dignity and integrity of the profession. They should also respect and acknowledge their colleagues professional aspirations and contributions. This Principle's ethical standards include; dignity, integrity, fairness and honesty, professional recognition, professional environment and intern and professional development. (Fisher 45)

However, these codes of conduct mainly focus on business ethics and fail to clarify the responsibilities of the profession to humanity. For instance, protecting the public's health and safety entails ethical implications beyond those concerning design construction and operation of buildings. This calls for ethics to be developed with a view on universal values. For instance, in the design plan for Eurovegas at Madrid and Barcelona, the financial crisis was crippling the country and the unemployment rate was at 24%, many wondered whether that was the right move or just a big gamble. Designers argued that the project would create 250, 000 new jobs but this did not conform to the society ethics and morals. The people of Madrid and Barcelona were not ready for a country filled with waiters and prostitutes. The project also wanted to overturn the smoking ban in Madrid in order to

incorporate the 17 billion Euro casino . In addition to the social and ethical dilemma is the environmental impact that the project would pose. This is because the proposed location of the casino at the Llobregat Delta is no desert but arable farm land. Also some 900 hectares near the Llobregat River is a declared special protection area for wild birds by the EU, all this bio-diversity would make way for casinos. Therefore, it should be noted that in order to evade possible losses as a result of poor definition of architects' collective responsibility, human values and norms should be considered when determining professional ethics principles.

Work cited

Fisher, Thomas. Architectural Design and Ethics: Tools for Survival. Amsterdam: Elsevier/Architectural Press, 2008. Print.