

temporary styles related to the old. In matters of architectural design, it is obvious that quite often the judgment of good or bad is dependent upon personal taste.

"In the United States historical district regulations are usually administered by a commission composed of from three to many persons of widely varied background. This is a typical method of interpreting regulations in America, but it is our experience that the effectiveness of regulations is often severely weakened because of this diffusion of responsibility. Important structures and architectural monuments have been lost because members of these commissions have been ignorant of the purposes of the law or lacked knowledge of architecture and history, or yielded to political considerations.

"Administration of these regulations is equally as important as the structural requirements and the standards for design of a building. This point can not be overstressed. For this reason it is strongly recommended that great care be exercised in selecting the persons to be concerned with administering the historic area controls. Ideally such persons should be well educated in the architectural history of Curacao as well as in contemporary styles. It is further to be hoped that such persons be dedicated by natural inclination to the preservation and protection of the architecture and culture of Curacao. The administrative procedures and guides for judging new plans can be spelled out in the regulations, but without such people in charge, the job will not be done."

The importance of the inclusion of a definite architectural inventory of each building in the historical areas as an integral part of the regulations is stressed. The report also suggests four categories for rating the relative importance of each building, ranging from "outstanding"—buildings which should be preserved at all costs — to "bad." It is envisioned that both private and government funds be used for acquiring buildings on the "outstanding" list.

Furthermore a "visual plan" or "design plan" is called for which should cover the historical areas of Willemstad. Such a plan would serve as a guide both to preservation and development. It should set forth a framework of proposals for action to enhance the form and to preserve the character of the area. This plan, of course, must be based upon the realities of economic possibilities.

Additional suggestions for building public support and providing interest includes such items as plaques, tourist trails with explanatory booklets, exhibits and the introduction of additional attractions within the historical district such as a museum, art galleries and a top-flight restaurant.

I should like to conclude with one additional paragraph from the report which I think sums up the philosophy of Blair Associates.

" . . . Preservation will work best if it is carried on hand in hand with building for the future. This is what makes the city a *living* museum; not just a collection of unused old buildings, but a place where people, conscious of their heritage, nevertheless create new forms to meet changing times. Only when they view the past in relation to the present and future can they learn to use old buildings for modern purposes,

and to create new ones so as to enhance, rather than detract from the distinctive character of the city."

—John P. Conron

INTERNATIONAL DESIGN CONFERENCE

Environment is the complex, often paradoxical aggregate of the physical, biological and social factors which influence us from conception to death — the totality of our experience. We can leave one environment, but only for another environment — perhaps similar to, perhaps drastically different from the one we left. But even the one we left will influence us in our new environment.

Environment is never static. It is changing continually. It modifies us and we modify it. With short-sightedness and stupidity, we sometimes have changed it for the worse — witness our ugly, congested cities and denuded, erosion-scarred landscapes. With courage, intelligence and vision, we have often changed it for better, both aesthetically and functionally.

The International Design Conference in Aspen in its first eleven years has skirted, touched on, referred to environment in considering areas of designs and aesthetics. The 1962 Conference will make environment the central theme — the focus of all discussion, debate and study.

A singular gathering of outstanding authorities in many different fields from the United States and other countries will explore and relate environment to almost all areas of our lives.

The 1962 Aspen Conference will run from Sunday, June 24 to Saturday, June 30. For further information refer to: John Conron, Box 935, Santa Fe, N. M.

ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATED

Three Santa Fe architectural firms have formed a collaborative under the name of Architects Associated. The firms: John P. Conron — David deR. Lent
Robert Plettenberg
Phillippe Register

The first project: To provide a comprehensive development plan for the New Mexico State Capitol.

These firms will continue to practice under their own names as individuals. The collaborative, however, has been formed to provide a wide range of backgrounds and talents for the undertaking of projects of the largest scope.

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