Impact Of Robert Moses on the Life of New York City

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In my opinion, Robert Moses, the master builder of New York City is a brilliant individual who had dedicated and worked diligently in building up this great city of New York while viewing the whole city as one piece. It was his works that made this city to rise up to become one of the great and powerful cities in the world. Without the works of Robert Moses this city of New York would have no place in history, and instead it would been a city of failure with less people inhabiting, with increased slum areas, increased crimes, where people would have been isolated and depressed from not having enough places to do recreational activities, and not being able to commute easily from one borough to another. In fact, I even doubt if the Five Boroughs would have become part of the New York City without the works of Robert Moses. I understand that the word “public” was the word that remained as a driving force in Robert Moses’s life. In every project he was involved he refrained from fulfilling task for individual satisfaction but he always worked and thought for the public and dedicated his work to benefit the future of the public in New York City. His goal was to keep the City of New York together and strong.

In 34 years, that is from 1934 to 1968, Robert Moses, remained as the one and only master builder in the New York City. He had dedicated his time in designing and developing the City of New York by constructing public works such as beaches, parks, swimming pools, playgrounds, parks, golf courses, bridges, parkways, expressways, and even a convention center. In the 60’s he had started one of the Nation’s largest Slum Clearance Program also known as Urban Renewal Program into action (Ballon & Jackson, 2007, p. 65). As we enjoy the benefits of hard work this great visionary had put into in developing this great city today’s New York City residents should have nothing but a thankful heart for the immense amount of work that he had done for the future of this great city. Every individual who lives in the city of New York should come to know whose mind and hands were working behind the development of this great city.

Robert Moses had this unique selfless nature in him that always helped him to look at the city of New York from a broader perspective. Before the start of any project, Robert Moses preferred to have a view of the city from the sky. This allowed him to eliminate the distractions that could stand in his way such as people, neighborhoods, different boroughs, or major parts of the city. Having a view from the city always allowed him to somehow bring the city together as a whole and to eliminate any weakness and instead add something to strengthen the way the tapestry of the land, waterways, and structures (Ballon & Jackson, 2007, p. 66).

It is sure that Robert Moses had to fight against many of the private sector to enforce his plans and ideas to work on behalf of the public. His only aim was to modernize the city and while keeping the city as a whole. Although it’s been more than fifty years since he finished many of his constructions, they still remain strong, remarkable, and most importantly it’s still serving its very purpose. He must be commented for his remarkable output where he always finished his task on time, always staying within or even under the budget, and for the exceptional quality of work (Ballon & Jackson, 2007, p. 65). The people of New York City are still in awe while watching this breath taking structures. Although there were many others who have had ideas of developing such breath taking structure in this city, Robert Moses was the only visionary who had the exceptional ability to step out of the dream zone and to make it to happen. It is appropriate to call him a “dedicated public servant”, as he worked diligently for the City of New York without expecting any rewards (Ballon & Jackson, 2007, p. 68).

Robert Moses, the passionate parks commissioner, completed all his work as a great visionary, where he considerately had the future of the city in mind. For example, while developing the Tompkins Square Park, he incorporated many small green patches which interrupted the curving walkways with one thought in mind and that is to deter any major gatherings or large demonstrations. In the same way when he designed the Central Park to bring relief for the working people and now about 25 million people visit this park each year (Wright 2008, p. 167, 281).

In 1950’s, Post-World War II, along with other cities in the United States, New York city also experienced a complete decline, where factories were shut down, the population dropped, public schools weakened, graffiti increased, structure of the city sagged, number of public transportation travelers declined, and crime rates hiked. It was during this time the apartment buildings were abandoned by landlords in the Bronx. The three decades that followed this time period was a turning point for the city of New York. The urban gloom turned out to be an international symbol of attraction, triumph, superiority, and security. At the same time, the crime rate declined, the flow of people through the public transits improved by 50 percent, graffiti dropped, and tourism improved. These miraculous turn around would not have happened without Robert Moses in the picture of New York City (Ballon & Jackson, 2007, p. 68).

Gratz (2010), in the book called “The Battle for Gotham” (p.122), did not seem to agree with the famous saying that Robert Moses often referred to, that is: “To make an omelet, you have to break an egg.” This writer is disagrees with Robert Moses for dislocating hundreds and thousands of families for fulfilling his projects. This writer did a thorough study on the how Robert Moses projects brought in negative impact on many families in the City of New York. I appreciate the fact that this writer took time to understand the untouched part of this great development era. But altogether, we must appreciate how our city is now based on the efforts that Robert Moses. His efforts only raised our city to be become one of the powerful, strong, and united cities in the world.

The success of Robert Moses extended to the team of workers that he trusted his work with. He motivated his architects and engineers to use their imagination, and to develop better and unique designs that the world has never seen before. He constantly tossed his team with questions that would force them to think differently which brought forth creative ideas. Every day, Moses went out to meet his workers in the field and he knew that having a good time with the workers will only motivate them to remain productive (Caro, 1975, p. 230, 233). Altogether, this key figure will be remembered forever by the New York City residents for his astonishing works.

References

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