

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Ilocos Sur
MUNICIPALITY OF VIGAN

OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG BAYAN

Ordinance No. 14
Series of 1997

“ORDINANCE PROVIDING THE GUIDELINES IN THE CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC TOWN OF VIGAN.”

WHEREAS, PD No. 1505, hereto attached as Annex I prohibits the unauthorized modification, alteration, repair and destruction of original features of all national shrines, monuments, landmarks, and other important historical edifices including groups of buildings with homogeneous qualities and their sites, which relates to important events and depict unique artistic qualities.

WHEREAS, to address the spirit and intent of PD No. 1505, for the purpose of protecting and ensuring the future of the Historic Town of Vigan, the following conservation terms, principles, processes and documentation are hereby provided. These are standard international practices on conservation tailored for use in the Historic Town of Vigan to maintain its authenticity, integrity, and protection as a heritage site in the present and into the future.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Sangguniang Bayan of Vigan, in session duly assembled that:

For the purpose of this Ordinance:

SECTION 1. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 1.1. Place – means the geographic area defined in Ordinance No. 12 described as the Historic Town of Vigan, consisting of a core area and of a buffer zone, including all the group of historical buildings and their setting and associated contents listed in Annex 2 (Listing of Ancestral Houses and Historical Buildings); monuments, shrines, landmarks, streets, plazas, open spaces, rivers identified of cultural significance found within.
- 1.2. Cultural Significance – means the aesthetic, economic, educational, environmental, historic, religious, or social value of the place defined in Section 1.1. above which helps us understand our past, contributes to the enrichment our present environment, and pass on to future generations. The cultural significance of the Historic Town of Vigan is embodied in its fabric, its setting and in people’s memory and association of its rich history from its early beginning as a Southeast Asian commercial trading seaport in the 15th century to an outstanding Spanish colonial town in the 16th – 19th century to the early American colonial period of the 20th century.
- 1.3. Fabric – means all the physical material and attributes perceived by the senses found in every nook and corner including excavations in the historic Town of Vigan i.e. bricks, hardwood timber, lime mortar, capiz windows, iron grills, lamps, piedra china tiles and clay tiles, 18th century period furnitures and furnishings, fauna and flora commonly found in the area like palmers, bougainvillea, suntan, adelfa, hibiscus and cactus.
- 1.4. Conservation for the Historic Town of Vigan – means invoking all the processes of caring / looking after the Historic Town with the end objective

of retaining / maintaining its cultural significance. It includes maintenance and may in some of circumstances include preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaptation or a combination of any one of these processes enumerated.

- 1.5. Maintenance for the Historic Town of Vigan – means the continuous provision of protective care to the existing fabric, contents, and setting of the historic town. Maintenance should be distinguished from repair, for the later may necessitate restoration or reconstruction and therefore the conservation process involved should be treated as such.
- 1.6. Preservation for the Historic Town of Vigan – means continuously maintaining the fabric of the Historic Town of Vigan in its existing and/or present state so as to retard / avert further deterioration in its fabric.
- 1.7. Restoration for the Historic Town of Vigan – means returning the existing fabric of a historical building / landmark, monument or shrine to a known earlier state by removing additions or reassembling existing components without introducing new material and without altering its cultural significance.
- 1.8. Reconstruction for the Historic Town of Vigan – means returning the fabric of a historical building, a landmark, a monument, a shrine, a street or a plaza to nearly as possible to its known earlier state. It is differentiated from restoration by the introduction of new material as fabric but does not preclude the use of old material into the fabric of the place.
- 1.9. Adaptation – means modifying the interior of a historical building listed in Annex 2 classified as class B to suit an acceptable compatible present use / uses without distorting its cultural significance.
- 1.10. Compatible Use – means a use which involves no change to the culturally significant fabric of the historical building. The change should be substantially reversible when needed at a latter date.

SECTION 2. CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. The aim of conservation for the Historic Town of Vigan is to retain its cultural significance i.e. aesthetics, economic, environmental, historical, religious and social value to help us understand our past, to enrich our present environment and to pass to future generations. Conservation must aim to provide for the security, maintenance and future of the Historic Town. All aspects of the cultural significance of the Historic Town of Vigan must be taken into consideration without giving due emphasis on any one aspect of its history at the expenses of others as defined in Section 3 of Ordinance No. 12 “Cultural Historical, Inspirational, Environmental and Economic Parameters of Development of the Historic Town of Vigan.”
- 2.2. Conservation must make use of all the disciplines i.e. anthropological, sociological, economic, architectural, engineering, urban planning etc. which can contribute to the study, safeguarding and protection of the historic town. Employment of traditional technique is a must but some circumstance modern technique maybe introduced provided the new technique exists on a firm scientific basis and supported by a body of experience.
- 2.3. Conservation for the Historic Town of Vigan must respect its existing fabric which evolved over a period of 500 years by building traditions, practices and

use of indigenous materials. Conservation should involve the least possible physical intervention so as not to destroy the evidence provided by the existing fabric of the Historic Town.

- 2.4. Conservation for the core area of the Historic Town of Vigan requires the maintenance of an appropriate visual setting: e.g. form, scale, color, texture and materials. Historical precedents shall always prevail in allowing or disallowing specific architectural design and choice of material. No new construction, demolition or modification which would adversely affect the setting will be allowed. The existing architectural homogeneity, spatial layout in terms of building form and scale, lot sizes must be respected without exemption in order to preserve the unity and continuity of streetscape. By tradition, colored pigments taited with lime are used to paint the exterior walls such as: yellow ochre, dark pink, medium blue and bottle green to light olive green. The interior walls are of the same materials but multi – colored in graphic designs such as geometric designs, floral and trompe loecil of draping fabrics. As to the buffer zone, all buildings shall be maintained or designed so as to enhance the integrity and authenticity of the core area. The form and scale of new buildings must not cover or compete visually with the historical buildings. The color, texture and material used (new or old) must not clash with those found in the core area. Any environmental intrusion which adversely affect the appreciation or enjoyment of the historic town is not allowed.
- 2.5. The conservation policy appropriate to a historical house is determined by an understanding of its significance. The conservation policy will determine which uses are compatible to the historical building.
- 2.6. A building or work should remain in its historical location. The moving of all or part of a building or work is not acceptable unless this is the only means of ensuring its survival.
- 2.7. The removal of contents belonging to a historic house which form part of the cultural significance of the place is not acceptable unless doing so is the sole means of ensuring their security and preservation. Such contents should be returned as soon as circumstance has changed to make their return practicable.

SECTION 3. CONSERVATION PROCESSES

The nature, extent and degree of intactness of the significant fabric including contents found existing in a historic house, landmark, monument, shrine street or plaza will determine the conservation process applicable.

- 3.1. Preservation is recommended in the situation where the present state of the fabric itself constitutes evidence of specific cultural significance, or where insufficient evidence is available such as to allow other conservation processes to be carried out. Preservation is limited to the protection, maintenance and, where necessary, the stabilization of the existing fabric but without distorting its cultural significance.
- 3.2. Restoration is recommended any if there is sufficient evidence of an earlier state of the fabric of the historical building, landmark, monument, shrine, street or plaza. It must be used only if returning the fabric to the earlier state reveals the cultural significance of the place. Restoration should reveal anew culturally significant aspects of the historical building, landmark, monument, shrine, street or plaza. It has as its basis a respect for all physical, documentary and other evidences found. The contribution of all periods to the restoration must likewise

be respected. If a historical building includes the fabric of different periods, revealing the fabric of one period at the expense of another can only be justified when what is removed is of slight cultural significance and the fabric which is to be revealed is of much greater cultural significance.

3.3. Reconstruction of a historical building, landmark, monument, shrine or plaza is appropriate only where the historical building, landmark, monument, shrine or plaza, is incomplete through damage or alteration and where it is necessary for its survival, or where it reveals the cultural significance of the place as a whole. It is limited to the completion of a depleted entity and should not constitute the majority of the fabric of the place. Reconstruction is limited to the reproduction of fabric, the form of which is known from physical and/or documentary evidence. It should be identifiable on close inspection as being new work.

3.4. Adaptation to a compatible use of a historical building is acceptable where the conservation of a historical building cannot otherwise be achieved, and where the adaptation does not substantially detract from its cultural significance. Adaptation must be limited to that which is essential to a use for the historical building determined in accordance with Section 1.10. Fabric of cultural significance unavoidably removed must be kept and stored to enable its future reinstatement when needed. Historical buildings classified under Class A because of rarity and intactness will not be allowed whatsoever to be adapted to a compatible new use.

SECTION 4. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDING

4.1. Any work done in the Historic Town of Vigan of Vigan must be preceded by a professionally prepared studies of the physical, documentary and other evidence. The existing fabric must be recorded before any intervention is to take place.

4.2. A written statement of conservation policy must be professionally prepared setting out the cultural significance of the place, and the proposed conservation procedure to be undertaken together with justification and supporting evidence, including photographs, drawings and all appropriate samples.

4.3. The organization or individuals responsible for policy decisions must be named and specific responsibility taken for each such decision.

4.4. Appropriate professional direction and supervision must be maintained at all stages of the work and a log kept of new evidence and additional decisions recorded as in 4.2. above.

4.5. The records required in 4.1., 4.2., 4.3., must be placed in permanent archive, catalogued by the Conservation Authority of Vigan and made publicly available.

4.6. Continuous study sociological, archaeological excavation etc. should be undertaken where necessary to provide data essential for decisions on the conservation of the Historic Town of Vigan and/or to secure evidence about to be lost or made inaccessible through necessary conservation or other unavoidable action. Investigation for any other reason which required physical disturbance and which adds substantially to a scientific body of knowledge may be permitted provided that it is consistent with the conservation policy of the Historic Town of Vigan.

SECTION 5. COMPATIBLE USES

Based on the cultural assessment of the Historic Town of Vigan the following compatible uses has been determine as appropriate to the place and maybe adapted in the conservation process.

- a. Single Residential or multiple residential density not to exceed 8 units.
- b. Mixed residential and commercial uses where the upper floors of buildings are used as private residences and the ground floors as craft shops such as furniture, weaving, pottery, fruits shops, newspaper/magazine and book shops, flower shops, souvenir shops, travel offices, government offices, clothes and shoes' shop, memorial chapel, health shops, grocery stores, bake shops, hardwares or any type which complement any of the above and servicing the needs of the residents and tourists.
- c. Financial Service Houses used by banks, finance and investment firms, stock brokerage firms, insurance firms, realty firms.
- d. Hospitality Houses like Four Star Hotel, pension, inn, dancing, conference and workshop hall, recreation hall, disco, tavern restaurant and coffee shop.
- e. Educational house like computer school, nursery school, crafts school, research center, performing or visual art school.
- f. Religious Houses like an abbey, retreat house, house of worship.
- g. Museum like ethnographic, history, natural, art and craft, political, memorabilia and music museums.

The following are deemed incompatible uses for a historic site:

- a. Services: Bus terminals, freight truck terminals, warehouses and crematorium.
- b. Residential: lean to shanties, tents or similar dwelling made of light, hazardous material unless temporary or incidental to construction activities.
- c. Agricultural: farms, fishponds, salt beds, piggeries, poultries, rice and corn mills.
- d. Commercial: junk yards, service garages, lumberyards and hardware carrying flammable, toxic and hazardous materials or any business not conducive to the environment of a historic town.
- e. Any establishment causing harmful and annoying activities which adversely affects the health, moral, peace and order of the historic town.

SECTION 6. PENALTIES

Without prejudice to the penal provisions of PD 1505, National Building Code, National Electrical Code, and other applicable laws, any person, group or corporation found violating any of the provisions of this ordinance or cause the same to be done, shall be liable for a fine of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500.00) and/or six (6) months imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVITY – This ordinance shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved: October 6, 1997.

(Sgd.) LIBORIO F. ARCA
Vice Mayor & Presiding Officer

(Sgd.) RANDOLF V. SINGSON	(Absent) FRANCISCO P. RANCHES, JR.
(Sgd.) DANILO ESTEBAN C. JAVIER	(Sgd.) BENEDICTO JOSE P. VERZOSA
(Sgd.) NICOMEDES R. RAMIREZ	(Sgd.) GEORGE J. VILLANUEVA
(Sgd.) VICENTE A. AGATEP	(Sgd.) LOURDES G. BAQUIRAN
(Sgd.) CONSTANTE V. BENZON	ARISTOTLE F. ARDE – absent

Attested:

(Sgd.) RAMIL A. ARCE
Secretary to the Sangguniang Bayan

Approved:

(Sgd.) EVA MARIE S. MEDINA
Mayor