Shajid Mahmud

November 17, 2019

English 101

Evan Balkan

The epic center in Baltimore

Pennsylvania Avenue is Maryland’s first arts and entertainment district specifically for African Americans. Pennsylvania Avenue was once a heaven for Black entertainers and there are many reasons why Pennsylvania Avenue known as the epic center of African American culture and entertainment.

The historical importance of Pennsylvania Avenue is significant. Pennsylvania Avenue have fallen on hard times during the past some decades. In past , the Chitlin Circuit was a performance avenue that provided cultural acceptance for the African American musicians, comedians and other entertainments in the past. During the racial segregation, Chitlin Circuit was the easiest way for the African American to show their talents. Since Black people were being racially segregated, just like white people doing their stuff like dancing, black people had to make their own place to do things like dancing. During the 1940s till 1960s, Pennsylvania Avenue was known as a platform for latest singers and musicians. The down fall of this center was due to over crowing and over population I the Baltimore city. As the population grew after 1960, the large part of land use d for housing and different businesses/ shops set up in or around Pennsylvania Avenue. The new business trend in 1960s, diminishes the place which was a platform of artist transformed as a walking street with lots of shops around corners of streets.

Comparatively , Pennsylvania Avenue lost its identity as an epic center for African American artist. Now, African Americans have been working to put in the four applications of the Maryland State Arts Council and Department of Commerce to get Pennsylvania Avenue designated for cultural center. And so far, African American people have received a lot of support from each other. Black people have been working with partners all along the “Pennsylvania Avenue corridor”, including “Pennsylvania Avenue”, “Main Street”, “Upton CDC”, “Arch Social Club” and several other organizations. This is not the first-time people talks over black arts and entertainment district have taken place in Baltimore however the movement is strong and African American seems highly motivated to recognize this place as an epic center for artists as it was in past. In past no official application submitted on behalf of the city of Baltimore to designate Pennsylvania Avenue as an art and cultural center.

Concludingly, the Pennsylvania Avenue was known for African American cultural epic center but with the passage of time, the over population put negative effects on this avenue and finally, people are just aware of its name as Pennsylvania Avenue without knowing its cultural value.