

the severity of the impact on the site.

"The effect of these factors would be to give transportation officials an incredible degree of discretion to use a variety of excuses for harming or destroying historic properties," Merritt says. "It would be disastrous."

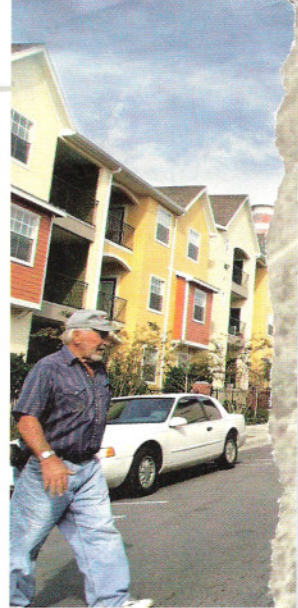
Under SAFETEA, disputes over historic resources would be resolved using only Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The law encourages negotiation between parties, but, says Andrea Ferster, a Washington, D.C., lawyer who handles preservation litigation, "there's nothing that requires them to avoid, preserve, or protect historic properties." The threat of litigation would be effectively emasculated.

The bill would also exempt the federal

interstate highway system, including historic bridges listed on the National Register, from all historic preservation reviews—"the extra nail in the coffin," Merritt says.

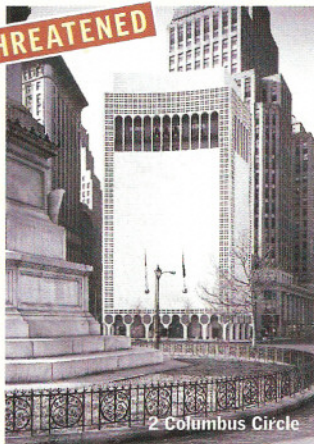
Opponents of the proposed revisions contend that the current method for reviewing the impact of construction projects on historic resources is not the major holdup that the government thinks it is. Anne Canby, president of the Surface Transportation Policy Project, a Washington-based group, says Section 4(f) would work more smoothly if planners identified threatened sites earlier in the process and involved local preservation groups right from the beginning. "While there are ways to make it work better, we don't think the law needs to be changed," she says.

The difference the law can make is apparent in Ybor City, a Tampa neighborhood that grew around cigar manufacturers in the late 19th century. In the 1960s, before Congress passed the transportation act, Interstate 4 was built through the northern end of Ybor City, destroying houses and cigar factories in its path. When the state transportation agency proposed widening I-4 in the 1990s, community groups and officials hammered out an agreement, signed in 1996, that saved 35 houses. Federal and state transportation



TRANSITIONS

THREATENED



THREATENED 1964 Two Columbus Circle, New York City: designed by Edward Durell Stone as gallery for art collection of A&P heir Huntington Hartford, considered for extensive exterior changes by prospective owner, Museum of Arts and Design || **1936 Cypress Gardens**, Polk Co., Fla.: state's first theme park—200 acres of botanical gardens, Florida-shaped pool, stadiums, butterfly conservatory, and Island in the Sky ride—closed and for sale

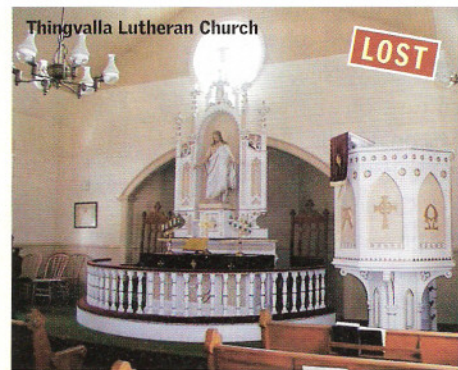
LOST 1948 Howard Meyer-designed modern house, Highland Park, Tex.: demolished to make way for 10,500-square-foot McMansion in community of rampant teardowns || **1892 Thingvalla Lutheran Church**, Mountain, N.D.: last surviving structure of Icelandic settlement called Eyford destroyed by fire that also claimed original organ, pews, and altar statue

SAVED 1910 T.B. Story Mansion, Bozeman, Mont.: survived long occupation by college fraternity, bought for \$1.3 million by city to hold, pending fundraising for restoration

RESTORED 1907 GM&O Railroad Passenger Terminal, Mobile, Ala.: vacant and deteriorating since 1986, brought

back to life as bus terminal, retail space, and offices with \$19 million of public and private money || **1874 Eads Bridge**, St. Louis: repaired and reopened to motor and light-rail traffic, bicyclists, and pedestrians crossing the Mississippi

COLLAPSED 1900 Kinzua Viaduct, McKean Co., Pa.: closed last year for repairs to half-mile-long, 301-foot-high steel structure, brought down by tornado



FOR SALE Pieces of Alcatraz, San Francisco Bay: chips of old cellblock from The Rock going for \$4.95 a box, reducing rubble from National Park Service's renovation but setting a dubious precedent for souvenirs

