

**GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
7.5-HOUR CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE**

***The Architectural and Cultural Heritage of Greenwich Village  
The Great Urban Paradigm Shift:***

***Robert Moses, Jane Jacobs and the Fate of Postwar New York***

**Wednesday, October 16, 2013**

Location: GVSHP, 232 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street, New York 10003

Hours: 7.5

8:45 Coffee and Refreshments

9:00-9:30 *GVSHP and Jane Jacobs*

**Andrew Berman**, Executive Director, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (Appendix A-a)

PowerPoint Discussion: The role of notable historic figures in the preservation movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as Jane Jacobs, will be discussed, and connected to more recent efforts and initiatives by GVSHP, such as landmark designation of the Meatpacking District, listing of the Westbeth Artists Housing complex and the Stonewall District on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, as well as other efforts to recognize and preserve sites of cultural significance and unconventional architectural distinctions. Rezoning actions and the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) will also be discussed, looking at applications by NYU and for the former St. Vincent's Hospital campus.

Handouts: GVSHP Newsletter and Education Brochure (Appendix A-b)

9:30-11:00 *The Urban Renewal Phenomenon: Revolution in Urban Planning and Design on a Grand Scale*

**Warren Shaw**, Senior Counsel, Commercial and Real Estate Litigation Division, Corporation Counsel of the City of New York (Appendix B)

PowerPoint Lecture and Discussion: Urban renewal is the central phenomenon in urban planning, and what might be called the politics of urban design, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Urban renewal's reliance on the power of eminent domain to rewrite cities on a vast scale, together with the use of high-rise Modernist designs and Radiant City planning ideas, was a revolutionary combination that was intended to transform our cities. It was a revolution that was rejected by the people, however. The revolt against urban renewal was the engine that powered Jane Jacobs, landmarks preservation, environmental and land-use review laws, and more.



11:00-11:15 Refreshment Break

11:15-12:45 *Anti-Centralization Backlash: Land Use Laws and the Procedural Innovations of the 1975 Charter – URLUP*

**Warren Shaw**

PowerPoint Lecture and Discussion: Jane Jacobs developed a set of ideas and vocabulary that reverberated far beyond her original attack on mid-century urban planning paradigms. In leading the revolt against urban renewal, Jacobs' work helped set off a broad and deep rejection of central planning and Modernism. On the level of New York City's political evolution, this phenomenon led to a series of laws, mostly enacted in the 1970s, that institutionalized many of Jacobs' principles and gave permanent form to what might be termed the anti-centralization backlash, i.e., ULURP, environmental review, community boards and the like. On a larger scale, the anti-urban renewal revolt was a major component in the fall of Modernism itself, a collapse that reverberates through our culture to this very day.

12:45-1:45 Lunch Break

1:45-3:15 *The Legacy of Jane Jacobs: Reconsidering her Influence in New York and Beyond*

**Max Page**, Professor of Architecture and History, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (Appendix C)

PowerPoint Lecture and Discussion: Jane Jacobs is the most important writer on cities in our history not only because she upended the dominant planning paradigm of the mid-twentieth century, but also because she continued to influence planners, architects, preservationists, environmentalists, economists, and writers long after her most famous book was written and long after she left New York City where she penned it. Her influence in New York and beyond, through the end of the century and her death in 2006 will be charted. The participants will also be challenged to consider in what ways her thinking from half a century ago is as relevant as ever, but also how it might be an obstacle to overcoming new challenges. Ever one to challenge received wisdom, Jane Jacobs would surely enjoy being questioned, and hard.

Suggested Reading:

Campanella, Tom. "Jane Jacobs and the Death and Life of Great American Planning" [online essay, <http://places.designobserver.com/feature/jane-jacobs-and-the-death-and-life-of-american-planning/25188/>]

Page, Max and Timothy Mennel, editors. *Reconsidering Jane Jacobs*, New York: Planners Press, 2011.



Zipp, Samuel. *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012

3:15-5:00 *Jane Jacobs' West Village—And After*  
**Francis Morrone**, Architectural Historian and Writer (Appendix D)

Walking tour of the West Village: the life and times of Jane Jacobs, and her writings about city life, will be recounted as we walk the streets she knew so well and described so lovingly in "The Death and Life of Great American Cities." Her battles with Robert Moses, and especially her role in saving the West Village from urban renewal, will be discussed, while also examining what urban renewal did to the Village south of Washington Square. The fate of Jacobs' Village will also be considered; she left the country with her family in the late 1960s when it was barely conceivable that her old neighborhood would become what it is today. To what extent was she a prophet of gentrification, or to what extent does gentrification represent a betrayal of her vision? And what about some of the battles being waged in the Village today? NYU's expansion, for example? And is there any place in New York today that embodies the Jacobsian virtues—and what are those virtues, anyway?

Suggested Reading:

Flint, Anthony. *Wrestling with Moses: How Jane Jacobs Took On New York's Master Builder and Transformed the American City*. NY: Random House, 2009.

Gratz, Roberta Brandes, *The Battle for Gotham: New York in the Shadow of Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs*. NY: Nation Books, 2010.

Jacobs, Jane and Jason Epstein, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities (50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition)*, New York: Modern Library, 2011

5:00-5:45 *Private Introduction to the West Village Houses, 371 West Street*  
**Katy Bordonaro**, Former President of the Cooperative (Appendix E)

A discussion and walking tour of the West Village Houses' complex, which comprises almost two acres in Greenwich Village, including a visit to at least one of the apartments. The WVA is a 42-building low-rise complex of plain brown buildings, many with fire escapes, located between Bank and Morton Streets and Washington and West Streets in the Far West Village. Planned in the 1960s with the help of Jane Jacobs and designed by Perkins & Will, it was built under the Mitchell-Lama housing subsidy program. The first buildings were completed in 1974. In 2002, the then owners of the complex announced they were opting out of the Mitchell-Lama program. Faced with enormous rent increases, the tenants fought back and a non-eviction, affordable cooperative conversion of West Village Houses was completed in 2006 (Appendix F).

