



Jane's Walks:

What is a Jane's Walk?

"Jane's Walk is a movement of free, citizen-led walking tours inspired by Jane Jacobs. The walks get people to tell stories about their communities, explore their cities, and connect with neighbors."

Who was Jane Jacobs?

"Jane Jacobs (1916-2006) was an urbanist and activist whose writings championed a fresh, community-based approach to city building. She had no formal training as a planner, and yet her 1961 treatise, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, introduced ground-breaking ideas about how cities function, evolve and fail, that now seem like common sense to generations of architects, planners, politicians and activists.

Jacobs saw cities as integrated systems that had their own logic and dynamism which would change over time according to how they were used. With an eye for detail, she wrote eloquently about sidewalks, parks, retail design and self-organization. She promoted higher density in cities, short blocks, local economies and mixed uses. Jacobs helped derail the car-centered approach to urban planning in both New York and Toronto, invigorating neighborhood activism by helping stop the expansion of expressways and roads. She lived in Greenwich Village for decades, then moved to Toronto in 1968 where she continued her work and writing on urbanism, economies and social issues. A firm believer in the importance of local residents having input on how their neighborhoods develop, Jacobs encouraged people to familiarize themselves with the places where they live, work, and play."