

What Would Jane Say?

What if the voices of city-building women
had been included in the *Plan of
Chicago*?

What made their views different?



Wikipedia

What Would Jane Say?

A Unique Generation of Women

- Personal freedom (cooperative housing)
- Suffrage
- City-building, institution-building:
 - Schools
 - Parks
 - Hospitals & public health
 - Immigration & workplace reforms
 - Courts & justice reforms
 - Arts & cultural movements

Dancing Backward



Library of Congress
LC-USZ62-134651

- Restrictive roles
- No vote
- Access to halls of power limited

What Would Jane Say?

The Local Network

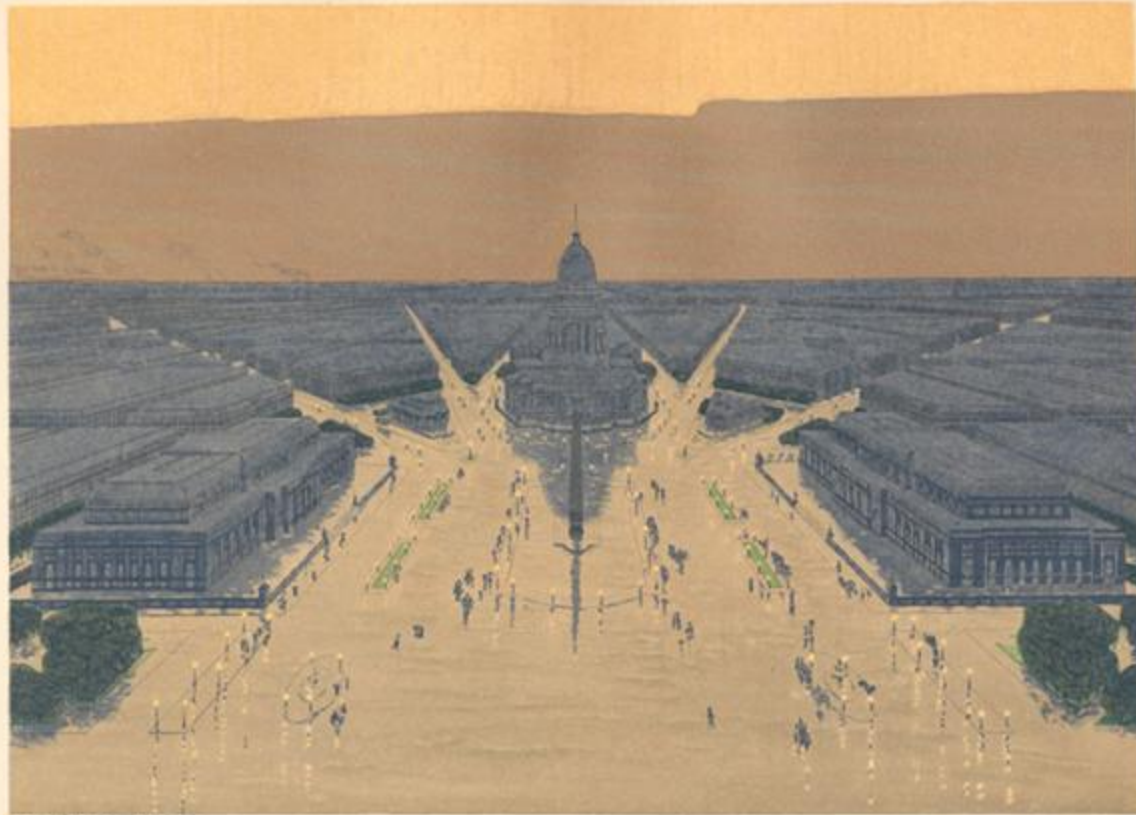
- Chicago Woman's Club & affiliates
- Settlement Houses: Chicago Commons, University of Chicago Settlement, Northwestern University Settlement, Association House
- Civic organizations: Civic Federation
- Cultural organizations: The Little Room

The National Network

- Playground Association of America
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- 1st National Conference on City Planning

- Many later New Deal department heads

Hull-House Was at the Center (but Burnham was unaware of that)



CXXXI. CHICAGO. VIEW, LOOKING WEST, OF THE PROPOSED CIVIC CENTER PLAZA AND BUILDINGS, SHOWING IT AS THE CENTER OF THE SYSTEM OF ARTERIES OF CIRCULATION AND OF THE SURROUNDING COUNTRY.
Painted for the Commercial Club by Jules Guerin.

Newberry Library

What Would Jane Say?

Business Climate 1889-1909

- Chicago was 50! New York and Boston were more than 250 years old
- Frontier mentality
- Weak government
- Excessive trust in private sector
- Business contracts for city services
- Documented abuses of tax assessments by business

General Climate 1889-1909

- Chicago doubled from 1M to 2M people
- “Temporary” post-Fire housing aged
- Epidemics were recurrent
- Chicago failed to create a big-city charter
- Political reform movements abounded

Why All the Fuss?

- Is this comprehensive?
- Is this a model we want to replicate?
- Can we endorse a plan by and for a tiny elite?
- Fiscal: there's nothing wrong with small plans if they are the right plans!

There's Nothing Wrong With Small Plans!

- Small plans with big impact:
 - Baby tents
 - Fight epidemics at the source
 - Keep children out of factories
 - Keep children out of adult courts and jails
 - Keep children healthy enough to attend school

What Effect Would Women's Voices Have Had on the Plan of Chicago?

- Parks
- Transportation
- Central Business District
- Immigrants & Labor
- Public Health
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Education
- Justice

Speculative non-fiction: Committee conversations . . . as if they were asked

What Effect Would Women's Voices Have Had on the Plan of Chicago?



LC-USZ62-70864

- Parks
 - Emphasis on neighborhood parks would have avoided the federal civil rights order to invest in minority community parks in the 1980s.

What Effect Would Women's Voices Have Had on the Plan of Chicago?



LC-USZ62-75197

- Housing & Neighborhood Development
 - Federal intervention, in the form of the Gatreaux decree, requiring the CHA to stop segregating minorities, would have been unnecessary

What Would Jane Say?

What Effect Would Women's Voices Have Had on the Plan of Chicago?



LC-USZ62-8614

- Education
 - The desegregation consent decree entered into by the Chicago Board of Education for systematically segregating minority students would have been unnecessary.

What Would Jane Say?

What Effect Would Women's Voices Have on the Plan of Chicago?



LC-DIG-nclc-04645

- Juvenile Justice
 - Federal monitors would not be currently overseeing Cook County's administration of juvenile justice – once a crowning achievement and a national model.

What Effect Would Women's Voices Have Had on the Plan of Chicago?

- Patronage Hiring & Political Corruption
 - In spite of the federal Shakman decree, political corruption is a way of life in Chicago and Illinois.