



The Municipal Art Society of New York
457 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022
212.935.3960
www.mas.org

Press Contact: Shea Communications, Inc.
George Shea, Kirsten Risko: 212.627.5766

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**‘JANE JACOBS AND THE FUTURE OF NEW YORK’ EXHIBIT
EXPLORES PRINCIPLES AND LEGACY
OF NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVIST, AUTHOR**

The Municipal Art Society of New York, through sponsorship from the Rockefeller Foundation, will present an interactive exhibit that highlights the relevance of activist and author Jane Jacobs and the urban design principles presented in her classic text, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

The exhibit highlights the context in which Jacobs wrote *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, while also illustrating the role of Jane Jacobs’s ideas in today’s New York. The exhibit is designed to prompt visitors to view the city through Jane Jacobs’ eyes and to empower them to take a more active role in advocating for a more livable city.

“The project presents the principles and activism of Jane Jacobs and challenges New York City residents to study the use of their city, its streets and the built environment,” said Judith Rodin, President of the Rockefeller Foundation. “The project inspires citizens to support and fight for the health of their own neighborhoods, and it encourages city officials, developers, planners and architects to embrace and implement Jane Jacobs’ teachings.”

“‘Jane Jacobs and the Future of New York’ highlights an approach to urban theory and planning that remains powerfully relevant in a city that is experiencing an unprecedented influx of wealth and development,” said Kent Barwick, president of the Municipal Art Society. “We hope that this effort informs the development process and energizes a new breed of activist.”

The interactive exhibit explores contemporary New York through Jacobs’ groundbreaking views on the elements of a healthy city, the value of small blocks, the importance of civic activism and the benefits of a diverse and dynamic neighborhood. It also encourages citizen involvement by helping visitors begin engaging in their own neighborhoods.

The exhibit will be on view at the Municipal Art Society’s Urban Center galleries at 457 Madison Avenue in New York City for three months, beginning Sept. 25, 2007 through January 5, 2008. During the exhibit, gallery hours will be extended to 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, and 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. The exhibit is part of a larger Jane Jacobs initiative that includes panel discussions, walking tours, a student internship program, a sustainability and livability project in the Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn and the publication of a collection of essays that elaborate on Jacobs’s relevance today.

Jane Jacobs and the Future of New York

Page 2

The Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1913 by John D. Rockefeller, Sr., to "promote the well-being" of humanity by addressing the root causes of serious problems. The Foundation works around the world to expand opportunities for poor or vulnerable people and to help ensure that globalization's benefits are more widely shared. With assets of more than \$3.5 billion, it is one of the few institutions to conduct such work both within the United States and internationally. The Foundation made a series of grants to Jane Jacobs in the 1950s that resulted in the publication of The Death and Life of Great American Cities. In 2007, the Foundation created the annual Jane Jacobs Medal. The inaugural winners, Barry Benepe and Omar Freilla, will be awarded their medals and a prize of \$100,000 each on September 24, 2007. Visit www.rockfound.org for more information.

The Municipal Art Society of New York is a private, non-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote a more livable city. Since 1893, the organization has worked to enrich the culture, neighborhoods and physical design of New York City. It advocates for excellence in urban design and planning, contemporary architecture, historic preservation and public art. For more information, please visit www.mas.org.