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Dear Jane’s Walk Leader,

Each year, the Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) organizes Jane’s Walk NYC: an annual festival of free, volunteer-led walking conversations inspired by famed urbanist and New Yorker Jane Jacobs. The goal of the festival is to inspire the public at large to more deeply engage in New York City’s many neighborhoods, cultures, and stories. Jane’s Walk NYC encourages people to lead their own walks about their neighborhoods, discover unseen aspects of their own communities, and use walking as a way to connect with their neighbors.

During the age of top-down master planning, Jane Jacobs turned conventional wisdom on its head. She is best known for galvanizing the West Village to resist an expressway that would have destroyed the neighborhood as we know it. Jane Jacobs is viewed as a pioneer and her work continues to have a dramatic impact on how cities planning, urban economics, and values are understood. The Jane’s Walk program keeps Jane’s mission alive for the next generation of New Yorkers.

As usual, anyone is welcome to lead a Jane’s Walk. Whether you are affiliated with an organization or are an impassioned individual, Jane’s Walk is an opportunity to share your experience of New York City with fellow urbanists.

This training guide is intended to offer tips and tricks to help walk leaders navigate the landscape of in-person, virtual, and self-guided formats for hosting a Jane’s Walk.

We look forward to celebrating our city with you this year! From your friends at MAS,

Team Jane’s Walk NYC
SELECTING A WALK TOPIC

What topic or an area of the city piques your interest?

What platforms and formats appeal to you? Most walks are guided/in-person walks, but there are also options to lead virtual walks, from live streaming to pre-recorded on-demand walks.

Get inspired by checking out the wide array of topics that have been featured in recent years. Below are links to some past Jane’s Walk festivals:

- https://www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc-2023
- https://www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc-2022
- https://www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc-2021
- https://www.mas.org/events/janes-walk-nyc-2020

Incorporate interactivity and getting off the beaten track. Think about engaging the group in a participatory or experiential activity (e.g. Scavenger Hunt in Tribeca) or bringing them to parts of the city that they would not normally see (e.g. Walking the Ridgewood Reservoir), host a film screening, or organize a neighborhood trivia hour.

Think about a theme that interests you:

- **Advocacy** (example: Preserving Affordability through Community Land Trusts)
- **Art & Architecture** (example: Lost and Found Murals in East Harlem)
- **Food & Entertainment** (example: Yiddish Theater Culture in the East Village)
- **Environment** (example: Flora, Fauna & Folk Riots: The Natural and Social History of Washington Square Park)
- **History & Culture** (example: A Brewing History of Bushwick)
This 2023 walk was hosted by El Puente, a Brooklyn & Puerto Rico based non-profit that focuses on Youth Organizing, Activism, and Community Led Action.

The walk leaders took us on an informative and reflective stroll through Los Sures/the Southside, Williamsburg. We learned about the history of the neighborhood & discussed how the BQE has changed the neighborhood.
IRL (IN REAL LIFE) SELF-GUIDED WALKS

An outdoor self-guided activity walk gives participants the opportunity to follow your prepared instructions for going on a walk route. For example, you might create a printable PDF with a list of locations, directions, and commentary, along with some images. Consider including prompts to offer further connection and engagement, such as asking participants to share photos of a specific stop on social media using #JanesWalkNYC. You also might choose to use an app-based tool like Urban Archive, which allows you to create a walking route paired with a story and historic images. Check out some of the walk routes and stories that came together in 2022 for Urban Archive here: http://janeswalknyc.mas.org/.

This walk, only 9 and a half minutes in length, celebrates listening as a multi-sensory and meditative experience and asks the listener to embrace detour instead of destination.

Participants are invited to photograph their feet at the destination they arrive at and upload it to Instagram #walkingwithoutdirection. The collection of photos is a real-time record of the people and places explored during this individually, shared experience.
VIRTUAL: ZOOM

Since Zoom is an accessible and popular platform it makes a great option for a virtual walk. There are a number of ways that you can plan to use Zoom for your Jane’s Walk, including a virtual Tour, Panel, Presentation, or Meeting. Examples of Zoom ideas include:

- Lead a discussion on an important topic affecting your neighborhood
- Host a hang out and foster dialogue
- Explore a specific topic across multiple boroughs
- Use the Zoom mobile app to lead a virtual walking tour outside in real time, or, allow a remote audience to tune in to a guided in-person group or solo walk.

Note: Factors such as duration and capacity are impacted by whether you have a free or paid Zoom plan. See the Resources Index on page 16 for a link to trainings provided by Zoom.

Branch staff from Soundview Library led an online walking tour of Soundview. They highlighted the history and landmarks of this neighborhood with photographs from generations past from the Library’s collections.
VIRTUAL: SOCIAL MEDIA

Do you have a social media following that you would like to engage, or are you looking to build one? Go “live” and lead a walk or create an on-demand virtual Jane’s Walk.

► Live: pick a specific date and time to go live on a platform like Instagram, Facebook, or YouTube. Consider going outside and leading your viewers on a walk. You can have a friend or volunteer hold your phone while you “go live” and lead your walk.

► On-demand: post content to your feed on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X (Twitter), or YouTube, by creating a post, story, or reel that includes a curated set of media, like videos and images, along with captions.

NOTE: Your social media profile must be public to lead a Jane’s Walk activity on Instagram or TikTok.

NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project has led this virtual walk for the past few years, exploring important historic sites around Greenwich Village.

Check out their 2023 Jane’s Walk: https://shorturl.at/tvI05
VIRTUAL/ON DEMAND: IN YOUR BROWSER

Maybe you have a blog post with images that explores a specific New York City topic. Or perhaps you have produced a podcast or created an activity using an app that you can share via a link. These may be best-suited for on-demand activities for Jane’s Walk.

“Gallivanting! Virtual Walking Tour of Little Manila, Queens”

Check out their 2021 Jane’s Walk: https://shorturl.at/EFOY8
PLANNING YOUR WALK

SELECT A ROUTE

The average Jane’s Walk runs between 60-90 minutes. For this duration, we suggest plotting between 5-7+ walk stops. Here are some considerations for selecting your route:

01. STARTING PLACE
Pick a precise starting place (e.g. exact street address or landmark) that is easily accessible by public transit and near a restroom, if possible (and safe)!

02. STORYTELLING
Think about the story you are trying to tell to help map out your walk’s sequence of spots.

03. ACCESSIBILITY
Consider accessibility. Everyone experiences space differently, so think broadly and empathetically about how others might feel along your route.

04. PUBLIC SPACES/ACCESS
Be mindful of areas that are not accessible to the public and seek permission before planning a walk route that goes onto any private property.

05. MAP IT
Use Google Maps to plot your route and factor in walking time between stops.

06. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
Practice your route beforehand, identifying good places to gather the group that are close to the features of the streetscape or landmarks that you want to point out.

Most importantly, have fun! As you plan your walk, look, listen, smell, and feel your surroundings. Be present in the city around you.
KNOW YOUR STUFF/RESEARCH YOUR WALK

The Greenacre Reference Library and MAS Archives are available for inquiries and research assistance. A portion of the collections, related to the built environment and 20th century history of New York, are digital and available to share.

Contact MAS’s Information Resources Manager, Erin Butler (ebutler@mas.org) with your question/topic of interest, or leave a voice mail: (212) 935-3960 x 1274.

Learn more here: https://www.mas.org/about-us/greenacre-reference-library/.

Check the Resources Index on page 20 for additional research sources.

RECRUIT A VOLUNTEER

We strongly recommend recruiting a volunteer who can help attend to logistics along your walk. Volunteers can assist in managing the crowd (e.g. make sure the group stays together and does not block narrow sidewalks or entryways), documenting the walk, and helping to answer questions. If you are hosting a conversation on Zoom, consider asking someone to tend to the technical aspects, such as moderating the chat and Q&A and sharing presentation slides.

STAY CURIOUS, LEARN, AND PRACTICE

Don’t worry about being an expert. You are a professional in your own experience of the city and you have plenty to share. However, if you are leading a live walk, we encourage you to practice ahead of time, inviting any special guests who may join you to ensure they are also comfortable walking the route or using the technology. This will help to avoid issues day-of, and will allow you to rehearse and even gather helpful feedback before finalizing the details!

LEARN FROM THE BEST

There will be the opportunity for Jane’s Walk leaders to take a mock tour with an MAS docent in advance of the festival—stay tuned for details.

CONNECT WITH JANE’S WALK NYC LEADERS

MAS has set up a Jane’s Walk NYC Slack. On Slack, you can communicate with each other, share helpful resources, seek help in Jane’s Walk planning, or offer to lend a hand! The link to join Slack is available by emailing janesswalknyc@mas.org and will be distributed to all who submit a Jane’s Walk.
LIVE WALK SCHEDULING
To provide participants with flexibility to experience a variety of walks over the course of the weekend, we have staggered start-time slots for May 3-5, 2024 to be 9 AM, 11 AM, 1 PM, 3 PM, 6 PM, and 9 PM.

THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT THE TIME SLOTS
- Traditionally, popular time slots have been 11 AM, 1 PM, and 3 PM. Leading a morning or evening walk can mean less competition with other activities and better attendance.
- The average Jane’s Walk runs between 60-90 minutes. For a live virtual walk, we recommend a duration of 30-60 minutes.
- MAS will closely monitor RSVPs for in-person guided group walks. For walks that hit capacity, walk leaders may consider leading a walk more than once to accommodate more people. Another solution is to lead a guided walk in a hybrid format, going live on Zoom or social media simultaneously, allowing people to also tune in remotely.

MAKE THE TITLE AND DESCRIPTION CLEAR, SUCCINCT, AND CATCHY
Coming up with an enticing title and description can help to attract the attention of potential attendees amid the hundreds of walks offered during the festival. Feel free to bounce ideas off the Jane’s Walk team—we’re here to help.

If there are specific instructions that are helpful for participants to know in order to join your walk, such as the platform, be sure to share those details too!
SPREADING THE WORD

MAS will promote Jane’s Walk through our website, social media channels, and media partners, but we ask that walk leaders also do their part to spread the word about the entire festival.

Here are a few ways to encourage participation:

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Post on social media so your friends hear directly from you in your own words. Aim for three mentions to drive participation:
  - one post a few weeks out announcing your walk,
  - one post a week or so out inviting people to join you,
  - and one post the day of or night before expressing your excitement about being part of Jane’s Walk.

- Share the MAS Jane’s Walk NYC Facebook event page on your wall or invite your friends to join.

- Share fun videos or stories from your walk on your social media and tag MAS! We may repost what you have shared!

Note: MAS will provide logos and graphics that you can use in your promotions.

OTHER WAYS TO PROMOTE

- Share an announcement by email or on local neighborhood boards, physical or virtual (MAS will provide printable flyers along with some other goodies ahead of the festival!)
  Remember people in both your personal and professional networks may be interested.

Make sure all of your posts link to your Jane’s Walk listing on mas.org so people know how to join in.

@MASNYC @MAS_NYC @MASNYC

#JANESWALKNYC
HERE WE GO! DAY OF LOGISTICS/TIPS

Walk Attendees/Registration
► All walk attendees for virtual and in person guided group walks register ahead of time on the MAS website. They receive a confirmation and a reminder email which includes: walk date, time, title and meeting location/Zoom Link, and other important details.

Maps/Images/Materials
► Feel free to bring printed images to use during your walk or create maps/other printed guides to hand out to your walk goers.

Arrive Early
► We recommend arriving 30 minutes or so before your walk begins, so that you can establish a good spot for attendees to find you and greet any early arrivals.

Start Time
► We will provide you with an RSVP count ahead of your walk. If you have some folks who are running late we recommend waiting 5 minutes or so.

Instructions, Provide Context, and a Warm Welcome
► Introduce yourself and share the goals for your walk.
► Briefly explain what MAS is, who Jane Jacobs was, and a little bit about the Jane’s Walk festival.
► Take a moment to learn about your group. Ask participants where they are from, what they know of the area or topic, and what attracted them to your walk.
► Give the group a heads up on the distance that your route will cover, a preview of stops to come, or any other pertinent instructions.
► If you are leading a live virtual experience, share technical instructions for how participants should engage with the platform (e.g. using the Q&A function in Zoom) and mention if the program is being recorded.
Avoid the “Walk-and-Talk”
- Avoid walking and talking at the same time to ensure that everyone can hear you.
- Pick a spot that is removed from foot traffic and noisy streets to gather the group.

Speak Up and Stay Visible
- Look for a higher elevation to stand on, like a park bench/stairs, so everyone can see you.
- Project your voice. MAS does not provide amplification devices. If you think you will need one, we encourage you to consider either renting or purchasing one.
- MAS will provide each walk leader with a Jane’s Walk NYC Sign and T-Shirt to help the group identify you at the meeting place and while walking.

Encourage Conversation
- Open the floor to questions or thoughts from participants throughout. For virtual walks use the chat/hand raise/polling/Q&A functions; the comments section on social media; or include a prompt for audience comments online for on-demand walks.
- Brainstorm a few questions beforehand to generate conversation.
- If you don’t know the answer to a question, that’s okay! You may want to use the opportunity to ask if anyone in the crowd has the answer. It’s a walking conversation, not a lecture—it’s great when walk leaders learn something new through Jane’s Walk, too.

Document Your Walk
- MAS encourages walk leaders and attendees to share about their Jane’s Walk experience. For example, if you’re leading a live walk in-person or on Zoom, you can ask attendees to pose for a photo at the end, or share photos or footage of the walk afterwards. If you have planned a selfguided walk, ask participants to share their photos of the experience by posting to #JanesWalkNYC!

We look forward to seeing all of the memories that you have to share.
What is MAS?
For more than 130 years, the Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) has lifted up the voices of the people in the debates that shape New York’s built environment, leading the way toward a more livable city from sidewalk to skyline. In addition to organizing Jane’s Walk, we advocate on planning, preservation, and policy issues that shape New York’s built environment and offer many public programs and walking tours throughout the year.

What is Jane’s Walk?
Jane’s Walk is an annual festival of free, volunteer-led, neighborhood walks that generate conversation about the city and celebrate its vibrant past, present, and future, taking shape in a collection of in-person and virtual experiences.

How often is Jane’s Walk?
Jane’s Walk takes place the first weekend in May every year, to coincide with Jane Jacobs’ birthday on May 4. For 2024, the festival will be May 3-5.

How is Jane’s Walk adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic?
Jane’s Walk leaders will have a variety of opportunities to host walks in virtual and socially distanced formats, including in-person guided group walks, self-guided in-person walks, virtual talks, social media activations, and more. For outdoor walks, masks will not be required. If you prefer to wear a mask, though, we want you to feel comfortable doing so. For walks that take participants inside, leaders and attendees will not be required to wear masks, unless required by the venue/building’s management.
Who was Jane Jacobs?
Jane Jacobs was a famous urban activist and writer who lived from 1916-2006. She is best known for galvanizing New Yorkers to stop Robert Moses’ project that would have built an expressway through Greenwich Village. She believed in the power of individuals to influence their city. Today, her principles represent the participatory planning approaches that have been embraced in communities around the world.

Who can lead a Jane’s Walk?
You can! Anyone is welcome to lead a Jane’s Walk, whether you are affiliated with an organization or just an impassioned individual. Jane’s Walk is an opportunity to share your knowledge with fellow urbanists. Don’t feel like you have to be an expert—adding local voices and a variety of perspectives makes for an even more dynamic experience.

Does MAS vet and approve Jane’s Walks?
MAS is committed to promoting healthy dialogue about issues affecting the city. We support the principles of self-organization and civic engagement that Jane Jacobs so fervently upheld. The festival is crowdsourced, not curated. Therefore, inclusion in Jane’s Walk does not imply MAS endorsement of the specific perspectives or proposals put forth by individual Jane’s Walks or by their respective leaders.

However, MAS reserves the right to withdraw a walk if the subject, location, or leader poses any harm or danger to participants, makes use of hate speech, or defames or excludes specific individuals or groups, or was not created for the original purpose of inclusion in Jane’s Walk festival. Jane’s Walk is also a non-partisan initiative, thus, any political campaigning or walks hosted on behalf of a candidate seeking office is not permitted as a part of the festival.

MAS also reserves the right to edit a walk’s title and description on our website for the sake of clarity, brevity, and grammatical consistency.

Can a Jane’s Walk take place on private property?
If a guided or self-guided walk instructs participants to enter private property, walk leaders also must provide written permission from property owners via email to janewalknyc@mas.org. MAS is not liable for any violations of trespassing on private property.

mas.org/janes-walk-nyc  janewalknyc@mas.org  #JANESWALKNYC
Can I seek compensation for leading a walk?
Jane’s Walk is free and open to the public, and therefore leaders are also prohibited from soliciting compensation (including monetary tips) from attendees.

How is Jane’s Walk paid for?
The cost of the festival is underwritten by MAS, a registered 501c3 non-profit organization. We receive support from individual donors, government grants, private foundations, and sponsorship. For more information on MAS and our financials, please visit mas.org. If you are interested in donating to help underwrite the costs of producing the festival, contact Britt Densmore, Vice President of Development, at bdensmore@mas.org.

Can I use Jane’s Walk as a promotional opportunity?
Distribution of marketing materials outside of those provided by MAS is prohibited. However, the festival can serve as an opportunity to share information about a particular project, initiative, or event with fellow urbanists as it relates to your walk.

How will registration work for guided group walks and virtual walks?
MAS will be taking registration for any live walk. For virtual platforms, walk leaders must submit a join link for Zoom or social media, and MAS will share it directly with registrants. For guided group walks, walk leaders must submit details and instructions for the meeting and ending locations, and any other relevant information for registrants to be notified of upon signing up.

How are Jane’s Walks promoted?
MAS promotes the festival as a whole, but participating individuals and organizations agree to identify themselves as part of Jane’s Walk through inclusion of the event logo and language in their respective communications (e.g. email, social media, printed collateral) leading up to the event.

What if I need to cancel my walk?
As we have learned, things can happen in life that are beyond our control. As much as possible, it helps to have a plan in place if you no longer can lead a Jane’s Walk activity. Can someone else lead it for you? Can you post an update on the platform or meeting location for your walk to help notify people? Are you able to reschedule for another time during Jane’s Walk week? Please contact the Jane’s Walk NYC team at janeswalknyc@mas.org to share any necessary cancellations or scheduling changes so the online roster can be updated accordingly and registrants can be notified.
What Will MAS Help with? What Won’t MAS Help with?
For support in your research and planning, we will be hosting a variety of training opportunities on Zoom before the festival in May. We are also available for brief rehearsal bookings during the month of April using Zoom meeting, where you can share your plans for your walk, practice, and ask questions. A link to sign up for rehearsals will be shared with confirmed walk leaders once submissions close on March 31.

However, MAS is a small team. We are not able to set up or manage your walk on your chosen virtual platform or provide staff for all guided group walks, even though we do our best to pop-in and attend as many walks as possible.

Where can I find more information about Jane’s Walk and learn about other walks happening during the festival?
The full list of walks is available on our website at www.mas.org/janes-walk-nyc starting in mid-April. It’s easy to find a walk using the search, date, theme, format, and borough filters. The website also features helpful information and resources for the festival.

How do I stay involved with MAS year-round?
MAS is a membership organization that offers events, programs, and tours throughout the year. Visit our website at www.mas.org for more information.

Who can I contact if I have more questions?
We’re here to help! Contact the Jane’s Walk team at janeswalknyc@mas.org with any questions you may have.

The deadline to submit a walk is Sunday, March 31, 2024
RESEARCH TOOLS
The list below is a small sample—there are many other academic, historic, and museum collections that can be helpful in your planning! Many of these institutions below also plan an assortment of programming that may offer inspiration for thinking through types of formats and topics.

- Bronx County Historical Society: http://bronxhistoricalsociety.org
- Brooklyn Public Library: https://www.bklynlibrary.org
- Center for Brooklyn History: https://www.brooklynhistory.org
- Greenacre Reference Library: https://www.mas.org/about-us/greenacre-reference-library
- Kanopy: https://www.kanopy.com
- Landmarks Preservation Commission: https://www1.nyc.gov/site/lpc/designations/designationreports.page
- Museum of the City of New York: https://www.mcny.org
- New York Public Library: https://www.nypl.org
- New-York Historical Society: https://www.nyhistory.org
- NYC Dept. of Records: https://www1.nyc.gov/site/records/index.page
- Queens Historical Society: https://queenshistoricalsociety.org
- Queens Public Library: https://www.queenslibrary.org
- Staten Island Historical Society: https://statenisland.pastperfectonline.com
- Urban Archive: https://www.urbanarchive.org/cities/nyc
- Talking to community members!

VIRTUAL AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT
- KARP Strategies produced a great program and a toolkit for best practices on virtual community engagement. Check it out here: https://www.karpstrategies.com/virtual-toolkit
- Mentimeter (for presentations, polls, brainstorming, and real-time feedback): https://www.mentimeter.com
- Slido (for live polls, quizzes, and Q&A): https://www.sli.do
- Typeform (for online form and survey-building): https://www.typeform.com
DESIGN AND PRESENTATION TOOLS

There are a number of other free online and app-based editing software available—this list below is a small sampling!

- Adobe PDF (Useful for sharing slides as a PDF to maintain certain design elements or decrease file size)
- Adobe Photoshop & Adobe InDesign (for image and graphic design)
- Canva (a free, online design platform with a range of templates and graphics): https://www.canva.com
- Google Slides (free online platform to create slides if you don’t have PowerPoint)
- Keynote (a presentation tool that is compatible with Mac only)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (for slide presentations)

ZOOM TRAININGS

Zoom offers a number of live and pre-recorded trainings on the various functions of the platform, along with many other support topics:

- Pre-recorded: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/217214286-Watch-Recorded-Training-Sessions
- Live training schedule: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360029527911-Live-training-webinars
- General support topics: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us
- Details for using the Zoom app on a mobile device: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/200305413-Mobile

FREE TO LOW-COST WEBSITE BUILDERS

- https://www.wix.com
- https://www.format.com
- https://www.squarespace.com
- https://wordpress.com
- https://www.blogger.com
- https://tumblr.com
RECORDING DEVICES
Your personal computer or phone camera/mic may be a perfectly suitable option for whatever activity you have planned, but if you seek to enhance your production value, here are some options:

Video:
- GoPro plus grip for video with built-in stabilization
- Handheld video stabilizer for smartphones
- Gimbal video stabilizer for DSLRs and camcorders

Audio:
- Wireless Lavalier mics
- Headphones
- Bluetooth earphones with built-in microphones

VIDEO AND SOUND EDITING AND PRODUCTION
- Adobe Premiere Pro
- iMovie
- BRIC’s Media Center offers a variety of free and budget-friendly, high-media production courses. Visit https://www.bricartsmedia.org/art-education-media-resources.
- Innovations in Socially Distanced Performance has a list of software and hardware recommendations for manipulating video, broadcasting, recording a podcast and more. Visit https://www.sociallydistantperformance.com/tools.
- Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN) provides low cost media and production training courses and also provides equipment and studio space rentals for certified producers. Visit https://www.mnn.org.
ACCESSIBILITY

Free to low-cost captioning

- For pre-recorded videos, there are free and DIY tools available for captioning, including:
  - https://dotsub.com
  - https://subtitle-horse.com
- MAS used a platform called Rev to provide live closed-captioning in Zoom Webinar. Check out Rev here (note this is a paid service): https://www.rev.com
- YouTube Caption Editor: YouTube can automatically generate captions using speech recognition technology. For more information go to Translate Videos & Captions in the YouTube Help Center here: https://support.google.com/youtube/topic/9257536?hl=en&ref_topic=9257610

Non-English Language and Interpretation:

- If you’re leading a non-English activity, consider asking someone to help as an interpreter.
- Consider asking someone to join who can provide ASL and interpretation for those unable to hear, if captions are not an option.

Phone Listening:

- If you host a talk on Zoom, consider enabling phone listening for those who cannot join by computer.
GET IN TOUCH

Do you still have questions? The MAS Jane’s Walk NYC team is here to help. Give us a call or shoot us an email for more information.

janeswalknyc@mas.org

(212) 935-3960 x 1307

mas.org/janes-walk-nyc