

tage of urban renewal as “human removal” was to be the future for many of the hopeful ideas promulgated at the conference.

Although Victor Gruen presented a thoughtful and intelligent basis for his proposals, he too failed. Many, perhaps most, of the pedestrian malls installed in the 1960s and 1970s were removed by the 1980s.<sup>5</sup> Frederick Adams advocated an understanding of the aesthetics of the moving automobile. He recommended, as well, design control to combat “rampant individualism, commercialism, and a lack of public taste in our society.”<sup>6</sup> Fifty years later we might see these two recommendations as being at odds. Gyorgy Kepes wanted “a new meaning to structure, a new order”<sup>7</sup> in scale with our broader, faster world and based on the sensibility of the Abstract Expressionist artists of the time—that is, with his own sensibilities and those of the 1950s Modernist architects around him. These sensibilities were, arguably, part of the problem with the urban renewal projects that followed in that their Cartesian geometries and preoccupation with purity narrowed the options for new building and planning, and brought about more demolition than might have been necessary.

Jane Jacobs trod more lightly. In proclaiming the value of old-style immigrant areas of American cities, she made a succinct statement of



“In the upper part of the city, around 103rd Street, slums are being torn down with ruthless speed to make way for low cost housing projects such as these seen against the skyline.” Manhattan, New York, 1959. Photograph and quotation by Henri Cartier-Bresson/Magnum.