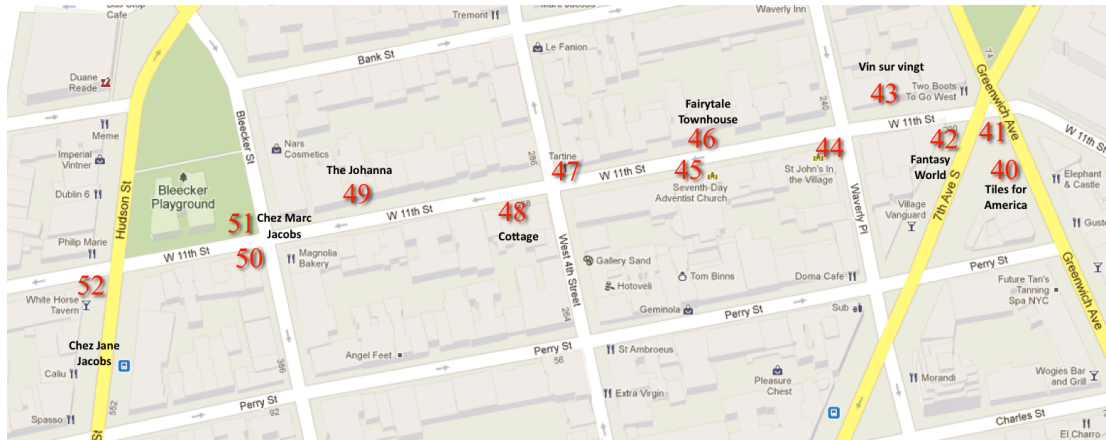


A Jacobean Fantasy (Greenwich Ave to Hudson St)



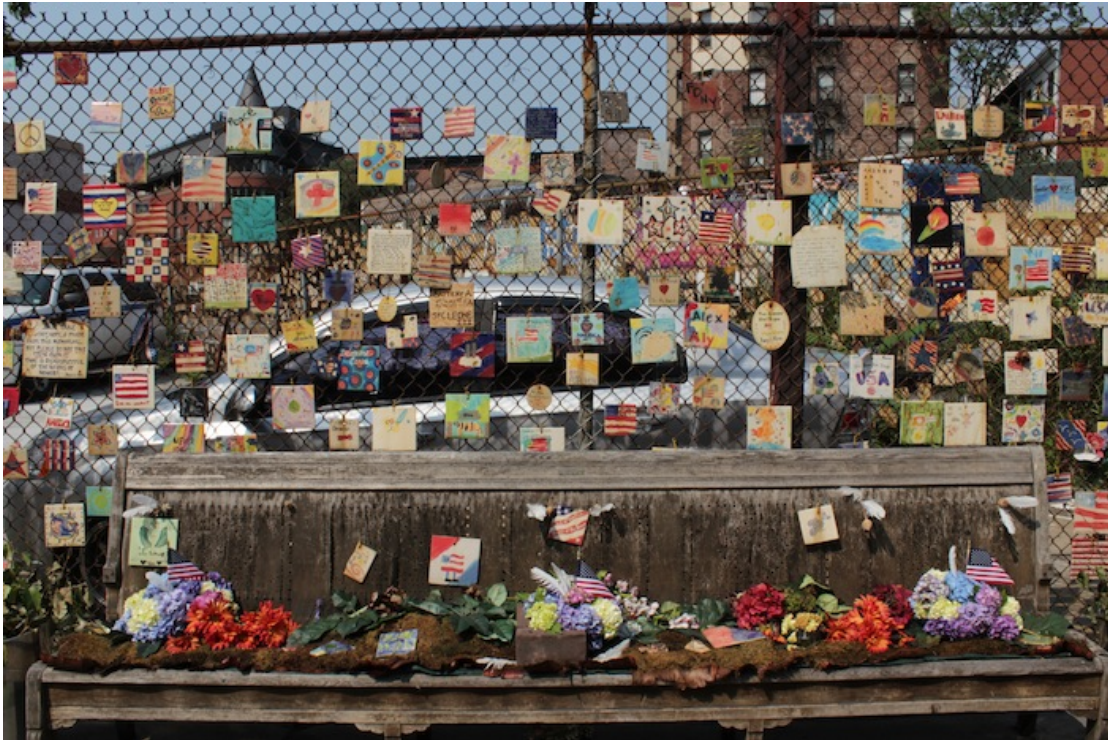
Past Greenwich Avenue, 11th Street makes a 45-degree turn and veers off into what looks like a completely different city altogether. This is the West Village, where the Goddess – Jane Jacobs – holds sway. It is a fantasy garden-world with bustling sidewalks, luxurious shade trees, fairytale cottages, and beautiful people strolling, chatting, reading, roller-blading, sipping espressos, pushing prams and doing other charming things beautiful people do.

The Goddess herself lived here for 30 years, at a townhouse on 555 Hudson Street, just south of 11th Street. In 1961, she would immortalize the West Village in a book entitled *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, in which she railed against the indiscriminate bull-doing of low-rise neighborhoods such as in West Village and their replacement by soul-less Modernist apartment blocks.

Her activism however, would turn out to be futile in the long run. Belying the pleasant, walkable streets and sidewalk cafes that still proliferate today are astronomical rents which have forced many original businesses – particularly along Bleeker Street – out and replaced them with upscale restaurants and brand-name boutiques. The most notorious of these boutiques are the five or so underwritten by the other Jacobs' on the street: Marc (no relation to the Goddess).

As one explores these hallowed grounds, one cannot help but feel that all of it is not long for this world. The Goddess herself abandoned her Village for Toronto in the '60s, and should she still be alive, would never be able to afford to strut her stuff here today.

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40 – *Tiles for America*, a colourful community memorial to 9/11 at Mulry Square, on the corner of Greenwich Ave.



41 – Walkability – a core tenet of the Jacobean religion.



42 – *Fantasy World*: a sex shop that marks the start of West Village.



43 – *Vin Sur Vingt*, a French bar and restaurant.



44 – *St John's in the Village Episcopal Church*, built in 1974.



45 – A couple of blocks down: *Manhattan Seventh Day Adventist Church*, also the final House of Worship on 11th Street.



46 – No. 235: a beautiful, fairy-tale townhouse with red windows and green creepers.



47 – A quaint little cottage-like structure possibly marks the entrance to the *Bleecker Street Gardens*.



48 – *Tartine*, an affordable French restaurant occupying a street corner on West 4th Street.



49 – No. 279: *The Johanna*, a delightfully named and ornamented tenement block.



50 – *Bookmarc*, on Bleecker Street, alluding to the *Marc Jacobs* boutiques diagonally across the intersection.



51 – *Bleecker Street Playground*, with its delightful statue of a circus family.



52 – And finally, the iconic *White Horse Tavern*, featured on the original cover of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Jane Jacobs lived in a townhouse to the left, outside the shot. Hudson Street is alternately named *Jane Jacobs Way* here.