

Ed Bacon Continues to Make His Mark

State historical marker honors city planner's life and achievements

*by Heather Livingston
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Bacon was an outspoken critic and advocate for his city's architecture and urban design. As the director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission for 21 years, he was devoted to improving the livability and beauty of Philadelphia, often ruffling feathers and always speaking his mind. During his tenure, Bacon oversaw the development of Society Hill, Independence Mall, Penn Center, Penn's Landing, Market East, the Far Northeast, and University City. He became internationally known after appearing on the covers of Time and Life magazines during the 1960s. His 1967 book, *The Design of Cities*, is still used in architecture and urban planning courses.

I hope that people who see this marker will remember his contributions to the design of the city.

The dedication event was attended by approximately 100 guests including two of Bacon's daughters, Gov. Rendell, and State Representative Mark Cohen. "The City of Philadelphia was greatly affected by the brilliant and tenacious Ed Bacon," said Rendell. The historic marker is located at the Northwest corner of 15th Street and John F. Kennedy Boulevard in LOVE Park (formerly JFK Plaza), a spot Bacon surely would've approved: he designed it while an architecture student at Cornell University. The park quickly became a favorite spot for skateboarders and an annoyance for city officials, drawing teens and 20-somethings from up and down the East coast. During the 1990s, the park was redesigned and, to Bacon's fury, skateboarders were banned. He famously protested the city's decision by briefly riding a skateboard in LOVE Park. Bacon passed away in October 2005.

Reference

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