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Humphrey Carver and the Suburban Landscape of Post-war Canada¹

Abstract

This article studies the life and work of Canadian urban theorist Humphrey Carver, examining the way in which he attempted to shape the post-war Canadian suburb by envisioning it as a work of art of architects and planners. Drawing on archival research in Carver's archive at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, the paper explores Carver's struggle with the suburbs, situated in the context of widespread automobile use and home ownership of single-family houses, supported and encouraged by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and suburban encroachment on the rural and agricultural landscape. In response, Carver offers a vision of a suburbanized city as a model for Canada's urban future.

Very early in life I wondered how cities could grow without destroying the surrounding countryside....I became an advocate of Garden Cities. I wrote books (*Cities in the Suburbs*) and helped to establish organizations (such as the Community Planning Association) hoping to restrain the destructive forces of city growth. But I failed. The two-lane parkways leading to open spaces have been transformed into six-lane freeways for bumper-to-bumper traffic. And finally I can't drive at 90 kilometres an hour and read the Exit signs or make quick decisions. I am practically helpless to exist in my own habitat. The big city, with its network of freeways, has become a monster which swallows up the landscape. That is the major change that has occurred in the 20th century.

- Humphrey Carver, 1994

This frank admission of failure from the urban theorist, architect and planner Humphrey Carver comes from his self-published autobiography, *Decades* (1994), written one year before his death. The words are a marked change from the hope and optimism he expressed in the 1930s when as a young architect in Toronto, fresh out of architectural school in London, England, he called for “nothing less than the gradual reconstruction of the entire fabric of our civilisation” (File 20/304).²

Although Humphrey Carver became a key figure in Canada's post-war suburbanization, there has been no sustained engagement with his work. He has been described as one of Canada's “leading

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2 From a book tentatively titled “Planning Canadian Towns” that Carver abandoned with the onset of the war in 1939. I will have occasion to refer to this book throughout the paper because many of the ideas Carver would develop over his long career are introduced in this book. This and other unpublished material comes from the Humphrey Carver Archive at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal.

planning theoreticians” (Sewell 1993, 44), the “most influential planner” of the early post-war years (Harris 2004, 15), and “one of Canada's most respected authorities on housing reform and the building of suburbs” (McCann 1999, 129). John Sewell (1993) also writes that Toronto's first master plan in 1943, although authored by Eugene Faludi, also bore the imprint of Carver.

In recent years, there has been renewed interest by architects, scholars and planners in Canada with exploring the social, aesthetic and ecological relationships people have with the suburban landscapes where the majority of people are now living.³ The rapidly increasing processes of suburbanization have made the suburbs an important topic across the humanities and social sciences and in urban and architectural studies and have sparked vigorous public debate. This paper proposes that to understand Canada's changing suburban landscape we need to turn to the past and to those figures who helped shaped that landscape.

This paper describes Humphrey Carver's role in shaping the post-war suburban landscape in Canada, largely through his work with the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) between 1948 and 1967.⁴ The paper asks the following questions: How did Humphrey Carver envision an alternative to what suburban historian Richard Harris (2004) calls the “creeping conformity” of the post-war suburb? Harris points out that although there was class diversity in the early 20th century suburbs, by 1960 they had become “more uniform and ubiquitous than ever” increasingly defined by large-scale corporate builders, mass consumption, automobiles and mortgage-financed home ownership. And how did Carver address the post-war “urban explosion” (Lefebvre [1970] 2003; Mumford 1961) tied more often than not to the growth of both automobility and suburbs in the decades in which Carver was working at CMHC: the 1950s and 1960s?

The paper is divided into five sections. First I give a brief biographical overview of Carver's

3 For example see Sewell 2009; Keil 2013; Young, Wood & Keil 2011. See also Fiedler & Addie's (2008) literature review of work on Canadian suburbs.

4 In 1979, CMHC changed its name to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

life and work, arguing that his approach to the suburbanized city offers a “contradictory aesthetics” that reflects the tendencies of post-war, Fordist suburbanization. I then turn more specifically to the ways in which Carver attempted to shape and control suburban sprawl through the Community Planning Association (CPA), which he helped found. Building on the idea of community planning as the “layout for living”—this was the title of the CPA's publication—I examine how Carver approaches urban planning and architecture as a work of art. I then address Carver's uneasiness with an increasingly mobile and individualized society, due to both transportation and communication technologies, like the car, the telephone and the television. Against the dispersal of the suburbs and building on his work in community planning, Carver called for “centres for human attachment,” places where residents of the suburbs could gather together. Controlling suburban dispersal in the landscape also meant renewing the relationship between suburbs and nature, a persistent theme for Carver, particularly later in life. In the last section, I argue, following Wilson (1991), that it was not necessarily a vision of the suburbs as situated in nature, but rather in the post-war context of mass automobility, it was nature seen as retreat, a place of recreation that one went to by car (100). Nature for Carver was above all something separate from humans. I conclude the essay, with Carver's own reflections on his career and how after his retirement in the 1970s he reconsidered some of his fundamental ideas around planning.

4.1 Background

Humphrey Carver was born in 1902 in a suburb in England and trained as an architect at the Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA) in London. He entered that program in 1924 with the aim to learn to “make beautiful houses for people to live in” (Carver 1994, 23). Alongside his classical architectural education at the AA, Carver was influenced by the work of Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus. In the 1920s, Le Corbusier published his two most influential books: *Urbanisme* (1921) and *Vers une architecture* (1924). Carver came across the latter at a Paris bookshop while on break from his studies in London. He describes his reading of the book as an “electrifying intellectual experience

which immediately changed my whole way of looking at the world around me, at buildings old and new....It was a glimpse of a world in which the social purposes of life would direct the shape and form of cities” (1975, 21). There is no shortage of lyrical praise to Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus in Carver's writing. In an unfinished book from the 1930s entitled “Planning Canadian Towns,” Carver writes, “until Le Corbusier arrived with his dazzling and elusive logic, we did not know how to transmute the industrial city into a noble and poetic form, without losing its contemporary quality” (file 20/304). It was the idea of the city as a “poetic form” that would later influence Carver's approach to building suburbs, which he believed should be made in the fashion of great works of art.

Counting Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy among his influences, Carver recalled in a 1968 speech that “we came to believe that the most exquisite beauty and social refinement is the polished product of technology, anonymous and shining, steel and glass” (file 20/257E). The tension between a “poetic form” and the city's “contemporary quality” is central to Carver's thinking; in order to appreciate the “novelty and diversity” of the “architecture of power and speed,” forms must be arranged in the landscape in an aesthetically pleasing way (1962a, 14). Carver appreciated the work of the Bauhaus because it did not restrict itself simply to individual buildings, but was able to mobilize “the whole machinery and equipment of urban life as a subject for design” (file 20/304). For Le Corbusier specifically this meant the primacy of composition and the way things in space should be “architected” ([Le Corbusier 1929] 1974, 96). In order to assert the importance of planning and design, Carver, much like Le Corbusier before him, pointed toward two aspects that give the landscape its contours: order or system, “the arrangement of the parts within the whole,” and an “intrinsic quality” that give a place character in the same way that painters or sculptors shape and give their works a unique quality (Carver 1962a, 19).

Carver emigrated to Canada in 1930 and became an influential figure in developing public housing while living in Toronto in the 1930s. He described himself as “a rebel,” coming to Canada to

“throw off...an obsolete social structure” and to devise a new, uniquely Canadian urban vision (Carver 1941, 3). Carver was also influenced by the long line of modernists who used the metaphor of surgery to explain the radical change needed in the city. He praised the cities that planned a “vigorous attack upon their obsolete central areas—to cut away the deadwood where decay has set in. City surgery is not unlike tree surgery. You have to prune away the part that has lost its vitality in order to get new fresh growth and bloom” (file 20/304). In Carver's case, it was urban renewal in the so-called slums of Toronto. In 1948, he believed that such city surgery was required for the entire area south of Bloor Street, between Bay St. and the Don River (Carver 1948, 34). Part of this area would become Regent Park, a project of which Carver was particularly proud.⁵

In the post-war period, however, his focus turned toward planning suburbs. In 1946, he helped co-found the Community Planning Association (CPA) and in 1948 he moved to Ottawa and began working with CHMC, the same year that his influential book *Houses for Canadians* (1948) was published. Sewell notes that Carver's approach to planning the suburbs outlined in this book—and which I explore below—was followed well into the 1970s largely through the workings of CMHC (1977, 25). CMHC was formed in 1946, and its main goal was enabling a “system of mortgage finance” that would be linked to “new methods of construction and land subdivision” (Harris 2004, 121). In other words, CMHC was set up to promote the mass production and purchasing of single-family homes. The organization was central to the post-war modernization process that transformed the still-rural peripheries of Canada's cities into suburbs.

From 1955-1967 Carver was Chairman of CMHC's Advisory Group, developed on Carver's

5 In his autobiography, *The Compassionate Landscape* (1975), Carver wrote that the architecture of Regent Park was the “pride and joy of the CMHC architectural staff”(148). At the end of his life, when Carver clearly would have been familiar with Regent Park's problems, he wrote that there were many families without fathers, so “no wonder Regent Park became known as chaotic and a ghetto. To shelter and protect people with problems was *the object of the exercise*” (1994, 49, emphasis added). Carver refused to admit that the design may have played some role in its problems. He went so far as to suggest that critiques of public housing had to do with their excellent design which made them “stand out from the general dullness of the surrounding city” and thus put their low-income tenants into an unwanted spotlight (1975, 142).

suggestion, and meant to encompass the “creative” aspects of the corporation that would “improve construction techniques and materials...advance the qualities of housing design and community planning, and...undertake social and economic research” (1975, 135). It was also responsible for funding architectural and urban-related projects throughout Canada, as part of CMHC's mandate to “encourage public interest in community planning” and so Carver was involved in the beginnings of many urban planning programs at universities throughout Canada (Carver 1975, 88). During this time—which he recalled as “the most constructive part of my working life” (1975, 149)—he also wrote *Cities in the Suburbs* (1962). In this book, he argues that the dispersed urbanization of the periphery needs more than just community planning, but a vision for an urban region anchored by multiple focal points, rather than one city centre surrounded by the sprawl of suburbs. Carver retired from CMHC in 1967, but he continued to write and give speeches throughout 60s and 70s, revisiting and rethinking many of his ideas; these provide an invaluable look into how Carver reflected on his work and particularly the changes of the late 1960s which I turn to in the conclusion.

In looking at Carver's life largely through the archive of published and unpublished material he left, I argue that a tension marks his approach to urban design and planning, as an urban visionary working inside the bureaucracy of the CMHC. In a speech to the Town Planning Institute, Stewart Bates, president of CMHC from 1955 to 1964—who Carver put at the “intellectual centre of CMHC” (1975, 55)—remarks: “In parts you are bureaucrats, committed to the daily task of moulding things into standard and uniform patterns. But in part you are designers and humanists trying to release people from the tedium of the mass-produced city” (qtd. in Carver 1994, 55-56).⁶

I argue that these two parts—bureaucrat and modernist visionary—reflect David Gartman's work on the relation between cars and architecture and what he calls the “contradictory aesthetics” of

⁶ The tension speaks to the particular rhythm of the archive itself. In the boxes of material, the researcher finds interspersed the banal correspondence of a government bureaucrat with the numerous speeches and letters in which Carver poetically extols his visions for the suburban future of Canada.

an “architecture of corporate efficiency” and an “architecture of consumer fantasy” (2009, 192). Gartman is situating his analysis specifically in the in the post-war period in the US and the contrast between the modernist skyscrapers in the city centre and the outlying suburbs to which the office workers would return each day. Movement between “rationalized work” in the city centre to the “compensating consumption” of the “suburban idyll” happened more often than not via automobile on the newly-built highways (191). Gartman writes that these two contradictory architectures could co-exist because they were “spatially and temporally segregated” (192) and so reinforced one another (195). On the one hand, Carver very much attempted to maintain the spatial division in these two aesthetics through his approach to urban design and planning, particularly as I will show in his visions for the “suburbanized city,” which was an attempt to preserve the suburban idyll freed of the dictates of post-war technocracy. On the other hand, the spatial divide between efficiency and fantasy is not as simple as Gartman makes it out. CMHC, or “the corporation” as Carver refers to it, was very much a part of this post-war technocracy, part of a “new class of...educated professionals at the centre of decision-making” (Gartman 2009, 194; see also Ross 1995). CMHC also spanned the divide of efficiency and fantasy as the quote above from Stewart Bates suggests. Canada's post-war suburbs were fueled by CMHC and its “mortgage instrument” (1975, 109) along with the modernization of house building and automobile production. In fact, Carver criticized CMHC for being too focused on simply the building of houses to the exclusion of the art of planning the communities where those houses would be built.

And whereas Gartman associated the “entertainment architecture” of suburban amusement parks like Disney with the consumer fantasy of the suburbs, Carver turns instead to the the relation of the suburbs to nature: zones of agriculture and recreation to which it is increasingly a part of and on which it increasingly encroaches, but which Carver argues for a strict separation. The modernization of the idea of nature as a place of retreat explicit in Carver's work mirrors and parallels his own approach

to the suburbs. This approach was an essential aspect to the contradictory aesthetics of the post-war-period, which had to be kept separate spatially.

4.2 Community Planning and the Art of the Suburbs

As the epigraph suggests, Carver believed that Community Planning could help “restrain the destructive forces of city growth.” Community Planning is the Canadian equivalent of the British “Town Planning” and the French “Urbanisme” and is largely a post-World War Two initiative; the Community Planning Association of Canada (Association Canadienne d'Urbanisme) was founded in 1946, and was funded through the CMHC. The graphic that accompanied the CPA's publication, *Layout for Living* (1947-1951, after renamed *Community Planning Review*), was a hand placing houses in the landscape, strikingly similar to the image of Le Corbusier's hand gesturing towards his *Ville radieuse*. In these early post-war years, the CPA was governed by a cadre of experts—architects, engineers, bureaucrats, all male—designing entire neighbourhoods. Carver called one of the major themes of his early post-war work with CMHC “design for living” (1975, 115).

Community Planning has its roots in Clarence Perry's neighbourhood unit, which he first outlined *Neighbourhood and Community Planning* (1929) as largely an architectural and urbanistic response to the spread of the automobile. Perry argued that the actual design of a neighbourhood unit was “forced by the automobile” (1929, 30) and that “arterial highways must necessarily run in every direction and turn the street system into a network” (31). Housing would occupy the “interstitial spaces” in neighbourhood “cells”: “the cellular city is the inevitable product of the automobile age” (31). The “automobile menace” was a “blessing in disguise” because it called attention to the need to standardize this neighbourhood cell or unit, which would be bound, but not penetrated by the street network.

To Carver, community planning had little to do with community as the term is usually understood now, but the practical application of his idea that the physical design of the city was a a

“social art,” which “give[s] outward expression to the underlying shape of social organization” (1962a, 59). This connection between design and social organization was what he had initially taken from both Perry and Le Corbusier. Community Planning as the planning of something that had once developed spontaneously had now become a “technical procedure” (1948, 42).

Community planning was also an initial response to the homogeneous housing developments of the early post-war period, which Carver became more acutely aware of when he began working with the CMHC in 1948. From the purview of the planner with a vision for an entire neighbourhood, the focus on solely building houses results in the piecemeal construction of neighbourhoods house-by-house, “the practice of slicing up suburban land into identical lots without group planning” (File 20/304). In 1947, the Minister of Reconstruction announced that five hundred thousand houses were to be built in Canada over five years (Carver 1947, 1). In those first years, Carver struggled with his place at the CMHC, where he recalled in 1973 that houses or buildings were seen simply as “mortgageable units” or “packages for sale” (File 20/2571) rather than what he saw as the real need: “a considerable number of entirely new communities” (1947, 2). This tension is reflected in the contradictions in Carver's own writing. Carver describes community planning thus:

It may be compared with the designing of the process by which the component parts of automobiles are delivered to the assembly line in a rational sequence so that the finished products can be brought to completion as economically and rapidly as possible. (1948, 39)

With the aid of CMHC, the houses of the post-war suburbs were built by the “mass builder,” who had “ridden in on the tide of corporate finance” (Harris 2004, 144). Carver's description reiterates a point Clarence Perry had already made in *Housing for the Machine Age* (1939) in which he argues that the automobile is “advanced” because it used the latest production methods and is built by a handful of powerful corporations, while housing is “backward” because there are no large-scale building corporations to rationalize and standardize the production of both houses and the

neighbourhood unit.

But in a 1947 article in *Layout for Living*, Carver writes that although the industrialization of house construction was necessary, “the production of houses can never quite be like the factory production of cars” (1947, 2). This Carver felt was the inevitable outcome of the focus on industrialization and standardization of building houses for home ownership to the exclusion of all else, and in particular rental dwellings for families, and for the young and the old. Carver shifted his attention from the house as a product to be manufactured on an assembly line to the neighbourhood as a whole: “the individual house is itself only a part of a larger whole. The 'end-product' is not the individual housing unit, but the total community—complete with all the services and utilities which enable urban householders to live as we are used to living” (1947, 2). In moving from the house as “end-product” to the community as “end-product” (ibid.), Carver situates Community Planning firmly within a modernist approach to the city that called for producing space as a whole rather than just individual buildings.

Community planning refers to both the quantitative—the sheer number of houses, schools, shops, etc—and the qualitative: “Community Planning would be a dull business indeed if it could be justified only on the inhuman grounds of production efficiency” (Carver 1947, 6). As early as 1947, Carver argued that the key element of “civic design” means different forms of dwellings arranged such that a community “comes to possess beauty and dignity.” “Beauty and dignity” arise when different types of dwellings are deliberately arranged. As such, “efficiency and beauty” can have for one another a “natural affinity” (ibid.). Planning a community should be about “arranging landscape spaces and living spaces” (Carver 1975, 118). Clarence Stein and Henry Wright's 1928 plan for Radburn, New Jersey—described as a “town for the motor age”—was often held as the ideal of Community Planning and the neighbourhood unit, although it was only partially realized as the company founded to back its development was bankrupted by the 1929 stock market crash (Relph 1987, 65). Radburn is significant

for two main reasons: the strict separation of cars from pedestrians, and the house turned away from the street. Radburn residents were to have a system of pedestrian walkways with which they could get to school, shops, etc. without ever having to cross a traffic artery. The cul-de-sacs, some of the first in North America, ensured that only residents or visitors would use these quiet streets, which would be connected to the major streets on the perimeter of the development. Yet even more significant, for both Carver and future suburban building, was the idea of the “town turned outside-in” and the “house turned around” (Carver 1962a, 40). Literally, the backs of the houses, which included the garage, would face the cul-de-sac, while the front of the house would face the communal interior gardens, which would be the focus of the Radburn “superblocks.” The houses were to be centred on the communal parks and gardens far removed from the street. Carver believed that the “art of the suburbs” could be found in the particular way Stein and Wright brought together “landscape and townscape...by grouping and clustering and arranging landscape spaces and living spaces” and thus giving the arrangement of houses as much significance as the single-family house itself (Carver 1975, 117-8). However, in his preparatory notes to *Cities in the Suburbs* he claimed that the “failure” of the Radburn Plan was turning the house so that its back faced the street. It was not because he believed that street life should be accorded more importance, but that the “route of approach taken by a car cannot, in fact, be regarded as the *back*....Life and liveliness revolves around the family car as a possession almost as important as the house itself” (file 20/303).

The influence of Stein, as well as Frank Lloyd Wright, show that Carver was too invested in the traditions of the single-family house to subscribe wholly to the modernist philosophy that a house was simply a machine for living in, also seen in his critiques of CMHC's approach to building houses. Carver's dismay at the uniform, mass-produced houses was partly a result of his own fascination with houses, which he called “house lust” or “philodomy.” The terms never actually appeared in any of his published work, but they did appear in his notes for a “CMHC Senior Staff Course” in 1957 and again

in his notes for an aborted book project from 1965 called “A Pride of Cities.” He defines house lust as “the enjoyment of a beautiful house [which] is *par excellence* a satisfying and intellectual accomplishment” (file 20/257A). House lust is a “deep and primitive urge” to “possess and beautify a place you can love.” House lust brought Europeans to North America, becoming the “most important element in the life-style of any community” (file 20/257D). The immigrants who came to Canada, argued Carver in “Planning Canadian Towns,” “came to look for a place in which the homes of the ordinary people would be the dominating element in the plans of cities” (file 20/304). Carver identifies house lust, along with “social expression,” “conservation of resources,” and “City Beautiful” as making up CMHC's “evangelism” (file 20/257A).

The single-family home, along with the family car, played a privileged and central role in Carver's thinking, expressing “individualism, autonomy, and independence,” qualities that Carver believed were the aims of family life (1962a, 99). The family is not just a core unit to the post-war social democracy, but it is a kind of moral guide. In the final sentences to “Planning Canadian Towns,” he wrote that “the family is the biological institution around which our Housing must be designed.” The moral foundation of society—“monogamy, family affection and parental example”—function best “within the privacy of an individual home” (File 20/304). Even in *Cities in the Suburbs*, as he called into question the universality of home ownership, which I explore in the next section, he still very much ascribed to the rigid gender roles of the 1950s suburban stereotype: the working man and his home-bound and car-bound housewife preparing dinner, doing the shopping and taking care of the children. Carver's insistence on a domestic, moral purity in the suburbs is inseparable from his claims that the slums of the city had lost their urban vitality, and like a tree, needed pruning so as “to get new fresh growth and bloom.” It was also the family car and the single-family house that gave individuals autonomy within the context of the post-war modernizing processes (Ross 1995, 63), which included many new technologies which were increasingly troublesome for Carver and his approach to the art of

building suburbs.

4.3 Mobile Privatization and the Art of Anonymity

Although he offered no shortage of praise for the single-family house and the nuclear family, he also suggested that as “a self-contained island” the house places too much emphasis on an individual as part of a family and not enough on the individual as part of the wider society (1962a, 67). As early as 1939 before the formation of the CMHC and the house-building programs of the post-war period, Carver called the specific attachment to single-family homes a relic of rural habits, a “special sanctity attached to the single house standing on its own piece of property” (1939, 130). For Carver, the revolution of transportation and the revolution of housing people *en masse* in single-family homes had given people “freedom and individuality and space and privacy,” but at the same time had “scattered and disintegrated cities” (1962a, 12). It is this tension that prompted Carver to ask in the 1930s whether Canada would reach a more “mature stage of urbanisation” and move beyond the single-family house as a dominant form of dwelling toward a more “civic way of living” (file 20/304).

In his preparatory notes to *Cities in the Suburbs*, Carver writes that the single-family house along with the family it holds forms a “sacrosanct, closely-knit and internally responsible unit,” but there is no corresponding image for the larger neighbourhood of houses; “the mass result of a large number of these houses...expresses nothing in particular” (file 20/303)—at least to Carver—aside from the triumph of industrial and construction technology.

The other side to Carver's aesthetics of dwelling was what he called the “art of anonymity” and which he applied equally to the individual structures of the city—skyscrapers, highways, and other works of engineering—and the city itself (1962a, 48). This is language familiar from modernists like Sigfried Giedion who in *Mechanization Takes Command* [1948] 1969] studies “anonymous history”—the unknown objects and inventors of modern industrial society who “have shaken our mode of living to its very roots” (3). Giedion describes these objects as “modest things of daily life, they accumulate

into forces acting upon whoever moves within the orbit of civilisation” (ibid.) The focus on anonymous technologies and inventors is mirrored in Carver's own description of the art of anonymity, which he used to describe office buildings, shopping centres, and highways, their function of which is to be neutral and conforming (1962a, 117).⁷ Although skyscrapers and highways are anything but modest, Carver's point is that their anonymity stem from the idea that unlike the family house, which has a beauty unto its own, the anonymous technologies gain meaning only from the way that they are placed in the landscape. The “anonymous social design” of an apartment building is given meaning when it is set in a green landscape (1962a, n.p.). In his own poetical style, Carver describes the new family in a Le Corbusier building “lifted up and shown the horizon from the upper floors of the great city Habitation” (1962a, 45).

In an article written for The United Church of Canada in 1967, Carver describes the mass-produced suburbs, the skyscrapers, and apartment buildings as evincing a lack of “symbolic representation.” The urban landscape is “expressionless,” “anonymous” and “unsymbolic,” as such the “genuine natural environment of a mobile industrialised society” (File 20/257J). The art of city building is much more than the “ultimate efficiency” of automobiles and expressways, more than the “glistening efficiency” of the downtown skyscraper, which is an art of a “cold and compromising kind.” He likens the skyscraper to the highway, imagining “the cars traveling up and down an elevator shaft instead of horizontally on the street” (1962a, 116).

In his writings of the 1960s in particular, Carver was becoming increasingly dismayed at the effects of an increasingly mobile society. Carver found himself fighting against technologies of mobility, which for him were becoming more important than the ideas of tradition and monumentality he associated with the city centres of old. In his notes for an aborted book project in 1965, Carver

⁷ Unlike with Le Corbusier, Carver does not make any references to Giedion, although he may have been exposed to his work through his friend and former colleague at architectural school in London, Jaqueline Tyrwhitt, who worked closely with Giedion (see Darroch 2008).

claimed that the mobility of the population was “one one of the worst features of city life” (File 20/257D). People were too “restless” and “unattached” to form coherent, stable and permanent communities (ibid.). The city does not have the “static and focused character” that one needs in order to dwell. Within the context of post-war suburbia where cars are “ephemeral, disposable, mortgagable [*sic*], replaceable, exchangeable” (1978a, 5) and in a time of “ubiquitous mobility and telecommunication,” which have had a “destructive influence” on urban planning, Carver pleads with the reader of *Cities in the Suburbs*: “can we leave nothing permanent behind” (1962a, 75)?

The new transportation and communication technologies—the car, telephone, and the television—along with the “vehement dedication to home ownership” and the “single-family house” were allowing families to isolate themselves in their homes and thus discouraging any concrete forms of city organization: “the city is an abstract continuum...without recognizable shape or focus...in which individuals float in a kind of unattached space” (1962a, 68). This is what Carver called the “anti-nucleation” influences of a mobile-centred way of life. This very much reflects the argument Raymond Williams makes in his discussion of the complex of communication and transportation technologies he refers to as serving “an at once mobile and home-centred way of living: a form of *mobile privatization* (Williams [1974] 2003, 26). Carver's thinking is very much a product of the “contradictory pressures” of mobility and the “dissolution of older and smaller kinds of settlement” (ibid.). His call for cities in the suburbs was a way of reproducing those older settlements as places to which people were attached. Williams argues that broadcasting served this dual function, as the television allowed people to connect to the outside world without leaving their homes. Long before the internet, Carver suggested that with television and the telephone, the city had become “a universe within which everyone is in the immediate presence of everyone else” (Carver 1962a, 67). In this sense, the increasing privatization of the suburban population, made more pronounced by the separation of work and family life, necessitated “new kinds of contact” (Williams 27). The monumental civic space of Carver's cities in the suburbs

were to be a corrective to both the mobile and home-centred way of life, a return to a mythical past that was in the process of being erased.

4.4 Post-suburbia or, Cities in the Suburbs

In this sense, Carver's idea of cities in the suburbs as “centres of human attachment” are a direct response to the confluence of communication and transportation technologies, along with the emphasis in post-war suburbs on the seemingly “private and 'self-sufficient” small, family home and the lack of interpersonal relations outside the family. Carver saw his cities in the suburbs as decisive in repairing the supposed break caused by the forces of anti-nucleation, to ameliorate the problems caused by dispersed urbanization both within the built-up areas as well as the landscapes beyond. Although the streetcar suburb had come together before the time of Community Planning, Carver argued that this was largely because the compact layout of the neighbourhood was defined by the distance one would have to walk to the streetcar stop, whereas the “scattered form” of the automobile suburb, together with its decentralizing communication technologies, now lacked any visible form and had to be intentionally composed and arranged. When Carver proclaimed in “Planning Canadian Towns” that the goal of planning was to rebuild “obsolete” villages, control and manage growth, and “construct new settlements in which will be embodied the experience of the ages and the hope of the future” (file 20/304), he was on the one hand aligning himself with the modernists who believed the only way to accommodate the new technologies of transportation and to contain the growing forces of urbanization was to rebuild the city anew. On the other hand, he specifically sought to maintain a connection between the past (the “experience of the ages”), the classical cities of Paris and Rome, and the new towns of the post-war period, such as Cumbernauld, Scotland, or Vallingby, Sweden, both of which were planned in the post-war period and had clearly defined city centres and both to which he makes frequent references.

In a 1967 letter to the Art Gallery of Ontario director W.J. Withrow, on the occasion of the City

Now exhibition in the same year, Carver offered a detailed explanation of what he meant by composing and arranging the city as if it were itself a work of art (File 20/257G).⁸ In the letter, Carver explained that the art of the city is not simply about the spontaneous scenes that photographers or painters capture in their images of city life, but in the conscious production of the city as a work of art in and of itself. This was an idea that Carver held throughout his career, going back to the influence of his time in London in the 1920s. In the foreword to “Planning Canadian Towns,” he writes: “Their have found their way into this book certain ideas, considerations and expressions which may seem inappropriate to the matter-of-fact business of operating a Canadian municipality. For these we make no apology. The building of a city is Man's supreme work of art; and works of art cannot be explained on accountants' balance sheets or calculated on the engineer's slide rule” (file 20/304). Carver would only fully develop this idea of a city as a work of art in *Cities in the Suburbs* (1962a), his vision for the future of the suburb.

It was in Carver's vision of post-suburbia that he attempted to reconcile the contradictory aesthetics of efficiency and fantasy as well as the forces of both mobility and an increasingly home-centred way of life. His vision for the suburbs went beyond the neighbourhood unit of community planning and looked toward the region as a whole. Carver's search for what he called a “post-suburbia habitat” in the form of regional city centres in the suburbs occupies much of the latter part of his career with the CMHC. In *Cities in the Suburbs*, he argued for a “system of regional subcentres” at key junctures in the suburbs which would attempt to contain the dispersion of post-war urbanization. He writes that the “heart of the city has been torn to pieces” as it has turned into the “control centre for the new public and private bureaucracies” (1962b, 59). Again, it was to the post-war bureaucratization of the suburbs, of which CHMC played an important role, that Carver sought to respond even though he himself was at the centre of these new public bureaucracies. The “tremendous upheaval” of

⁸ The letter was not unsolicited, it arose out of the possibility that CMHC would offer financial support for an accompanying publication.

automobility, suburbanization, and the decentralization of industry had caught the “art of town planning unprepared” (1962b, 59).

Carver developed his idea of regional sub-centres most extensively in *Cities in the Suburbs*, written while on a sabbatical leave from CMHC. Although Sewell (1993) calls attention to Carver's *Houses for Canadians* (1948) as his most influential work, in a 1967 letter to urban planner Len Gertler, Carver felt that *Houses for Canadians* was “out of date” and “never made a very good book;” he preferred to stake his “reputation” on *Cities in the Suburbs* (file 20/229). *Cities in the Suburbs* is one of the early critiques of the architectural uniformity of mass suburbia, which Carver himself situates amongst other urban critics of the time, including Lewis Mumford in *The City in History* (1961).⁹ In his preparatory notes describing the purpose behind the title, he writes:

The stuff of which cities are made is scattered in pieces and fragments through this expanse. Can we somehow arrange their pieces so that the new “cities in the suburbs” will be triumphant in their comparison with the dignity and excellence of the finest cities of other ages? (file 20/303)

The failings of suburbs like Levittown or other post-war, mass produced suburbs, was not just that the houses looked alike, but that there was a lack of a diverse stock of housing, both owner and tenant occupied to accommodate a diverse population: young and old, families and single people, rich and poor, etc. Carver acknowledged that if the “standardized material” of the suburbs is to be made into a “work of art” it needs “variety, surprise and contrast” and not just row upon row of sprawling family houses. Every suburb needs multiple forms of dwellings and not simply single-family homes.

⁹ It is worth recalling Mumford's text here because like Carver he offered a critique of the uniformity of the suburbs. As an antidote to the “suburban exodus” and urban congestion he pointed to the contribution of Petr Kropotkin, the Russian anarchist geographer, and his decentralized urban communities that took advantage of new farming techniques and the “flexibility and adaptability of electric communication” and Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, which introduced the idea of cities limited in size and surrounded by a greenbelt. Mumford's focus on *both* Kropotkin and Howard's work is largely ignored in the critical literature on Mumford, which dismisses him as a snob (Hayden 1984) or an out-right anti-urbanist (Jacobs 1961).

Carver describes the effects of zoning and the practices of subdividing: “No kind of building but a family house shall enter here. No apartment houses for young people or flats for old people. No corner store. No housing for those who are outside the privileged circle of home-owners” (Carver 1962a, 16).

In *Cities in the Suburbs* (1962a), Carver attempted to synthesize the influences of Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Ebenezer Howard and Clarence Stein—the “same heroic figures still stalk the suburban landscape”—into a “fresh solution of the suburban problem” (51). With Corbusier and Wright he would combine the art of the single-family house with the social design of apartments. The art of the single-family house was different from the “art of designing forms of multiple housing” (1962a, 101). The house along with the family car expresses the “aims of North American family life”: “individualism, autonomy and independence” (1962a, 101). The apartment is about dependence, and personality is expressed through relations with others rather than simply through consumption and the “display of possessions” (101). In this sense, suburban living in apartment buildings for Carver was not about the “unique individuality” of each household, but “privacy and anonymity within a framework of community organization” (102).

In concrete terms, Carver envisions suburban city centres for every four or five neighbourhoods of 5,000 dwellings, serving a total of 15,000 to 20,000 people. Carver believed that one hundred such centres could be built throughout the cities of Canada over a 10-year period, with the bulk of these centres in Montreal (27) and Toronto (24). The city centre would have four parts: a marketplace, a place for performances and education, the seat of government, and finally the church, which deserves a “special place in the arrangement of the city” (1962, 96). The apartments would be arranged around the city centre, while further away from the centre, would be the car-borne single-family households. In contrast to his argument in *Houses for Canadians* that house building should be carried out by large private corporations, here the government plays a larger role in purchasing ahead of time the land that would become the city centre.

Although Carver's idea of cities in the suburbs continues to resonate, in many ways his ideal rooted in the strict separation of suburb from city and work from dwelling was completely at odds with the urban and suburban trends in the 1960s when Carver was writing. Following Gattman's "contradictory aesthetics" of city and suburbs, I would argue that Carver sought to keep work life separate from the suburban city centres, which were to be places where people could fulfill their roles as consumers and citizens, not workers. Carver believed that "true artistic expression" can only be found in places concerned with the "meaning of life itself" which did not evidently include alienating forms of bureaucratic labour (117). Carver wanted to emulate the timelessness and monumentality of the churches, cathedrals, and squares of Europe. Carver's city in the suburb is a near mythical place freed and strictly separated from the efficiency and the "practical engineering approach," which has "blotted out any opportunities for excellence in the modern city" (117), a way to freeze time in the face of post-war modernization. It is also an attempt to recreate the fantasy of the single-family home in a public space devoted to the needs of consumers and house-holders.

Howard's Garden City was also a key influence on Carver's idea of cities in the suburbs, but he also modifies the idea because of the importance car. (For a short time, Carver lived in the Hampstead Garden Suburb in London, designed by Howard disciple Raymond Unwin.) Carver felt that the automobile had changed the relationship between city and garden too profoundly for Howard's designs to continue to be relevant. Howard's Garden City was unique in that it was to allow residents to reach green spaces by foot or on bike, but cars can offer access to an "infinity of open country outside the city" such that the "city-in-a-garden" can be replaced by the "house-in-a-garden" (Carver 1962a,55). By reasserting the claims of the "house-in-a-garden" over the "city-in-a-garden" Carver reasserts privatisation—that is, in the sense of the private domain of the garden, and the private space of the car used to access the "infinity of open country." The retreat to nature and the concomitant need to preserve and protect it for human enjoyment, is an extension of the privatization described above,

mirroring the increasing importance of private life in the post-war suburbs.

4.5 When the Suburb meets the Country with a Clean Edge

In Alexander Wilson's *Culture of Nature* (1991), he writes that in North American landscape parks the edges, where the meadow meets the forest, are some of the most “complex and textured” ecosystems, where “the degree of cooperation and symbiosis” between plants, animals and humans is greatest. The post-war suburbs, however, sanitized and standardized the edge, which evoked “separateness” rather than “diversity and interrelationship” (1991, 96). The edge is the “property line” reinforcing the strict separation of people in their private houses. Carver argued that the suburban city should “meet the country with a 'clean' edge” (1962a, n.p.), although the edges are marked as much by the built-up area as by the regional highways. Central to Carver's vision in *Cities in the Suburbs* was not simply the design of suburban town centres, but also the strict separation of city from the countryside.

The greatest benefit of the car was its ability to connect people to nature, a subject that Wilson develops and critiques at length. For Wilson, nature understood as a space of recreation is inseparable from the system of automobility that allows people to access these places at all. Wilson nicely captures the relationship between nature and technology found in Carver's thinking: “the love of nature flourishes best in cultures with highly developed technologies, for nature is the one place we can both indulge our dreams of mastery over the earth and seek some kind of contact with the origins of life” (Wilson 1991, 25). The car did not simply connect people to nature, rather the car helped redefine just what the idea of nature came to mean. And as we saw in the earlier section on community planning, new suburban developments were organized around the car and the single family house: it not only meant clearing the land and subduing the non-human elements, it also led to neighbourhoods surrounded by arterial roads and highways. If in the post-war period nature becomes increasingly a place one goes to, it also becomes increasingly displaced from the living and working environment and

defined as either a space of recreation or a space of agriculture.

Before I look at this aspect of Carver's work, I want to discuss Carver's years in England and his appreciation of landscape—he began his career in Toronto working with a landscape architect. Carver's years in England were formative, and in particular the years of his childhood between the “green and black landscapes” (Carver 1975, 49). On the one side was the Black Country, a “shadowy grey landscape under a pall of smoke” and on the other the Forest of Arden, the “gentle, static, and lyrically beautiful” villages of pastoral England (9). In the contrast between city and country, Raymond Williams writes that “we become conscious of a central part of our experience and of the crises of our society” (Williams 1975, 289). Williams also grew up gazing upon the landscape of the “Black Country,” but from the other side of the border, in Wales. The idea of landscape was important to Carver. He named his autobiography the *Compassionate Landscape*—“two of my favourite words”—as a “kind of thank you to the world which has given me so much enjoyment—the mountains, the sea, the woods and gardens, in all their seasons—and all the people I have known” (1994, 69). Williams writes that the very idea of landscape already implies separation and observation (1975, 120). In the following section I want to show how through the contrast between these two landscapes in England, and later between the urban and rural landscapes of Canada, Carver became conscious of himself as an architect and modernist. Central to Carver's vision of cities in the suburbs was the countryside, which paradoxically belonged to the urban region, but was also separated from it by the highways.

This paradoxical belonging and separation was magnified by the car, which allowed and to a certain degree necessitated thinking beyond the city and to the region as a whole, which included the country and recreational regions. Although Carver laments the “ubiquitous mobility” of both transportation and communication technologies, his monumental view of nature at once separated from and connected to dwelling is impossible without the car. Muskoka can be “as much a part of Toronto as King and Bay” (1962a, 54) only because automobility shrinks the distance between them. As people

became increasingly mobile, “the sharp definition of the old city walls has disappeared” and the “edge of the suburbs” became “blurred and indefinable” (51). The focus should be on urban regions, not city and suburb separately. The “outermost parts” of the urban regions have become “pieces of the contemporary urban scene” (54) and thus Carver believed that farmers and city dwellers must work together to control urban growth as well as the influence of city tourists and traffic on the rural landscape.

At the same time that the automobile and its highways would separate dwelling from nature it would paradoxically act as that which would unite city, suburb and landscape solving the problems of “metropolitan unity” (1962a, 58). Rather than see the suburb, city and landscape as separate entities, Carver believes they should be thought of as “all-inclusive regions containing both the city and *its outlying possessions* in the woods and on the lakes” (Ibid., emphasis added). Harkening back to the first parkways of the New York region, Carver suggests that parkways and freeways would create a unity between the suburb and its “spacious playgrounds” (58). The highways would be the bridge between the city and the country, giving urban dwellers a chance to “share with farmers an interest in cultivating the land for crops and fruits and dairy products, as much for their scenic as for the food value” (Carver 1962a, n.p.). For Carver, one of the biggest arguments for controlling unchecked urban growth was the protection of the farmland and the recreational landscapes from the encroachment of subdivisions. In many ways, Carver's attention to the disappearing farmland in the area around Toronto specifically was indicative of the time, as in 1970 the release of the Toronto-Centred Region Plan called attention to the “quantities of land...removed prematurely from agricultural and recreational use” within the “commuting area surrounding Metropolitan Toronto” (quoted in Sewell 2009, 43). This plan was part of a study begun in 1962 as the Metro Toronto and Region Transportation Study (MTARTS) and which strongly advocated a regional plan for Toronto and the surrounding area similar to the one Carver advocates in *Cities in the Suburbs*. In a 1964 letter to CMHC president Herbert Hignett, he

suggested that the authors of the MTARTS were asking for his input because they were likely interested in his “suburban town-centres” as “an essential part of the physical scheme of development that would have to be served by transportation” (File 20/220). Carver was a part of the “advisory committee” to MTARTS (Carver 1975, 165).

Like Carver's sense of house lust, nature was valuable insofar as it could be “possessed” as an open space for recreation or “conserved” for our “future use and enjoyment” through planning parks and highways (Carver 1962a, 56). Although Carver rightly acknowledges that the forests and lakes of the outlying regions should be considered as inseparable from the city—it is often the source of drinking water and food—they became part of the urban region as “a place of leisure..attached to the schedules and personal geographies of an urban society,” and to where urban inhabitants travel on weekends or on summer holidays (Wilson 1991, 26). Carver's understanding of nature is inseparable from both the automobile and the single-family house and reflects the modern obsession with controlling nature and the natural world—as if it was something separate from humans. Nature was increasingly becoming something one goes to, that one looks after, cares for, enjoys and protects, and above all *consumes*, rather than something inseparable from human, cultural activity. Carver creates a mythic utopia around his house lust, the “life and liveliness” of the family car, and the exalted nature—together they form Carver's utopia of dwelling and mobility. It is the automobile that for Carver can renew the city and suburban dwellers' relationship with the "open horizon of land and sky" (1962a, 48). Carver premises his vision of nature upon a simultaneous, and contradictory, critique of “ubiquitous mobility” as described above and a celebration of autonomy and independence that allows people in their cars to access the hinterlands an extension of the private spaces of both car and house. In a revealing passage from *Cities in the Suburbs*, he writes: “What's the use of a car if you can't get to the water, the woods, and the mountains (55)?”

Although Carver argued that the city, suburb, countryside and hinterland beyond should be

thought of as part of one urban region, he still believed that the “the suburban city should meet the country with a 'clean' edge” (1962a, n.p.). But by his own admission, this rather simplistic “clean edge” divide between city and country had already been thrown into confusion by the automobile, the very technology which was to assure the separation. As early as the 1930s, Carver saw the spread of a new kind of suburbanised landscape:

On account of the mobility and flexibility of modern transport, the suburbanisation of the rural hinterland has been enormously accelerated; the city has set up a process of infiltration and “softening” of the country. There is no longer a clear division between Town and Country. Previously it had always been possible to walk out from the gates of the city and find oneself immediately in the country; now the front has become fluid and in between Town and Country there is a wide transitional area which is neither one nor the other. (File 20/304)

Which brings us back to this paper's epigraph, the crux of which was Carver's claim that he failed to keep the “destructive forces” of city growth from swallowing up the countryside. The irony is that in his old age, he had become unable to drive through the landscape to reach that nature because of the traffic jams and his own inability to navigate the modern highway. If Carver's admission of failure is to be pinpointed—that he believed it was *his* failure is itself revealing because it means he believed it *could* be controlled—it is with this contradiction between separation and unity, and Carver's belief that urbanization and the system of automobility could be controlled through urban design, as if to solve the problems of automobility means simply the proper arrangement of dwellings, roads, shopping centres, and freeways and parkways. As the use of the car grows, so does the distances between built-up parts of the region and the surrounding countryside making them more difficult to reach particularly for those who do not own a car and for those too old to drive. The lack of green spaces within the city exacerbates this divide, leaving the car-less inhabitants stranded on islands of concrete and pavement.

Instead of uniting the region as Carver thought the scenic parkways and freeways would do, they created a wedge between urban inhabitants and the region to which they supposedly belonged, but which they have no access to. It took Carver until the age of 93 to reach this conclusion. But in light of his supposed failure, he was able to retreat to the world of his single-family home in the well-to-do leafy neighbourhood of Rockcliffe Park Village in Ottawa where he declared “small is beautiful. We like it just the way it is” (Carver 1994, 98).

Conclusions

We have the choice to 'design' the future, rather than let it drift.
- Humphrey Carver

After his retirement from CMHC in 1967, Carver continued to give lectures and write, although he no longer played an active public role in housing issues (1975, 191). At the same time, the work in this post-retirement period—in the form of numerous candid and forthright speeches and articles—sheds light on the marginalization of Carver's brand of heroic modernism. Carver began to stumble. He actually uses the word in his talks in the late 1960s and 1970s, referring to himself as an “old man groping and stumbling in the dark...trying to raise in my mind some picture of the...'post-suburbia' habitat” (1979). “I will stumble on,” he wrote in a 1970 speech in Waterloo, “to try and make sense of this conflict between 'planning' and 'freedom of choice’” (File 20/132). He was referring in particular to the conflicts around the planned Spadina Expressway in Toronto; the debate around its building was raging at the time until its cancellation in 1971, signaling the end of the highway building projects envisioned in the 1943 plan for Metropolitan Toronto. Carver not only saw a new turn in suburban growth, but he saw an increasing distrust around him of the grand visions of planners like himself, and it created in him a “desperate feeling of inadequacy,” as he admitted in that speech at Waterloo. Carver felt that it “dreadfully unpopular” to be a planner at this time (file 20/241), in part because of the rejection of the top-down planning characteristic of community planning, which activists criticized. He

seemed clearly disturbed by these changes as he struggled to both maintain and reconsider his own positions as evident in the following:

In planning the urban environment, are we now for the first time beginning to understand that man is himself part of that environment? He is not only the person who makes the urban environment and the person for whom it is done. He is also a critical part of the ecology. And he is a confusing creature, as perverse and controversial as Jane Jacobs, as innocent and angry as some people who have to suffer living in slums.

It suggests Carver was re-thinking the role of planners, but also his view of the environment and ecology. By the late 1970s, Carver acknowledged that the spread-out pattern of post-war suburbia spurred by the “footloose automobile and cheap fuel” was no longer “quite so sensible.” In the post-war period, he reflected, the “sacred goal of civilisation” was for every person to own a house and a car. In this context, CMHC, and the associated industries of building and finance, “acquired an aura more sanctimonious than any ministers of the church” (file 20/132). Although he may have thought Jane Jacobs both “perverse” and “controversial,” it was in light of her work Carver rethought his planning ideas. He admitted in the 1979 speech that in “sorting things out” rather than advocating for a mixed society, planners create “destructive, sterile and uncivilised” environments.

In one sense, Carver's cities in the suburbs are relic of the post-war Fordist era where work and dwelling, the urban and the natural, production and consumption were strictly separated geographically and symbolically. He attempted to perpetuate this divide in his own visions for cities. He also attempted to plan against rather than with the new technologies of transportation and communication, which he believed had a “destructive influence” on city and suburban life, arguing for a richer public life in the suburbs. Carver's idea of cities in the suburbs or the “suburbanized city” is a forerunner to the creation of “downtowns in the suburbs” that became codified in Metropolitan Toronto's 1980 urban plan (see Filion 2001, 143; Sewell 1993, 219). Carver had articulated an idea for a suburbanized city in 1962,

but he has rarely, if ever, been acknowledged as an important progenitor to these suburban downtowns, even though his particularly vision was very different from how the downtowns would eventually look with their focus on the very ubiquitous mobility Carver decried and the way in which they combine work and dwelling rather than separate it. Carver rightly argued that people needed public spaces in the suburbs in which people could gather. And vibrant public spaces continue to be a problem in the suburban downtowns.

Carver also perpetuated an idea that continues today of the “middle-class home-owning family” as “self-contained and self-reliant” and inhabiting a “completely autonomous dwelling” (99). The freedom and autonomy of the car and the single-family house was only made possible by the system of mortgage financing that the government provided through CMHC, and the communication and transportation technologies, mainly the television, telephone and car, and now the internet, which enable people to live separated in geographical space.

Expo '67 marked “the beginning of the end of optimistic dreams” that Carver associated with the 1955-67 period, when he was chairman of the CMHC Advisory Group and when “the concepts of a new urban Canada began to ferment in people's minds” (1975, 193). Carver felt Expo '67 was remarkable in the way it faced the problems of housing and urban life in general, particularly through Moshie Safdie's Habitat where he and his family stayed. During Expo, one of the units was reserved for the use of senior CMHC bureaucrats, as CMHC funded its design and development costs. I could imagine Carver, on the cusp of retirement, standing in one of the small gardens in Safdie's Habitat and feeling a sense pride at Canada's achievement at Expo, while at the same time feeling a tinge of sadness for the end of an era, *his* era.

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Imaginations of post-suburbia: Suburban change and imaginative practices in Auckland, New Zealand. Article. Sep 2018.Â

Furthermore, the paper provides an overview of suburbanization in Canada, as a territorial mass halfway between the American and the European models of suburbanization. A noteworthy literature has been produced to study the suburban ways of living in Canada, and in this respect, the contribution enhances the strengths of the "Atlas of Suburbanisms", pointing out the interesting theoretical approach adopted by Canadian academia. Humphrey S.M. Carver (1902-1995) played an important role in the federal government's revival of Canadian community planning following the Second World War and guiding Canada's transformation into a suburban nation. Carver was a senior executive at Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) from 1948 until his retirement in 1967. While Carver's work as a housing advocate is well documented, his role as an advocate for community planning is less known. He was the founding vice-president of the Community Planning Association of Canada (CPAC) in 1947, president of the Town Pla Suburbia in the postwar era. The American Dream: 2.5 kids, a dog, and a house with a white-picket fence. It's one of the most iconic and enduring images in American culture, the object of both praise (as evidence of a high standard of living) and ridicule (as evidence of conformity and materialism). The cookie-cutter homes that sprang up outside metropolitan areas after World War II weren't grand palaces, but to the generation that had survived the Great Depression and World War II these little cottages represented almost unimaginable luxury. An advertisement from General Electric sh