

# THE INFLUENCES

## example and inspiration

“As far as I know, it was Leonardo da Vinci who invented separation of pedestrians and vehicles. It is in Central Park in New York City and I saw it at Radburn, where my father had taken me as a teenager. We planned it for Reston.”

—Robert Simon



In the 1920's Simon's father had been on the Board of the new town of Radburn, New Jersey, which had followed the 19th century English Garden Cities example, including pedestrian walkways, underpasses and a community center. Development of Radburn was aborted by the great Depression, but was a significant influence in Simon's planning.

Born in 1914 into an upper middle class family, Simon's father was a realtor whose investments grew to include Carnegie Hall. His mother made the arts an important part of his education. Three months after he graduated from Harvard, Simon's father died, leaving the 21 year old responsible for the family business.

In considering the features of the new town, Simon drew upon his own background—growing up in Manhattan, traveling and living in Europe, living in suburban Long Island.



Simon looked to cities such as New York, Philadelphia and Boston for their townhouses, to Main Street USA for mixed-use development—residential and office space over ground floor retail—and to European and South American cities for their plazas.



Inspiration for the high-rise at Lake Anne came from the new town of Tapiola, Finland outside Helsinki.



Portofino, Italy was an inspiration for Lake Anne with the lake creating a tiny port abutting the plaza.



The fountain in Lake Anne, a common element today, was not common in the 1960's; it was inspired by one in Lake Geneva, Switzerland.