



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
104 West 70th Street
January 6, 2009**

LANDMARK WEST! is a not-for-profit community organization committed to the preservation of the architectural heritage of the Upper West Side.

The Certificate of Appropriateness Committee wishes to comment on the application to construct a stair bulkhead on this Beaux-Arts-style hotel building designed by Israels and Harder and built in 1903-04.

Based on its minimal visibility from public thoroughfares, our Committee does not object to the bulk and siting of this stair bulkhead. We believe it important, however, to have a clear understanding of the potential for future rooftop encroachment. Though proposals such as this may seem appropriate as individual items, collectively they have an inappropriate impact on individual buildings and larger historic districts.

Though technically classified as a stair bulkhead, this structure is not insignificant in size. If only one apartment in the building has the right to build on the roof, worry of the perpetuation of rooftop accretions may be allayed. However, if there is any possibility of future rooftop build out by others, 104 West 70th Street risks the same fate as the beleaguered rooftop of the landmarked Hotel Endicott. Located at West 81st Street and Columbus Avenue, the Hotel Endicott is a reminder of the detrimental affects of short-sighted, case-by-case Certificate of Appropriateness approval. As LANDMARK WEST! testified in December 2007, the Hotel Endicott is “haphazard above the cornice line and takes on the appearance of a prairie dog farm. This mess of penthouses certainly detracts from one’s visual experience of the building.”

We urge the Commission to consider the potential cumulative impact of this application and the precedent it may be setting in terms of scale, materials, etc.