



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
115 Central Park West, the Majestic Apartments
January 19, 2010**

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 amend Certificate of Appropriateness 91-0008 for a window master plan at 115 Central Park West, the Majestic Apartments, an Art Deco-style towered apartment building designed by Irwin S. Chanin and built in 1930-31.

The spirit of a windows Master Plan is to ensure cohesion in window design. The Commission's own *Rules* notes in Chapter 3 that in historic buildings:

The window sash, window framing, and the architectural detail surrounding the windows were carefully designed as an integral component of the style, scale and character of the building. It is important to retain the configuration, operation, details material and finish of the original window as well as to maintain the size of openings, sills, decorative moldings, and the sash itself.¹

Protecting the integrity of each component of window design is, thus, of the utmost importance. Approving replacement windows each of a different material and with varying dimensions is anathema to this goal and contrary to the position of the Commission published in the *Rules'* Chapter 3.

At present, the Majestic resembles a windows factory. Having gone co-op in the 1930s and not receiving Individual Landmark designation (and the protection that conveys) until 1988, there were almost five decades during which modifications occurred across the building's many façades without any overall vision. Piecemeal alterations, often seeking to maximize one's experience of Central Park from within the apartments. But what of the public's appreciation of architect Irwin Chanin's soaring edifice from within the Scenic Landmark of Central Park? This perspective may not have been considered prior to 1988 but it is our responsibility to bear this in mind now.

That the Majestic is already a hodge-podge of window configurations is a tragedy, and approving this application as proposed today would only further distort the design of this iconic Central Park West Individual Landmark building.

¹ *Rules* of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, 3-01(b).