



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
117 West 81<sup>st</sup> Street  
October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008**

**NOTE TO COMMITTEE:** At the July 22<sup>nd</sup> public hearing, the Commission supported the rear yard addition as proposed. However, they felt that the rooftop addition was excessive, would overshadow the original building and should be downsized. They were asked to make the rooftop addition less visible and to return for a 2<sup>nd</sup> review.

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 alter the rear façade and to construct a rooftop addition at 117 West 81<sup>st</sup> Street, a Renaissance Revival-style rowhouse designed by Henry L. Harris and built in 1884-85.

LANDMARK WEST! first testified on this application at its July 22<sup>nd</sup> public hearing. We noted then that the proposed rooftop addition would be minimally visible to the public and agreed that it would not adversely affect this historic rowhouse. As the modified proposal presented today renders the rooftop addition even less visible to the public, we have no additional comments on that aspect of the proposal.

However, we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our concern about the rear yard. The proposed addition restores the yard's depth to the thirty-foot minimum required by zoning, but couples this modification with the enlargement of the now-L-shaped extension to full-width. Such an addition would perpetuate the steady erosion of the historic footprint and openness of rowhouse midblock interiors. We urge the Commission to take this into serious consideration.