



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
51 West 90<sup>th</sup> Street  
February 15, 2011**

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 replace windows, demolish portions of the rear extension and alter the rear façade at 51 West 90<sup>th</sup> Street, a Renaissance Revival-style row house, designed by Henry Andersen and built in 1893-94.

LANDMARK WEST! is pleased that the footprint of 51 West 90<sup>th</sup> Street is to remain the same. So often, our committee reviews applications wherein diminutive row houses are pushed to their limit and, incrementally, rear yards are encroached upon. Thankfully, that's not the case here. While our committee does value this proposal's regard for the rear yard, the design, we believe, falls short.

Since our first review of this project in January, we've remained in contact with the applicant to assess their willingness to incorporate our feedback into the proposal. While the applicant is aware of our concerns, they have yet to be directly responded to in the form of design modifications. As such, we are eager to share our comment with the Commission today and to hear further ideas as to how they may be addressed.

**Rear façade**

Rear façades of row houses are characterized, historically, by crisp punched windows set in a masonry wall. If window openings are to be enlarged, as proposed for No. 51, we believe that masonry should remain the dominant material of the rear façade, not metal and glass in the form of oversized windows. Presently, the third floor windows are already askew from the top floor windows. This may well be an opportunity to find inspiration for updated fenestration in the pre-existing peculiarities of this row house. What other designs might be realized that do not over-fenestrate the rear façade, but address the homeowners' request for increased light?

LANDMARK WEST! believes that the rear façade windows merit additional design experimentation and are eager to hear discussion of this point among the Commissioners today.