

Hearing Date: February 24, 2004

LPC Docket Number: 041832

Manhattan, Block: 1185, Lot: 42

37 Riverside Drive - West End Collegiate Historic District

A neo-Renaissance style apartment building designed by Schwartz & Gross and built in 1924. Application is to construct a greenhouse at the penthouse.

HDC Testimony

Unfortunately, the Historic Districts Council cannot deliver intelligent, informed testimony on this application because the boards provided for our review were insufficient. The boards did not include real sightlines, material samples or images and drawings of what the proposed greenhouse will look like when completed. In addition, the height of the proposed greenhouse was not indicated on the drawings. We urge the Commission to delay consideration of this proposal until the community has had the opportunity to review a more complete set of drawings.

Hearing Date: February 24, 2004

LPC Docket Number: 042896

Manhattan, Block: 1144, Lot: 32

Columbus Avenue and West 72nd Street - Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District

The northwest corner of Columbus Avenue and West 72nd Street Application is to construct a metal and glass newsstand at the sidewalk.

HDC Testimony

The Historic Districts Council strongly objects to the placement of a newsstand on the northwest corner of Columbus Avenue and West 72nd Street. On narrow and busy sidewalks, newsstands such as this one interrupt pedestrian flow and moreover obscure the neighborhood's architecture and storefronts. In this particular case, the newsstand is sited directly in front of 101 West 72nd Street, which was beautifully restored by William Leggio Architects in the late 1990's. The restoration of the building and its Chase Manhattan Bank storefront in particular was key to the revitalization of West 72nd Street. Landmark West's campaign to reinvigorate West 72nd Street by restoring the buildings and storefronts and removing street clutter has been extremely successful. Indeed, West 72nd Street was recently named a semifinalist in the National Trust's 2004 Great American Main Street Awards. To approve an obstruction directly in front of the wonderfully restored Chase storefront would be an affront to the work Landmark West and the building owners, merchants, and residents on West 72nd Street have accomplished.

In addition, HDC firmly believes that the placement of a newsstand in front of a bank produces a security risk. The newsstand would in essence block the view of the storefront from the street, and vice versa. This reduced visibility could be quite detrimental in the event of a bank robbery.

In December, the Landmarks Preservation Commission expressed grave concern about two newsstands, one on Broadway in the Upper West Side, and one on Sixth Avenue in Ladies' Mile. We hope that the Commission will again exert its powers and work with the applicant and the appropriate city agencies to find a more suitable location for this newsstand.

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