

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
2689-2693 Broadway/230 West 103<sup>rd</sup> Street, the Hotel Marseilles  
TBD**

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 at this apartment building, designed by Harry Allen Jacobs and built in 1902-05.

The Ansonia, the Aphorp, the Belnord, the Dakota, and the Dorilton. All of these buildings share something in common with Harry Allen Jacobs' Hotel Marseilles: all are Individual Landmarks on the Upper West Side. Singled out for their exceptional architectural richness, these apartment buildings deserve high-caliber maintenance programs, the foundation of which is solid historical research.

**Windows Color Research**

At our June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting with the applicant, we found the proposal to be under-researched. The color proposed for the new window finish was black, which is inappropriate for this building. Flashes of black paint may be visible on the bricks, but historical images, of both the Hotel Marseilles and a contemporary building also designed by Jacobs, are evidence that black is not a historically appropriate color. Rather it is likely a remnant of later paint jobs.

Without undertaking this routine level of historical investigation, this application lacked a clear sense of direction. Black as a finish color derived neither from the history of the Marseilles itself—no testing had been completed—nor from other buildings in Harry Allen Jacobs' oeuvre. Both of these reference points were provided to the project architect by our Committee prior to today's review and are shared with you in our informational packet today. Clearly, a lighter color finish is the historically appropriate solution.

**Window Configuration**

Early photo documentation shows the original configuration of the Hotel Marseille's windows on its Broadway frontage. Using this as a guide, we know that the profile of the proposed replacement windows is heavier than the historic original. The Commission's *Rules* recognize that "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 ... [a] building."<sup>1</sup>

*Over, please*

---

<sup>1</sup> *The New York Landmarks Preservation Commission Rules*, Chapter 3, Section 1.

Likewise, what is proposed for the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, arch transom-topped windows, originally much taller, is inappropriate. The applicant should replicate the configuration seen in the historic photo, not perpetuate the heavy, sub-divided non-original replacements.

### **Brickmolds**

Our Committee questions on what the applicant is basing their proposed design for extruded aluminum brickmolds. If the historic brickmold no longer exists, as the applicant stated at our meeting, then a clear source for this new design must be cited. Without it, as with the choice of color discussed earlier, any proposed design is guesswork.

### **Spandrel Panels**

While addressing the windows, the applicant would do well to assess the spandrel panels between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> floors. The tax survey photo and other images show that these architectural features were originally more delicate, pressed metal with a design in relief. Presently, garish anodized aluminum panels mar the façade of the Marseilles. Use this opportunity to bring back these remarkable spandrel panels.

We believe that this proposal does not rise to the level of quality befitting an Individual Landmark and, thus, do not give it our support.