

**Jeanne Martowski  
91 Central Park West  
New York, New York 10023**

**Testimony for November 15, 2005,  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Hearing  
For Congregation Shearith Israel (8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street)**

My name is Jeanne Martowski, and I have lived on the Upper West Side for over forty years. For the past twenty years, I have worked with my neighbors and preservation groups to achieve landmark designation to protect the special architectural character of our community. It was this character that drew me to this neighborhood in the first place and convinced me to make it my home. I know many of my neighbors feel exactly the same way. Let me be upfront about the fact that I am a resident of 91 Central Park West, immediately to the south of Congregation Shearith Israel and adjacent to the proposed project site. However, my view would not be significantly impacted.

I am here because, as a property owner and former president of my co-op in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, I feel strongly that the Landmarks Law should apply equally and fairly to all of us. This is necessary for the landmarks preservation process to function at all. The same standards must apply no matter who the property owner is, no matter what their motivation. Would a typical property owner seeking to enlarge his or her rowhouse in order to accommodate a growing

family be allowed to build a rooftop addition that was significantly visible from the public way? In most cases, no. For example, in 2003 the Commission rightly rejected a proposed rooftop addition just down the block at 62 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street because the Commission found that it would have been “highly visible from Columbus Avenue in conjunction with the rear façade of the rowhouse; ...that the presence of this addition silhouetted against the sky will call attention to the addition and detract from the character of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District; and that the proposed addition will diminish the special architectural and historic character of...the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District” (see attached Permit Denial, LPC-03-5552, July 30, 2003). This building is the second rowhouse in from the corner of Columbus Avenue, less than 100 feet into the midblock of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposed penthouse would have been a 1-story addition on top of a 4-story building. I repeat, it was rejected.

I argue that the same issues exist here, so the same standards should apply. The proposed new building would rise significantly beyond the height of any other building on this midblock. It would diminish, not enhance the character of our historic district. In all fairness, it should be disapproved.

Thank you very much.