



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
140 West 74th Street
July 29, 2008**

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 install a canopy at 140 West 74th Street, a Queen Anne-style rowhouse designed by Edward L. Angell and built in 1889.

First, we must say that we are pleased to see the applicant's plan to restore the façades of these combined rowhouse residences. After years trapped under thick latex coating, followed by a more unfortunate period of patching and peeling paint, the original brick and brownstone will be revealed and restored, returning to the rowhouses much of their former charm and dynamic street presence. Our Committee applauds the decision to remove the wood box canopy which presently serves as shelter at 140 West 74th Street. As for its replacement, the applicant proposes to forego the standard-issue canvas awning in favor of a more substantial, copper one.

Copper does not strike us as the most appropriate material for an entrance canopy in the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District. Though copper is an extant material on 140 West 74th Street, its quantity is minimal and its locations are not easily perceptible. Our Committee feels that the current renderings suggest an industrial architectural vocabulary more akin to the Meatpacking District, with a steep sloped, metal overhang, than to the residential quality of the Upper West Side. Transparent wire glass – rather than opaque metal – with black metal framing would be a more appropriate material for a canopy in this neighborhood.

Still, rather than force an outside aesthetic onto this rowhouse, the applicant ought to consider not replacing the wood box shelter at all – *anything* but a stoop will be an emphatic reminder of what is missing from the rowhouse's façade. On balance, our Committee believes that having no canopy would be more appropriate than the historically confusing introduction of the proposed canopy to this rowhouse and to this historic district.

While the overall improvement made to the rowhouses' street presence will be considerable, Landmark West! would like to encourage the applicant to view this application as an important first step towards a more comprehensive restoration plan for the building. Through-the-wall air conditioners, an unsightly brick retaining wall and inappropriate aluminum windows continue to mar the façades, and the applicant would do well to develop a master restoration plan for the continuing future improvement of the building.