



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
334 West 89th Street
July 22, 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 replace the areaway fence and install a trash enclosure at 334 West 89th Street, a Renaissance Revival-style rowhouse designed by Ralph S. Townsend and built in 1893-94.

The applicant proposes installing a nine-foot-long, two-foot-deep enclosure of solid, black metal to “hide” the building’s trash receptacles from the public. In actuality, the introduction of a three-dimensional, opaque mass along the sidewalk will be anything but hidden. Furthermore, it will obscure features of the rowhouse before which it would be placed. We recognize the atypical nature of this areaway’s existing conditions – namely, that the cellar level has been given window well exposure, creating a nine foot drop from the sidewalk level. Relocating the trash enclosure nine feet below grade may not seem ideal to the applicant, but it is the burden of the architect to overcome this.

Ideally, an enclosure mounted on a shelf to be cantilevered over the areaway would position trash receptacles off the street and reduce visibility. In addition, this would return the trash area to a level consistent with other rowhouses on the street and within the Historic District. The Commission should encourage innovative design solutions such as this, not condone design for convenience.

Our Committee also has suggestions regarding the materials of the proposed trash enclosure. The black paint on the proposed metal enclosure will most surely begin to chip off with wear over time. Our Committee urges the applicant to seek out alternatives to the ubiquitous black-painted metal trash bin. Selecting a more durable, quality material, such as tinted metal, should be explored.