



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
610 West End Avenue  
October 21<sup>st</sup>, 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 sidewalk canopy and alter the front courtyard at 610 West End Avenue, a neo-Renaissance style apartment building designed by George & Edward Blum and built in 1910.

Two individuals connected with this application are also affiliated with LANDMARK WEST!: the project architect, Françoise Bollack, and a LANDMARK WEST! Board member. Because of their connection, neither participated in the discussion or decision making of this item.

610 West End Avenue, also known as The Evanston, is experiencing a rebirth. In 2007, the building embarked on the careful restoration of the Viennese-inspired wrought iron fence surrounding the apartment house; a project which LANDMARK WEST! honored with the Architectural Detail Restoration Award at our 2008 Preservation Awards ceremony. Now complete, the railing pays tribute to the creative prowess of its designers, George & Edward Blum. Following this impressive effort is today's proposal to replace the existing canvas canopy with a new one in metal and glass and to improve the interior courtyard by removing non-historic paving and restoring windows and vault lights.

**Canopy**

Our Committee commends the applicant for undertaking such deep and thoughtful research to inform this proposal. Using another Blum-designed apartment house as their guide – the Admaston, located at West 89<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway – the applicant has designed a canopy that is sensitive to the aesthetic of George & Edward Blum as well as reflective of our own time. The canopy will be a new layer of history, distinct from and unique to the original building.

The proposed canopy is successful in several respects. First, it fulfills preservation's credo that all alterations to a historic structure should be reversible. Indeed, the canopy proposed here displays a light touch. Further, the design pays close attention to detail. The new canopy will make a subtle connection with the newly restored fence by using small rounded fasteners that connect the composite metal columns. These same details are found on the fence and provide continuity between these two architectural elements.

Realizing the new canopy in glass will open up and illuminate the interior courtyard. And finally, the proposed canopy's extension into the sidewalk has been reduced. In doing so, the sidewalk is less obstructed and reclaimed as public space.

*Over, please*



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### **Courtyard Alterations**

We find the granite colored-cement paving proposed to be an appropriate replacement for the existing, non-historical terra cotta-colored pavers. The proposed treatment for the courtyard windows and vault lights is equally successful. Our Committee applauds the applicant's decision to restore rather than replace the existing windows. In addition, the glass proposed for the vault lights is an appropriate treatment for this courtyard space.