



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
300 Central Park West, aka the El Dorado
June 19, 2007**

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 construct an addition to this individually landmarked 1929 Art Deco style apartment building that is part of the Central Park West/Upper West Side historic district and was designed by Margon and Holder, with Emery Roth as a consultant.

Standing as sentinels upon the Central Park West skyline, the soaring towers of the El Dorado are truly one of the Upper West Side's most iconic architectural treasures. Visible from across Manhattan, this Art Deco edifice resonates with New Yorkers today just as it did nearly eighty years ago, when The New York Times effused on the El Dorado's opening:

"Central Park West seems destined to present distinct and imposing architectural characteristics, superior, perhaps, to any other long thoroughfare."

Even the most modest additions to such a revered landmark should never be taken lightly or approved summarily. LW's Committee does not object to this minimally visible addition which has been presented as an in-kind replacement of an enclosed terrace. That said, we do not extend blanket support to additional construction on the grand terraces of this individual landmark. Having been preceded by an earlier shed, this addition's grandfathered status is a special circumstance and certainly should not be considered a precedent for further accretions on this Art Deco masterpiece.

What concerns our committee, however, is another nearly invisible structure: the mock-up. The mock-up for this terrace enclosure was removed in early spring long before being publicized for public review on June 15. LPC guidelines clearly state that mock-ups remain in place during the review process. We request that the Commission reinforce their requirements for timely, demonstrative mockups.