

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Regarding 314 West 92nd Street
June 14, 2005**

LANDMARK WEST! is a non-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 a rear yard and rooftop addition.

First of all, we would like to thank the applicant for presenting this project to our committee. We also appreciate the outreach from neighbors who attended our meeting and/or contacted us to express their concern about the impact this proposal would have on the Riverside-West End Historic District.

Our committee is generally not opposed to rooftop and rear yard additions, as long as their impact on the surrounding historic fabric is minimal. In this case, however, we find that the proposed additions would significantly undermine the character and integrity of both the individual building, a distinctive Beaux-Arts rowhouse designed by the sophisticated firm of Janes & Leo, and the largely intact rear-yard ensemble, which is partially visible from 91st Street.

Furthermore, we are concerned that approval of these additions would set a precedent for future additions that would be visible from both 91st Street and Riverside Drive (at both locations, there are views along alleys into the rear yard interior).

By bringing this proposal to a public hearing, the applicant is asking the Commission to depart from its published Guidelines for rear yard and rooftop additions. Specifically, the LPC's Guidelines permit staff-level approval of rear yard additions that are "not visible from a public thoroughfare or right of way" and where "other rear yard incursions exist within the block." Similarly, LPC Guidelines permit staff-level approval of rooftop additions that are "either not visible from a public thoroughfare or...only minimally visible from a public thoroughfare" and do "not adversely affect significant architectural features of adjacent improvements."

We see no reason to deviate from the Commission's prescribed Rules. The proposed additions would be quite visible from the public way and would considerably alter the appearance of the rear façade of this rowhouse. From 91st Street and Riverside Drive, the glimpses one gets is of a rear yard that is virtually unaltered since the early 20th century – indeed this unspoiled appearance is called out in the district designation report. Therefore, the proposed additions would also create an adverse effect on significant architectural features of the district.

Approval of this application would open the door to a slow erosion of this all-too-rare vista offering the public insight into the original appearance of a turn-of-the-century rowhouse block interior.

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Regarding 322 West 75th Street
June 14, 2005**

LANDMARK WEST! is a non-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 legalize the installation of windows without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits.

LW! has admired the sensitive exterior restoration of this stately townhouse designed by C.P.H Gilbert. Therefore, we are disappointed by the misguided installation of mahogany windows with a clear, rather than painted finish, which would have been the historic condition.

The architect for the restoration project shared with us a copy of a permit for extensive work on this building, but which did not directly specify a finish for the windows. However, we find it difficult to believe that the Commission would not have offered specific guidance on the appropriate finish for the windows. In any case, it is crucial that the Commission instruct the applicant to correct rather than legalize the windows since their current state is clearly inappropriate and should not be condoned as an example that might be perpetuated in other locations.

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Regarding 325 West End Avenue
June 14, 2005**

LANDMARK WEST! is a non-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 rooftop bulkheads and install a roof deck, pergola and railing.

In general, our committee believes this proposal would have a minimal impact on this individual building and the West End-Collegiate Historic District. If anything, this addition is somewhat overdesigned and will not simply “disappear.” However, we applaud the proposed use of materials, including different metals, that are in keeping with traditional rooftop structures.

We would recommend that the metal railing be reconsidered. The vertical members are spaced too closely together, making the railing too opaque. A more transparent design would be preferable.

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Regarding 101 West 81st Street
June 14, 2005**

LANDMARK WEST! is a non-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 a rooftop addition.

Our Committee does not object to the proposed rooftop addition, which would be minimally visible from the street. However, we cannot consider this particular addition in a vacuum. For years, LW! has offered similar versions of the same testimony with regard to proposed rooftop additions to this building, which occupies a prominent spot on the corner of West 81st Street and Columbus Avenue, opposite Theodore Roosevelt Park and the American Museum of Natural History. Repeatedly, we have emphasized the need for a master plan to govern future rooftop additions at this address. Already, there are ten additions, three of which are very large and very visible from the street.

In April 2000, the Commission rightly denied an application for a rooftop master plan that fell miserably short of the mark. Still, it's a mark worth pursuing. Five years ago, LW! stated that "a master plan for roof top additions should set design, bulk, location, and visibility guidelines so that future roof development produces a sense of cohesiveness. In particular, the color, material, massing, and symmetry of the additions should be detailed and uniform."

We recommend that the Commission approve this application only on the condition that a master plan be developed to address these issues with regard to new additions and future changes to the existing additions.

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Regarding 127 West 79th Street
June 14, 2005**

LANDMARK WEST! is a non-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 create a master plan governing the future installation of windows.

Our committee commends the applicant for seeking to create a master plan. However, we strongly urge the applicant to consider replacing the existing, non-original metal windows with windows that match the original in terms of material, configuration and operation. According to historic photographs, the original windows were predominantly six-over-six double-hung with some lines of multi-pane casements. Approval of the master plan, as proposed, would sanction the installation of windows that do not reflect the original fenestration of this building. To quote the Commission's own Window Guidelines:

Windows are an important and integral part of the design of most buildings. They typically comprise 30% to 40% of the surface area of a building's principal facade. In most historic buildings the window sash, window framing, and the architectural detail surrounding the windows were carefully designed as an integral component of the style, scale and character of the building. It is important to retain the configuration, operation, details material and finish of the original window as well as to maintain the size of openings, sills, decorative moldings, and the sash itself.

We see no reason for the Commission to deviate from its Guidelines in this case.

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
Regarding 107-111 West 82nd Street
June 14, 2005**

LANDMARK WEST! is a non-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 legalize painting the first floor façade without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits.

LW! was disturbed to learn that the bases of 107 and 111 West 82nd Street, which previously exhibited natural brownstone, had been painted with an elastomeric coating that binds with the stone and is completely irreversible. This alteration should not be legalized since the coating, usually used for roofing, is not breathable and will trap moisture inside the building, leading to further problems down the road. Instead, the Commission should take advantage of this opportunity to restore the bases of all three buildings – Numbers 107 and 111, as well as Number 109, which was painted prior to designation – by removing the outer layer of brownstone and replacing it with new brownstone, preferably the real thing rather than cementitious stucco.