



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
31 West 71st Street
December 13, 2016**

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 legalize the installation of a marquee and to re clad it with new fabric at 31 West 71st Street, a neo-Gothic style apartment hotel designed by Robert T. Lyons and built in 1917, which is part of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

As a rule, the LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee opposes legalizations of work installed without LPC permits. When property owners ignore the Landmarks Law and make changes without the Commission's guidance and consent, all too frequently the results are, at best unremarkable, and at worst, destructive. In either case, the practice of legalizing alterations after the fact, in essence penalizes property owners who often go to great lengths to comply with landmarks regulations by rewarding those who flout the law.

In the case of 31 West 71st Street, the owner, La Quinta is an 800+ location chain with nearly 9,000 employees. They have experience with landmarks—being the stewards of the Harry B. Mulliken's former Aberdeen Hotel in K-Town, a 1902-04 apartment hotel, which has been an individual landmark since 2000. While one might say they should know better, it appears as though they do, and the culprit in this case was the Comfort Inn and Rodeway Inn that preceded it, each with their own colorful, and extensive wrap sheet.

LANDMARK WEST! hopes that with La Quinta at the helm, the notorious YELP reviews, detailed police reports, and at least some of the salacious New York Post headlines will subside.

Architecturally, LW! prefers marquees to canopies and especially in an instance such as this where the original function is returned. The proposed cover's color and material seem appropriate and will hopefully portend a fresh start.

Our committee supports approval of this certificate of appropriateness.

Thank you for your time.