



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
32 West 75th Street
June 21, 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 construct rooftop and rear yard additions and alter the facade 32 West 75th Street, a Romanesque Revival style rowhouse designed by George H. Budlong and built in 1889-90. It is part of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee carefully reviewed this application and has some specific concerns.

On the front facade, we welcome the return of the stoop and entry sequence. However the alteration of the parlor window and opening below impedes rhythm and alters the integrity by expanding the span. No. 32 is a "B" in an ABBCDxExBA sequence, this facade could take direct cues from several brethren in the row, but instead chooses a snow-covered #30, an "A" with a return stoop as precedent. Our concerns with this facade speak to alignment and intent.

Tax photos show a ribbon from the stoop kneewall of #30, across a sill detail of the parlor window and back down the original stoop of #32. (ref. page 10 of 26) By raising the kneewall and lowering the parlor level aperture, the applicant disrupts the continuity in a missed opportunity to restore historic intent.

More worrisome are the new brick inscriptions. The parlor voussoir and main door both originally had rounded intrados, but the door was enframed in a stepped (not rounded) extrados crown to its arch reflecting the truth of materials, and structural reality of the actual stones supporting that aperture. Originally, the apex of the two keystones both aligned, but the new pattern, (akin to a physics diagram of the trajectory of a bouncing ball) leaves a visual deceit- the juncture of two arches which would not support each other in compression. Further, widening this window alters the spring line of the arch, challenging its own integrity. Again, the alignment is lost...is there a chiropractor in the house?

We suggest a closer study of the historic evidence provided in this presentation.

We find the height and volume of the rooftop addition to be within reason and lament the loss of the rear dogleg but are most alarmed by the abundance of recessed balconies- too much of a bland thing is still, just too much!

Further, while we are intrigued by the existing tree sprouting from a new air conditioning condenser in the rear yard, (ref. page 21 of 26), we still ask for a minimum of a five-foot planted edge to be maintained at the rear lot line.

Thank you for your consideration.