



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
7 West 83rd Street
November 28, 2017**

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 7 West 83rd Street, a neo-Romanesque style synagogue designed by Charles Bradford Meyers and built in 1928-30. The application is to replace windows.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee was confounded by the lack of detail in this proposal. Aside from the fact that the words “repair” and “restoration” do not appear *once* in the nearly 30-page proposal, the inconsistent labeling and representation of facades, conditions, and details confuse the reader.

For example—why do coded window typologies vary in the same elevation? How is clear glass set to replace fire-rated glass? Where are the windows specified as Types 1-12? How are air conditioners accommodated? Is this truly a comprehensive plan?

Typically, a color-coded elevation diagrams what is in scope versus what is not, and helps one discern what is original to the landmark and what may have already been modified. Such an elevation is missing here.

Given how thoroughly lacking much of this proposal is (i.e. floorplans which do not even identify windows in scope) we would suggest that the applicant return with a proposal which at the very least includes details for each window type in scope.

From what was discernable in the proposal, our Committee was alarmed at the use of lead tape replacing the existing mullions. This is unfortunate from not only a maintenance perspective but also a visual one. Approving this replacement of historic fabric with a flimsy ersatz sticker version of itself with a built-in disintegration date is not a preservation minded-action.

Whereas the existing leading recedes within the steel frame, in this proposal it receives equal value to its new, proposed aluminum replacement. Further, given the depth of so many masonry openings, it is hard to imagine the un-keyed conditions assessment photo gallery accurately reflects the wholesale conditions.

Again, we would request a finer examination and report. Overall, we find that these piecemeal modifications eat away at this landmark's historic fabric, and we assert that allowing this scattershot work to proceed would degrade the Commission's statutory mandate. LANDMARK WEST! would support a plan that better reflects the original intent of the design.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee recommends denial of this application.