



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
227 Riverside Drive (aka 340 West 95<sup>th</sup> Street)  
December 11, 2018**

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 227 Riverside Drive, a neo-Renaissance style apartment house designed by John Wooley and built in 1897-98. The application is to legalize the installation of a barrier-free access ramp without Landmarks Preservation Commission permit(s).

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee fully supports accessibility of our landmarks but equally as vehemently 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 this case, our Committee can assert with near certainty that the Commission would not have entombed the entry column or pilaster bases in a concrete pseudo-stylobate ramp. A reversible non-slip metal-decked option or one with a reveal, pulling back from the architectural features would have been preferable.

With similar certainty, the former frontal steps would have been removed rather than cocooned into a concrete goiter exasperating the injustice against this entry, while simultaneously further impeding the public right of way. While we are loathe to support the removal of original material, it has been so modified through illegal interventions that in this case, its removal may be an improvement.

The non-offensive utilitarian pipe rail, which provides functional service, is ironically not seeking legalization but rather further complication. We would suggest it remain as-is to it is of another era.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee recommends leaving bad enough alone. Our Committee suggests partial rejection of this application.