



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
135 Central Park West
August 13, 2019**

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 135 Central Park West, a Beaux-Arts style apartment building designed by Clinton & Russell and built in 1904-07. The application is to create and modify window openings at the roof.

LANDMARK WEST! was founded, in large part to gain designation protections for the Upper West Side, mainly for our namesake Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. Among the key facets of this district is its Central Park West skyline, with noted sister towers of the El Dorado and San Remo and the corner turrets of landmarks such as the Beresford. The emphasis of this edge was significant for how the march of these various civic institutions and apartment buildings met the sky.

The AIA Guide alludes to this very significance when it describes the Langham as:

“A ponderous hulk, dull, except at the roofline, where a simple cornice has been so elaborated with ornament and ornate dormers that it sparkles with light” (AIA Guide to New York City, 5th Edition; 394)

In doing so, architects Clinton and Russell “returned to the avenue some of the distinction it enjoyed at the time of Hardenbergh’s Dakota” (New York 1930, 388). Given the international importance of this skyline, we cannot in good conscience support further mutilation of this distinctive roof. The mansard is dressed for attention, and was intended for relief to allow the Oreille windows to pop for prominence. Additional removals would only mute their legibility, in deference to the designer’s intent.

Further, in reading the plan, these are mostly serving exceedingly narrow, already lit storage areas. These windows are aesthetically offensive, and functionally unnecessary.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee feels this C of A application should be denied.