



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Board of Standards and Appeals, 22 Reade Street
Item 2019-94-A, September 10, 2019**

LANDMARK WEST! is a not-for-profit community organization committed to the preservation of the architectural heritage of the Upper West Side.

LANDMARK WEST! is short of words.

We've been saying it all for nearly five years. We have talked about this site in various forms, through placeholder buildings, and (an unsatisfactory) DOB Challenge. We talked about it in an initial BSA Filing (without a single issued comment), through a DOB Notice Intent to Revoke, (mysteriously cleared, yet simultaneously resolved without any semblance to the DOB's own, recently enumerated procedures), and now, at a second BSA Filing where we know that even a tie favors the developer over the community.

Thus, TIE = COMMUNITY LOSS.

All the while, we examined the voluminous record of what City Planning intended.

However, INTENT = IRRELEVANCE.

Today again, City Planning, who called this project "obscene" is absent.

So, CENTRAL DARK TOWER = OBSCENITY.

Yet, we must ignore City Planning intent as we await a tertiary agency's interpretation of the Department of Building's interpretation of City Planning's Zoning Resolution, aka, their *intent*.

We argue over futile meanings: *ceiling height, void, foundation, vesting*, words we know, but must unlearn as their planning definition is purposely absent in a 1,300 page Zoning Resolution, and thus ambiguous.

Conveniently, AMBIGUITY = CARTE BLANCHE.

Unfortunately, ZONING = FAKE NEWS.

We argue over basic language, but we all understand what this is. We know from last session, that expecting the text to follow meaning is "strange" and a "90's argument [because] nobody could imagine that anyone would build [like this] Nobody." Yet this follows trends begun by this

developer a decade and a half prior. And, although incongruous with expectation or plan, is somehow, *NOT* absurd.

We are schooled that 161' of void in the belly of a building, an unjustified, greater than 10% loss factor deduction, a more than 30% void for vertical rise, a single building casting shadows across the park is *NOT* absurd. By way of antonym, this scenario must then be deemed logical, practical, reasonable, responsible, sensible and wise.

There are so many words. But it's merely a limited vocabulary without mention of community, neighborhood, quality of life, health, nor even life safety to be found.

It is time that New York stand for something meaningful again, in order to restore intention, rationale and predictability to planning! This, isn't it.