



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
55 West 86<sup>th</sup> Street  
September 22, 2020**

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 55 West 86<sup>th</sup> Street, within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. This landmark is a Queen Anne style townhouse designed by John G. Prague and built in 1888-89. The Application is to replace storefront infill and windows and later the commercial façade.

The Landmark West Certificate of Appropriateness Committee was somewhat stymied by this proposal. As the history of this cross town thoroughfare changed from posh residences to mixed use commercial, stoops were removed (which we may wish for, but don't ever expect to be returned) as extensions were built out to the street.

Altering an alteration of a modified façade is not what concerns us, and the current proposal is arguably an improvement over the existing condition if not quite reminiscent of the once born-again, but fleeting Bonwit Teller replacement building just off Fifth Avenue. There is simply nothing about it that harkens to the history of the district, nor relates to the remaining vestiges of the landmark visible on the floors above.

The Landmark West Certificate of Appropriateness Committee sees a missed opportunity, but improvement none-the-less and supports approval of this application.

Thank You.