



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
328 West 108th Street
December 8, 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 328 West 108th Street, within the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II. This landmark is a Renaissance Revival style rowhouse designed by Janes & Leo and built in 1898-99. The Application is to legalize the application of an elastomeric coating to the façade in non-compliance with Certificate of No Effect 19-37925.

The Landmark West Certificate of Appropriateness Committee vehemently opposes legalizations of work installed without LPC permits, or in this case, in deference to a Certificate of No Effect. 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.

The LPC has clear rules against elastomeric coatings because they literally suffocate the building to the point where they cannot breathe.

This coating will continue to need its own maintenance requiring added layers of caked on make-up over this façade, further exasperating the owner-imposed hardship at hand. Worse yet, the longer it remains in situ, the more damage it will do, by extending the duration of any trapped moisture from escaping and further deteriorating the brick.

The Landmark West Certificate of Appropriateness Committee requests that the unsanctioned coating be removed at soonest possibility, and further evaluation of the underlying masonry be inspected before further action is permitted.

For the sake of this landmark, which cannot speak for itself as it is currently gagged by elastomeric coating, the Landmark West Certificate of Appropriateness Committee strongly requests denial of this application.

Thank You.