



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1000 Fifth Avenue, The Metropolitan Museum of Art  
February 9, 2021**

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 1000 Fifth Avenue, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Individual Landmark. This landmark is a Beaux-Arts and Roman style museum, built in 1864-1965, and designed by Vaux and Mould, R.M. Hunt, McKim, Mead and White, with later additions built between 1975-1990 designed by Roche-Dinkeloo. The Application is to replace a curtain wall façade.

The Landmark West Certificate of Appropriateness Committee is grateful to have this opportunity to speak on this item, which resides in Community Board 7 but was not presented to our local Community Board Preservation Committee nor voted on by our Full Board although the entirety of Central Park resides within the district boundary.

When Kevin Roche John Dinekloo Architects (KRJDA) began work at the Met in 1967, their “Master Plan proposed an architecture of glass roofs and walls which would allow the maximum penetration of daylight, and develop an appropriate character for its presence in a park.” Fifty-four years later, while the allusions to a greenhouse in the park remain, the intent of “maximum penetration of daylight” poses an existential threat to the very longevity of the collection housed within.

KRJDA’s innovations with glass precedes them from their experiments with the first use of neoprene gasketing in curtain walls at the (1949-1954) Warren MI General Motors Technical Center, the world’s thinnest curtain wall clocking at 5/16” for the (1956-1958) IBM Rochester plant in MN, and with the world’s largest mirror, pushing the limits of mirror coatings for the 1959-1962 Bell Laboratories in Holmdel, NJ, all by predecessor firm Eero Saarinen and Associates.

It is not a stretch to imagine if better technology existed, the firm would have used it; or better yet, pushed industry to create something even better. Herein lies our concern. Honoring the designer’s intent suggests each wing should be sheathed in the latest technology available at the time of reglazing. The overall landmark however is literally enshrouded like the many relics within in its own glass vitrine, and this should have consistency to rationalize the Vaux, Mould, Hunt, McKim, Mead and White work it completes.

The Landmark West Certificate of Appropriateness Committee is in support of the proposal but also requests consideration for a cohesive masterplan for the glazed pylons at the Dendur and Lehman wings, which guard the original individual landmark site. Thank You.