



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
159 West 72nd Street  
September 20, 2022**

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 159 West 72nd Street, a Modern style commercial building from within the Upper West Side – Central Park West Historic District. This landmark was designed by Abraham Sperling, and built in 1972-1973. The application is to reclad the facade.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee appreciates this long-standing business which has been on the block for 49 years.

There is no question that the current façade is in need of repair, and as-existing, is not of historic importance. That said, our Committee cannot help but feel that this is a race to the bottom. From Renwick, Aspinwall & Guard's monumental but graceful ziggurat-pedimented Provident Loan Society to the utilitarian refacing of 1972, and onto today's proposal there is a continual simplification and dumbing-down of the façade over the past 90 years. Without over-embellishing, the Abraham Sperling façade at least maintains a sense of texture and materiality with its scaled bricks, while the proposed stucco recladding, leaves a flatness.

In the precedents shown, none include bays of similar width, or feature facades so wholly consuming a structure otherwise bereft of ornamentation or definition of any kind.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee requests the material be reconsidered or at least scale-giving definition be incorporated into the basic design.

Thank You.