



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
45 West 81st Street
February 14, 2023**

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 45 West 81st Street, a neo-Moorish style apartment hotel building with Spanish Renaissance style elements designed by Sugarman & Hess and built in 1922 from within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. The application is to construct a rooftop addition.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee is concerned about this rooftop addition and the potential impact it has on the dominant design of the building, particularly at the skyline. Firstly, we believe the addition is too close to the front and sides of the building's existing parapet. Additionally, the interior floor-to-ceiling heights of the new penthouse is significantly greater than the existing floor height below and could be lowered to reduce visibility. Thirdly, the off-center placement of the addition interrupts one's reading of the landmark which has a dominant symmetry.

Although our Committee believes the design itself is minimal and in materials and form does not compete with the original design, the intention of Sugarman & Hess was to draw the eye up to the ornate neo-Moorish arches at the cornice level. Ultimately this proposed expansion of unit 16D is impossible to overlook when observing it from the street level, and the size and orientation **will** compete with the key defining features of this landmark.

Visibility studies shown on LPC 14 are conveniently framed left and right by two tree trunks which block one's full understanding of the mock-up's impact on the decorative roofline. Given that this proposal is visible as far south as West 77th Street, we herein supplement our written testimony with additional views to show the potential impact.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee would ask that the applicant consider setting the addition back further and pull it in equally at both sides to lessen its proximity to the front facade and its visibility.

Thank You.



View from Columbus Avenue showing visibility impacts on the decorative arch.



View from 81st Street, Rose Center for Earth and Space showing considerable visibility of the side of the addition closest to the edge of the main building.