



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
154 West 73rd Street
July 25, 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 154 West 73rd Street, a Neo-Grec rowhouse with Queen Anne-style elements designed by Martin V. B. Ferdon and built in 1882-83 from within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. The application is to construct rooftop and rear yard additions and excavate the rear yard.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee agrees that leaving the top floor setback maintains the row alignment which serves to benefit the overall appearance and functionality of the doughnut. We are confused, however, why this wasn't also the case for the 2nd and 3rd floors which protrude from the rear wall, disrupting the historic appearance of the doughnut. Maintaining this plane would then result in a greater retention of historic fabric and less work for the applicant who would no longer need to reconstruct three floors of the landmark's rear facade.

We are satisfied that the rooftop addition is not visible, but can't help but voice our distaste for its volumetric expression. The users will enjoy a clean space while leaving neighbors with twice the necessary back-of-house surfacing. A full floor addition would have resulted in less cumulative visual impact.

We want to emphasize our concern and given the recent commitment of this agency to preserving our vulnerable buildings, that this proposed scope of work, notably the excavation of the rear yard, will **not** undermine the building structure. Although nothing in this application is particularly alarming, we do recognize the arms race that such additions set off as one blocked neighbor then seeks to expand to regain their lost light, further encroaching on the valuable green space, essential not only for the physical and mental health of the residents but our planet—an initiative that this administration is addressing via other agencies this week via Zoning for Carbon Neutrality.

The LANDMARK WEST Certificate of Appropriateness Committee recommends approval with the caveat that the middle floors be setback to retain the row.