



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Public Design Commission
Prototypical Link5G, Citywide
August 8, 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 the design of prototypical communications structures (Link5G) for installation citywide. The application is presented by DoITT.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee remains concerned about the continual cluttering of our streetscapes. Many of our initial qualms from our December 13, 2021 testimony remain unaddressed as do the concerns shared by you the commissioners.

As we said in December, these kiosks are already large and obtrusive, yet with the applicant's if-you-give-a-mouse-a-cookie model LINK will undoubtedly be asking for their glass of milk, napkin and broom in a moment. Sure, something nearly four times the size may add additional services but the deal on the table is not only a foreign design, but a full bait and switch. And this is just the Gen2 version after a few years. Imagine the ask in years to come.

You, the Commissioners shared our concerns about advertising in Residential Historic Districts.

This seems to be the only provision the applicant has clarified. It is a start.

You, the Commissioners shared our concerns about the height.

As we said in December, New York City still has some of the tallest buildings in the hemisphere; if height is a factor driving the design, it is time to work with landlords as cell phone companies have been doing since Motorola engineer Martin Cooper made the first cell phone call from Sixth Avenue at 53rd Street in April of 1973—45 years ago. This option remains ignored.

You, the Commissioners recognized the incongruity of these devices in scale, material and detail to our bishop-crook lined streets.

Yet, in the past eight months, all the applicant can truly do is add clip art to a slideshow and insist upon the urgency of their proposal.

Your input has been ignored, and no other solutions are offered. This inflexibility seeks to railroad the Commission.

Today's proposal offers no further thought to design nor to consideration of the public, just a steadfast fixation on Link's own third-party contracts and a path of least resistance. Their best justification is to offer distracting noise about equity.

There are a multitude of other solutions that can achieve the technological sophistication desired should they attempt the design sophistication we desire.

We reiterate, landmarks make up less than 5% of NYC, and those in residential districts are less than 3% of the built landscape, and a fraction of those are residential sidestreets. On this point we agree with the applicant—the field is inequitable, so accommodations must be made.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee urges the Public Design Commission to consider the cookie. If you deem that these towers are even necessary, we continue to urge your resolution to include language that these structures do not invade our existing historic district side streets without further design consideration. There is no need for this giveaway. We hope we will not be here in another five years again for something that if it continues at this rate will be over twelve stories in height when we are again inevitably offered a must-do scenario under the veil of equity.

As they currently tower over us, these poles are not innovative, sustainable civic structures and they do not improve the public realm.

Thank You.