



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
420 Amsterdam Avenue  
February 13, 2024**

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 420 Amsterdam Avenue, a Romanesque Revival flats building designed by Gilbert A. Schellenger and built in 1890-9, from within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. The application is to legalize enclosing the areaway, replacing the fence, and installing a garbage enclosure without LPC permit (s).

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee vehemently opposes legalizations of work installed without LPC permits. When property owners ignore the Landmarks Law and make changes without the Commission's guidance and consent, all too frequently the results are, at best, unremarkable, and at worst, destructive. In either case, the practice of legalizing alterations after the fact, in essence penalizes property owners who often go to great lengths to comply with landmarks regulations by rewarding those who flout the law.

The illegal work is not indicative of what the exterior of a landmark building should look or feel like.

What was once a continuous decorative iron railing is now a patchwork of utilitarian railing with unnecessarily decorative off-the shelf trash units on diamond plates. This material palette is more indicative of a freight elevator than an 1890s flats building. The fences are disconnected from one another, not only physically but also in design. We suggest the applicant restore their illegally removed railings to rectify this violation and urge the Commission to reject this legalization.

Thank you.