



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
381 West End Avenue
June 17th, 2025**

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 381 West End Avenue, a Flemish Renaissance Revival style rowhouse designed by Frederick White and built in 1885-86 from within the West End - Collegiate Historic District. The application is to legalize reconstruction of the secondary west facade without LPC permit(s).

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee strongly believes that as long as the Landmarks Law exists, these rules must be followed. 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. This work done without LPC approval undermines this fundamental principle.

We note that the 2018 approved design included a window configuration and design that added important architectural character to the façade. Unfortunately, the work completed diverges significantly from the approved 2018 design, the amendment to the approved 2018 design, and even the surrounding context of the row. The current façade lacks this continuity and weakens the historic fabric of the district.

Additionally, the applicant attempts to justify their unauthorized work by focusing on the interior layout and functionality. While we understand interior considerations are important to owners, the Landmarks Preservation Commission's responsibility—and ours—is to protect the function and integrity of the exterior layout, which is what defines the building's contribution to the historic district.

For these reasons, we urge the Commission to deny this legalization request. Instead, we recommend that the owner be required to restore the façade in accordance with the 2018

approved design. Furthermore, we oppose any approval of the further amended design also proposed.

Thank you.