



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Public Design Commission  
Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center, W. 62nd St and Amsterdam Ave.  
June 23, 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 the proposal to reconstruct Damrosch Park, a landscape designed by Dan Kiley, and the demolition of the Daniel and Florence Guggenheim Bandshell, designed by Eggers & Higgins.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee would first like to thank the Lincoln Center staff for accommodating our tours of Damrosch Park, and providing a detailed walk-through of the proposal, and most importantly, for their willingness to address some of our initial concerns.

Environmentally, we appreciate the shift toward a more permeable landscape, and enhanced tree canopy.

Socially, the new design enhances ADA access, invites pedestrian access, and integrates the park with its surroundings.

Architecturally, we are also pleased to see that our earlier recommendation to retain the travertine-clad corner at West 62nd Street was incorporated. That modification, along with the inclusion of travertine in other areas, helps maintain a sense of continuity with the larger Lincoln Center campus and original master plan.

However, our committee still has several significant reservations.

Completed in 1969, Damrosch Park, designed by Eggers & Higgins and Dan Kiley, was conceived as a public park with multifunctional uses. Its defining features include a geometric layout, raised planting beds, and the Guggenheim Bandshell. The proposed redesign intends to eliminate these elements and super-charge activity within the park, but even when unpopulated, the park appears frenetic and busy. These design choices risk overshadowing the

park's original identity as a serene, multifunctional landscape. Instead, it becomes a performance space with an adjunct park. We encourage simplifying or removing elements to restore clarity and calm to this civic setting.

As preservationists, we lament the loss of the original bandshell, an architecturally significant feature of the 1969 landscape. The new performance infrastructure fundamentally alters the character of the park, linking it more programmatically, but less architecturally, to the classically designed modern campus.

In terms of environmental mitigation for the surrounding neighborhood, our committee has concerns about the potential impact of light and sound pollution on nearby Amsterdam Avenue residents. With the proposed stage facing west, mitigation efforts are critical. We urge the Commission to press for a clear plan to manage these impacts at all times. One solution is to incorporate mature trees and plantings from the beginning.

This park serves different functions to a cross-section of the community, but first and foremost, it is a park. The primacy of this civic space must remain paramount.

We appreciate the inclusive process the design team has followed and the improvements made thus far. We hope the next steps will continue in that spirit, balancing community use, design, and preservation.

Thank you.