



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
256 West 75th Street  
June 25, 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 256 West 75th Street, a Queen Anne-style rowhouse designed by William J. Merritt and built in 1885-86, from within the West End Collegiate Historic District Extension 1. The application is to legalize replacing the front door, the front facade windows, the granite-clad at the stoop, and rear facade modifications 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 applicant is no stranger to legalizations as this landmark received a permit in 2019 to restore the illegally removed historic roof, yet recognizing this basis for their permit, still chose to deviate from their now-approved plans. Our Committee believes it would be remiss of the Commission to encourage the continuation of approving illegal work in violation of the rules, done right under the community's nose.

The attention this landmark deserves was again denied in various aspects, which seem to just "happen," and showed no respect to the LPC process by continuing to alter this building without proper permits.

The relationship across this small row of two is unfortunately further lost through extensive alterations at the rear, but now illegal changes at the facade emphasize these dissimilarities even further. The altered door changes the reading of this building entirely and our Committee believes it could never be approved as appropriate in the first place.

Our Committee recommends that the applicant remove the illegal alterations and return the facade to the way it was. Further we urge the LPC to pay particularly close attention to this landmark so that these “oops I did it again” moments do not continue during construction.

Thank you.