

## **Consulting Party Comments RE: CityBridge/Boldyn 5G Network Tower at 1900 Broadway**

**SITE NAME:** MN-07-GF0957\_A

**ADDRESS:** 1900 Broadway

**COMMUNITY DISTRICT:** Manhattan CD6, CM Gale Brewer

**CONSULTING PARTY:** LANDMARK WEST!

### **COMMENT prepared by LANDMARK WEST!:**

The proposed site for a Link 5G network tower on Broadway and 64th Street/"Lincoln Plaza" has the potential to have an adverse impact on the surrounding (within 500 feet) City Landmarks and SHPO and NRHP designated and eligible districts and buildings:

- Lincoln Center Historic District - NRHP Eligible
- Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District - LPC Historic District
- Central Park West Historic District - NRHP Listed
- The Society for Ethical Culture School (33 Central Park West) - LPC Historic District & NRHP Listed
- The Society for Ethical Culture (2 West 64th Street) - LPC Individual Landmark, LPC Historic District & NRHP Listed
- Century Apartments (25 Central Park West) - LPC Individual Landmark & NRHP Eligible
- First Battery Armory (56 West 66th Street) - NRHP Listed & LPC Individual Landmark

### **Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and Historic District**

The Lincoln Center Historic District is a National Register of Historic Places eligible resource, thanks to the research done by Landmark West! and preservationist Gregory Dietrich, and it is

within the APE of the proposed Link 5G network tower. Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, predominantly built from 1962 to 1968, serves as the world's first, and at the time, largest arts center. At such a large scale, with many different buildings, Lincoln Center required a design committee. Led by Wallace K. Harrison, who ultimately designed the site plan and the Metropolitan Opera House, the committee was made up of various other acclaimed American architects who were assigned to other buildings throughout the complex.

Built to house the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the New York State Theater, the Juilliard School of Music, the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, and various other facilities and public spaces, Lincoln Center was a difficult and complex undertaking. Although its genesis in Robert Moses' "urban renewal" plans for the historically under-served neighborhood of San Juan Hill remains controversial, Lincoln Center has successfully brought high quality fine arts programming to the City of New York for almost sixty years. Housed in incredible travertine auditoriums, theaters, music halls, and pavilions designed by the likes of Phillip Johnson and Eero Saarinen, Lincoln Center is a cultural hub and architectural monument that has grown to become an important part of New York City's heritage.

Lincoln Center meets National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Art, Community Planning and Development, and Performing Arts. Lincoln Center significantly contributed to America's postwar cultural history as the nation's original cultural center that presented classical performing arts to the world. Lincoln Center meets Criterion C as a unique monument of significant architectural styles, including Formalism and Brutalism, that challenged more conventional post war Modern design. In addition to the building, modern works of public art by artists including Alexander Calder, Marc Chagall, Raoul Duffy, Jasper Johns, Richard Lippold, Aristide Maillol, Henry Moore, and Elie Nadelman were sensitively incorporated into building interiors and landscaped plazas

EBI Consulting claims that the proposed Link 5G tower will have no adverse effects on the Lincoln Center. We disagree.

Despite presenting a viewshed analysis (pp. 68-69 of 117) and photos (Figures 2 & 6) which both show the proposed Link 5G tower will be visible from the site boundary facing Columbus Avenue, EBI maintains the position that the proposed tower will not have an adverse effect on the significant character and unique qualities of the Lincoln Center complex. The proposed tower will be visible from David Geffen Hall, the Metropolitan Opera House and the Josie Robertson Plaza, major contributing resources to the Lincoln Center Historic District. The viewshed analysis on page 69 of 117 conveys the dominant visual impact this proposed tower will have on the District.

We disagree with EBI's claims that the proposed tower will not be visible from the Lincoln Center boundary because it will be blocked by dense vegetation. The trees along Columbus Avenue and Broadway will not provide sufficient coverage to completely block the view of the large 32 foot tall aluminum plated tower.

We believe the construction of a Link 5G tower in this location will significantly affect the character defining features of the Lincoln Center Historic District and diminish its ability to convey its significance as a Postwar Modernist Cultural Center. All elements of the eligible complex were sensitively designed and incorporated together to create a first of its kind postwar urban complex. We believe the design and scale of the 32 foot 5G towers are out of character with the City's streetscapes, but particularly in close proximity to historic districts and resources. The design of the Link 5G towers are completely out of character with the specific design intentions of the Lincoln Center complex and is inappropriate to be constructed in this location, in complete view of the National Register eligible historic site.

#### **UWS/CPW Historic District & CPW Historic District**

The proposed Link 5G tower is cited to be located 370 feet west of the Upper West Side/Central Park West (UWS/CPW) Historic District boundary, and within visual effect of the Central Park West (CPW) Historic District. EBI says that both Historic Districts will not be affected visually. We

disagree wholeheartedly. The tower, located within sightline of the Historic Districts, will affect its character, and the character of the block which is contextual with the Historic Districts.

Within the UWS/CPW and CPW Historic Districts are the Individual Landmarks The Society for Ethical Culture, the National Register listed Harperly Hall Apartments and National Register eligible West Side Y. M. C. A., all on West 64th Street, all in direct view of the proposed site. Figures 18-19 show (although not very clearly) how the proposed 5G tower will be visible from these historic resources. The character defining features of these landmarks, and the historic context of the urban landscape, will be impacted significantly by the construction of a Link 5G tower at this location.

#### **Lincoln Square Special Zoning District**

It is worth noting that the proposed Link 5G tower is located within the Lincoln Square Special Zoning District, the boundaries of which are roughly from Amsterdam Avenue to Central Park West, between West 60th and 68th Streets. The Special Use Regulations for the Lincoln Square District employ sensitive design of the area around Lincoln Center to emphasize its architectural and cultural significance and protect its integrity. Buildings within the Special Zoning District, including along Broadway, must meet certain criteria. Additionally, special ground floor level streetscape and sign regulations apply as well as regulations that limit commercial development. They were put in place in order to provide for the special cultural needs, convenience, enjoyment, education and recreation of the residents of the area and of the many visitors who are attracted to Lincoln Center.

Although there is no criteria that includes Link 5G network infrastructure, LANDMARK WEST! believes constructing these 32-foot tall pieces of urban street furniture, within the Special Zoning District flies in the face of the regulations put in place by the city to ensure the preservation of the area surrounding Lincoln Center as an international center for the performing arts.

Additionally, the cumulative effect of two Link 5G towers in close proximity to one another, both facing towards the Columbus Avenue boundary of Lincoln Center (as proposed by Boldyn), will significantly impact the streetscape of the Lincoln Square district.

LANDMARK WEST remains steadfast in our stance that these 32-ft tall structures are poorly designed and will further clutter the city's streetscapes. Their out-of-scale design will not only detract from historic areas and buildings in our neighborhood, but are also inappropriate for most commercial and residential areas of the city. Our elected officials, including Council Member Gale Brewer, Congressman Jerry Nadler, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine and NYS Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, agree with us that these Link 5G towers interfere with the streetscape and integrity of our historic districts and resources. Additionally, given the rapid speed at which new technology is developed, we are concerned that there is a likelihood that these large towers will soon become obsolete.

The expressed goal of the Link 5G rollout, as was presented to the public through various platforms, was to target underserved communities and bridge the digital divide, providing wireless and cellular services to those areas of the city. However, LANDMARK WEST! has to question the decision to place three clustered towers in Lincoln Square within the Upper West Side neighborhood. It is clear that Lincoln Square is not an area of connectivity inequality. This is an affluent area with a high traffic of visitors daily from ABC Studios staff and visitors, Sesame Street headquarters, students at Julliard, NYIT and Fordham; and visitors to Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. It is not in dire need of 5G coverage, this is not a disadvantaged area.



Figure 1. View towards proposed Link 5G tower, on the corner of Broadway and West 64th Street, taken from the Broadway Mall, 64th Street. The West Side Y.M.C.A and the Society for Ethical Culture viewed towards the end of the south side of West 64th Street and the southwest corner of Central Park West and West 64th Street.



Figure 2. View towards the Lincoln Center Historic District complex, with a prominent view of David Geffen Hall, the Metropolitan Opera House and the Josie Robertson Plaza, from the proposed site location.