

Preservation Committee Minutes

August 1, 2019

The Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/Manhattan met on Thursday, August 1, 2019, at the CB7 District Office, 250 West 87th Street. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chair Mark Diller. Committee members Jay Adolf, K Karpen, Michele Parker, Madge Rosenberg, Peter Samton and Susan Schwartz, and non-Committee Board member Julian Giordano participated in the meeting. The following discussions were had and actions taken.

5 West 63rd Street (Central Park West) – The West Side YMCA. Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to legalize the installation of mechanical equipment.

The premises was constructed ca. 1928-30 by architects Baum, Dwight James.

Included in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District

Presentation by: Thomas Lam and Slowomir Bazylczyk

- The building is a 14-story Neo-Romanesque health club and dormitory structure composed of brick with rich terra cotta and limestone details.
- The façade includes a setback at the 7th floor, behind a lower cornice of bricks arranged in a repeating pattern of small arches capped by terra cotta coping.
- The façade below the central part of the lower cornice includes three bays each composed of three monumental lancet windows beneath a Romanesque arch, with each lancet window separated by columns and with an oculus window within each arch.

- The application concerns the installation of HVAC mechanical equipment on the terrace behind the lower cornice.
- In response to complaints by neighbors, the mechanical equipment was surrounded by a noise-abating enclosure composed of synthetic, sound-absorbing materials of a neutral tan color.
- The mechanicals are one of two sets of air conditioning units installed on the terrace.
- The enclosure is approximately the same height as the mechanical equipment behind it, which is necessary for it to perform its noise-abatement purpose.
- Only one of the two sets of mechanicals/enclosures is visible from the public way. The mechanicals and enclosure are visible from various points along West 63rd Street.
- The mechanicals were installed at their current location in order to align with existing HVAC ducts and vents essential for their efficient operation.

- The installation sought to be legalized was completed in 2015. There are 2 units on the roof; one cools a locker room, the other a racquetball court. The issue concerns a sound-abating enclosure which was installed in response to complaints by neighbors.
- The enclosure extends 4 feet above the parapet and is visible from several street locations.
- The light tan color of the enclosure enhances its visibility.

Community Questions and Comment:

- Julie Copeland – Upper West Side resident

- Objection to the installation based on its appearance.

Committee Questions and Comment:

- Concern over the visibility from multiple angles.
- Questions as to true all-in cost of relocating the mechanical equipment were not answered.
- Questions as to whether painting the enclosure a different color would limit or minimize its visibility.

NO RESOLUTION: After much discussion the committee requested that the applicant agree to table the application and return with an estimate of the cost to relocate the equipment further from the parapet and a proposal (with rendering) to paint the enclosure a darker color reflective of the façade. The applicant agreed and the application was tabled until the September 12, 2019 Preservation Committee meeting.

2 West 64th Street (Central Park West) – The Society for Ethical Culture. Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for the installation of lettering on the West 64th Street façade.

The premises was constructed ca. 1909-10 by architect Robert D. Kohn.

The building is an individual landmark (designated 1974).

Presentation by: Lliam Bolling, architect, and Richard Van Deusen, member of the Board of Trustees and Chair of the Building Committee of the Society for Ethical Culture.

- The building is in the Art Nouveau style with its main facades constructed out of large, smooth stone. The building serves as the meeting house for the Society.
- The West 64th Street façade includes a main entrance of double blonde wood doors surrounded by Art Nouveau pilasters and ornamentation with a small frieze above in a triangular pediment.
- The main entrance sits in the middle of the side street façade beneath three columns of windows with multiple panels and divisions punctuating the monumental stone façade, with a stone band above functioning as a mini cornice, and with an additional floor above with narrower, smaller windows in alignment with the columns below.
- Toward the end of the West 64th Street façade, two additional doorways flanked by pilasters with more modest decoration frame the façade. Between the smaller doorways and the main entrance, the massive base of the stone edifice, including a curved sculptural effect, rises to about the middle of the doorways.
- Transoms of decorated leaded glass sit above each of the main and side entrances.
- A flat expanse of stone sits between the massive base and the lower edge of the monumental windows above.
- The Central Park West façade is similar in design and massing, but has indented outlines in lieu of the monumental windows.
- Beneath the southern-most outlines on the CPW façade, in a tall thin rectangular stone outline, appears lettering in patinated metal with the words “The Society for Ethical Culture Founded in

the City of New York May 1876.”

- The application is to install individual letters forming the words “Society for Ethical Culture” into the façade between the side entrance to the east and the main entrance. The location of the lettering would appear above the massive, dramatic, curved base of the structure and below the height of the entrances (and below the monumental windows above).
- The lettering would be centered beneath the eastern-most of the three columns of the monumental windows.
- The letters would be inserted directly into the stone of the façade.
- The letters would be ¼-inch dark oxidized bronze in the Bookman typeface.

- Applicant attempted to duplicate the lettering on the existing 6” bronze letter on the Central Park West Façade but could not because that type of lettering is no longer manufactured.
- Building has been owned and occupied since 1910 by the Society for Ethical Culture.
- Former signs for Ethical Culture were banners placed upon the light fixtures on Central Park West that were ripped and torn by the wind on CPW.
- It is the largest public auditorium on the Upper West Side, aside from Lincoln Center.
- 3 pins per letter will be used to fix the sign to the building. Applicant decided to use pins because they are a historic way to attach a sign to a building, citing the New-York Historical Society, the American Museum of Natural History, the David Koch building, and David Geffen Hall in Lincoln Center as similar examples.
- 3 pins per letter will also allow for easier repair.

Community Questions and Comment:

- [none]

Committee Questions and Comment:

- Suggestion to move sign to other side of door (right side as you face West 64th) since traffic travels from west to east on West 64th Street.
- A: It was the LPC that suggested the proposed location. The Applicant explored installing the lettering above the approved ramp installed in 2016, but applicant was advised by LPC Staff not to adopt that suggestion.
- Questions regarding the choice of font.
- A: There was discussion within the Building Committee about the font for the sign and it was determined the Bookman font is the cleanest, boldest font to use given the long name of the applicant.
- A: Applicant further assured the committee that the color of the lettering would not be red, as it appeared in our copies of the presentation materials for the application, but would be dark, oxidized bronze, of which applicant brought a sample.

Resolution: To approve the application as presented.

After deliberation, the Committee adopted the resolution to approve the application:

VOTE: Committee Members: 4-3-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

Calendared for the August 13, 2019 public hearing at LPC. Per prior discussion with the Committee, this application was approved to proceed to public hearing prior to a full Board vote.

135 Central Park West (West 73-74 Streets) “The Langham.” Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for window replacements and new window openings on the south half of the mansard roof.

The subject building was constructed ca. 1904-07 by architects Clinton & Russell.

The building is in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Presentation by: Peter Mullen, architect.

- The subject building is a 12-story apartment building constructed of brick, limestone, cast iron and terra cotta, with elements of the Beaux-Arts and Renaissance Revival styles.
- The building includes a mansard roof that wraps around the West 73rd, Central Park West, and West 74th Street facades.
- The mansard roof rises above and slightly behind a cornice consisting of decorative stone elements that include a running balustrade. At the center of the CPW façade,
- There are tall pyramid-shaped turrets at the corners of the façade.
- On each of the north and south ends of the CPW façade, the mansard is punctuated by tall highly decorated stone dormers with a triangular pediment above, and an oculus window above the pediment. The stone dormers each include a 2:2 window, except the dormer in the center of the façade has a pair of such windows.
- There are 5 dormers on each of the north and south sides of the CPW façade, with the larger dormer in the center.
- On the north side of the CPW façade, new square window openings were inserted into the mansard roof between the oculus windows ca. 1915.
- Only three such windows were inserted into the south side of the CPW façade between the oculus windows.

- The application seeks to add 4 new window openings, and modify the sizes of 2 other existing openings, in the mansard so that they create a symmetrical band on either side of the CPW façade.
- The windows to be inserted in the new openings would be bronze anodized tilt-and-turn windows to match the others in the symmetrical series.
- Other window replacements, including the oculus windows and existing rectangular windows, are the subject of LPC Staff-level approvals.

Community Questions and Comment:

- [none]

Committee Questions and Comment:

- The application is essentially to match the proposed new openings on the South side of the mansard roof with those already installed on the North side, including those previously approved by LPC at the Staff level.
- The new window openings will only be minimally visible from the street, and greater visibility is only available once well inside Central Park.

Resolution: To approve as presented.

After deliberation, the Committee adopted a resolution to approve the Project.

VOTE: Committee Members: 7-0-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

Calendared for the August 13, 2019 public hearing at LPC. The Committee agreed at the meeting not to object to this application proceeding to public hearing prior to a full Board vote.

21 West 75th Street (Central Park West – Columbus Avenue). Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for replacement of four windows on the second floor of a brownstone townhouse.

The subject building was one of a group of six individual townhouses built ca. 1983 by architect George M. Walgrove.

The building is in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Presentation by: Brian Volkomer - window contractor from Adler Windows

- The second and third floors of the front façade are characterized by a three-flat-sided bay window with a fourth window to the west.
- The four windows on the second floor are 1:1 double-hung windows that are glazed with leaded glass. Each panel of the windows include some 48 leaded glass rectangles. Each panel includes a small stained glass medallion approximately in the center of the panel.
- While it is unlikely in the extreme that the leaded glass was original to the building, research has uncovered no precise record of the installation of the leaded glass.
- None of the other existing buildings in the grouping have leaded glass on their front facades.
- The application is to replace the leaded and stained glass with a 1:1 wood window manufactured by Marvin Windows for historic townhouses, with the installation including new brick molds to match the original configuration.
- The resulting replacement windows will match the existing condition on the other townhouses in this grouping and another unrelated grouping of townhouses on the block.
- There are currently 4 (four) windows on the second floor that are each composed of 48 leaded glass boxes.
- The application is to replace these windows with one over one windows.
- They will be replaced with Marvin wood windows with 2 inch round casings
- Applicant did not know when the leaded glass windows were added.

- Applicant will re-post notices for this project prior to full Board since the notices were posted only a few days prior to the Committee meeting.

Community Questions and Comment:

- [none]

Committee Questions and Comment:

- If the leaded windows were not original, there should be no problem with their replacement.
- Since the windows are an anomaly, approval is appropriate.
- Preservation Committee would like to know the history of the leaded windows and applicant has agreed to send that information to Jessie in the CB7 main office.

Resolution: To approve as presented.

After deliberation, the Committee adopted a resolution to approve the Project.

VOTE: Committee Members: 7-0-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

44 West 77th Street (Central Park West – Columbus Avenue). Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for replacement of a single window in the side courtyard.

The building was constructed ca. 1909 by architects Herbert S. Harde and R. Thomas Short.

The building is in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Presentation by: Tom Zoli, Colin Murtaugh, architects.

- The subject premises is a 16-story apartment building built of brick with neo-Gothic terra cotta details. The façade was dramatically altered ca. 1944 due to the instability of the terra cotta decoration.
- The application is to remove a single window unit facing an interior (east) side court on the 14th floor of the building.
- The subject window unit consists of a pair of 2:2 double-hung windows whose glazing includes leaded glass in a 3:3 tall rectangular pattern within each panel of the 2:2 frame, and with small, thin rectangles of leaded glass surrounding the 3:3 pattern.
- The special window is not visible from any public way, and can only be seen within the courtyard by neighboring apartments and windows on the building next door.
- At least 14 other windows in the same courtyard, all below the applicant’s window, have been modified or are otherwise non-historic.
- The proposed replacement window would be a single-panel tilt-and-turn window to match other such windows approved for installation in this apartment at LPC Staff level.

Community Questions and Comment:

- [none]

Committee Questions and Comment:

- No objections were noted. Only reason this was before our committee was the leaded glass glazing.

Resolution: To approve as presented.

After deliberation, the Committees adopted a resolution to approve the proposal.

VOTE: Committee Members: 7-0-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

Calendared for the September 13, 2019 public hearing at LPC.

241 Central Park West (West 84th Street). Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to create an ADA-accessible entrance on the West 84th Street façade, providing “at grade” access to the main lobby.

The subject building was constructed ca. 1930-31 by architects Schwartz & Gross.

The building is in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Presentation by: Michael Plofker, architect.

- The building is a 19-story brick and cast stone apartment building with a tower roof built in the Art Deco style.
- The ground floor of the building on the three primary facades is composed of cast stone with a curved, fluted vertical decoration, with metal casement windows along the side street façade.
- The windows along the side street consist of pairs of larger and smaller casements, each with divided light, with divided light panels above and below the operable portion of the casement windows.
- The application is to convert a single pair of ground floor divided light casement windows (one large and one small) into a single alternate entrance to the main lobby.
- The pair of windows is the second set in from the Central Park West façade.
- The project would require extending the larger casement window opening to the ground level, removing portions of the curved, fluted cast stone. That cast stone would be used to infill the smaller paired casement window to the east of the new doorway.
- The door in the new opening would be aluminum painted to match the existing windows on the façade. The doorway would include a transom with divided light to match the casement windows on the façade.

- The door and transom would have exterior-mounted faux divided light and recessed cameras.
- The door will be grade level with 84th street.
- No residential tenants will be displaced by this plan. The space is currently being used on a month to month basis as a doctor's office.
- The door design is modeled on the window design previously approved by LPC.
- Anyone in the building can use this door. Anyone who may be disabled can use the main entrance on CPW.
- Building will commence upon approval by LPC.

Community Questions and Comment:

Christopher Falkenberg, 239 CPW (across West 84th Street from the proposed new door).

- Objection to the proposal for the following reasons:
 - what effect would this door have upon the street that is already crowded with young children who are picked up and dropped off two times per day at Congregation Rodeph Sholom.
 - the applicant currently has a building entrance on CPW which currently has no limitation on entrance/exit by those who are picked up/dropped off in accessible vehicles that will now pick up/drop off on West 84th Street.
 - applicant should install a mechanical device in their CPW entrance which will have less impact on the traffic on West 84th street rather than creating a new entrance on an already-crowded side street.
 - it seems inconsistent/inappropriate to use the side street instead of the wider door on Central Park West.
 - the community had no opportunity to review this application, including the application materials, and because the headmaster at Rodeph Sholom was on vacation, he had no opportunity to comment on this application.
- ADA drop-off, especially involving vehicles such as Access-A-Ride, will block the street especially if it occurs at pick-up or drop-off times for the school.
- Should be permitted time to research the impact on the side street before a Committee vote.

Jason Vinokur, Esq., attorney for 239 CPW Corp.

- Did not get a chance to review the application materials despite requests.
- Committee should delay its vote to permit research into the application, particularly concerning the impact on the crowded street.

Rodney Cohen, a resident of 239 CPW

- There is only one entrance/exit to 239 CPW and that is on W 84th Street while applicant already has an entrance/exit on CPW.
- This proposal, within 30 feet of CPW, will further exacerbate congestion on the narrow side street.

Committee Questions and Comment:

- The scope of review of the Preservation Committee is the appropriateness of the design and visual characteristics of the application and proposed changes.

- Other City Agencies such as the Department of Transportation would be more appropriate venues for concerns relating to traffic congestion particularly involving private school arrivals and departures.
- Questions concerning the number of building occupants use accessible vehicles.
- Concern for the noticeable traffic issues due to construction in the area that prevents parking.
- The Committee reviewed the appropriateness of the proposed changes within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, and found the Project to be appropriate in that context.
- Suggestion to the neighbors to reach out to the Department of Transportation and possibly the CB7 Transportation Committee for options to address the existing and anticipated congestion.

Resolution: To approve as presented.

After deliberation, the Committees adopted a resolution to approve the proposal:

VOTE: Committee Members: 7-0-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

Calendared for the September 10, 2019 public hearing at LPC.

141 West 85th Street (Amsterdam-Columbus Avenues). Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to replace an existing staircase.

The subject building was constructed ca. 1890-91 by architect John G. Prague.

The building is in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Presentation by: Norbert Porlein, architect.

- The subject building is a 3-story (plus basement) brick, brownstone and ironwork townhouse in the Queen Anne style with Romanesque elements.
- Prior to 1940, the stoop to the parlor floor entrance had been removed.
- Sometime prior to 1980 (pre-designation), a metal stairway to the parlor floor had been installed. The stairway is straight to the entrance – i.e. perpendicular to the façade of the building.
- The existing stairway includes a metal bannister and stiles with alternating floral decorations.
- The building immediately to the west has a similar metal stairway with metal handrails supported by thin metal stiles, but without the floral decoration.
- The main entrances to the pair of buildings with metal stairways have wrought-iron decoration on a metal door with a large glass panel behind.
- No other townhouse on the block has a metal stairway.
- Of the townhouses on the block, 17 have their original stone stoops; 11 have modified garden level entry-ways, and 3 have modified street-level entrances.

- The application is to replace the metal stairway, bannister and stiles in kind, and to perform related installation work on the sidewalk to anchor the new stairway.
- Applicant stated that the Department of Transportation requested they replace the sidewalk, although DoT made an inspection but hasn't returned or contacted them further.
- Nonetheless, the applicants want to replace the sidewalk as well as replace the metal stairway.
- The applicant noted that a similar metal stairway at 141 West 85th Street (though without the floral decorations) had a stair break because of corrosion and that their stairway has signs of corrosion as well.
- The replacement stairway would be in kind including the floral decorations.

Community Questions and Comment:

- [none]

Committee Questions and Comment:

- Committee members split on whether the floral decorations should be retained.
- A: LPC specifically requested that they be retained.

Resolution: To approve as presented.

After deliberation, the Committees adopted a resolution to approve the proposal:

VOTE: Committee Members: 7-0-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

Calendared for the September 10, 2019 public hearing at LPC.

123 and 125 West 87th Street (Amsterdam – Columbus Avenues). Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to replace the existing stair railing with precast concrete to match a neighboring stoop, replace parlor floor doors, and replace the gate beneath the stoop..

The buildings were constructed ca. 1883-84 by architect Increase M. Grenell.

The buildings are in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Presentation by: Ada Ko, architect.

- The subject buildings are a pair of 3-story (plus basement) smooth brownstone townhouses, each with a metal 3-sided bay window unit with pilaster details and a sloped roof at the story above the parlor floor.
- Each building has a masonry staircase leading to the parlor floor entrance.
- The masonry side rails of the stairway have been removed and replaced with metal handrails sitting atop thin metal stiles. The original masonry side rails were removed sometime prior to the 1940s.
- The townhouse to the east has a similar stone stair and metal handrail arrangement.

- The next townhouse to the east, at 119 West 87th Street, has a stone stairway with a handrail and balusters cast stone, leading to a pair of newel posts with modest to complete decoration in a floral pattern.
- The application is to install new cast concrete side rails on the stone stairways to match the balusters and newel posts of 119 West 87th Street.
- The application also seeks to install new parlor floor doors on each building. The proposed new doors would be in pairs, would be constructed of wood with four square-ish panels on each paired door, with the second panel from the top being infilled with glass.
- The doors would be similar in style and arrangement to the current wood doors on 123 West 87th Street, but for the glass panels. The proposal would remove the existing doors on 125 West 87th Street, which consists of a pair of tall, thin wood frames and a large glass fixed panel in each.
- The change in doors to match and have glass in the center of each door is sought for security reasons.
- Applicant wants to increase the height of the balusters to 28" from 24" for consistency with 119 West 87th Street, and for safety of their children.
- Material used will be cast concrete painted black to match the windows and trims.
- Applicant will restore and patch the stoops as well.

Community Questions and Comment:

Julie Copeland, 127 West 87th Street (immediately to the west of the subject building):

- Opposed to the application because she has endured construction at the site for two years.
- Objects to the 4" increase height of the balusters as it would impinge on the light in the areaway well in front of her building.
- Objects to the design.
- Also objects to the content of the Notice which never gave any indication that the applicant was asking for a 4" increase in baluster height and that the rest of the application could be approved at Staff Level at LPC.
- Will refuse to give the applicant access to her building for any construction.

Committee Questions and Comment:

- Railings should be utilitarian.
- Strong recommendation that the architect and Ms. Copeland speak with each other about going forward and to correct the failure to share information up to this point.
- The proposed changes, including the railings/balusters and the doors, may or may not be convenient, but they are appropriate.

Resolution: To approve as presented

After deliberation, the Committees adopted a resolution to approve the Project:

VOTE: Committee Members: 7-0-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

Calendared for the August 6, 2019 public hearing at LPC. Given the community opposition, the Committee advised the applicant that the application should be heard at full Board prior to a public hearing at LPC.

570 Columbus Avenue (West 87-88 Streets). Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for an ADA-accessible ramp.

The building was constructed ca. 1893-94 by architect Jacob H. Valentine.

The building is in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

Presentation by: Robert Cane, architect.

- The building is a 5-story brick and stone apartment/flats building in the Renaissance Revival style.
- The storefront infill is not original, and was the subject of post-designation approvals by CB7 and the LPC.
- The subject storefront consists of a pair of large fixed glass panels with metal plinths below flanking a main entrance that is recessed from the plane of the main façade.
- There is a 4" step up into the store from the street level.
- Lowering the floor of the store within is not feasible as it would interfere with the store's operations.
- The proposal is to add a ramp consisting of a platform at the level of the main entrance that descends and curves 90 degrees to meet the sidewalk. There is insufficient space to build an ADA-compliant ramp across the small storefront.
- The portion of the ramp curving to perpendicular to the façade would meet the sidewalk at approximately the same distance from the façade as the unenclosed sidewalk café operated by the restaurant in the storefront immediately to the north of the applicant's premises.
- The ramp would be composed of concrete with open metal railings painted black.
- The ramp extends eight (8) feet from the building.

Community Questions and Comment:

- [none]

Committee Questions and Comment:

- The configuration of the ramp projects too far out into the sidewalk and might become a danger in the winter months when the café of the restaurant next door (Bella Luna) might not be set up.
- There was also come concern about the next tenant in the applicant's space: if it is a restaurant, there will be no room for an outdoor unenclosed café, thereby limiting the type of tenant who could rent the space.

- The intrusion of the ramp into the sidewalk interferes with the appearance and operation of the storefront, especially given its configuration, and is thus inappropriate.
- The inappropriate effect could be moderated by a different configuration.

- The Committee invited the applicant to postpone its public hearing and return to Committee on September 12, 2019, with a revised design. The applicant will consider the proposal.
- The Committee adopted a protective disapproval of the current proposal in the event that the applicant does not agree to return to Committee in September.

Resolution: To disapprove as not appropriate to the character of the Historic District.

After deliberation, the Committees adopted a resolution to disapprove the Project:

VOTE: Committee Members: 7-0-0-0; Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.

Calendared for the September 10, 2019 public hearing at LPC.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.