

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

March 22, 2011

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE N.Y.C. LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE RIVERSIDE – WEST END HISTORIC DISTRICT EXTENSION

Good afternoon, Chair Tierney and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the Landmarks Conservancy. In 1987 the Conservancy enthusiastically testified in favor of the Riverside-West End Historic District. Nearly 25 years later we do so again for this extension.

Like the original district, the extension is composed of structures representing several phases of development from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, designed by prominent architects of those eras. Walking along West End Avenue, one is struck by the vast collection of stunning historic architecture in all directions. The stately apartment buildings on the Avenue are complemented by magnificent brownstones and row houses on the side streets, and by many historic religious properties and other community facilities, most in turn-of-the-century revival styles. With an eclectic mix of forms, materials, and details, these intact streets create a vibrant sense of place across a large swath of Manhattan.

We would like to remind building owners of the advantages of landmarking. The City's own Independent Budget Office has released a study stating that historic district designation stabilizes and improves property values. Just as designation has benefited other parts of the Upper West Side, this extension will enhance the neighborhood, ensuring that any alterations are guided by the Landmarks Law.

The Conservancy is pleased to join with neighbors, public officials, and preservationists in support of this designation. In particular we are grateful to the West End Preservation Society for initiating the effort to expand the District and to the Landmarks Commission for significantly expanding the scope and acting with speed. We look forward to supporting the next phases of Upper West Side historic districts, which, when complete, will recognize in total the tremendous architectural heritage which distinguishes this section of the City.

And as always, we are happy to offer the assistance of our Historic Properties Fund, Sacred Sites Program, and Technical Services staff to the owners and users of buildings in the extension.

Thank you for the opportunity to present The Landmarks Conservancy's views.