



**West End Preservation Society Statement before the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission in
Support of the Proposed Riverside-West End District Extension II** **October 25, 2011**

Good Afternoon, Chair Tierney, Commissioners and Staff. My name is Richard Emery and I represent the West End Preservation Society, which supports the designation as proposed, of the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II.

The requisite elements that define a historic district can be found there. The historical narrative of West End Avenue unfolds within these streets. At 102nd Street, there stands a row of five Neo-Renaissance homes built in 1898, by Neville & Bagge. Walk a few blocks north and you stand in the doorway of Stanley Court, the first 12-story apartment building on West End Avenue. Begun in 1905, it offered luxury living and single floor convenience to residents, with spacious ten room apartments.

The visual story is told in stately homes on Riverside Drive and the Bennington buildings on West End Avenue, with their terra-cotta peacocks keeping vigil on high. The Allendale on W 99th Street, once boasted of a magnificent tower on its roof. In 1909, one could see it from anywhere along West End Avenue. Today, the only place to see this tower is in photographs, as it was destroyed in 2007.

There are many examples of what has been lost: architectural details gone at the Dallieu, George & Edward Blum's building on West End & 101st Street; stoops, balconies, cornices have vanished and we have lost two townhouses on West End between 95th and 96th Streets.

This Commission has the power to protect our homes, to oversee change when changes are made and insure those changes add to, not detract from, the essence of a building or neighborhood.

We also face a need for economic stability and environmental sustainability. Historic preservation is integral to both. Economically: studies have shown it protects and enhances property values. Environmentally: reusing and retrofitting buildings conserves embodied energy and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. It does not stress

West End Preservation Society Statement before the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission in Support of the Proposed Riverside-West End District Extension I. March 22, 2011 2

an already strained infrastructure as compared to new, larger development in existing neighborhoods. It is at the heart of sustainable development.

We aspire to protect our upper west side community so it will continue to evolve while retaining its unique sense of place in the City. Preservation is not about being mired in the past but is essential to our survival in the future.

West End Preservation Society thanks the Commission for undertaking this proposal and we proudly stand in support with our elected officials, our neighbors and fellow preservationists. Thank you.

West End Preservation Society

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