



**West End Preservation Society Statement to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding  
Certificate Of Appropriateness for Borough of Manhattan: 18-0672 – 326 West 77<sup>th</sup> St: Block 1185- Lot 88  
West End- Collegiate Historic District**

**April 5, 2016**

Good Afternoon Chair Srinivasan, Commissioners and Staff,

Dating from the 1890's there is much to love about this rowhouse. West End Preservation Society would like to commend the applicant for their restoration of the front façade, including the reintroduction of their long lost stoop. We remain optimistic the eventual handrail installed will do justice to the new stoop; currently it seems more an afterthought than an adornment.

As one of those remaining rowhouses from Charles Mott's original thirteen on the block, it is especially good to see these dormer windows have remained and will now be restored. We appreciate the research and effort involved in returning clay tiles to this striking roofline, rather than asphalt shingles. Unfortunately, while taking great pains to restore the front façade, this rooftop addition will do nothing to enhance this charming row house and therefore we oppose it.

We appreciate the applicant's revisions that minimize the view of the glass railing and reduce the dimensions on the bulkheads, from the original drawings. This slight reduction does nothing, however, to address the imbalance of the addition. This stacking of cubes' configuration adds too much mass to one side of the building and would ask that another approach be found for the necessary mechanicals and bulkheads. We understand the desire to capitalize on every inch of habitable space on the roof but in this case, reverting this building to a single family dwelling, the rooftop is only one of many opportunities to utilize outdoor space within this design proposal.

As to the rear yard addition, it would be nice to see something other than great walls of glass but that seems to be the universal request for rear facades. The mansard roof may be an interesting design element but from the comparison rear yard photos, it does not appear that another mansard roof is to be found on a rear facade, so it does not necessarily fit into the landscape.

Which brings me to the actual landscaping. We are very concerned with the proposed excavation of the cellar level to a mere five feet from the lot line.

An underground bunker of this size seems excessive and unnecessary. The resulting yard is a majority of hardscaping and glass skylights leaving a small amount of footage for green space. We would like to encourage the applicant to reduce the length of the cellar floor, retain more earth and make more use of softscaping in their yard, which would yield great benefit not only to the homeowners but to the environment.

Thank you for considering our comments.