

## **LANDMARK WEST!**

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**Sent:** Wednesday, June 25, 2003 3:45 PM  
**Subject:** 2 Columbus Circle On-Line Forum: Turning Up the Heat

What more will it take to get the Landmarks Preservation Commission to hold a public hearing on 2 Columbus Circle?

- Leading preservation organizations, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, agree that it deserves its "day in court"
- 30 speakers at last week's City Planning Commission hearing called for the opportunity to discuss the building's significance in an open, public forum
- Hundreds of letters and postcards have circulated, expressing both ardent support for and strong criticism of Edward Durell Stone's 1964 design

Right now at [www.collectorsworld.org](http://www.collectorsworld.org), *New Yorker* architecture critic Paul Goldberger is moderating an on-line forum on the future of this iconic and controversial site. And if you haven't tuned in yet, you're truly missing out - not only on an exciting discussion, but also the chance to voice YOUR opinion about 2 Columbus Circle, its meanings and its merits (or lack thereof).

It's not too late. The forum will continue through July 2. Check in day or night for the latest topics, which have so far included:

### **2 Columbus Circle: truly important, or merely eccentric?**

Paul Goldberger (Entry 2): "For all my affection for the Stone building, nothing would convince me it is important in quite the same way that Scharoun's Berlin Philharmonic is."

Architect Michael Sorkin (Entry 19): "I like the little building and say save it....We don't need to burden our every landmark with greatness. There is a largeness of meaning embodied in this place, a fold in the civic memory. Why would anyone deface such a building?"

### **Our ability to evaluate and appreciate the recent past.**

Historian Tom Mellins (Entry 26): "I am struck with what I believe is the importance of taking the longest view possible in matters of preservation. Is it relevant that many architecture students and young practitioners seem to be intrigued by 2 Columbus Circle?"

MoMA curator Terry Riley (Entry 31): "if we don't believe we have the perspective to judge the value of 2 Columbus Circle as it is, how do we have the perspective to judge the proposed alterations?"

### **The prospect of landmark designation for 2 Columbus Circle.**

Riley (Entry 25): "I still am not convinced that the building's quirkiness is enough to pull it into some protected status" and (Entry 8) "Preserving Stone's folly doesn't make up for losing Penn Station, nor is it an intelligent use of the ultimately finite resources of the preservation movement."

Architect John Kaliski (Entry 10): "Landmarking has evolved significantly over the past thirty years. The criteria of judgement... have expanded.... [T]he more we talk about this building, or the more we acknowledge that this building inspires discourse, or the more we acknowledge its eccentricity, the more likely it becomes a candidate for preservation."

## 2 Columbus Circle's potential for adaptive re-use.

Kaliski (Entry 35): "In practice there are plenty of examples where older buildings have been given new uses while utilizing aggressive architectural programs and designs....I do not think 2 Columbus is a simple case and I would therefore look for a preservation and design approach that manages multiple narratives."

Writer and critic Witold Rybczynski (Entry 37): "Let [2 Columbus Circle] be changed, but carefully."

Riley (Entry 39): "Despite appearing to being implacably opposed to the 'conservation' of 2 Columbus Circle, I am completely in agreement with Witold's last point...Maybe we should discuss what is of value in the Stone building and what is less so."

*What is of value in 2 Columbus Circle and what is less so?* Isn't that what the landmarks process is designed to determine? If you believe this discussion should continue, write to Landmarks Chair Robert Tierney **TODAY**, urging him to calendar a public hearing for 2 Columbus Circle. Give New Yorkers the opportunity to decide! (Please send copies of your letters to [landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org](mailto:landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org) or fax to 212-875-0209.)

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