

TESTIMONY OF MARC A. LANDIS  
PRESENTED TO THE MANHATTAN PUBLIC HEARING  
OF THE  
NEW YORK CITY DISTRICTING COMMISSION  
AUGUST 16, 2012

Commission Chair Romano and Commissioners:

My name is Marc Landis, and I am an elected Democratic District Leader on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. I serve as the chairperson of the New York County Democratic County Committee and the co-chair of its Campaigns and Elections Committee. I am also a candidate for City Council, residing in what is currently District 6.

I am a steadfast supporter of the principles of the Democratic Party; however, the issues and challenges posed by the decennial redistricting process supersede any partisan concerns. Good districting ensures that the people's voices will be heard and that Council Members will be able to effectively represent their districts, regardless of party membership. My neighbors and I are counting on this Commission to ensure a fair districting process. We hope that communities of common interest remain in the same districts, so that the strength of community views will be heard in governance. We want our Council Members to know that the voice of a single constituent's concern will be reflected by and will echo throughout the district.

The Upper West Side is clearly a community of common interest. My neighbors come from diverse demographic backgrounds, and may live in public housing or in penthouse condos, but we are one community. While we don't agree on every issue all of the time, we share the same fundamental concerns about improving our public schools, expanding housing opportunities, and protecting our quality of life. The chief challenge before the commission is to determine where to draw district lines for a concise, compact Upper West Side.

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Marc Landis, Democrat for City Council  
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The existing District 6, which encompasses West 96<sup>th</sup> Street to West 54<sup>th</sup> Street, Riverside Park to Central Park, as well as a small area just south of Central Park, is functionally a good model for an Upper West Side district. However, Upper West Side residents between West 96<sup>th</sup> and West 100<sup>th</sup> Streets, who are in the same Community Board district that runs south to West 59<sup>th</sup> Street, have instead been placed in two other districts, Districts 8 and 9. Their inclusion in an Upper West Side City Council district is imperative to satisfy the goals of district coherence, collective voter power, and representative effectiveness.

Accordingly, I propose that the Commission establish an Upper West Side district that runs from West 57<sup>th</sup> Street or West 59<sup>th</sup> Street up to West 100<sup>th</sup> Street. This would allow the residents of Central Park Gardens, Tower West, the Westgate complex now known as Stonehenge, Park West Village and Columbus Square, to share a district with the rest of the Upper West Side neighbors, and with nearby access to constituent services.

Logically, the next district to the north, starting from West 100<sup>th</sup> Street, would keep Manhattan Valley, Morningside Heights and Manhattanville in a single intact district, rather than dividing it up in three separate districts. Currently, these neighborhoods are sliced among Districts 7, 8 and 9.

I thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony, and urge you to ensure that our Upper West Side neighborhoods will be fairly represented once your work is completed.

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