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Why TriBeCa is still downtown's nabe to know

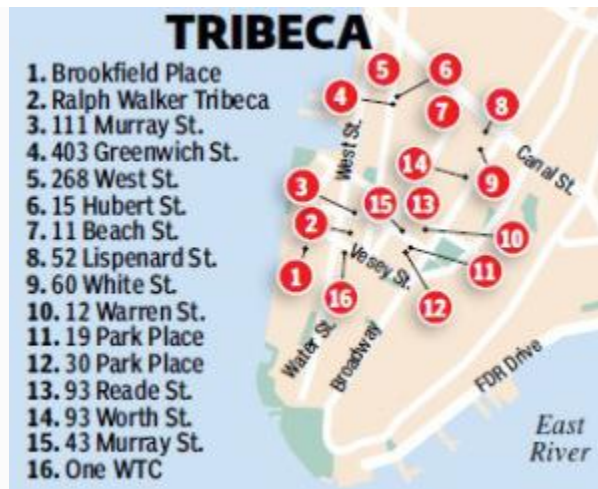
By Zachary Kussin



Shiny 111 Murray is one of the newer projects in TriBeCa. Photo: Redundant Pixel Studios

Decades after TriBeCa first emerged as one of Lower Manhattan's most desirable enclaves, the district finds itself once again in the spotlight. Its prime location — a stone's throw from buzzing downtown construction — has upped TriBeCa's commercial offerings, helping give the sleepy nabe a 24-hour vibe. Most of all, available neighborhood development sites are attracting world-class architecture, with prices on the rise and builders placing bets that deep-pocketed buyers will want to be part of the action — in luxury settings, no less.

Need proof? There's the 13-unit 12 Warren launching sales this fall. There's also the 24-unit 19 Park Place, where a handful of apartments have already entered contract in off-market deals.



But take a look at TriBeCa on a macro level to view the neighborhood's continuing rise. Roughly 526 condominium units will come to market south of 14th Street in 2015, with 60 percent of them — some 316 — slated for TriBeCa alone, according to data compiled by agents, the Marketing Directors. In 2016, roughly 823 condo units are projected to come online in this zone, with 35 percent of them — or 288 — in TriBeCa. It would be an understatement to say that neighborhood builders have never been busier.

“[Developers] saw TriBeCa growing tremendously and decided to do more,” says Corcoran Group broker Tamir Shemesh, who’s handling sales and marketing at 52 Lispenard St. — a seven-unit condo that came to market in March. “They found deals that make sense because there’s a major upside to their investment.”

More supply means more luxury product, which ultimately means higher prices. Median asking prices in the neighborhood jumped 39 percent year-over-year to \$4.27 million in 2014, according to StreetEasy. And on June 15 of this year, TriBeCa’s median ask hit \$4.58 million, over three times higher than the overall Manhattan figure recorded through the same date.

What’s arriving in TriBeCa is a mix of ground-up projects and conversions. Of the new-construction builds, the most recent is 111 Murray St. — a 157-unit tower that launched sales this week, which is developed by Fisher Brothers, Witkoff and New Valley. The building, which will house one-bedrooms to penthouses with prices from \$2 million to over \$17.5 million (penthouse pricing is not available), comes designed by an all-star cast. Kohn Pedersen Fox’s A. Eugene Kohn is the architect, while MR Architecture + Decor’s David Mann is designing the units. Rockwell Group’s David Rockwell will lend his touch to the lobby and amenity spaces and Edmund Hollander will handle the outdoor green spaces.



52 Lispenard — a nabe newcomer — launched sales in March. Photo: HANDOUT

While examining the site before purchasing it for \$223 million in 2013, the project’s developers knew they’d benefit from commercial development at the World Trade Center.

“As we began to hear the roster of tenants that had signed up, we began to say to ourselves, ‘Wow, look what’s happening down here!’ ” recounts Witkoff honcho Steve Witkoff of the visit he took with Winston Fisher of Fisher Brothers. He adds that the Fulton Center and Santiago Calatrava’s WTC transportation hubs, plus all the retail they’d bring, would only lure more potential purchasers.

Indeed, TriBeCa is also a beneficiary of buzzing FiDi development activity. But the hype also extends to Battery Park City’s Brookfield Place, which offers upscale shops and eateries.

Other ground-up projects include the Robert A.M. Stern-designed 30 Park Place, which topped out in January. Colonnade Group is also bringing a nine-story condo, whose unit sales are anticipated to exceed \$25 million, to 403 Greenwich St.

There’s also Related’s 268 West St. This 46-unit project, where pricing is not yet available, is also by Robert A.M. Stern and will be completed in 2017.

“Not everybody wants to drive a Maybach; there needs to be product that is beautiful and affordable, but not egregiously priced,” says Rob Gross, a Douglas Elliman broker who handles deals in TriBeCa.

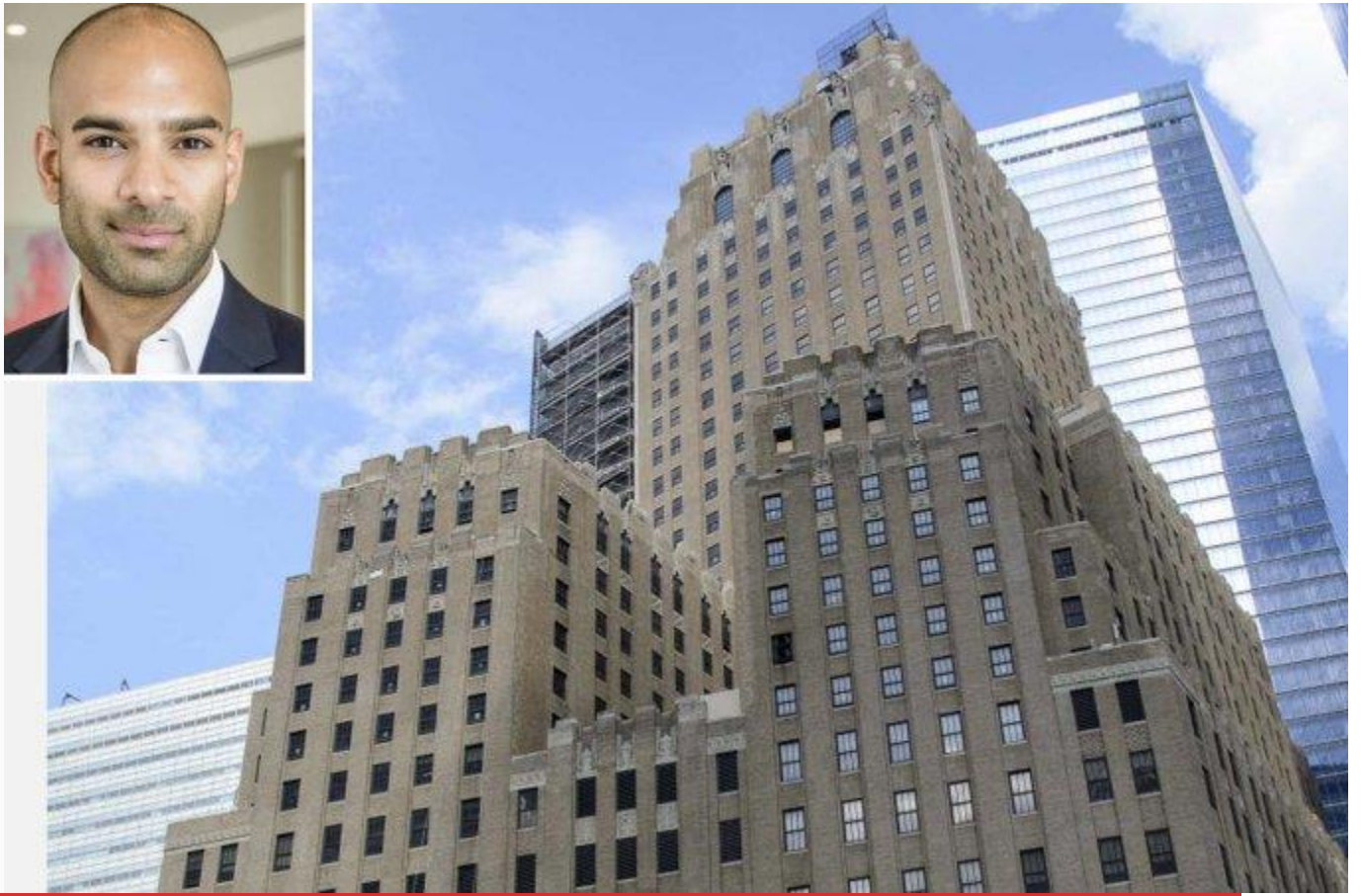


ON THE MARKET: 15 Hubert St., #PHA, \$6.22 million — 3,075-square-foot duplex penthouse, upper-level entertainment room with private terrace, kitchen has floor-to-ceiling white-oak cabinetry. Contact: Louise Phillips Forbes, Halstead, 212-381-3329 Photo: Halstead Property Development Marketing, LLC

It's already possible to pay less to live large in TriBeCa, though prices are hardly modest. One of the nabe's conversion projects, the CetraRuddy-designed 15 Hubert, launched sales in April with units largely priced under \$1,500 per square foot, StreetEasy shows. Its three penthouses priced from \$5.7 million to \$6.22 million — the only apartments in the 12-unit building that have not entered contract — break \$2,000 per square foot.

“This served a niche of the market in a price point that didn't exist,” says Louise Phillips Forbes, who's leading sales and marketing here for Halstead Property Development Marketing.

Other conversions include the eight-unit 60 White St., developed by Veronica Mainetti's Sorgente Group of America, where prices now start at \$4.58 million. There's also the four-unit Obsidian House at 93 Reade St., where prices now begin at \$3.05 million. The conversion at 93 Worth St. made a splash with the addition of seven penthouses up top; the 91-unit project is now 95 percent sold. The 27-unit 11 Beach will be completed next summer.



Arran Patel (inset) bought at Ralph Walker Tribeca. Photo: Stefano Giovannini

The benefit of a conversion project is its historical charm, which brought Arran Patel to buy a two-bedroom, 1,800-square-foot unit at Ralph Walker Tribeca two months ago.

Patel, a salesperson for Douglas Elliman's Vickey Barron — who's leading sales and marketing at this 159-unit project — will get custom cabinetry and over 10-foot ceilings once occupancy starts in the fourth quarter.

"I like things that can't be replicated," he says.



Will Meyerhofer and William Kwok (with their dog Simon) at home at 43 Murray St. Photo: Stefano Giovannini

Similarly, Will Meyerhofer, a psychotherapist, and his partner, William Kwok, bought a 1,400-square-foot loft at 43 Murray St. in 2013 after spending eight years renting in Battery Park City.

“We wanted a place that looked like a downtown gallery,” says Meyerhofer. Boasting high ceilings and brick walls, the spacious spread cost \$1.21 million. “We feel incredibly lucky. Our apartment is ... in a gorgeous, historic old building, and it’s in the chicest neighborhood in New York City.”