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NY1 examines the effects of Hurricane Sandy on the anniversary of the storm.

Sandy One Year Later: Builders Now Plan For Storms From The Ground Up

By: **Jon Weinstein** Updated 10/29/2013 04:26 PM



In the wake of Sandy, architects and builders around the city are adapting their development plans to fortify new waterfront structures against the possibility of any future storms. NY1's Jon Weinstein filed the following report.

The planning was already underway for a new building at 560 West 24th Street when Sandy's floodwaters struck. But because it sits just down the block from the Hudson River, the people behind the new apartment and gallery complex knew they had to make some changes.

"How do we protect our loved ones, our residents from this being either dangerous or disruptive and with that clean slate we redesigned our building," said Adam Gordon Holdings Co-Developer Adam Gordon.

The building itself sits below the water table, which means it needs a so-called bathtub foundation to give it basic protection from flooding. But after Sandy, the designers and developers decided to take it a step further, adding additional protection up to the building's second level.

"The perimeter of the building has a concrete wall all the way around it which is waterproofed, which adds to that enhancement. So we are protected at the street face and the perimeter up to seven feet high," said Richard DeMarco, the building's architect.

To fill the gaps in that concrete wall the project includes movable flood gates that would be installed in the hours before a storm strikes.

"An aluminum panel that gets anchored to the ground like a dam," DeMarco explained.

The cost of this particular mitigation work is minor compared to the damage it is intended to prevent. If somehow water does get through, the basement will have an airtight vault with submarine doors to protect electrical systems. The building's boiler will be on the roof. There will also be a generator in the event like during Sandy, the city's power grid goes dark.

"People need power in order to stay in their homes and stay warm and stay protected, and I think that's probably one of the most important things we did, upsize the generator," said Tavros Development Co-Developer Dov Barnett.

These kinds of storm protections are being built at construction sites across the city.

"We believe strongly that climate change is going to cause increased volatility in weather and this may be the new norm," Gordon said.

It's a new norm that builders everywhere are preparing for.

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