



December 27, 2013

# A Condo for Art Collectors

By C. J. HUGHES

Supporters of the High Line, the wildly popular elevated park, are quick to point out that it has catalyzed the redevelopment of West Chelsea. What may get lost in the enthusiasm is the fact that art galleries, too, have provided a major spark, going back to the 1990s, when they first began appearing amid factories in this longtime industrial area.

It is this artistic legacy — as well as the people who support it by buying paintings today — that’s on the minds of the developers of [560 West 24th Street](#), near 11th Avenue, a new eight-unit condominium aimed at serious collectors.

The walls of the apartments, most of which have four bedrooms, won’t simply be made of Sheetrock, as is often the case elsewhere. Many will be reinforced with plywood, to support the weight of heavy picture frames, said Adam Gordon, a [developer](#) known for elegant townhouse projects. He is developing the project with the firm [Tavros](#). Small white lights, like those that illuminate so many of West Chelsea’s galleries, will be embedded into ceilings, to ensure that art is shown to best advantage, he said.

In the foyers, which at 560 West 24th will be called “galleries,” a portion of a wall will be tilted, like an easel, to display paintings — perhaps by residents themselves — that can be easily and quickly switched out, Mr. Gordon said.

In addition, windowless studies off of living rooms are being made extra-spacious, so that storage racks filled with art can be wheeled inside for safekeeping.

“If you talk to any collector, you will hear them say that they always have more art than walls,” said Mr. Gordon, whose own collection, which leans toward contemporary, was mostly bought nearby.

His development portfolio includes townhouses uptown and downtown, including Nos. 92 and 60 Jane Street, in Greenwich Village. Mr. Gordon also completed 54 Bond Street, a former bank at the Bowery that became a three-unit condo.

Art above, art below: At the base of 560 West 24th will be a 4,200-square-foot

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not yet leased. And as if to drive a point home, the nearby sales office for the condo is tucked into a back room at [Edward Thorp Gallery](#), where would-be buyers thread past sculptures.

Visitors there can learn about the condo's accouterments, which include wood-burning fireplaces, grille-fronted French-style windows and octagonal doorknobs, from [P. E. Guerin](#), a West Village manufacturer.

"There's definitely a New York-Paris connection," said Leonard Steinberg, the broker at Douglas Elliman Real Estate who is handling sales, which are expected to begin in January. The building will open next summer.

Prices will average \$2,500 a square foot, Mr. Steinberg said, describing that as on a par with comparable new condos nearby. The top-level penthouse, which will have 3,200 square feet inside and 1,400 square feet outside, will be priced at \$18 million.

In a sense, making the apartments look nice is the easy part. The bigger challenge, Mr. Gordon said, is to find somewhere — anywhere — to build in the heart of West Chelsea, which by most definitions runs from West 14th to West 30th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues.

Mr. Gordon took on a troubled lot, previously known as 552 West 24th Street. It had been the intended site of an angular, glassy condo during the last boom, until the previous owner lost the property to foreclosure, said Mr. Gordon, who bought it from a lender for about \$10 million in 2011.

Next, he had to contend with a deed restriction, which was tied to 200 11th Avenue, the adjacent condo best known for the garages accompanying its apartments. The restriction, which limited the height of any building, could be lifted only by the board of 200 11th Avenue, he said. "It was brain-damaging how complicated it was," Mr. Gordon said.

Equally vexing, he said, was the fact that the previously planned condo had been heavily documented by blogs and magazines, so that there was a long Internet trail of bad press. Which is why he is using a different address linked to the site, No. 560: "I didn't want people to Google it and get the wrong information."

That Mr. Gordon has had to jump through so many hoops to build in West Chelsea doesn't surprise some brokers. "There's really a dearth of opportunities here for developers," said Cathy Taub, an agent with Stribling & Associates, which is marketing [508 West 24th Street](#), a condo on the same block.

Since last summer, that building has sold eight of its 15 units, most of which are three-bedrooms priced around \$2,500 a square foot, Ms. Taub said.

But demand seems to be keeping pace with supply, which means that Mr. Gordon, or any other developer for that matter, shouldn't be considered a rival. As Ms. Taub put it, "I think we are all in good company."