

February 25, 2016

**INSIDE**  
Celebrity Chef  
Jean-Georges eyes  
a downtown condo

NYP REAL ESTATE

# HOME



## HITTING ITS PEAK

**In the shadow of Midtown, the Far West Side is set to surge** **NEW HEIGHTS:** Near the Hudson River, dramatic VIA is almost ready for renters.

By EMILY NONKO

IT'S not often you see the entire dynamics of a neighborhood from a single rooftop view.

But that's the case at the top of the Helena (pictured, above right), a 597-unit rental built by the Durst Organization on West 57th Street and 11th Avenue in 2005. Back then, this Hudson River-adjacent area was far less active.

Today, looking down, there's a massive construction site to the north — the eight-acre Riverside Center development, where residential towers at One West End and 21 West End Ave. are slated to open in the next two years. To the south is 606 W. 57th St., projected to be one of New York's largest apartment buildings when it opens in 2017.

To the west, a nondescript sanitation garage faces an

expanse of piers — remnants of this area's past, when it was strewn with garages and warehouses. It's all now overshadowed by the massive silver tetrahedron at 625 W. 57th St., cutting 467 feet into the air.

That's VIA, studly starchitect Bjarke Ingels' highly anticipated rental that's set to begin leasing next month. Developed by Durst 10 years after the Helena, VIA promises to transform this once

gritty, forgotten waterfront stretch into New York's next destination neighborhood.

"We've heard this area referred to as Siberia," says Eric Von Frohlich, who opened Row House, a boutique fitness studio at 555 W. 59th St., with his wife Debra in 2014. The couple is banking on the arrival of upscale development to the neighborhood. Rents for a VIA studio will

See **WEST SIDE** on Page 34



Tamara Beckwith/NY Post (2)

**MOVIN' IN:** Anders Lindström gets more bang for his buck in the area.



**MEGA PROJECT:** With 1,189 rentals, 606 W. 57th St. will be the largest building in the city.

Courtesy of TF Cornerstone; Right: Tamara Beckwith/VV Post



**FAMILY MATTERS:** Developer Ed Baquero built in the nabe and then moved there with his wife Lisa, sons Sebastian (right) and Julian, and pup, Bear.

# THE WILD WILD WEST

**WEST SIDE** from Page 33 average \$2,770, \$3,880 for a one-bedroom, \$6,500 for a two-bedroom, \$11,000 for a three-bedroom and \$16,500 for a four-bedroom.

For decades, the area wasn't much more than a hub for auto-related businesses, including parking lots and dealerships, and long avenue blocks deterred New Yorkers from venturing too far west.

Durst Organization hopes that hype from Ingels' first US project, not to mention an insane amenities package, will convince New Yorkers that the walk from Columbus Circle to 11th Avenue isn't quite as bad as the trek to Siberia. (Helena offers a shuttle to the subway and VIA will, too.)

When Durst worked with the City Planning Commission to acquire a rezoning for VIA, officials were gunning for something that would serve as an iconic gateway into a neighborhood that had yet to find its identity. "We saw VIA as an anchor," said Douglas Durst, president of the company.

And it's far from the only development coming. According to real estate researchers CityRealty, there are 7,355 apartments planned north of Hudson Yards (from roughly 42nd Street) through Riverside Center at about 60th Street, between the waterfront and 10th Avenue.

Many developments will be located within VIA's orbit. Under-construction rentals include Frank, another Durst building with 120 units, TF Cornerstone's 606 W. 57th St. with a massive 1,189 units, Dermot's 21 West End Ave. with 616 units and Taconic's 525 W. 52nd St.



**DIVE IN:** VIA's suite of amenities includes a pool.

Courtesy of The Durst Organization; Right: DBOX; Below: Row House

with 400 units. Then there's the debut US project from Portuguese starchitect Álvaro Siza, who's working on a 80-unit condo at 611 W. 56th St.

NYC newcomer Anders Lindström moved to a studio inside Sky, a new 71-story rental on West 42nd Street, for the quality of the apartment and the amenities he could get for his budget.

In fact, Durst himself will move into the upper floors of VIA's peak upon its opening. Durst is not the only New York developer tempted by the Far West Side. Corigin Real Estate Group's Ed Baquero moved into a building he developed at 555 W. 59th St., the Element, after it opened in 2007.

"Back then the area was covered with automobile businesses," he says, noting there are still a few left. He decided to move into the

west. The package includes a pool, sun decks, a basketball court, a screening room and a poker room, among other bells and whistles.

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**SITTING PRETTY:** One West End units range from \$1.52M to \$7.45M.



chain FIKA moved in.

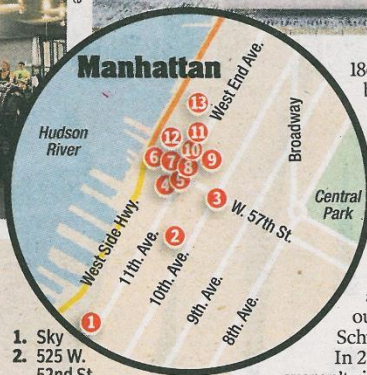
Most of the retail west of 10th Avenue is still in the planning phases. Riverside Center will have 100,000 square feet of it, including a food market. Frank's ground floor will house medical tenants. "We wanted to address the needs of the

neighborhood, where there's not any significant supply of medical space," says Corcoran broker Paul Hexler. Jeremy Shell, head of acquisitions for TF Cornerstone, is also plotting for rental giant 606 W. 57th St.: "We knew we needed strong retail in the base to help create a neighborhood that didn't exist until recently." The firm hopes to include a pre-K school on the ground floor, which would complement the Collegiate School's new building in nearby Riverside Center.

Row House's owners haven't regretted their expansion into so-called Siberia. "The area looks uncharted, but we found that people are willing to walk the two extra blocks," says Debra. Nonetheless, as the Von Frohlichs expect their second child, they say they'd consider moving here from the Upper East Side for more space. But there's one thing the area desperately needs. "A really cool name," says Eric. "Something better than the Far West Side."



**WORK OUT:** Row House is a new Far West Side tenant.



1. Sky
2. 525 W. 52nd St.
3. Rex
4. 611 W. 56th St.
5. 606 W. 57th St.
6. VIA
7. Helena
8. Frank
9. Element and Row House
10. One West End
11. 21 West End Ave.
12. Riverside Center
13. New Collegiate School

Ciera Battleson



**WAKING UP:** Coffee shop Rex opened on 10th Avenue, once "no man's land."