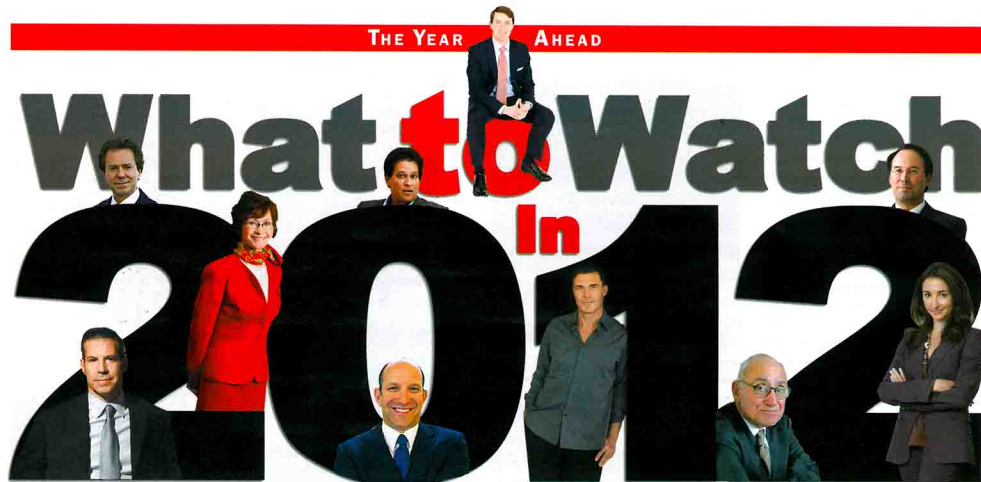


THE REAL DEAL

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A roundup of developers, brokers, listings, projects, REITs and more to keep an eye on in NYC real estate this year

BY LEIGH KAMPING-CARDER

Last month *The Real Deal* spoke with real estate professionals to learn which projects and players will be on their radar in the year ahead. After dozens of interviews, hours of research and many editorial meetings, we winnowed down a list of real estate players and projects to watch in 2012.

We weren't looking for the city's top brokers, or the biggest firms or the most successful developments.

Instead, we were looking for the most interesting newcomers who are already making a splash, or the veterans putting their expertise to use in a different way. We looked at the developments that have the power to change a neighborhood — or demonstrate the folly of hubris. We looked at the new alliances that will be tested in the coming year, and the investors who have money to plow into property in the upcoming months.

In short, we zeroed in on those who are embarking on uncharted territory this year. For one reason or another, every entry on this list will be worth a look in 2012.

Rental developments

While **New York by Gehry**, the 76-story rental tower at 8 Spruce Street, is 65 percent leased, the remaining 200-odd units will hit the market this year — possibly as early as next month. The project's backers expect all 903 of the units to be rented out by fall 2012.

But developer Forest City Ratner is making one adjustment, combining eight units on the top floor into three penthouses ranging from 3,000 to 4,000 square feet — priced between \$45,000 to \$60,000 per month. "They were nice," Forest City executive Susi Yu said of the scrapped apartments, "but not up to the standards of these units that we are creating."

Further north, David Pickett's Gotham Organization broke ground on its massive **Gotham West** project — a \$520 million, four-building complex between West 44th and West 45th streets and 10th and 11th avenues with 1,240 rental units — in October. It's been described as the largest new construction project underway in Manhattan.

On a smaller scale, Toll Brothers and Equity Residential paid \$134 million for a former parking lot at **400 Park Avenue South**, with plans to erect a 40-story rental-condo hybrid on the property, which comes with 400,000 square feet of development rights. Equity Residential, headed by Sam Zell, will own and operate the lower 22 floors, with 265 rental apartments, while Toll's upper floors will house 100 condo units.

Meanwhile, Jeffrey Levine's Douglaston Development, the firm behind the Edge condos, is planning another massive Williamsburg project, this time at the **site**

once set aside for the third Northside Piers tower. Unlike the Edge and Northside Piers developments — which once competed for a shrinking pool of buyers but are now mostly sold — the new tower will reportedly contain 500 apartments for rent, testing the rental market even as the North Brooklyn condo glut burns off. Douglaston will work with Toll Brothers's former partners at the site, L+M Development Partners and RD Management, and will reportedly start construction in March.