

These 4 projects are shaking up New York City

BY STEVE CUOZZO | NOVEMBER 4, 2014 | NEW YORK POST

The opening of 1 World Trade Center and construction financing for 3 WTC are obvious “game changers” for downtown.

But Manhattan is full of “game changers” these days. The four described here, not wish-list but on time to be finished within six months, are as momentous in their own ways.

1. 70 Pine Street

Rose Associates’ \$550 million conversion of the landmarked former AIG tower into 644 luxury rental apartments is nearly done and the first tenants will move in this winter.

Some 2,000 new residents will bring life to what’s been, until now, FiDi’s only remaining “black hole.” The often quiet blocks of narrow Pine and Pearl streets will bustle with families and singles — and help lure more restaurants to the neighborhood’s culinary-deprived historic heart east of Broadway.

The Art Deco tower will have an affluent set of residents. Rose is hoping to top the previous highest downtown rent of \$66 a square foot at the Frank Gehry-designed 8 Spruce Street nearby.

2. The No. 7 Line Extension

The \$2.4 billion project, funded by the city under ex-Mayor Michael Bloomberg, will open this winter. Press coverage has focused more on predictable minor delays than on how the new station at West 34th Street and 11th Avenue totally alters the chemistry of the Far West Side.

Related Cos.’ 10 Hudson Yards, under construction for Coach and L’Oreal, presently stands far removed from the rest of Midtown, as do the Javits Center and the new, northern terminus of the High Line Park.

Their isolation ends when trains start to run from Times Square to the beautiful new station one mile away.

3. Jeff Sutton’s Harlem Project

Powered by a \$95 million construction loan from Natixis Real Estate Capital, the 33,000-square-foot, six-story retail mecca has begun to rise from its foundation. Taking up the full Lenox Avenue west blockfront between 124th and 125th streets, it does more than merely bring Whole Foods to a part of town historically lacking good shopping options.

The project, which also includes Burlington Coat Factory and American Eagle, will stand across 125th Street from the thriving Harlem Center, anchored by Marshall’s. Lenox Avenue, one of Central Harlem’s capital boulevards, won’t ever be the same.

4. West 42nd Street Hotels

The south side of 42nd Street between Sixth Avenue and Broadway was the blockfront the Times Square area renaissance forgot — especially the western half. That changes for good with the openings over the next few months of the luxurious Knickerbocker Hotel at landmarked but

longlanguishing 1466 Broadway (at the corner) and the less pricey Hilton Garden Inn next door. The two properties will restore energy to the sidewalk still marred by scaffolding. Their combined 600 guests rooms will come along just in time to offset the block's reduction in energy as Condé Nast leaves 4 Times Square for 1 World Trade Center.

Skyscrapin' in tenants

The day after One World Trade Center opened its doors, we can report a couple of new leases at the Port Authority and Durst Organization's cloud-buster.

Though small, they reflect success in luring build-to-suit tenants. C12 Capital Management, moving from Midtown, has taken 3,446 square feet of prebuilt space on the 46th floor. Incandescent Technologies, a provider of information management consulting services, took 2,556 feet on the same floor.

Asking rents below the 65th floor are in the \$60s. Durst set aside 94,000 square feet on the 45th and 46th floors for specialized companies' small-space needs. The 3-million-square-foot 1 WTC has now leased 1.76 million feet.

Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Group has taken 45,838 feet at Mitsui Fudosan America's 1251 Sixth Ave., sources said. Insiders said the tenant was repped by Cushman & Wakefield's Fred Smith, Josh Kuriloff, Omar Farooq and Andrew Braver. The landlord was repped by Newmark Grubb Knight Frank's David Falk and Peter Shimkin, and by Chris Perez in-house at Mitsui Fudosan. The brokers did not get back to us.

Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Group is moving from 527 Madison Ave. Asking rents for midrise floors at 1251 Sixth Ave. are in the low \$80s.

Aviva Investors Americas is moving to Silverstein Properties' 1177 Sixth Ave. The 11,645-square-foot lease was brokered by Savills Studley's Jason R. Perla and Greg B. Taubin. The landlord was repped in-house by Roger Silverstein and Joseph Artusa with JLL's Frank Doyle and Benjamin Bass.

Sources said the asking rent was around \$80.

As L&L Holding prepares to transform obsolescent 425 Park Ave. into a new trophy address designed by Norman Foster, a tenant exodus has begun.

The latest to go, law firm Kent Beatty & Gordon, has taken 6,964 square feet at SJP Properties' II Times Square, now more than 85 percent leased.