



One Union Square East completes 14,000 s/f residential green roof

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One Union Sq. East, the famed pyramid-topped building that initiated the revitalization of Union Sq. 20 years ago, will set a new benchmark for the booming neighborhood with the opening of one of the city's largest residential green roofs.

Located at One Irving Place, the 14,000 s/f green roof will put the full block, mixed-use property, also known as Zeckendorf Towers, at the forefront of the city's new green roof initiative. In late September, mayor Michael Bloomberg kicked off N.Y.C. Green Infrastructure, a major campaign aimed at integrating infrastructure, such as green roofs, to improve water and air quality, cool the city, and reduce energy bills and greenhouse gas emissions.

Green roofs play a critical role in preventing discharge of sewer overflow into New York waterways during rain storms by capturing and slowing storm water runoff. According to a recent study by Riverkeeper, a 40 s/f green roof could result in 810 gallons of storm water captured per year, meaning One Union Sq. East's massive green roof could prevent over a quarter million gallons of storm water from entering the sewage system each year. Likewise, it will significantly reduce runoff entering the subway system at Union Sq., preventing rain delays at the city's fourth busiest subway station.

According to Peter Ellis, president of One Irving Place Condominium Homeowners Board, the green roof provides numerous other benefits, including enhanced aesthetic appeal and improved quality of life, increasing the value of individual units and demand for the building as a whole. In addition, green roofs boast a 40-year lifespan, doubling the estimated life of a conventional roof and creating a long-term capital saving for the building.

More than 40% of units in the 670-unit condominium development have direct views of the green roof, which is on the seventh floor roof in the center of the building's four, 29-story towers. In addition, all residents pass the roof on a daily basis while en route to the building's towers, gym, pool, and sundeck.

The roof provides the property's 1,200 residents with views of seasonal landscapes, including dogwood, Japanese maple, rhododendron, hosta, fern, sedum and moss, that will flower and change colors year-round. More than 4,500 bags of soil were required for the project.

The building's residential unit owners paid for the cost of the \$330,000 project with the assistance of a \$60,000 tax credit which will be received through the New York City Green Roof Property Tax Abatement Program (approximately \$4.50 per s/f).

"One Union Sq. East pioneered Union Sq.'s revitalization over 20 years ago, and the board is proud to help the complex lead the neighborhood and the city into the future once again," said Ellis. "In addition to its invaluable environmental benefits, the green roof will greatly enhance the quality of life

for all residents, providing a view and landscape unlike any other in the city."

The opening of the green roof marks another milestone for One Union Sq. East, which sparked the resurgence of Union Sq. when it opened in 1987. The building is at the heart of what is now a thriving neighborhood that includes the Greenmarket, expanded pedestrian promenades and plazas, a new playground, major retailers like Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Nordstrom Rack, and Best Buy, and 11 of the most popular Zagat Guide restaurants for 2011.

Properties in the building range from studios (\$525,000 - \$650,000) to one-bedrooms (\$850,000 - \$1.2 million) to two-bedrooms (\$1.2 million - \$2 million) and larger units, while most rentals range from \$2,400 to \$9,000. Many units in the 29-story towers boast views of the Manhattan skyline and the Hudson and East Rivers.

The green roof is a collaborative project between New York Green Roofs, a green roof design/build service, consulting engineers Feld, Kaminetzky & Cohen, Xero Flor, which produces pre-vegetated sedum and moss mats, and roofing company Rally Restoration.

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