

THE HUFFINGTON POST

June 14, 2013

New York's Newest Neighborhood – NoMad

In the ever-changing New York City real estate market, it appears that East Williamsburg is no longer the city's newest "neighborhood." The rise of Long Island City, NoHo/The Bowery, and now NoMad are all reshaping the commercial fabric of the lost neighborhoods that were once nothing more than a breeding ground for squatters, foreclosed buildings, and maybe a few starving artists. Land in New York has not always been expensive, new New Yorker's have a hard time grabbing onto that fact. The longer one lives here, the more you realize just how fast the city is really changing.

These real estate changes reflect the city's growing popularity. In 2012, New York City welcomed over 52 million visitors and grew in population almost 10 percent in the past decade. This reversal in 1980s urban decay, represents a larger shift in urban desirability. We are living in a time where cities are cool again. People are ditching their over-sized suburban lifestyle and moving into urban cores, finally reinventing the United States in a more European, city center-based, lifestyle.

The epicenter of this cultural shift has and most likely will always be New York City. The growth of urban centers is seen in New York with massive influxes in domestic and foreign capital. Capital that is literally pouring into the city's real estate market, creating one of the largest housing booms not seen in the last century. Over 1,000 city-owned buildings (in Harlem alone) are being snatched up as quickly as they are put on the auctioning block. If the higher end of the market catches your attention, the penthouse at 432 Park Avenue, the city's newest "it" building, is currently in contract for \$95 million. This comes just months after One57, Gary Barnett's Central Park South tower recently announced a buyer for his \$90-plus million penthouse. These listings are just a couple of several \$20-plus million listings that now sprinkle the market. While the ultra-high end market catches the attention of *Page 6* readers, other changes are happening to the market that are a little more discreet.

The Ace Hotel, a high-end boutique chain headquartered in Portland with other locations in Seattle and Palm Springs, opened in 2010 in what many thought was a terrible piece of real estate. The pawn shop-riddled stretch of Broadway that connects Herald Square and Madison Square left little to be desired. Yet, one way or another, the Ace was able to change all of that. The hotel has hosted Alexander Wang's Fashion's Night Out Party, houses the ever-trendy Opening Ceremony and Stumptown Coffee, and has a beautiful lobby space dedicated to the artistically geared, upwardly mobile 20-something crowd. An area that was once a dumping ground for knock off perfumes and handbags appears to be turning around and selling true luxury.

North of Madison Square Park -- NoMad as real estate professionals now call it, is the latest spot for the movers and shakers. The Ace led the way, but now faces competition from the equally trendy NoMad hotel. Opening Ceremony is not accompanied by Kitsune Maison, while both Ace and NoMad hotels offer upscale dining to guests and residents alike. The blossoming hotel scene somewhat reminds me of the Bowery just a few years ago. Similar to the Bowery's transformation (led by the Bowery Hotel and then

Cooper Square Hotel), restaurants and now housing projects appear to be popping up all over the place. Recently CORE started marketing its newest luxury property, 241 Fifth Avenue. Additional projects on the north side of Madison Square Park, along with ever-increasing demand, will make this area an interesting one to follow.

Clearly there is money to be made in the emergence of this new neighborhood. Ultimately, time will be the best factor in the overall success of an area many New Yorker's hardly know about. Real estate professionals across the board seem to have their eye on the high-ceilings, art-deco, and rather untapped market that is the area recently termed "NoMad" the is quickly cementing itself as the city's newest neighborhood, at least for the next couple of months.