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# Alternatives Outlined for W. 96th St.

By ROBERTA B. GRATZ

Christopher Boomis, the East Side builder who is increasingly looking west, appeared personally for the first time before a community meeting last night to outline his plan for building a 34-story apartment house on the northwest corner of Broadway and 96th Street.

The reception he got was far from enthusiastic, but the audience of more than 100 persons was more approving—if still skeptical—than it had been at previous meetings about the plan.

"As a developer," Boomis told the meeting, "I have two approaches I can take." The first, he explained, would be to construct a 34-story, 440-unit tower with commercial space and a garage in the first two stories. This, he emphasized, he could do "by right" because the plan would conform with existing zoning regulations and requires no variance.

The second approach he outlined would be to seek—with community approval—a variance that would allow him to eliminate the garage required by the zoning law and create a large commercial space suitable for a department store. In return for community approval of the variance needed for this plan, the stocky, 53-year-old builder said he was willing to "negotiate with the community" to either set aside "probably 14 apartments for the elderly" at half the market rents or provide community facilities—"whichever the community prefers."

He would also be willing, Boomis said, to consider financing the renovation of the Broadway mall between 96th and 97th Streets and install new lighting on 97th Street.

"I would rather do it that way, with community approval," Boomis said, referring to the second approach.

The 96th to 97th Street block front is the same site where community opposition four years ago short-circuited plans for an Alexander's department store.

All 440 apartments of the 96th Street tower will be one-bedroom units, renting for \$350 to \$400, including utilities and cable TV.

Since it is being built under the city's special tax abatement program, which waives property tax payments for two years and then a graduated tax for 10 years before the property becomes fully taxpaying. After the first two years, the landlord may increase rents enough to compensate for tax payments.