

# Luxury Apartments Finding Home on W. Side

By ROBERTA H. GRATZ

Luxury apartment construction, grinding to a halt in most areas of the city seems to be picking up steam on the West Side.

Christopher Boomis, the luxury high-rise builder most active on the West Side, is planning yet another apartment house, this one on the site of the Good Shepherd Faith Church at 152 W. 66th St., between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue.

A Boomis project is already under construction one block north on 67th Street between Amsterdam and Broadway and his plan to build at 66th Street and Broadway is still moving.

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The 66th Street project is rather unusual for the area and, in fact, for the city. Although plans are not final—Boomis is still awaiting mortgage approval—they would provide for a lease of the land to Boomis in exchange for a new rent-free church within the first two floors of a 32-story tower. A portion of the rental income—how much is still to be negotiated—would go to the church.

## All 1-Bedroom Apts

It is within the Lincoln Square special zoning district and will require no zoning variances. The district is bounded roughly by 60th and 68th Streets, Amsterdam Avenue and Central Park W. The building, to be designed by the architectural firm of MacFadyen/De Vidlo, will contain 120 one-bedroom apartments. Like his other West Side projects, Boomis is hoping to build this one under the city's tax abatement program, which aims to set rents 15 per cent below the market level. The selection of a site containing no residential tenants and the allowance for only one-bedroom apartments are also consistent with Boomis' West Side development pattern.

The Rev. Richard Symes, minister of the Presbyterian church for 10 years, says that the 100-member, mostly low-income congregation has been hoping for this kind of arrangement for seven years. The 60-year old structure, which is not architecturally

distinctive, is, says Rev. Symes, "inefficient, run-down and not good for use by the community." The proposed arrangement, he adds, would give the church a multiple use facility, make it self-supporting and return a tax-exempt property to the tax rolls.

Also on the West Side development scene, the Planning Commission has scheduled a hearing for Oct. 30 on the plans of builder Paul Milstein to construct a luxury apartment tower with

eight floors of commercial space on the east side of Broadway between 62d and 63d Streets. Like the new Boomis project, this too is within the Lincoln Square special zoning district.

Milstein's plan has caused considerable controversy since he applied in June to the Board of Standards and Appeals for a hardship variance that would allow him to build a 43-story, 612-unit tower. If built, it would have the highest density of any new residential building in the city.

In special zoning districts, bulk bonuses are granted by the Planning Commission to builders providing special amenities such as arcades and plazas. Since the Milstein project is within such a district, the Board requested Milstein to submit his plan first to the Planning Commission before applying for a hardship variance.

The proposal Milstein has submitted for Planning Commission approval is reportedly quite different in design—it has a landscaped plaza at

the rear, a Broadway arcade and a covered plaza linking the two—and is 30 stories high, instead of the 43.

After a preliminary examination, a spokesman for the Planning Commission said that the new plan appears to conform to special district limits.

However, Charles Moerder, a former Buildings Commissioner who is Milstein's lawyer, indicated that if this plan is approved, Milstein still plans to appeal to the BSA for a variance on hard-

ship grounds to enlarge the bulk as originally requested.

"We will not only have done what the BSA wanted in getting a planning determination," he says, "but we have redesigned the whole lower level."

Fred Papert, the advertising executive who helped organize the Citywide Lincoln Square Defense Committee to oppose the Milstein variance, said the committee will continue to oppose any variance request that "would give one foot in excess of what the special district provides. If a variance is granted, we plan to make a well-organized, well-financed legal effort to have it overturned."