

MANN REPORT RESIDENTIAL



JOSH GUBERMAN
CORE DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC

Building On A Unique Business Model

Core Development Group

Spaciousness, elegance, and value...cutting-edge design and detail...superior custom work and craftsmanship—these are the most visible qualities that mark Core Development Group’s projects. Yet they are only part of a commitment to excellence that runs through the company’s unique operations.

That commitment starts with searching out new properties, and follows with buying and constructing them, marketing them, and then operating the buildings as their managing agents. “It’s a vertical business model that is unique in real estate,” points out Josh Guberman, Core Development Group’s CEO.

Josh Guberman’s commitment goes even further. “As managing agents for our buildings, we are the people our residents call when something doesn’t work,” he says. “We like that! We love to learn, we love to grow, we love to understand what building materials hold up well—what new uses we might find for fine flooring, stone, tile, and other materials. We like to stay on the cutting edge of building industry technology, to see what we can bring to our next developments.”

This learning is evident in Core Development Group’s newest homes. Two of them are on the market now: Legacy condominiums, on Manhattan’s East 84th Street, and LUX 74, on East 74th Street.

“Legacy is an extraordinary boutique-style luxury house,” Guberman notes. “It’s designed by Costas Kondylis and is one of a handful of smaller-scale projects on which he personally oversees design each year. The building was a six-story garage, dating to the turn of the 20th century, spanning more than 50 feet without any interior columns. It was ideal for condo conversion: its structural supports hold up the walls, so we were able to design stunning open floor plates—40-foot living rooms and expansive bedrooms—without the impact of structural steel.”

LUX 74 was also originally a garage, two stories high. “We razed it and started from scratch,” says Guberman. “LUX offers a variety of unique residences, ranging from studio to spacious five-bedroom units. The building has full concierge service, a state-of-the-art fitness room, landscaped roof deck, and other amenities. At the

same time, we made a particular effort to make it an affordable entry-level luxury option for people just starting out in the market or looking to upgrade.”

A third, recently completed project is Core Development Group’s Union Square Lofts, consisting of seven handcrafted residences—four full-floor lofts and three multi-floor units—in two adjacent buildings on lower Fifth Avenue. “Core Development Group, by the way, should not be confused with a recently launched brokerage company, The Core Group,” he points out. “We’re not related, even though its CEO, Shaun Osher, is a friend.” Guberman adds with a smile, “We build! Shaun and The Core Group sell!”

In building, Core Development Group brings strong cost control to its properties, from construction to managing the finished building on behalf of its tenants. “Many developers put together projections for operating costs—such as gas, electricity, insurance, or labor—that are grossly inadequate and which require assessments and common charge increases after unit owners move in,” says Guberman. “When we plan a building, we ensure that our projections for common charges are as close as possible to the actual costs of running the building. In the past ten years, we have been very successful in having little or no increases to common charges. We’re very proud of that.”

These three projects are only the latest in Josh Guberman’s 15-year career of developing and building high-end residences. He was the first residential builder/developer in the history of Greenpoint, Brooklyn. The Greenpoint projects, in turn, followed an earlier attempt at residential renovation, in the mid-90s, in Clinton Hill. “That was a ten-apartment SRO building,” he recalls. “I saw an opportunity to restore a really run-down eyesore and create something special for multi-family use. I even worked with Landmarks on restoring the building’s complete exterior. But after seven incidents of vandalism, along with lots of community unrest and uncertainty about what I was doing, I realized that I didn’t want to be the developer in a neighborhood that simply didn’t embrace development.”

“I moved on to Greenpoint,” he recounts. “The neighborhood had just been rezoned and light industry was moving out. Until then,



Photography: JillPhotography.com

Josh Guberman

Greenpoint had no condos. What I found there were older townhouses, small single-family homes, pre-war brick buildings, and, more important, a homogeneous neighborhood of people who were deeply committed to the safety, beauty, and improvement of their community. I saw that modern-art glass and stone structures would look completely out of place, so I created two mid-sized condo projects with beautiful red brick exteriors, limestone façades, and handcrafted metal gates. Further, we made sure to market our product at a price point that the local residents could afford. In the end, out of some 70 units we sold, probably 30 percent were bought by local residents.”

“What’s more, we are still managing virtually all our projects,”

Guberman adds. “I feel it’s very important to stay connected with the buildings and with the unit buyers. Being available for them, whether directly or through their brokers; to be able to address issues or concerns they may have; to steady and clarify expectations; and to follow through on our commitments for delivering their home and ensuring that the quality of life in that home is solid—all this represents a very important facet of our mission statement at Core Development Group.”

Josh Guberman has been involved for some 20 years with pursuits related to real estate—first crafting and developing stores for a retail clothing chain; then starting his own design and construction company specializing in retail stores, restaurants, and high end residential renovations; and today pursuing development. “It has always been a labor of love, and it still is,” he says. “I enjoy the architectural planning, the interior design, personally selecting the stone that will go into each bathroom, the material for the kitchens, or the lobby design. Combining these aspects with the development, the construction, and then managing the properties—it’s what I believe is a unique management concept. But it’s one I can handle only with the great team I have executing it at Core.

“Our mantra is, ‘we don’t sell; our customers buy,’” Guberman says. “We’re not interested in convincing someone that an apartment of ours is something they absolutely must have. We want people in our buildings who will be a good fit with those buildings. During bidding wars, we’ve even chosen buyers that offered significantly less because they were easy to work with. The people we want are those who will live in harmony with their neighbors, who will be respectful of the common areas, who will follow the protocols of the condo by-laws, and who will work hand in hand with their fellow unit owners on the condo board. Yes, we’re builders, but our commitment at Core Development Group is not maximum profit, it’s the quality of life and integrity in the product we build.” ■

By Peter Haas

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