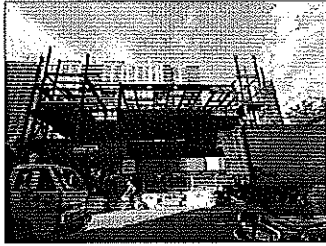


THE REAL DEAL

NEW YORK CITY REAL ESTATE NEWS

Lincoln Square's new shul looks nothing especially synagogue-like

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By James Gardner



Construction is almost complete on the new Lincoln Square synagogue

After a tumultuous few years, with work stoppages and money in short supply, Lincoln Square Synagogue's new building is finally approaching completion at 180 Amsterdam Avenue, near 68th Street. Already its sinuous four-story curtain-wall façade is nearly complete and lies exposed for all to see.

A Modern Orthodox congregation founded in 1964, Lincoln Square Synagogue may be most famous these days as the place where Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, Elena Kagan received the synagogue's first bat mitzvah in 1973.

But it has always been conspicuous in architectural circles for its mod, space-age mother-ship, completed in 1970, that looks like something out of a Stanley Kubrick film, even though, in a nod to the nearby Lincoln Center, it was clad in the classicizing travertine favored in that complex. As congregations go, this one appears to be especially attuned to architecture.

"As a rabbi, using architecture to foster inclusivity and enhance the spiritual experience within a Jewish Halachic context was paramount to me," said Lincoln Square's Rabbi Shaul Robinson.



The resulting new building, which broke ground in 2007 and is just down the street from the original building at 200 Amsterdam Avenue near 70th Street, has been designed by the local firm of Cetra/Ruddy. Comprising 52,000 square feet, it will contain a sanctuary for more than 400 people, a study area for 125 congregants and a 10,000-square-foot banquet space.

But, externally, the dominant aspect of the new building, which appears to be flanked by brick structures on either side, is an undulating four-story curtain wall, each level of which moves autonomously and is formed by narrow plates of translucent glass.

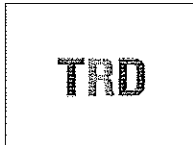
For the first new synagogue built in Manhattan in the last five decades, there is nothing especially synagogue-like about its forms, but then, there was hardly anything of the sort in the older building either. For now though, it looks promising enough along this weary stretch of Amsterdam and is destined to carry on the enterprising architecture spirit of the original building. Indeed, any sense of respite from the long years of construction and delay will seem most welcome not only to the worshippers, but to everyone in the surrounding neighborhood.

Tags: 180 amsterdam avenue, Completion, lincoln square synagogue

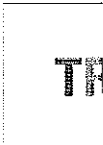
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