

Essex Crossing will now come with more affordable housing

The developers are adding 61 affordable apartments, and 17 market-rate units

BY [TANAY WAREKAR](#) FEB 16, 2017, 4:10PM EST



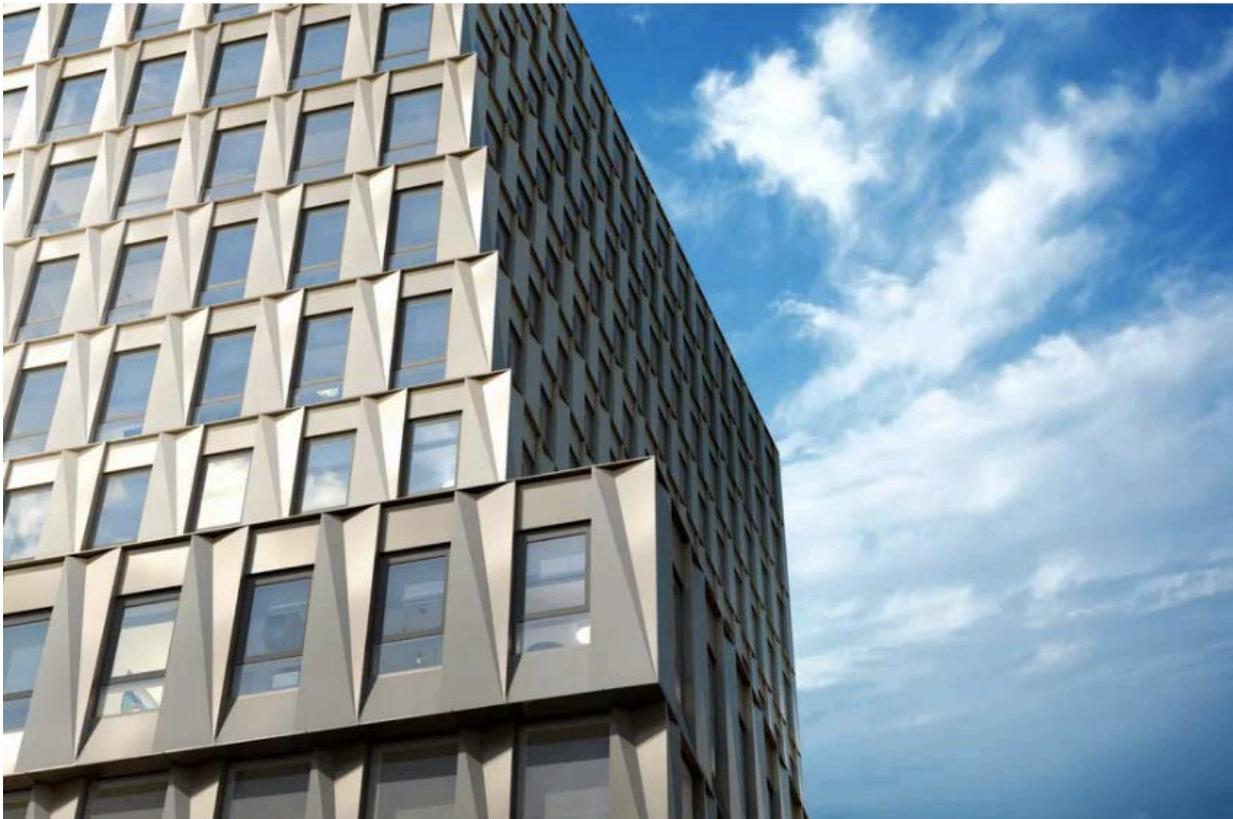
Courtesy of SHoP Architects

As the Essex Crossing megaproject on the Lower East Side gets ready to move into the second phase of development, the developers have made some slight alterations to the overall plan, which will lead to an increase in both the affordable and market-rate units at the project.

The total number of affordable apartments will now go up from the existing 500 to 561, and the market-rate units will also increase slightly from 500 to 517, Isaac Henderson, project manager for the Delancey Street Associates (the development consortium behind the megaproject), announced at Community Board 3's land use committee meeting last night.

In addition, the developers have decided to add three new income bands of affordability at the overall project, making the affordable units accessible to an ever larger group than before. These units will now be open to New Yorkers making 30, 40, and 50 percent of the area median income, which now means the overall range of affordability will span 30 percent-155 percent of area median income.

While there was lots to celebrate in terms of affordable housing at the site, the expiration of the 421-a tax break program has also forced the developers to take away some of the affordable condos. While 32 affordable condos were originally planned for the megaproject, that has now come down to 11, all of which will be located at [242 Broome Street](#). These affordable apartments, which will come in one, two, and three-bedroom variations will likely cost between \$225,000 to \$325,000.



The condo at 242 Broome Street *Courtesy of MOSO Studio*

Even if some version of the 421-a is approved (like the one Governor Andrew Cuomo is [currently pushing forward](#)), it's unlikely that the developers will bring back these affordable condos, Henderson said at the meeting last night, stressing that the project needed to stay on track.

As some form of compensation, the proposed building at site 8, which would have had 19 market-rate condos and 5 affordable ones, will now have 92 fully-affordable studio apartments for low-income seniors.

One of the community board members at the meeting pointed to the fact that many of the seniors in the neighborhood had larger families and would find studio apartments unviable, to which Henderson pointed again to the additional bands of affordability, and the 61 new affordable apartments. (All the affordable apartments will be offered in a variety of configurations).

Another proposed condo building that saw a change was the project proposed for site 9. That too was going to be an 80/20 condo building like site 8, but now it will be a 50/50, meaning half the units here will be affordable.

On the flip side, the project at site 3, which was going to be a 50/50 rental is now going to be a fully market-rate condo building, as will the project at site 10—that was originally going to be an 80/20 condo.

The only other site left is site 4, where developers are planning a 50/50 rental.

The second phase of development at Essex Crossing relates to sites 3,4, and 8, and work on all three is expected to get underway sometime between June and December this year. Work on sites 9 and 10 comprises the third and final phase of construction on the megaproject and won't get underway for a few more years.

Meanwhile work on phase 1 of Essex Crossing is scheduled to wrap up at various times over the course of 2018. That includes the above-mentioned 242 Broome Street (site 1). Then there's site 2, which will come with a 195-unit rental building (98 affordable apartments) and a movie theater courtesy Regal Cinemas. The 15-story building at [site 5](#) is designed by Beyer Blinder Belle and will have 211 rentals, half of them affordable. Finally, at site 6, Dattner Architects have designed [a fully affordable building](#) with 100 apartments for low-income seniors. The affordable housing lotteries for these last two buildings are expected to kick off in the next few weeks.



What the fully affordable senior building at Site 6 looked like last summer. *By Joel Raskin*