



## Well-heeled New Yorkers are flocking to the 'Fur District'

By Emily Nonko  
Impressions 23,917,718



Simon Fagg recently moved to amenity-laden rental Abington House. It's just one of the projects energizing 30th Street, once the domain of 9-to-5ers. Zandy Mangold

In the 1970s, Bennett Model commuted to work on 30th Street at his family's company, a buying office that purchased luxury outerwear for stores around the world. At the time, the area was known as the [Fur District](#): Between 30th and 27th streets and Sixth and Eighth avenues, "there were over 350 fur-related companies" — and not much else, says Model, now 70.

It was unfathomable that the neighborhood would attract more than a 9-to-5 crowd; the swath south of Penn Station and the Empire State Building was dominated by

Nypost.com  
March 14, 2018

commercial businesses and had nothing in the way of nightlife. “It wasn’t a place where people lived,” Model says.

Today, developers are building 346 condo and rental units along 30th Street, from the Hudson to the East River, according to Halstead Property Development Marketing. New residents bullish on the area include Simon Fagg, a 42-year-old Brit who moved to a studio at 500 W. 30th St.’s Abington House in 2015.

The shift was, of course, gradual. In the 1990s, Model witnessed fur companies getting priced out or taking business elsewhere, and warehouses were converted to loft apartments.

These days, he observes, practically everything — the under-construction towers, the Kimpton Hotel Eventi (renovated in 2015), Nordstrom Rack (opened in fall 2017) and hip Till & Sprocket restaurant (a 2016 debut) — is different. “Only the facades of the buildings are the same,” he says.

Model is now president of his family business, Annabelle New York at 247 W. 30th St., which sells contemporary ready-to-wear designs — some with fur, some without.



Brian Zak



Fur industry vet Bennett Model has witnessed the area's shift to residential.  
[Brian Zak/NY Post](#)

He hastens to add, "We're not making your grandmother's fur coat anymore." You could argue the same is true for 30th Street, which is shedding its old identity as a commercial corridor and reinventing itself with new residential development.

Hudson Yards now anchors the west side of the stretch, with 30th Street serving as a gateway into the southern swath of the under-construction mixed-use neighborhood between 10th Avenue and the Hudson River. Closer to the middle of Manhattan, upscale developments are on the rise, promising luxury units and new retail. On the quieter eastern end, there are still deals to be had in slightly older apartment buildings.

Related made an early bet on the block, tapping award-winning architect Robert A.M. Stern to design Abington House. Laden with amenities, the 312-unit rental opened in 2014. There are currently three apartments available with additional units to be listed soon, ranging between \$3,330 to \$8,155 per month.

"The area is getting more and more exciting," says Fagg, who works for a science-based software company. His apartment (studios in the building start at \$3,330/month)

Nypost.com  
March 14, 2018

boasts a 200-square-foot terrace; Fagg adds he spends much of his time walking the High Line or exploring nearby Chelsea.

It is the proximity to neighborhoods like Chelsea, with more developed retail and restaurant strips, and transit hubs like Penn Station, that have residents warming up to 30th Street. "With some clients, there's a stigma that this isn't a [real] neighborhood," says Boris Sharapan Fabrikant, an agent with Triplemint. "That perception is changing."

Data from Triplemint shows 70 resale units on the market and 59 new-development pads up for grabs.

But a slew of apartments are yet to come. One major addition is Related's One Hudson Yards at 530 W. 30th St. The 178-unit tower launched leasing last summer, with rents on one- to four-bedrooms ranging from \$5,095 to \$24,500 a month. At 90 percent leased, there are 19 units left priced between \$9,150 to \$16,250 per month.

One Hudson Yards connects under the High Line to Abington House and the two buildings share amenities like a gym, a sauna, a hot tub and an 82-foot pool. It's something Fagg, also a trained fitness mobility specialist, calls "a real draw."

Just northwest of One Hudson Yards, Related and Oxford Property Group are developing 15 Hudson Yards, a 285-unit condo tower with units asking between \$3.89 and \$32 million. (The building is located directly over the rail yards, at the corner of 30th Street and 11th Avenue.)

Nypost.com  
March 14, 2018



The One Hudson Yards rental (center), slanty arts venue The Shed (rear right) and a public artwork (right) are all new to 30th Street. Related

Sherry Tobak, senior vice president of Related Companies, says her team fielded 8,000 inquiries leading up to the 2016 sales launch; the recently topped-out building is now 50 percent spoken for. “People are excited about living in a new neighborhood,” she says. “It’s something that has set the tone for 30th Street.”

Besides Hudson Yard’s amenities — from a 35,000-square-foot Spanish food hall run by celeb chef José Andrés to the city’s first Neiman Marcus to a \$200 million public art piece called Vessel, made of 154 staircases — there’s also arts center The Shed, designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro in collaboration with Rockwell Group. The glassy

Nypost.com  
March 14, 2018

200,000-square-foot structure with a movable roof will open at 545 W. 30th St. in 2019.

This summer, The Shed is hosting a 12-day event series with music and dance performances in an empty lot at 360 10th Ave., on the corner of 30th. The lot is owned by Frank McCourt, former owner of the Los Angeles Dodgers. Sources say McCourt is still working on sorting out development plans for the site, a planned \$3 billion, 730,000-square-foot residential tower with retail at the base.

Farther west, at 606 W. 30th St., another major transformation is underway. Douglaston Development has plans for a 32-story building with 206 rentals, which would connect to a 62-story building with 990 more units at 601 W. 29th St. (The site is now home to structures that house Jeff Koons' studio and a Port Authority office building.) A Douglaston spokesperson says the project "recently began the public review process and will continue for the next several months."

Modal Trigger



Famed architect Rafael Viñoly (right) is designing 277 Fifth Ave., where condos start at \$1.92 million.

Pentagram; J Grassi/Patrickmcmullan.com

A few major developments are taking advantage of 30th Street's more central section. At 277 Fifth Ave., a 55-story tower by Rafael Viñoly recently topped out; it will open with 130 condos later this year. Developed by Victor Group and Lend Lease, "the location has both uptown and downtown appeal," says Scott Walsh, senior

Nypost.com  
March 14, 2018

development manager with Lend Lease.

"It's equidistant from Washington Square and Central Park." There has been interest in available units, priced between \$1.92 and \$9.2 million, from people already living in the neighborhood who are drawn to a starchitect-designed building, Walsh says.

Condo sales are also moving along at NOMA, located at 50 W. 30th St. The FXCollaborative-designed, Alchemy Properties-developed tower is offering up 55 units. Pricing on available units is between \$2.4 million and \$6.9 million; closings are slated for spring. "We thought the building and area would appeal to a younger crowd," says Alchemy president Ken Horn.



Annette Petrusa, a 37-year owner at the Kips Bay Towers complex, has seen the neighborhood gain traction with new residents. Erik Thomas/NY Post

As real estate prices increase along the western and central portions of 30th Street, there are more affordable options closer to the East River. East 30th Street was "very desolate" in 1981, according to Annette Petrusa, the year she bought a condo at Kips Bay Towers, a complex designed by I.M. Pei between First and Second avenues.

She left a career in fashion to become a real estate agent and now operates her own firm that specializes in the building. Petrusa has likewise seen the area's prices creep upwards: The median price of a one-bedroom spread in Kips Bay Towers rose from \$865,000 in 2016 to \$890,000 in 2017, she says. "Today we have a mix of ages,

Nypost.com  
March 14, 2018

professions and many young people drawn by the [East River] ferry location" at East 34th St., she adds. Her latest listing, a studio asking \$540,000, entered contract after one day. Another studio, on the 19th floor, is currently asking \$560,000 with Corcoran.

From east to west, 30th Street has come a long way from its days as the Fur District. Even fur industry veteran Model says, "the new buildings and restaurants are fabulous." And his commute from uptown, he adds, could be done away with altogether: "Now, I want to live here."

<https://nypost.com/2018/03/14/well-heeled-new-yorkers-are-flocking-to-the-fur-district/>