

harlem world

around the block, around the world

All Systems Go For 125th Street Project

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The architecture firm behind a new 360,000 s/f mixed use property to be developed above the former Victoria Theater in [Harlem](#) says the ambitious project will “link the past and the future.”

Aufgang & Subotovski is designing the commercial and residential project on [125th Street](#) in Harlem, where two 26-story towers, including a 210-room hotel, a 230-unit [apartment tower](#) and a cultural center, will rise above the historic theater.

“This is really going to preserve a piece of Harlem’s history,” said Ari Aufgang, a principal at the firm.

A handful of major restorations will bring back the theater’s original look, with restorations to the original 1917 façade and original marquee, glowing ceiling panels, gilded chandeliers, and an original grand stairway, Aufgang said. While history is preserved, the project will also pave the way for the future of the area, he added, saying, “This is going to be the first major project of this scope in the area and it will promote further development.”



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The hotel will feature retail space, restaurants, and a 5,000 s/f ballroom for conferences and other political and social events, Aufgang said, though no tenants have been officially named. The complex will also include a 25,000 s/f arts center, housing the Classical Theater of Harlem, [JazzMobile](#), the [Apollo Theater](#) Foundation and the Harlem Arts Alliance; and a 199-seat [black box theatre](#) and 99-seat multi-purpose theatre space.

The city rezoned the street in 2008, paving the way for developers to replace small-scale buildings with office towers, residential high-rises and cultural institutions.

“There is some low-rise development, but as far as large, [mixed-use developments](#) this is the only one,” Aufgang said.

Construction, slated to begin early next year, will take between 18 and 24 months, he added. The owner of the land, [Empire State Development Corporation](#), chose Danforth Development Partners to spearhead the project in 2007, but the plans were shelved during the market collapse; then in March 2011 Danforth teamed up with equity partner Exact Capital to rekindle the venture.

[Source: REAL ESTATE WEEKLY]