

Hentze-Dor Real Estate, Inc.

April 14, 2014

Huge New York Development Project Becomes a Data Science Lab

Huge New York Development Project Becomes a Data Science Lab By STEVE LOHR April 14, 2014, The collaboration between the developers of Hudson Yards, on Manhattan's West Side, and New York University is evidence of the potential for the emerging field of "urban informatics." Marilynn K. Yee/The New York Times The collaboration between the developers of Hudson Yards, on Manhattan's West Side, and New York University is evidence of the potential for the emerging field of "urban informatics." Hudson Yards is a huge estate development project, the largest in New York since Rockefeller Center. It is to include office towers, apartments, shops, a luxury hotel, a public school and acres of public space. Construction began at the end of 2012, and has picked up recently. But the sprawling development on Manhattan's West Side, built on top of old rail yards along the Hudson River, will also become an urban laboratory for data science. The developers, Related Companies and Oxford Properties Group, are teaming up with New York University's Center for Urban Science and Progress to create a "quantified community." The people aren't there yet; the first office tower is scheduled to open next year, and the first residential building in 2017. But the plan is extraordinary in its size and comprehensive approach, built in from the outset. Among the things expected to be measured and modeled: pedestrian flows, street traffic, air quality, energy use, waste disposal, recycling, and health and activity levels of workers and residents. Privacy issues, of course, loom over the program. Researchers at N.Y.U. insist that any individual measuring, in homes or using smartphones, will require participants to choose to join, or opt in. And information collected for research or to make community services more efficient, they say, will be made anonymous, so people cannot be identified personally. Yet the conditions under which people will feel comfortable sharing their personal information, the researchers say, will be another subject for experiment in the living laboratory of the Hudson Yards community. The Hudson Yards collaboration is evidence of the potential for the emerging field of "urban informatics." It is a field fueled by the advance of digital technologies — sensors, wireless communication, storage and clever software — that make it possible to see and measure activities in an urban environment as never before. There are dozens of research programs at universities worldwide seeking to use data science to better understand urban settings and behavior. The N.Y.U. center is at the forefront. It has links with several universities, and is supported by corporations including I.B.M., Microsoft, Xerox and Cisco, which are pursuing business in the "smart cities" market. Cities around the world are using data collection and analysis tools to manage traffic, curb crime and conserve electricity and water. But most of the programs, experts say, are efforts to address one goal or another, and are being added to the existing infrastructure in old cities. Hudson Yards will be different. "To start from scratch and to put all these technologies together in an integrated way is a neat opportunity, and an exciting thing to do," said Charlie Catlett, director of the Urban Center for Computation and Data, a joint initiative of the University of Chicago and Argonne National Laboratory. A rendering, provided by the Related Companies, of the Hudson Yards development along Midtown Manhattan's western edge. A rendering, provided by the Related Companies, of the Hudson Yards development along Midtown Manhattan's western edge.

47-14 32nd Place, Long Island City, NY, 11101 | Telephone: 718-786-5151 | Fax: 718-786-6914

All information furnished regarding property for sale, rent exchange or financing is from sources deemed reliable. No representation is made as to the accuracy thereof and it is submitted subject to errors, omissions, change of price, rental or other conditions, prior sale, lease or financing or withdrawal without notice.