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## New Manhattan Condos Offer Old-World Motor Courts

Developments with the amenity include 50 United Nations Plaza, 252 East 57th Street and 20 East End Avenue



A number of luxury condo buildings under construction in Manhattan, including 20 East End Avenue, plan to include motor courts. HAYES DAVIDSON

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**New York's luxury** condo developers are pitching a solution to curbside parking in ankle-deep slush: an old-world motor court.

A number of luxury condo buildings under construction in Manhattan plan to include spacious motor courts, in which a driveway leads to an open area near the entryway for passenger drop-off. The courts give residents the time and space to unload belongings away from the street. Typically, a doorman or attendant is on hand to assist. If you want to park, however, you have to pay: \$250,000 in one example.

The feature is closely linked to buildings from the Gilded Age and early 1900s. Two iconic buildings, the Apthorp and the Dakota, both on the Upper West Side, are among the handful of residential buildings with a true motor court. More recently, a motor court was included in the Robert A.M. Stern-designed 15 Central Park West, built in 2007, perhaps sparking a comeback.

“The problem is that a motor court takes up a lot of space, says William L. Zeckendorf, co-chairman of Zeckendorf Development, which along with Global Holdings is developing 50 United Nations Plaza. When completed, it will have a 10,000-square-foot motor court, Mr. Zeckendorf says. “The zoning for this particular building allowed for one.”

In New York’s competitive real-estate market, Mr. Zeckendorf says developers are always looking for a marketing edge. The motor court “is an amenity that cannot be duplicated easily,” he says. “While it may not sell the apartment, it makes closing the deal easier.”

Here’s a sampling of three luxury buildings in the works that include motor courts.

—Beth DeCarbo



PHOTO: HAYES DAVIDSON/JAMES EWING



## 50 United Nations Plaza

When completed, this contemporary condo development will include 88 apartments. Designed by Foster + Partners, the building will have views of the United Nations Secretariat building, the East River and the Chrysler Building. While the building has a modern design, the landscaping around the motor court was “meant to be reminiscent of an English mews house. It softens the hardness of the architecture,” Mr. Zeckendorf says.

When the building is ready for occupancy in March, prices will range from \$2.21 million for a one-bedroom to \$70 million for a duplex penthouse. Owners can purchase a parking space in the building’s underground garage for an additional \$150,000.



PHOTO: PIRANHA

## 252 East 57th Street

In the early stages of designing this building, designers visited a number of elegant, prewar buildings for inspiration. They ultimately decided to incorporate a gated porte cochère—similar to a motor court, only smaller—into the design. Despite the smaller size, the drive can accommodate up to six cars, says Pamela D’Arc, director of sales at Stribling Marking Associates, which is handling sales for the building.

Developed by World Wide Group and Rose Associates, 252 East 57th will stand 65 stories high. When the building is completed in the last quarter of 2016, it will have 93 condos, starting on the 36th floor.

The design includes a high-tech twist: an automated parking system. Upon arrival, the driver can open a bay door, put the car on a platform and walk a few steps to the lobby entrance. An automated system delivers the vehicle to one of the building’s 54 parking spots below.

Apartments in 252 E. 57th start at \$4.195 million for a two-bedroom apartment. A license to use the automated parking system can be purchased for \$250,000, not including common charges and taxes.



PHOTO: HAYES DAVIDSON

## **20 East End Avenue**

Upon arriving, residents will drive through an arch and under this 17-story luxury condo building into a motor court laid with an intricate pattern of cobblestones. An open-air portion at the rear of the court has a fountain, set off with landscaping and latticework.

The space has “the feeling of a garden,” says Robert A.M. Stern, whose firm, Robert A.M. Stern Architects, designed the building. He notes that the neighborhood has a lot of older residential buildings, many built by Vincent Astor in the early- to mid-1900s. “We had those things in mind in trying to find our own way of creating a special sense of arrival,” Mr. Stern says.

When construction is completed in summer 2016, 20 East End Avenue will consist of 43 two- to six-bedroom apartments, including three duplex townhomes and two penthouses. Prices will range from about \$4.5 million to over \$25 million. The building, developed by Corigin Real Estate Group, does not offer private parking space, but it is flanked by parking garages on either side.