

Ceruzzi, SMI USA Buying Midtown Site From Thor for \$325M

BY LAUREN ELKIES SCHRAM JUNE 25, 2015, 5:15 P.M.



RENDERING OF 520 FIFTH AVENUE (IMAGE: COSTAR).

Ceruzzi Properties and Shanghai's SMI USA are purchasing a demolished Midtown site from Thor Equities in a \$325 million deal for land and air rights, Ceruzzi head Lou Ceruzzi told Commercial Observer. The deal is under hard contract.

"We expect to build retail, hotel and residential," Mr. Ceruzzi said about the site at 520 Fifth Avenue between West 43rd and West 44th Streets. The Handel Architects-designed 71-story building can be as big as 400,000 square feet, he noted. The buyers hope to break ground by the end of the year.

Mr. Ceruzzi clarified some of the details to CO after seeing previous reports about the sale.

The buyers are moving forward with Thor's design for the site.

“We paid a price and that included very complete designs for the property,” Mr. Ceruzzi said. But the building will likely be slightly modified, “subject to input from the hotel company.”

A team from HFF represented Thor in the deal and Ceruzzi and SMI did not have a broker.

Thor bought 516, 518 and 520 Fifth Avenue for \$132 million in March 2012, property records indicate. The firm put the site on the market at the beginning of this year, hoping to sell it for \$350 million, Crain’s New York Business previously reported.

Thor declined to comment through a spokesman.