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Former illegal UWS hotel to become permanent supportive housing

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The Morningside Inn at 235 W. 107th St.

A development team has secured funding to turn a former illegal hotel on the Upper West Side into permanent supportive housing for the homeless, adding a bit of momentum to the [nascent push](#) to use single-room occupancy buildings as a way to confront the city's housing and homelessness crises.

The SRO building at 235 W. 107th St. was known as the Morningside Inn. It had been used as a hotel despite not having the proper approvals from the city before Rockabill Development and Goddard Riverside acquired it in 2021 for \$12.6 million. The building racked up almost \$280,000 in fines while its rooms were being improperly used for short-term rentals, according to the Mayor's Office of Special Enforcement.

Rockabill and Goddard have now landed \$38 million in funding to move forward with converting it into permanent supportive and affordable housing, which should cover the entire cost of the project. The financing is split between \$18.4 million from the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, \$14 million from Chase and \$700,000 from the offices of Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine and Councilwoman Gale Brewer.

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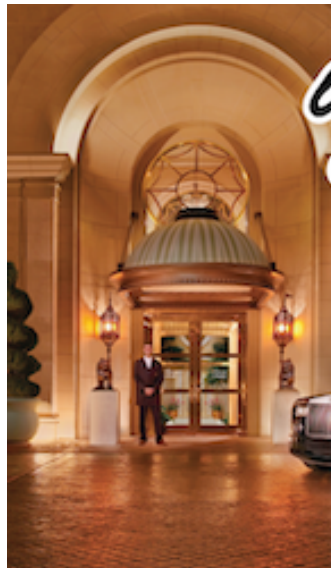


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The 6-story property was built in 1912 and has 84 residential units, only about half of which have a private bathroom. The conversion will reconfigure the building to give each unit its own bathroom, which will reduce the number of residential units to 68, along with one unit for a superintendent.



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The residences will include 54 supportive housing units for the chronically homeless, six affordable units that people will apply for through the city's housing lottery, and eight affordable units for the building's current long-term residents.

There also will be two communal kitchens and dining areas on each floor meant for between six and seven tenants. A community room and space for case management and social services will go on the renovated first floor and cellar, while other renovations will include elevator upgrades, repairs

to the exterior façade and new floors.

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Goddard Riverside is an Upper West Side-based nonprofit focusing on social work, and the West 107th Street project will be named after Stephan Russo, its former executive director.

The property will keep its status as an SRO building. These types of homes fell out of favor decades ago, with politicians banning the construction of new units and campaigning to shut down existing ones, ultimately destroying much of the SRO inventory.

However, the idea of reviving them has been gaining momentum as New York confronts a serious [homelessness problem](#) and [housing shortage](#). In September the city [launched a pilot program](#) that moved 80 formerly homeless New Yorkers into empty supportive housing units at four SRO buildings in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

"At a time when the need for high-quality supportive housing has never been greater, the responsible preservation of SROs is smart public policy and adds to the social safety net for extremely low-income New Yorkers," Rockabill Principal Katie Devine said in a statement.

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