

Sent by Sue Susman June 21, 2011

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Retail condos: stores and residents share new developments

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A Whole Foods, Crumbs and Sephora fill the ground floor of Columbus Square

By Liana Grey

At Court Square, a mixed-use project Rockrose will soon be developing near Jackson Avenue, in the heart of Long Island City, Dunphy hopes to populate storefronts with nothing but mom and pop shops. "They know the customers will be able to afford their services," she said.

That, too, was the lure for the shops that moved into a former retail desert on the Upper West Side. Beginning in 2009, Chetrit Group and Stellar Management filled the ground floor of Columbus Square, a rental complex that stretches between 97th and 100th Street on Columbus Avenue, with a Whole Foods, Crumbs Bakery, Sephora, and other prominent national chains.

"It's a high-end neighborhood now. Before it was blight," said Lauren Rosenthal, a broker at Citi Habitats. "It's basically a really nice mini-mall right in a residential neighborhood." [*Did you know our neighborhood was blighted?!!! - Sue*]

Rosenthal has shown a handful of clients units at the development, and if it weren't for the strip of shops along Columbus Avenue, they might have overlooked the block entirely and missed out on touring stunning residential amenities at 808 Columbus, like landscaped gardens and a salt-water swimming pool.

"They're still developing the Amsterdam side," Rosenthal said. "I was just there yesterday and there was a new grocery store."