

## The Upscaling of Stuyvesant Town

### Ability to obtain market rents spurs MetLife upgrades

Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village house an estimated 25,000 to 30,000 people in 11,250 apartments on 80 acres of land from First Avenue to the East River between 14th Street and 23rd Street. Stuyvesant Town, which runs from 14th Street to 20th Street, has 89 buildings with 8,757 apartments. Construction started in 1945, and by the time occupancy was under way in 1947, MetLife had acquired the land for Peter Cooper Village, from 20th Street to 23rd Street. Peter Cooper has 2,493 apartments in 21 buildings, and it had a higher initial rent structure for its larger apartments.

The master plan for the new improvement program is the work of Paul Rosen and Anthony Johnson of Rosen Johnson Architects of Manhattan. "It was very important to MetLife that the aesthetics of Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village should be respected, and not replaced with a style du jour," Mr. Rosen said.

Work will begin in the spring with the replacement of the guardhouse-like entrance to Peter Cooper Village at 22nd Street with a new security station set within a courtyard with benches and plantings. There will be improved lighting, walkways, signs and landscaping on the grounds of the two projects. A major emphasis will be placed on upgrading the playgrounds.

A roadway will be created at the center of Peter Cooper Village, with curbed and paved walkways for pedestrians, separating pedestrian and vehicular traffic and creating a more orderly and safer internal environment, Mr. Rosen said. All 21 lobbies will get new entrances in the form of 200-square-foot glass pavilions, brightly lighted at night, as portals to the existing entrances.



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At both developments there will be new guard booths to enhance the security system. The main oval at Stuyvesant Town will get a facelift. "We will reduce the number of paths that cross the space, upgrade the finishes around the center fountain and put in a new water-jet system" Mr. Rosen said. Later, all the elevators and building entrances at Peter Cooper Village will be replaced. Together the two developments are among the crown jewels of

large-scale middle-income rental projects produced in the city by major insurance companies during the frenetic era of housing production just after World War II. They are the only ones left in MetLife's real estate portfolio, but there are no plans for a sale. Parkchester in the Bronx, an earlier model for Stuyvesant Town, was sold to the real estate investor Harry B. Helmsley in 1968 and converted to condominiums.