



Updated: Tue., May. 15, 2012, 6:08 PM

Reputed slumlord taking over 'Waldorf-Astoria of Brooklyn'

By RICH CALDER

Last Updated: 6:08 PM, May 15, 2012

Posted: 6:08 PM, May 15, 2012

A reputed slumlord who is part of the development team getting slammed over conditions at the moldy, asbestos-laden Chelsea Hotel is taking over the former "Waldorf-Astoria of Brooklyn."

Developer David Bistricher confirmed he's bought the landmark Hotel Bossert on Montague Street in Brooklyn Heights from Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, the publishing arm of the Jehovah's Witnesses, and plans to turn it back into a 302-room hotel.

He declined to reveal the purchase price but said the building's original façade would be preserved and that he plans to have it running as a hotel again by 2014, pending city approvals.

Most of the rooms at the former hotel – where the Dodgers celebrated their only World Series title in Brooklyn before heading west – are now used as residences for Witness volunteers.

Bistricher is a principal in Clipper Equities, a junior partner in the Chelsea Hotel on West 23rd Street famous for musical and literary tenants like Bob Dylan and Janis Joplin.

Developer Joseph Chetrit is listed as the primary owner of the Chelsea Hotel, but Clipper Equities was also partner in the deal to purchase the site in 2011 for \$80 million. With Bistricher staying behind the scenes, Chetrit has come under fire from tenants and politicians for allegedly turning the hotel into an unsafe dump to help drive out longtime tenants.

But Bistricher's track record in Brooklyn is notorious. As owner of the 59-building Flatbush Gardens complex, he had more than 8,100 open violations in 2010 and even ranked among the city's biggest slumlords that year, according to a list comprised by Public Advocate Bill De Blasio.

Bistricher's shoddy upkeep of Flatbush Gardens and other properties was also a key reason why in 2007 then-Attorney General Andrew Cuomo fought to block a \$1.3 billion bid by Clipper Equities to buy the nation's biggest federally subsidized housing complex, Brooklyn's Starrett City.

Bistricher declined to discuss his role at the Chelsea Hotel but said he got a bad rap for his work at Flatbush Gardens, adding he took it over when it "had 16,000 violations" and has managed to resolve most of them.

Judy Stanton, executive director of the Brooklyn Heights Association, said her group would take a "wait and see approach" on Bistricher until it has more information but said a hotel could improve the economy in the Montague Street shopping district.

rcalder@nypost.com

NEW YORK POST is a registered trademark of NYP Holdings, Inc.
NYPOST.COM, NYPOSTONLINE.COM, and NEWYORKPOST.COM are trademarks of NYP Holdings, Inc.
Copyright 2011 NYP Holdings, Inc. All rights reserved. [Privacy](#) | [Terms of Use](#)
