

REAL ESTATE WEEKLY

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Greening buildings, making deals happen ... and playing poker

By STEVEN SPINOLA, REBNY PRESIDENT

Our industry was one of the first to realize that "Going Green" made good business sense.

We are proud of our many members who were at the forefront of this movement and pursued highly difficult certifications such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and EnergyStar.

Many of our members served on national committees helping to write these standards which have been accepted nationally. We have also been very active in working with the City Council and the Mayor's Office as the City goes green.

REBNY participates in the Green Codes Task Force, convened by the Urban Green Council (UGC), and currently serves on the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) with many of our members as well as other developers, building owners, contractors, unions, affordable housing representatives and trade associations.

In 2008, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Speaker of the City Council Christine Quinn asked the UGC to take a look at New York City codes and make recommendations for removing impediments to green technologies and identifying improvements for promoting energy efficiency and other sustainable practices. The idea of "greening the codes" came out of Bloomberg's PlaNYC, the comprehensive sustainability report released in 2007 that laid out a plan for reducing the greenhouse gas footprint of New York City while accommodating another one million residents in the city by 2030.

PlaNYC also set forth the goal of a 30 percent reduction in carbon emissions in the city by 2030 below the baseline of 2005 levels. The work of the Green Codes Task Force included reviewing the building, fire, water, and sewer codes, as well as the zoning resolution.

After 18 months of work and four rounds of proposal drafts and comments, the Green Codes Task Force Report was delivered to Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn on February 1, 2010, encompassing 111 recommendations specific to the New York City built environment. On the request of the Industry Advisory Committee, Bovis Lend-Lease worked to analyze the first cost of each proposal and the length of payback for implement-



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ing the proposals.

While the report is complete, the process of analyzing the recommendations continues. The IAC meets weekly to discuss proposals in detail. REBNY and other participants are diligently working to assess the feasibility of the various proposals, as well as provide expertise on best practices.

As the process of refining proposals continues, the IAC is working on legislative language, helping to fix loopholes and ensuring the proposals adhere to the industry's understanding of the reality of how buildings work. We will continue to work closely with the Urban Green Council, City Council and Mayor's Office to ensure that the proposals are workable for the real estate industry.

REBNY Sales Agent Bootcamp

Agents were talking deals at a recent REBNY Sales Agent Bootcamp called "Time to Make a Deal Happen" given by Education Committee chairs, Vickey Barron,

Senior Vice President of Prudential Douglas Elliman, and Diane Levine, Brokerage Manager of Sotheby's International Realty. Bank of America sponsored the event.

The sold-out seminar, free for REBNY members, gave agents some great insight into better handling real estate transactions from two industry experts.

Barron told attendees to remember that every deal is not the same, timing is everything and to work as a team with the other broker on the deal.

The floor was continually opened to questions from the agents and both Barron and Levine used their own experiences to give first-hand advice. Many left saying they would use the new tips in the field.

REBNY Sales Agent Bootcamps are geared to REBNY sales agents that are in the business for less than three years. This was the last of the series that runs over the program year from September to June. The next one will be held in the Fall.

In other REBNY News:

Registration is now available on REBNY.com for the annual Commercial Negotiation Seminar on Tuesday, May 18 at REBNY, 570 Lexington Avenue in the Mendik Center. The focus of this seminar will be a Lease Renewal Negotiation. The panel will be moderated by Michael Laginestra,

CBRE with panelists: Steven Durels, SL Green Realty Corp.; Mitchell Konsker, Cushman & Wakefield; Jonathan Mechanic, Fried Frank; and Alan Weil, Sidley Austin LLP. For further details, contact djones@rebny.com.

Poker players wanted. The Appel Evans Group, Jeff Appel of Bank of America, Jerry M. Feeney and the Mann Report have come together to sponsor the First Annual New York Broker Poker Tournament from 6 -10 pm on Thursday, May 20 held at the Bank of America Tower. This tournament will name the 2010 New York City Broker Poker Champion, with all proceeds benefitting the Residential Member In Need Fund. For details, contact Alyssa Schwartz at appelevansgroup@gmail.com or call 646-556-1386.



During REBNY's most recent Sales Agent Boot Camp "Time to Make a Deal Happen" at the Mendik Center, two industry experts gave agents some great insight into how to better handle real estate transactions. Diane Levine, Brokerage Manager of Sotheby's International Realty (on left) and Vickey Barron, Senior Vice President of Prudential Douglas Elliman used their own experiences to give first-hand advice. Jeff Appel, Vice President of Bank of America, (also pictured) sponsored the sold-out event.