

# **Save New York Summit**

## **June 22, 2017**

6:00 PM Welcome

6:10 PM George M. Janes, AICP, zoning expert

6:30 PM Michael Hiller, attorney & community defender

6:45 PM Action Items

7:00 PM Questions/Comments

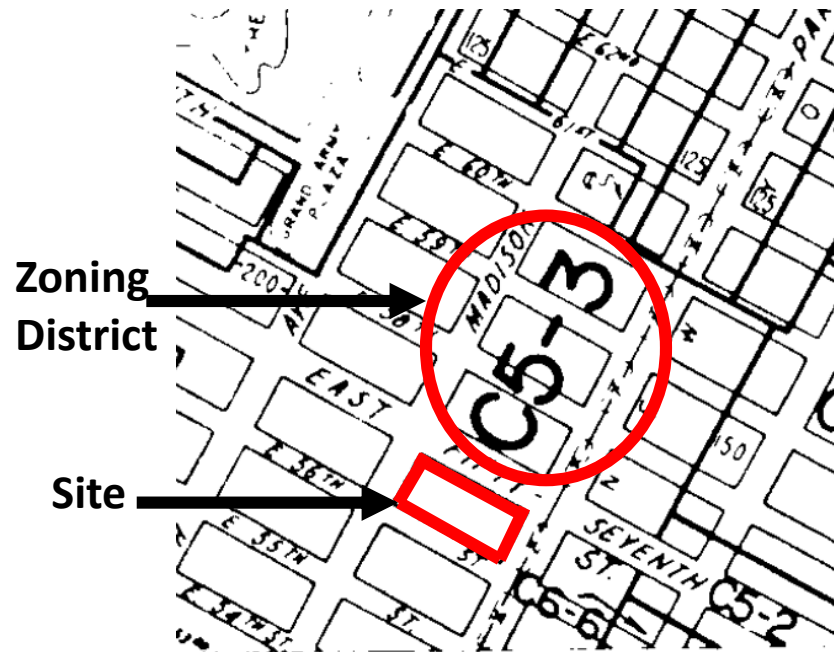
**Have you noticed this building?**

**432 PARK AVE**  
**Height: 1,396 feet**



**How did this happen?**

# The underlying zoning has been in place since 1961



1961 zoning map



2017 zoning map

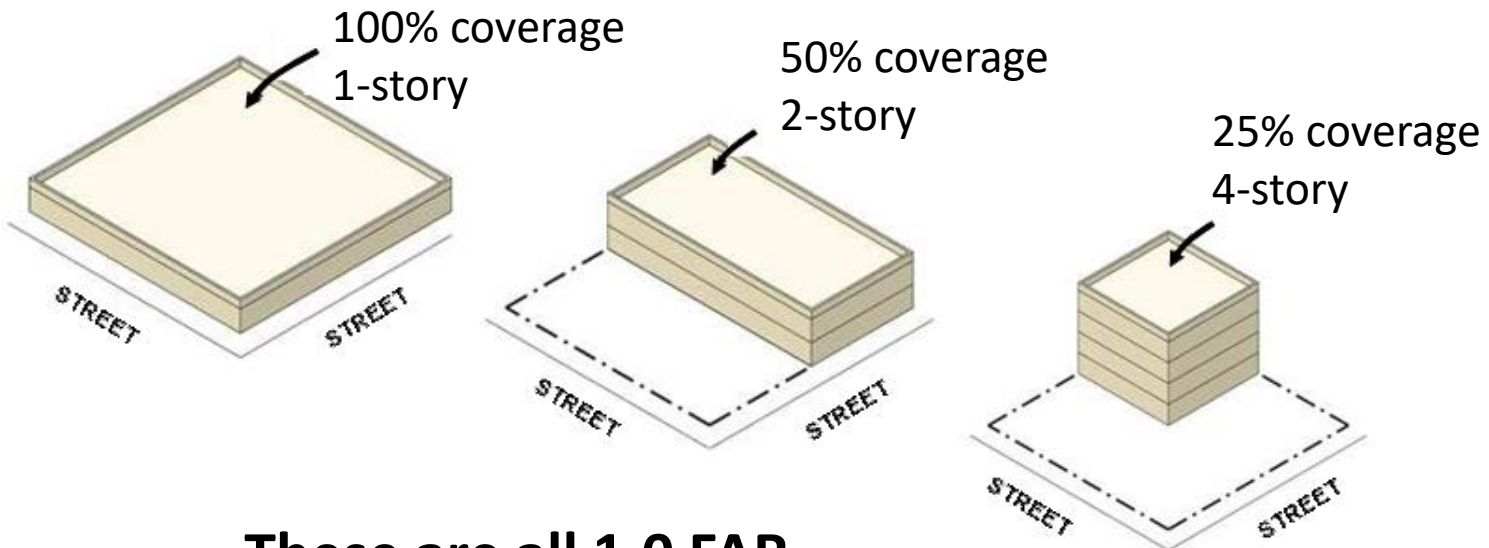
## Height and setback rules were revised in 1982

**So if we've had two generations for this to happen, why are we seeing this now? And are we going to be seeing more?**



# Building mass in NYC is limited by Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

- FAR is the ratio of LOT size to BUILDING size
  - 10,000 SF lot \* 4.0 FAR = 40,000 SF building
  - 10,000 SF lot \* 10.0 FAR = 100,000 SF building
  - 10,000 SF lot \* 15.0 FAR = 150,000 SF building
- FAR doesn't tell us how tall a building will be, just how large:



**These are all 1.0 FAR**

# But not all floor area is created equal! Only some areas count

## Counts

Halls

Stairs

Interior walls

Building amenities

In-unit HVAC

Basements

Elevator shafts

Part of the exterior wall

## Exempt

Accessory building mechanicals

Accessory parking /loading

Electrical chases

Flues and chutes

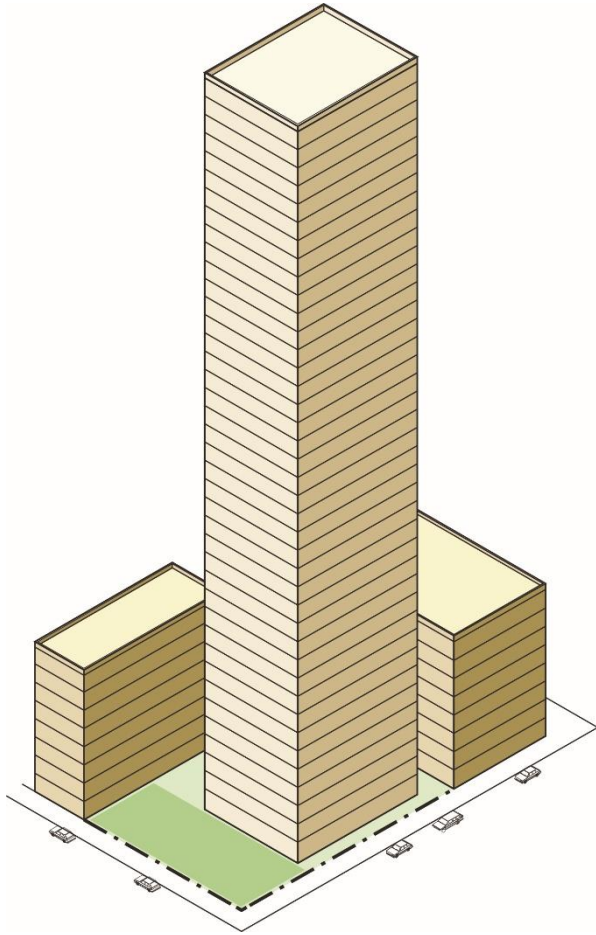
Centralized HVAC

Cellars

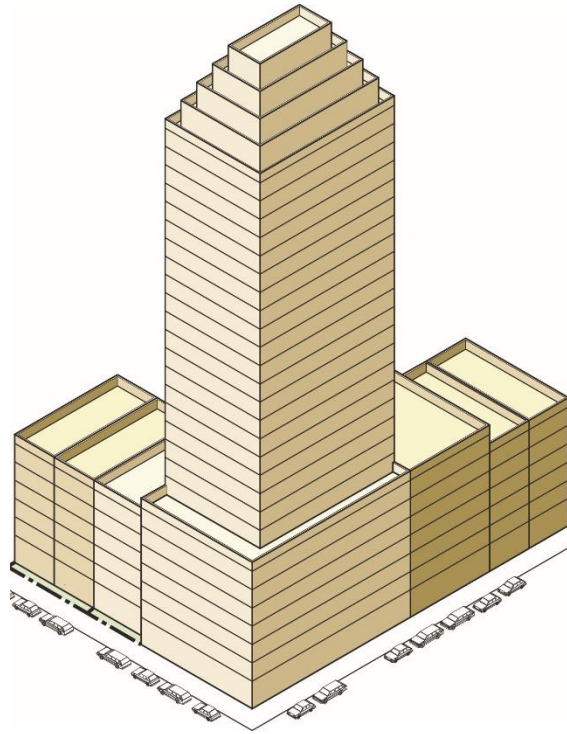
Pipe shafts

The other part of the exterior wall

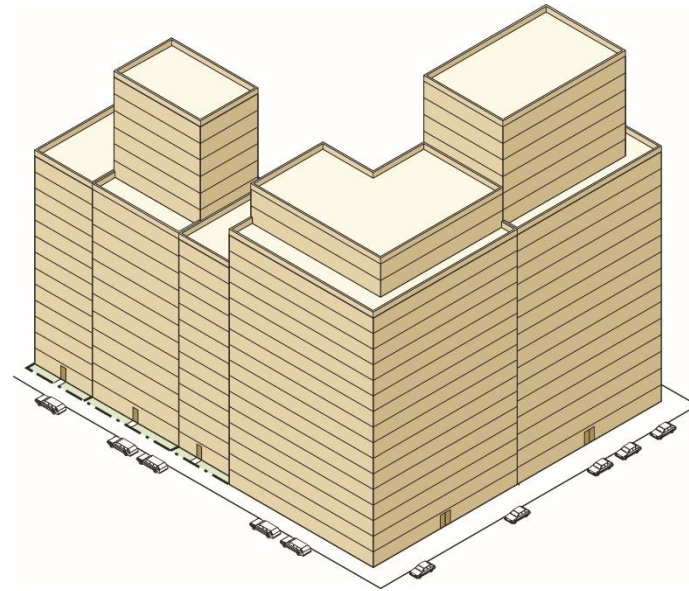
# Most tower districts allow different building forms



**Standard Tower**



**Tower-on-base**



**Contextual**

**These are all 10.0 FAR**

# Towers have no height limit

Unused floor area can be moved from neighbors in **Zoning Lot Mergers**

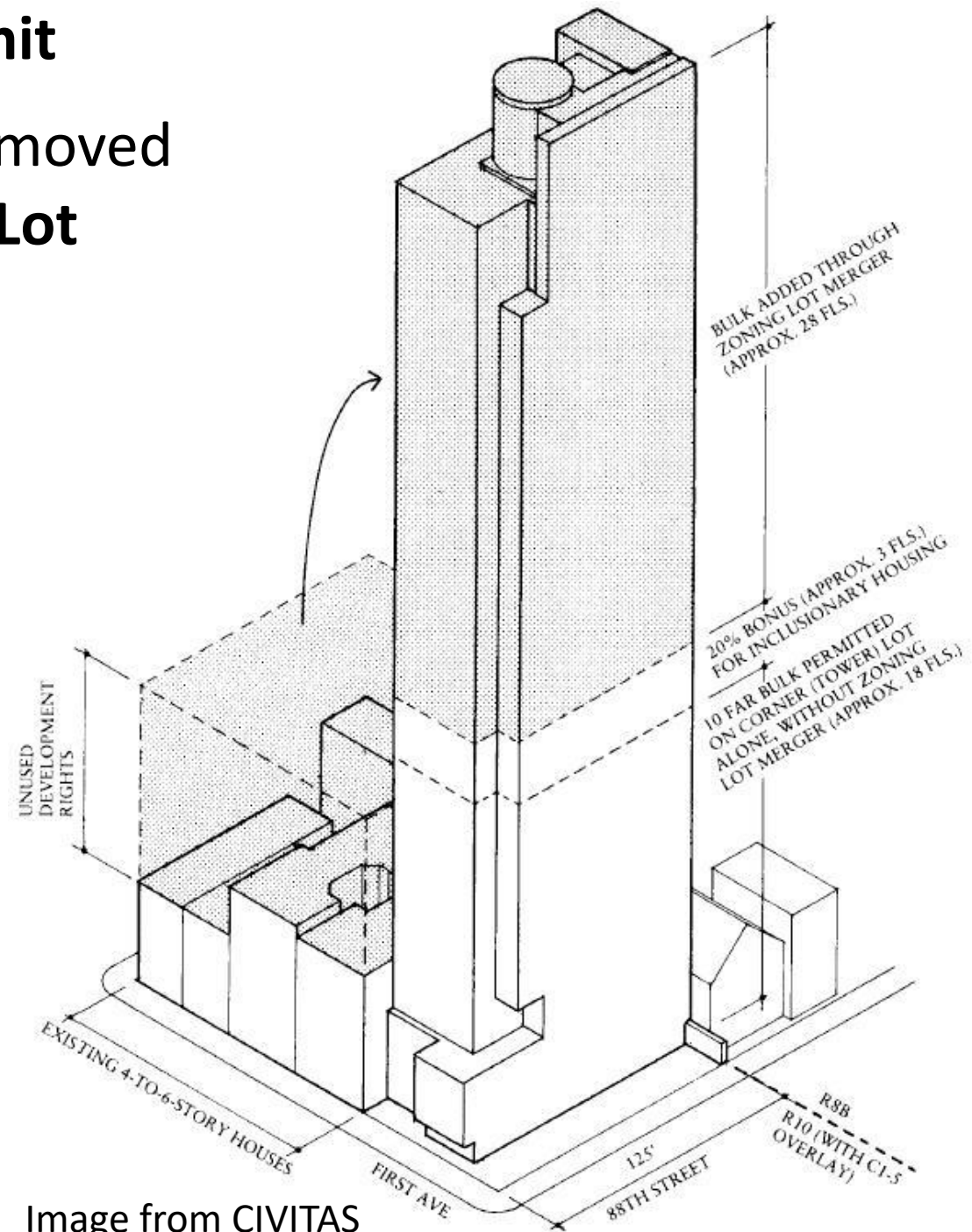


Image from CIVITAS

# Moving floor area is a great way to preserve historic buildings



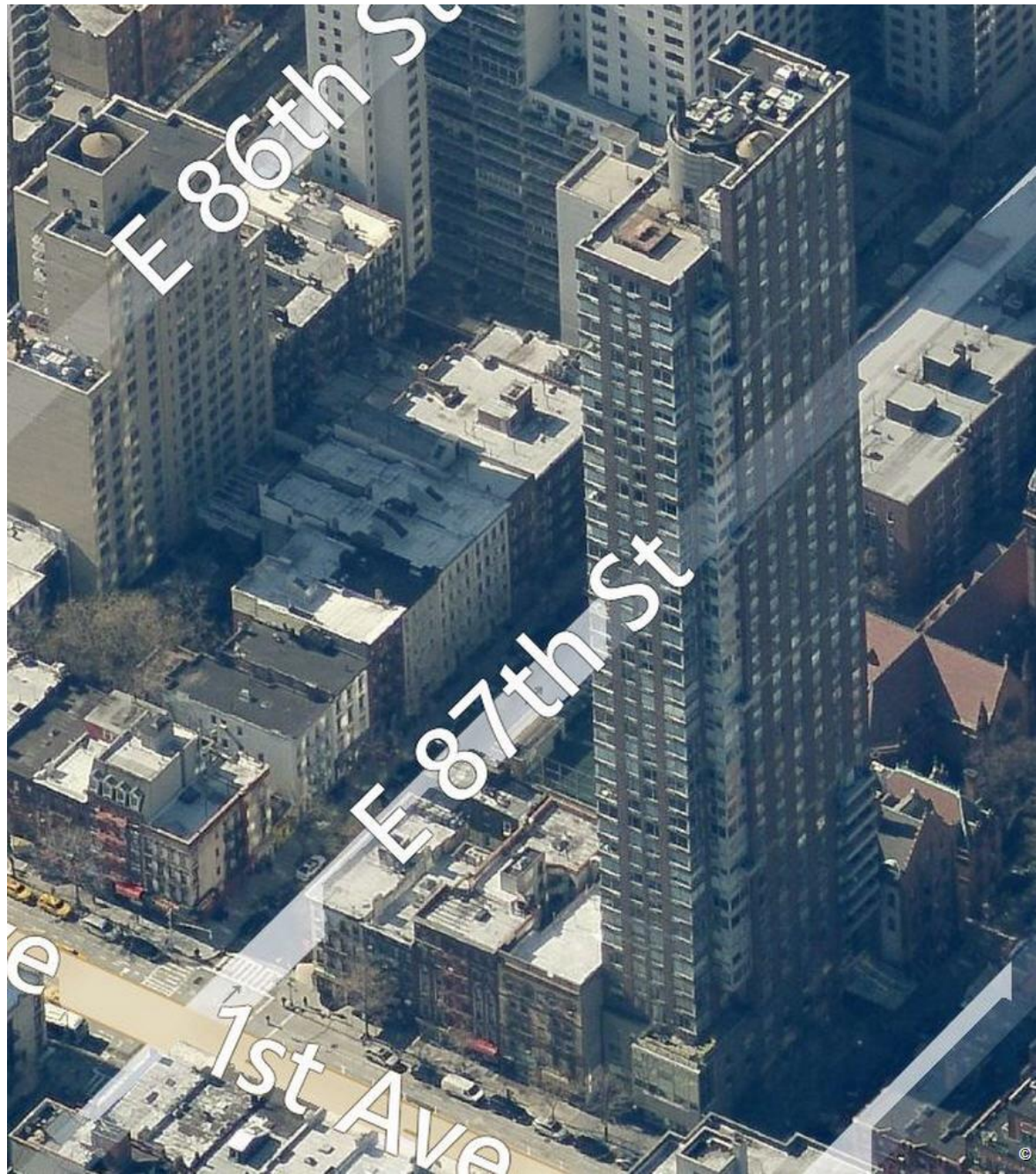
These buildings transferred their development rights and will likely never be redeveloped

But the result can be tall neighboring buildings

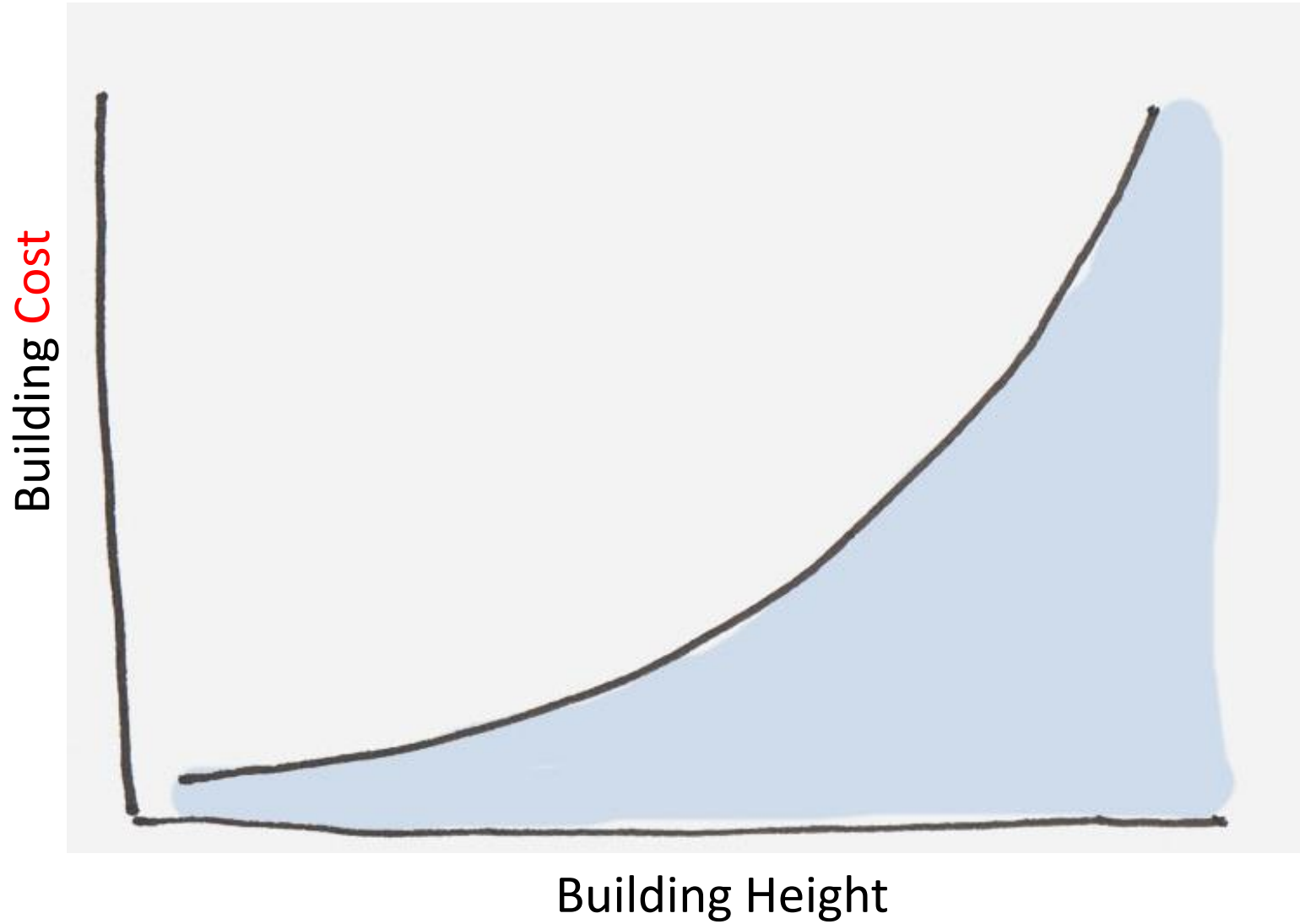
Towers have no  
regulated height limit

But they have a  
**practical limits**

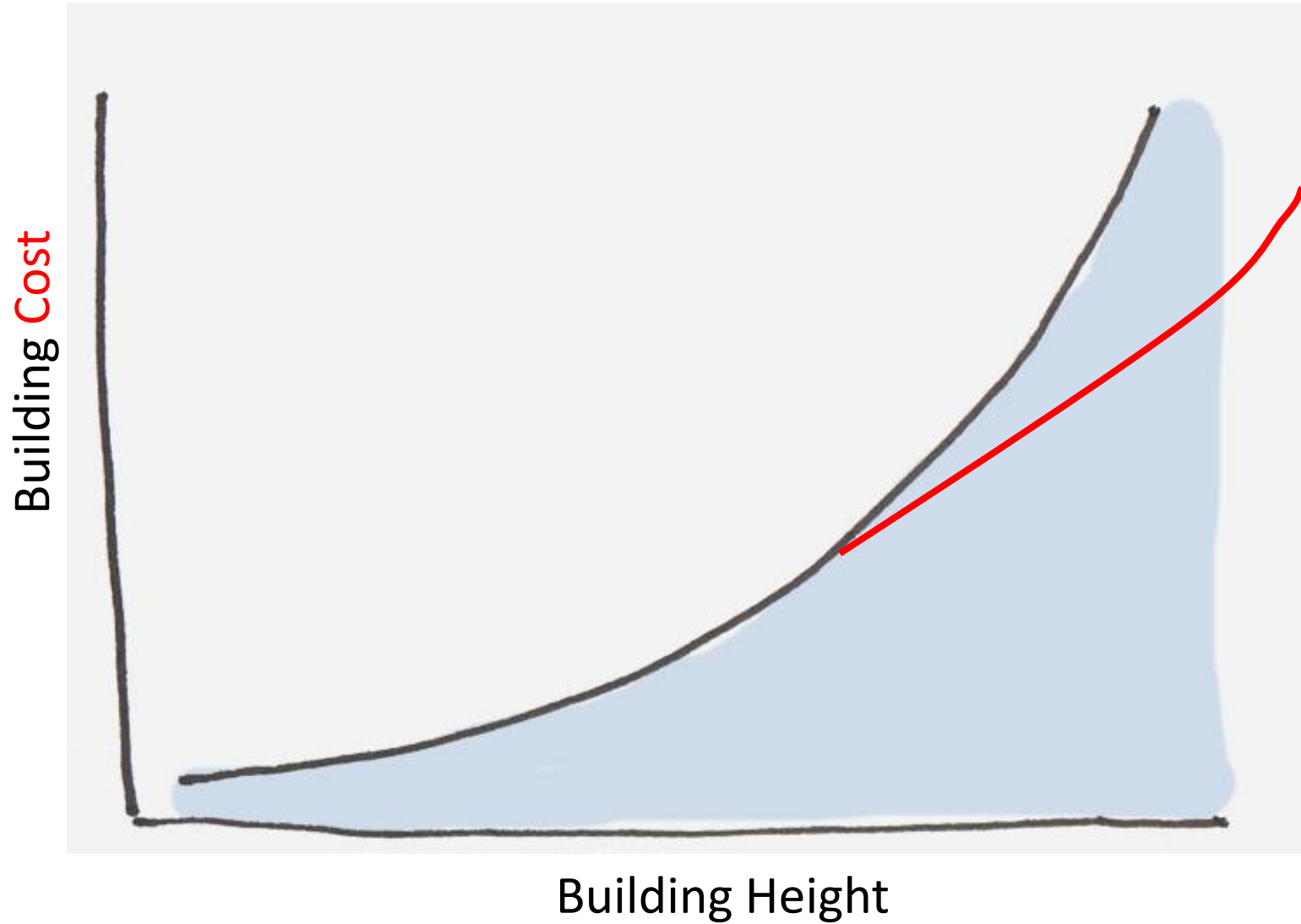
467 foot residential tower built in  
1988



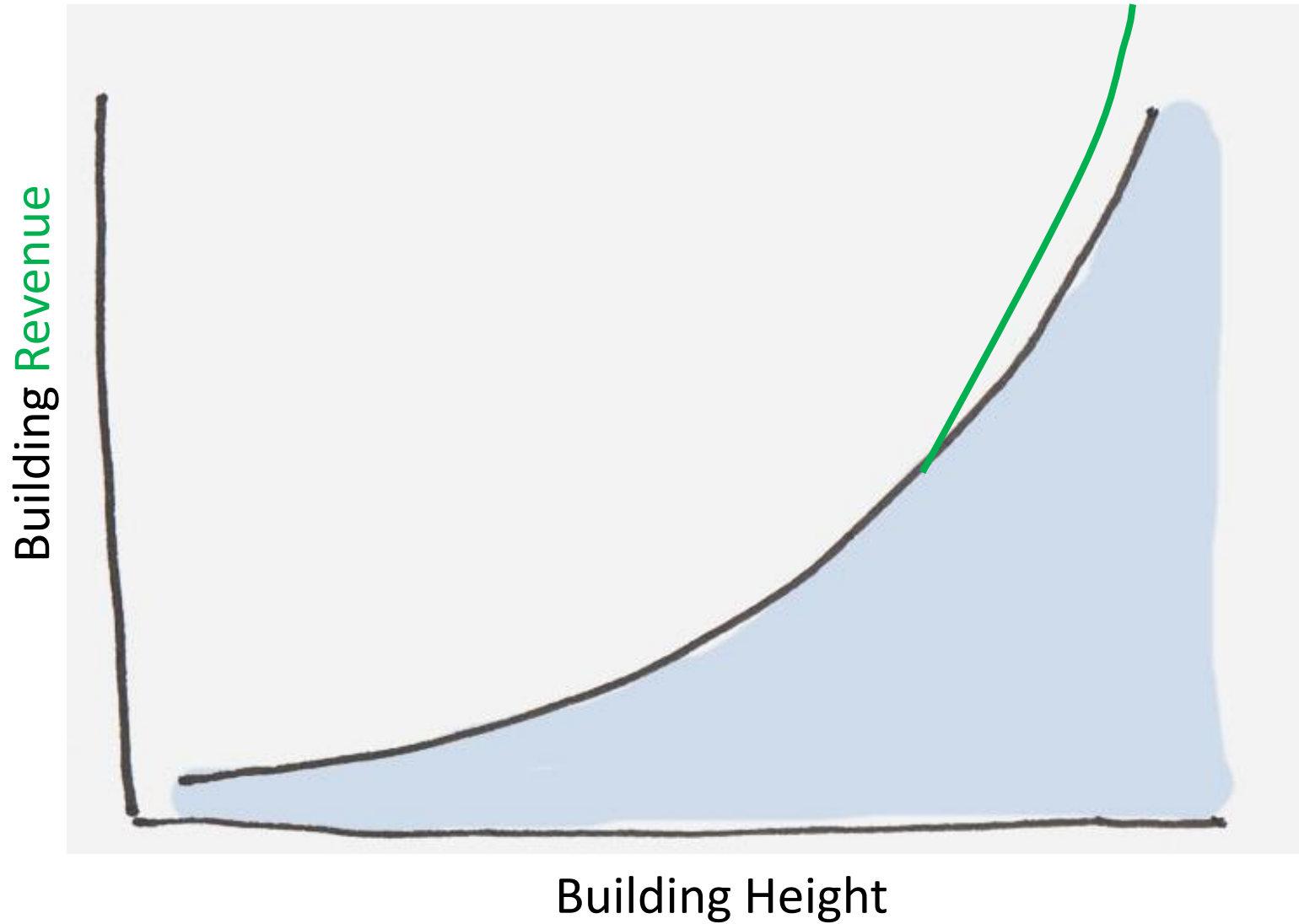
# Tall buildings cost a lot to build



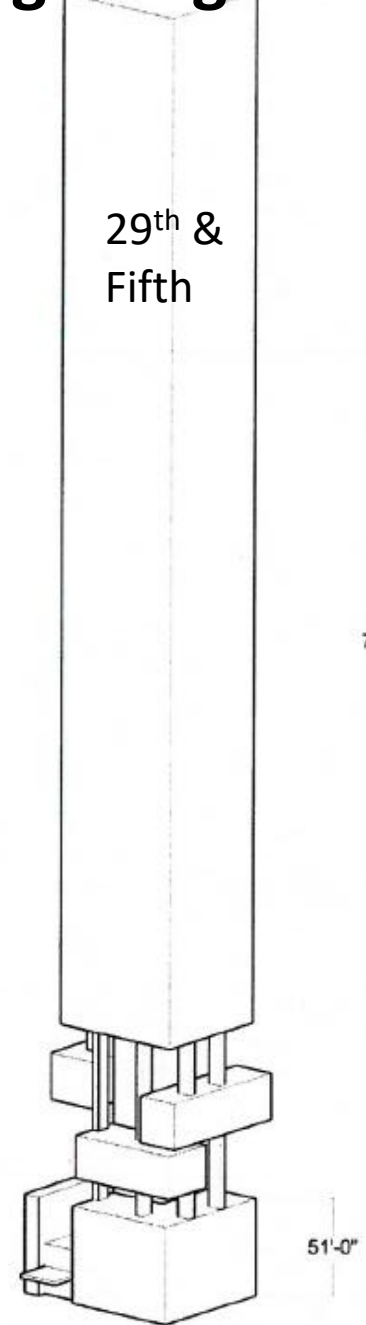
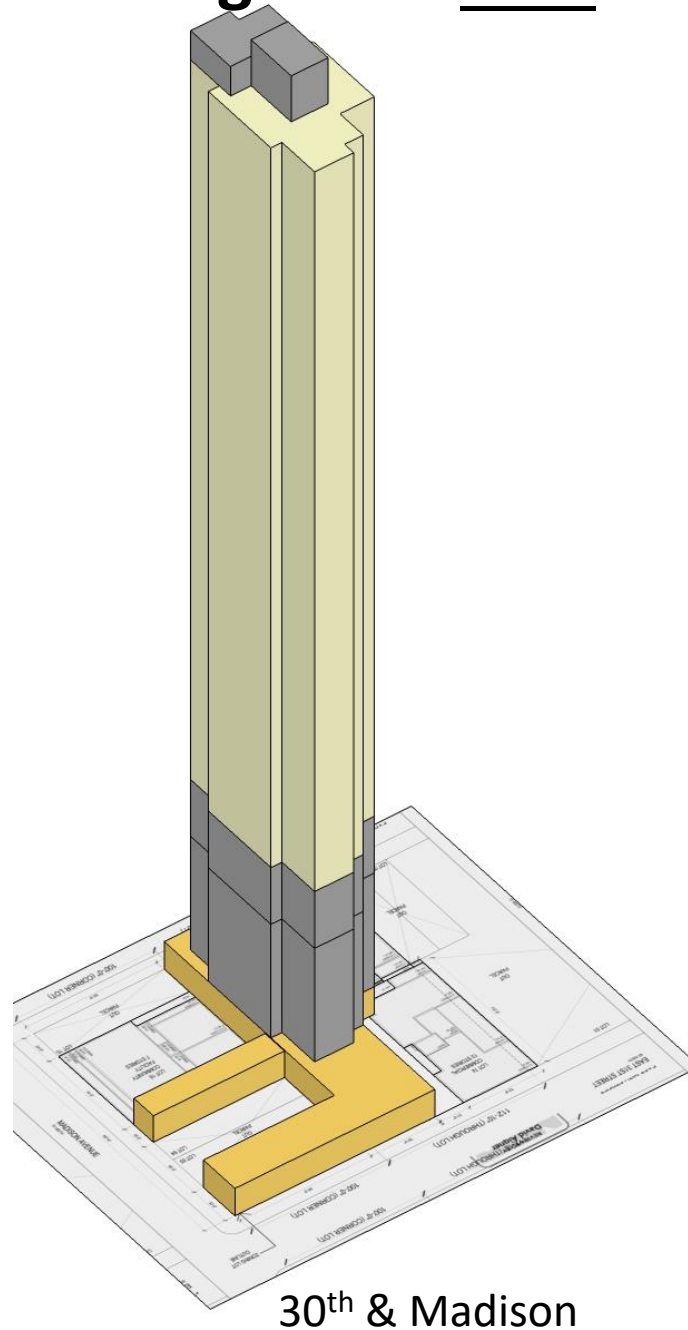
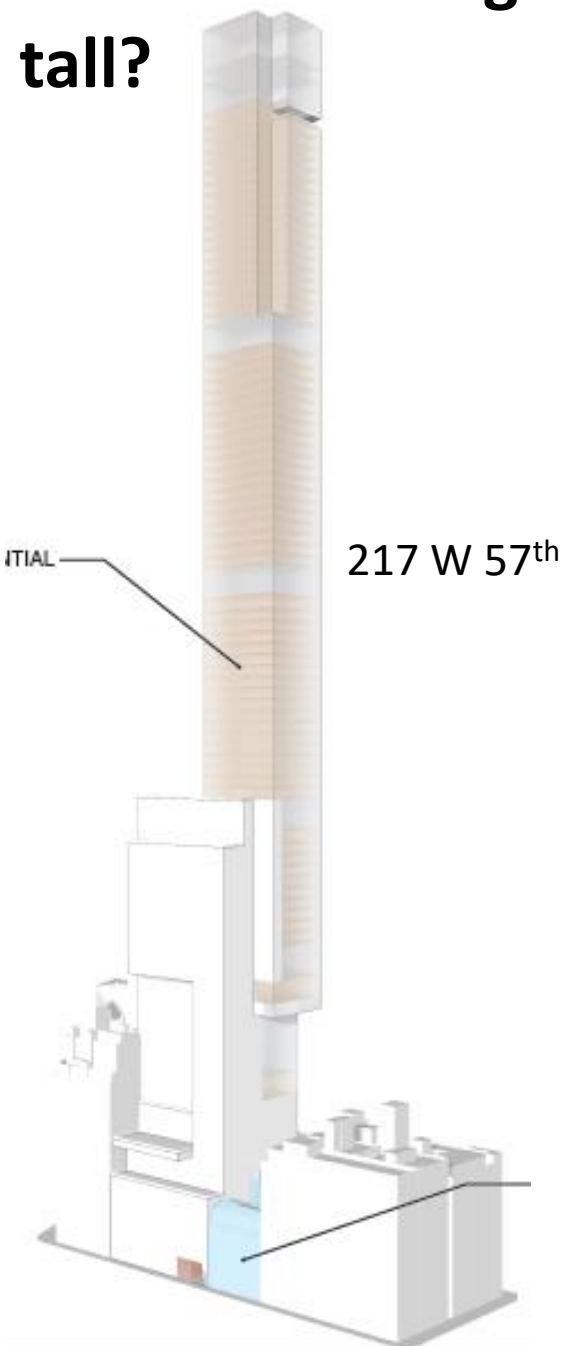
**But new technologies are bending the cost curve**

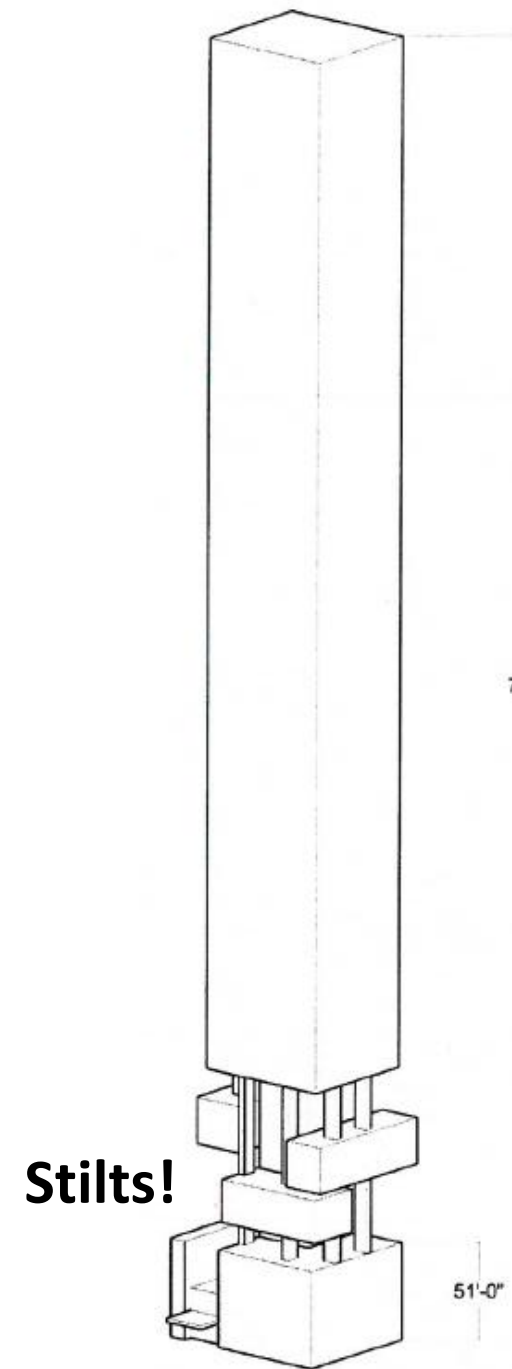
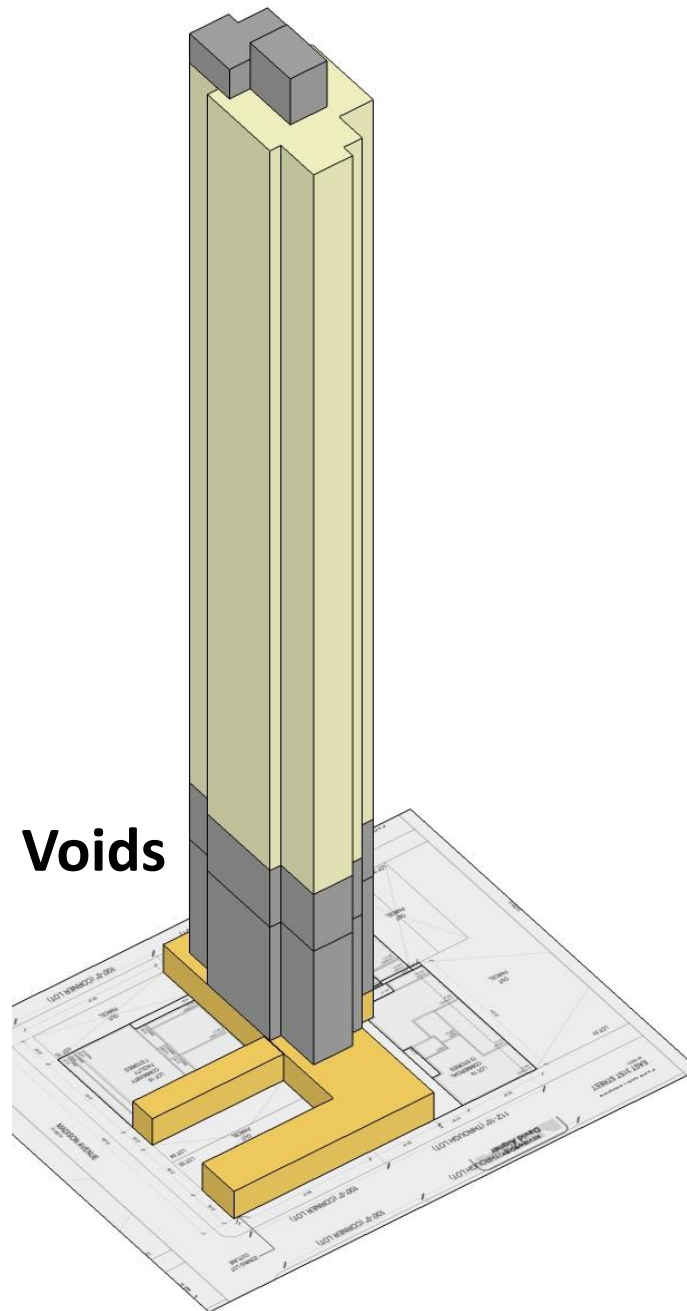
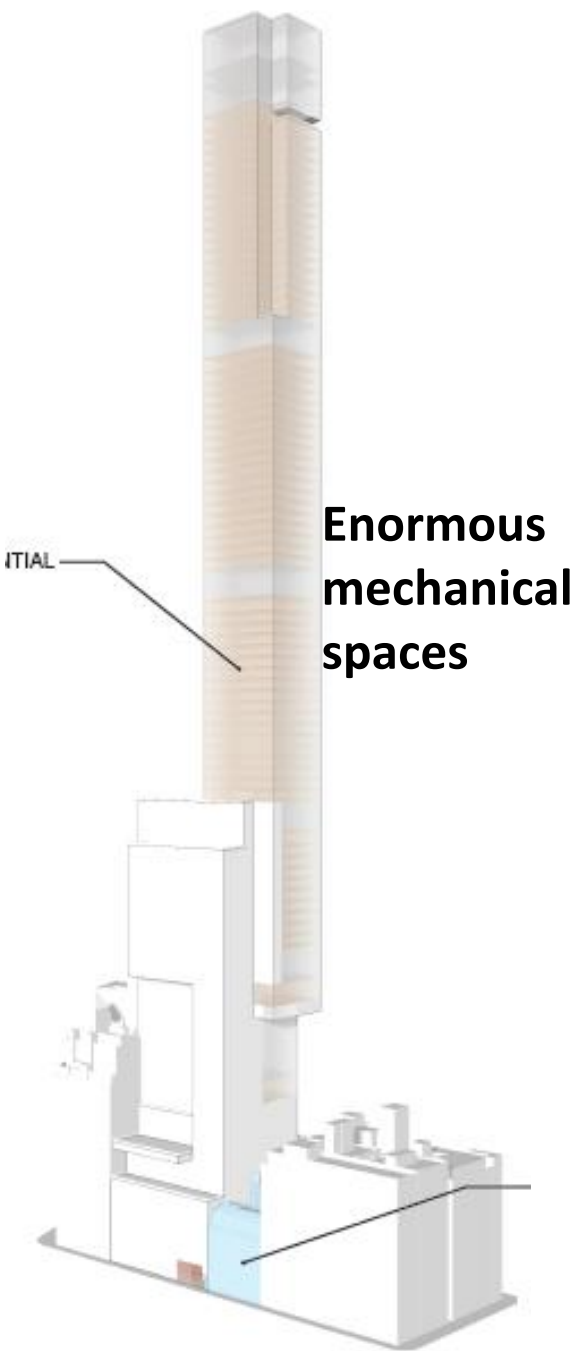


**And the market supports huge revenue for higher floors**

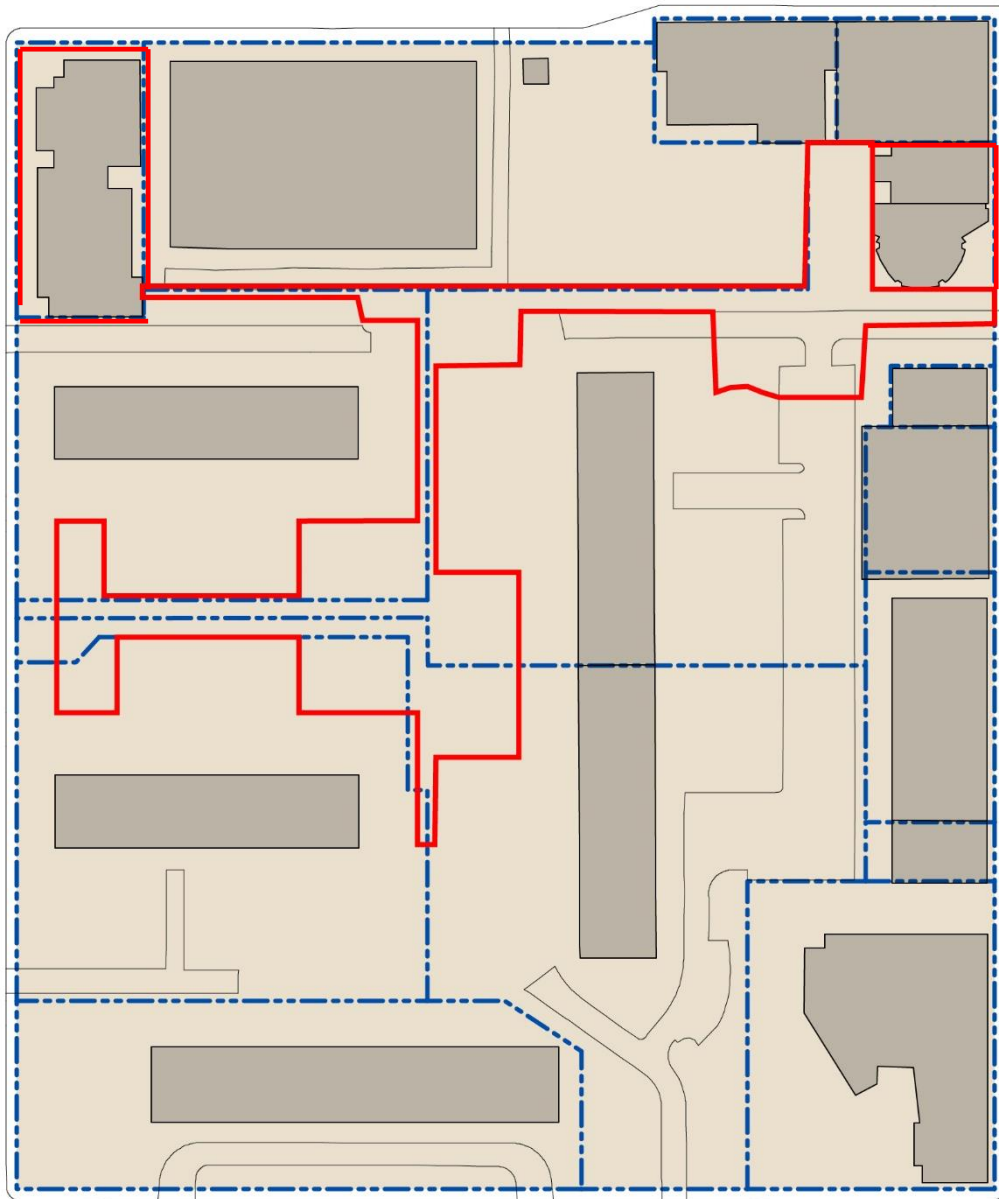


But most zoning hasn't changed: So how are they getting so tall?

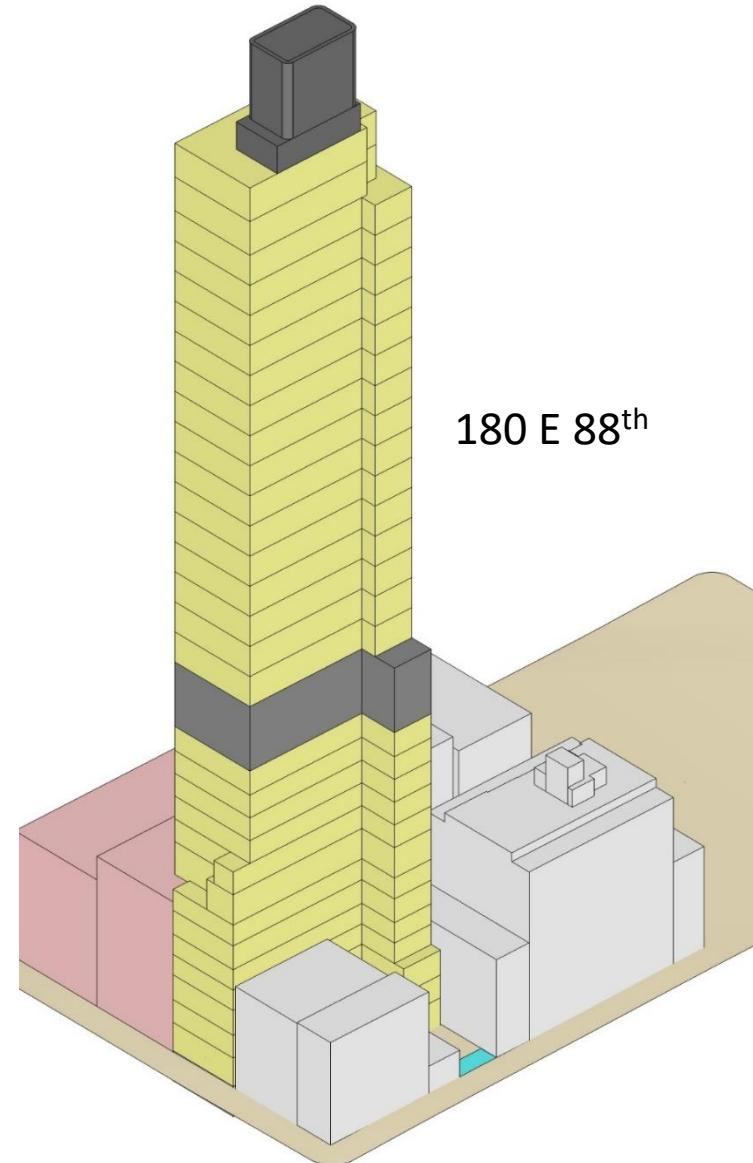




## Gerrymandered and sculpted zoning lots



200 Amsterdam



180 E 88<sup>th</sup>

# Placeholder plans = Reasonable buildings that will be amended after the challenge period is over!

## SITE PLAN

Scale: 1/32" = 1'-0"

## AXONOMETRIC DIAGRAM

Scale: 1/64" = 1'-0"

**STANDARD SETBACK REQUIREMENT AS PER DM 62-36 (b):**  
20' MINIMUM SETBACK ABOVE STREETWALL

**REQUIREMENT SETBACK:**  
FRONT: 20'-0"  
REAR: 30'-0"  
SIDE: NOT REQUIRED

## NYC Buildings

### ZD1 Zoning Diagram

#### Location Information

House No(s) 36  
Street Name West 66th Street  
Borough Manhattan  
Block 1118  
Lot 45  
Bn 108168

For additional zoning characteristics, see Section 12 of the PW.

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NAME (PLEASE PRINT) Lulu P. [Signature]  
SIGNATURE [Signature] DATE 10/10/2024

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BIS Doc # \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN EXAMINER'S SIGN AND DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### ZONING CONSIDERATION

CODE	CA-7 / R10 Sq	Map 80, Special Lincoln Square District Subdistrict A
DTL AREA	15,031 SF	Block 1118, Lot 45, 46, 47, 48
MAX. BASE FLOOR AREA	20,720 SF	
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PERMITTED COMMERCIAL FLOOR AREA	20,720 SF	20,720 SF (A)
TOTAL ALLOW. 20th FLOOR AREA	20,720 SF	20,720 SF
PERMITTED COMMERCIAL FLOOR AREA	20,720 SF	20,720 SF
MAXIMUM TOWER COVERAGE	40%	20,720 SF
MINIMUM TOWER COVERAGE	40%	20,720 SF (A) (2)
MAXIMUM STREET WALL	85 FT	
MINIMUM STREET ARCHES STREETWALL	20 FT	MAP 80, Special Lincoln Square District Subdistrict A
MINIMUM AVIABLE DISTANCE	40%	MAP 80, Special Lincoln Square District Subdistrict A
MINIMUM FLOOR AREA BELOW 200 FT	20,720 SF	

### LEGEND

CA-7/ R10 EQUIVALENT • (SPECIAL LINCOLN SQUARE DISTRICT - SUB DISTRICT A)

PROPOSED BUILDING

----- ZONING LOT

**217 W 57<sup>th</sup> was planned for 64 stories / 689 feet in 2005**



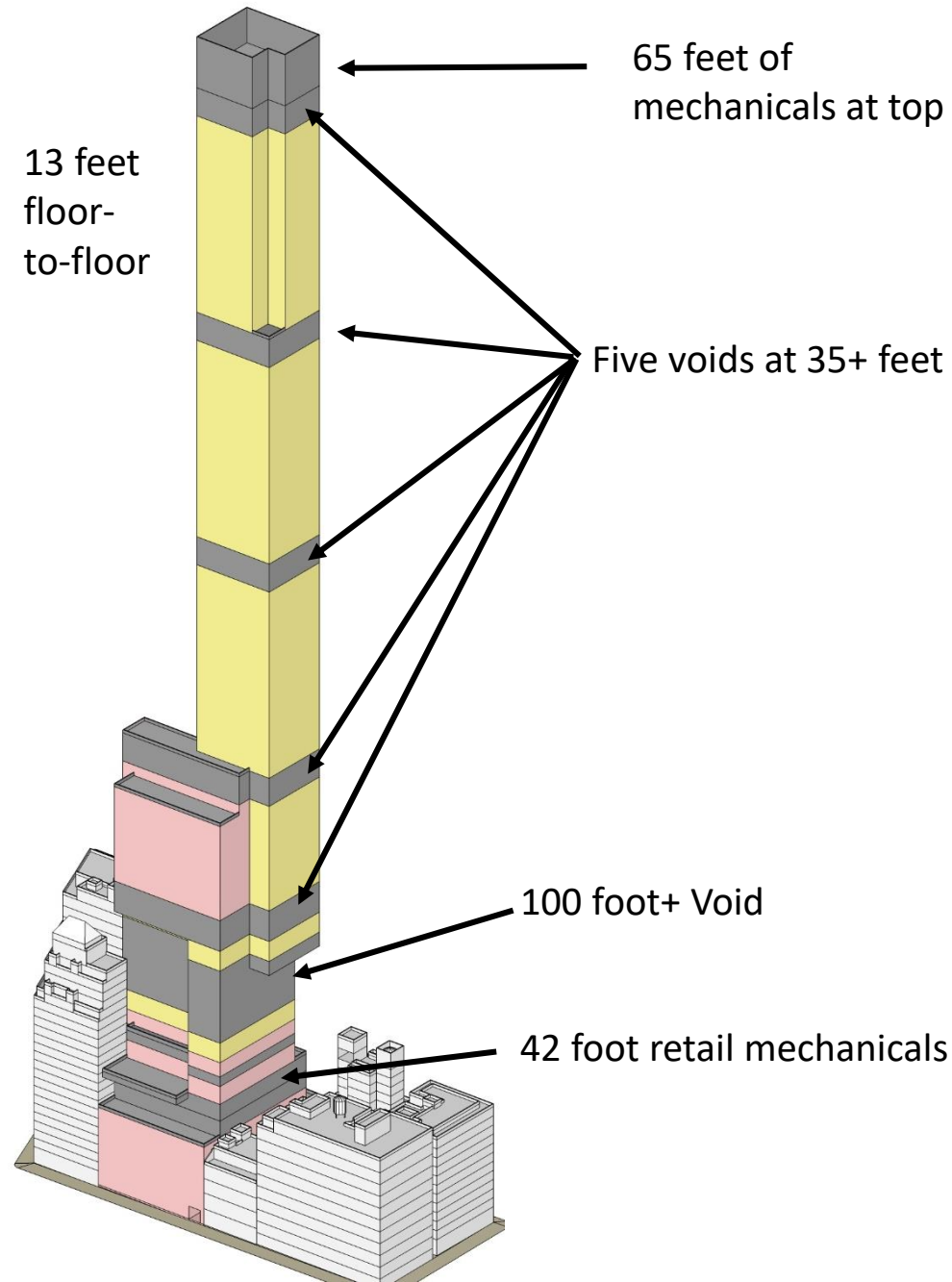
**Today, it is under construction at 86 stories / 1,435 feet\***

- Averages nearly 17 feet for each story
- Similar to, but taller than, 432 Park
- It gained 22 stories and 746 feet; How?

\* A post-approval amendment brings this up to 95 stories / 1,550 feet



# What happened?



- Voids and building mechanicals = 390 feet of the building's height (27%)
- One floor is 100 feet floor-to-floor
- First 14 stories are 370 feet tall (26.5 feet average)
- Zoning lot is huge (91,000 SF) so building is huge

# A tall Nordstrom building preserves these Landmarks



# And these other notable buildings



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- Huge mechanical spaces / voids within the building that are exempt from zoning
- DoB allowing aggressive tactics
  - Shaping the zoning lot to avoid regulations
  - Questionable mechanical deductions
  - The filing of fake plans to avoid challenges

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- Fix excess mechanical spaces: (limit the exemption, location in the building, FTF heights)

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- Make / allow DoB get tougher with aggressive interpretations
- **Develop community-driven rezoning plans**


# Now what?

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  - Electeds
  - Community Boards
  - Developers / Property Owners
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  - Citizens

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  - Citizens
- Discuss your concerns with the City and develop potential solutions
  - Ideally, the City recognizes and fixes the problems
  - Press and public pressure helps with 

# Finally, so how did this happen?



**19 full floors of  
mechanicals/ voids**

They are a design feature!

**23% of gross floor area in  
mechanicals, exempt from  
floor area**

**16' 5" Average floor-to-floor  
heights**

40,000 SF zoning lot

# #VotersAgainstSupertalls



**Public hearing! Speak out!!**

**15E30th Street**

**“Structural void” in the base  
of building to 150 feet**

**Permit is being appealed to  
the BSA!**

**BSA is holding a public  
hearing July 25<sup>th</sup>!**

