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Sky Bridge Aims To Link Towers And Residents

Space will be 300 feet above First Avenue

This fall, residents of two new, adjacent rental towers on the East Side of Manhattan won't need to sacrifice pool, gym or spa access because they live in one building and not the other.

Instead, the amenities will be suspended 300 feet above First Avenue in

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a sky bridge connecting the apartment buildings. Developers of the skyscrapers along East 36th Street, known as the American Copper Buildings, said they didn't want the three-story bridge to be just an elevated walkway. They envisioned a communal space.

"It was really key for this to be a cohesive project rather than just two neighboring towers with a park in between them," said JDS Development Group founder Michael Stern.

The framework of the 30,000-square-foot bridge is complete. This month, developers and leaders of SHoP Architects led a tour of the 100-foot bridge, which connects floors 27 through 29 of the buildings.

On the bridge's concrete floor, the painted labels "Hot Tub," "Juice Bar," and "Lap Pool" hint at future features.

To the west is a prime panorama of the Manhattan skyline. To the east, the view takes in everything from Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park to the growing collection of towers in Long Island City.

Gregg Pasquarelli, a SHoP Architects partner, designed a

75-foot lap pool, with adjacent floor-to-ceiling windows, on the second level of the bridge to make residents feel they are floating above the East River.

"How cool would that be that you can swim from one skyscraper to the other 300 feet in the air?" Mr. Pasquarelli said.

To the north of the pool will be a hot tub, as well as a marble Turkish bath. A fitness center, with access to a rock-climbing wall that stretches to the floor above, is tucked into the northwest corner of the 28th floor on the way to the bridge.

Just before residents from the westernmost tower enter the third story of the bridge, they will pass a juice bar and yoga studio. As they walk south along the bridge, they will enter a lounge and bar area before reaching the children's playroom, catering kitchen and open studio in the other tower.

"It allows utterly everyone in that building, whether you're renting a studio, a three-bed, a top floor or bottom floor, to experience the utter best of this entire property. That's what this was all about from the very beginning," said JDS Development Group principal Simon Koster.

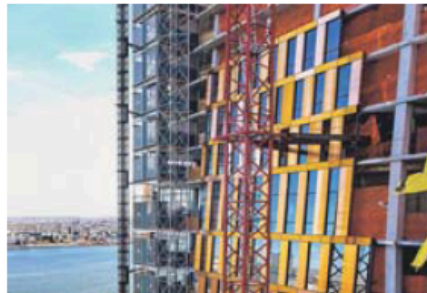
A spokesman for the American Copper Buildings said the prices of the apartments won't be made public until the fall. The towers will have 761 units, with 20% set aside as affordable.

Atop the roof of the bridge are private terraces for three apartments on the 30th floor.



CHRIS GOODNEY/BLOOMBERG NEWS

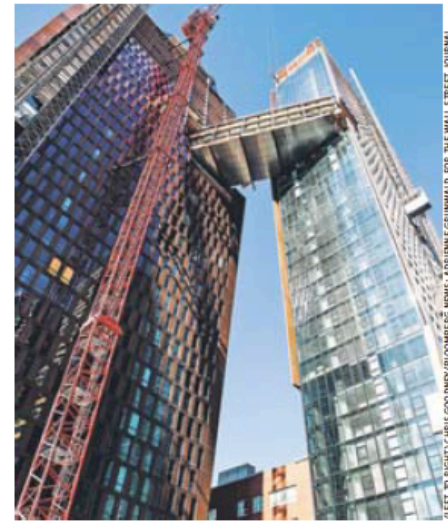
Above, the American Copper Buildings, at right, under construction on East 36th Street. Bottom left, the buildings' copper-clad facade. Bottom right, a view of the three-story skybridge connecting the two structures, one of them 48 floors tall and the other 41 floors.



The first level of the bridge serves a building-operations function. All of the power transformers for both buildings are in the 41-story south tower, while the cooling systems are on the roof of the 48-story west tower. The first story of the bridge is filled with mechanical systems, so the buildings can feed each other utilities.

"It's not just gratuitous and cool," Mr. Stern said of the bridge. "It functions."

Mr. Pasquarelli hopes New Yorkers find the outside of the copper towers as striking as the views from the sky bridge. He chose copper cladding for the exteriors because it changes color over time, from bronze to green, not unlike the Statue of Liberty.



LEFT TO RIGHT: CHRIS GOODNEY/BLOOMBERG NEWS; ANDRINE GRUNWALD FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL