

## Tenants sue Croman over LES tenement renovations

*Lawsuit is latest clash in battle between residents and owner of 309 East 8th Street*

August 14, 2014 08:30AM

By [David Jones](#)

« PREVIOUS      NEXT »



Millionaire developer Steven Croman is scheduled to face tenants on Aug. 26 in a new round of litigation filed in New York City Housing Court.

The lawsuit seeks to block the construction work at Croman's six-story tenement building at 309 East 8th Street. Judge Sabrina Kraus ordered the hearing on Tuesday after five tenants, represented by the nonprofit Urban Justice Center, filed suit seeking a halt to construction at the building and seeking correction to alleged violations at the property.

According to the suit, filed Aug. 7, the five tenants claim that the landlord has engaged in gut renovations of multiple vacant apartments at the building since 2013, causing the ceilings to collapse in several occupied apartments.

The suit claims that in March the Department of Buildings granted permission to renovate another three apartments in the building, and the following month a partial vacate order was issued for the building's basement after a structural wall was compromised.

The renovations at the 17-unit building also caused a gas leak that resulted in a month-long gas suspension, according to lawyers for the tenants.

A new round of construction is scheduled to begin on the newly empty apartments, and the suit seeks to block any new renovation work that is considered unsafe, including demolition, drilling and installation of drywall.

"I would say that this case is symptomatic of what is going on in the Lower East Side today," said attorney Sadia Rahman, who represents the five tenants. "Violations like the broken front door and broken cornices have been in place for years, but owners instead are investing considerable sums of money into vacant apartments so that they can be deregulated and rented at market value."

The suit comes just days after [two tenants sued the Croman real estate family](#), alleging that they were being harassed by a former New York Police Department detective who is facing a [cease-and-desist order from state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman](#).

Those two tenants are among the five plaintiffs in this case. The suit names Croman as a defendant, as well as company official Harriet Croman and managing agents Harriet Kahan and Janeth Donovan.

The suit also names the Department of Buildings, which issued the partial vacate order, and the Department of Housing Preservation & Development, which oversees housing code violations. Officials, who asked not to be identified, said the building has 18 active violations. They added that \$2,578 in emergency repairs have been made by HPD.

"We have not seen this lawsuit, but we will vigorously defend ourselves against any claim that the building has been intentionally neglected," said a spokesman for 9300 Realty, which manages the building. "Since taking ownership of the property, we have made significant improvements to the building and removed numerous violations associated with the prior ownership."

Tags: [steven croman](#)

Like 31 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

### Now Trending on The Real Deal

by Taboola

**Ziel Feldman: It was worth every penny**

**Keller Williams says adios to "MDLNY" star Luis Ortiz**

**The other Kushner**

### From The Web

Sponsored Links by Taboola

**The Black Card That's Changing the Face of NYC**



From left: 309 East 8th Street, Harriet and Steven Croman