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NEW YORK CITY REAL ESTATE NEWS

Brokerage founder is behind mysterious renovation of UES townhouse

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Rumors about the townhouse at 12 East 72nd Street are swirling: Who is renovating the home? A Russian oligarch? The emir of Qatar? Will the amenities really include three swimming pools and a basketball court? What's really happening inside the 19,329-square-foot property is this: It will be a single-family home for Steven Croman, founder of residential brokerages Croman Real Estate and 9300 Realty, the New York Observer reported. "It's just a single-family home," Croman told the Observer. "We weren't looking for something that size, but that's the building we found. We have a dog, kids. It's just a private home. We like the block."

There won't be three pools — rather, two pools and a basketball court — and Croman has no intention of selling when the home is completed, scheduled for this spring.

Croman, himself a somewhat controversial figure — one online reviewer described his firm as "SCUM of the earth" — bought No. 12 and No. 14 on East 72nd Street for \$5.5 million in 2002 and began evicting the buildings' rent-stabilized tenants. He claimed that he could repurpose one or more dwelling units for personal use, though that did not endear him to the neighbors: they brought him to court (and later settled the case). Croman has also faced allegations of overly aggressively evicting rent-stabilized tenants at his other properties, although he denies the claims.

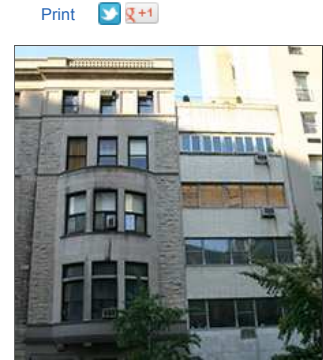
"That's not what we're about," he told the Observer. "We restore older buildings and make them beautiful."

The home will include wine storage, six wet bars, a dumbwaiter, nine full bathrooms and seven half bathrooms.

And as for the neighbors?

"People have been great," Croman told the Observer. "We love the neighbors." [\[NYO\]](#) —Zachary Kussin

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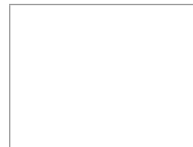
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