

July 3, 2008

IN THE DETAILS ...

## Bulging Buildings: Cantilevers Make a Comeback

By **CARTER B. HORSLEY**  
*Special to the Sun*

Cantilevers, among the showiest feats of architecture, are resurgent in the city.

The new Graceline Court, at 106 W. 116th St., is a prominent example of the architectural feature, characterized by beams supported only at one end. The modern, mid-block, 16-story tower, designed by Feder & Stia, looms partially over the Malcolm Shabazz Mosque.

A far more dramatic cantilever can be found at the Linden 78, a 20-story condominium building designed by Handel & Associates and now under construction at 230 W. 78th St. The Linden will have an imposing cantilever section starting at the sixth floor, hovering above the low-rise buildings along Broadway.

Aesthetically, the city's cantilevers are a mixed bag, however. Large, "Hey, look me over" cantilevers can be dramatic and daring, though some of the less graceful ones resemble urban bullies.

In 1908, Ernest Flagg designed one of Lower Manhattan's most distinctive skyscrapers for the Singer Manufacturing Company, at Broadway and Liberty Street, several floors of which bulged outward near the top. It was demolished, sadly, in 1968.

Frank Lloyd Wright used cantilevers in several of his most famous houses as early as 1910, though he is best known here for his cantilever-free 1959 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

In 1966, Marcel Breuer designed the Brutalist Whitney Museum of American Art on Madison Avenue at 75th Street, with its impressive and rather ominous cantilevers on the avenue.

In the early 1970s, Davis Brody Architects designed three impressive and major "towers in a park" apartment complexes in New York — Waterside, Ruppert, and River Park Towers — that all featured tall, slender buildings with chamfered corners beneath slightly cantilevered tops.

In 1977, Hugh Stubbins designed Citicorp Center on Lexington Avenue to soar partially above St. Peter's Church in one of the city's most dramatic spatial experiments.

In 1983, Edward Larrabee Barnes carved away a large chunk of the lower floors at the base of his IBM Building at 590 Madison Ave. at 57th Street.

A far more intimidating cantilever design was recently unveiled for a pot-bellied tower on the site of the Deutsche Bank building at the World Trade Center site. The design, by Kohn Pedersen Fox, resembles a streamlined toilet, and the tower was to be used by JP-



DEN PARKER

**ARCHITECTURAL FEAT** In 1983, Edward Larrabee Barnes carved away a large chunk of the lower floors at the base of the IBM Building at 590 Madison Ave. Cantilevers are a part of a number of new projects.

ahead. The cantilevered portion of the tower would overhang a new St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.

Several other new condominium projects have more discreet cantilevered sections.

The 21-story, L-shaped Georgica condominium tower at 305 E. 85th St., designed by Cetra/Rud-

boring buildings.

The Isis, a 19-story tower by FX-Fowle at 303 E. 77th St., also has two cantilever sections.

On the southeast corner of Third Avenue at 86th Street, Robert A.M. Stern has designed the Brompton, an apartment tower whose southern façade cantilevers a bit over the low-rise building at the

signed an office building at Park Avenue and 125th Street, to be known as Harlem Park. Its staggered form of boxes, some slightly cantilevered, is reminiscent of the recently opened New Museum of Contemporary Art on the Bowery, designed by a Japanese architectural firm, SANAA.