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Muss snaps up tony UES retail condo

The Queens-based developer buys the retail condo at the new Touraine residential tower at 865 Lexington Ave., and promptly lands Le Pain Quotidien as a 15-year tenant.

Joe Anuta

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Queens-based Muss Development recently snapped up a roughly 5,000-square-foot retail condominium across the East River. Muss has purchased up the store unit at the base of the Touraine, a luxury residential condominium on Manhattan's Upper East Side for \$12 million as part of the firm's push to lock up high-end corner parcels throughout the city.

"We've been involved in retail for decades, so for us this is a logical extension," said Muss Development Principal Jason Muss. He noted the firm has already lined up a tenant for space at 865 Lexington Ave. on the corner of East 65th Street. Le Pain Quotidien has inked a 15-year lease there.

The company, which owns all manners of buildings across the city, has a particularly strong presence in the outer boroughs. But Muss jumped on the Upper East Side upscale space after noting the dearth of neighborhood retail in the area.

"There is very little retail around there, and Madison Avenue rents are in the stratosphere," Mr. Muss said, noting the company already has another Upper East Side retail location.

Muss took the upscale space on the heels of another retail condo transaction in downtown Brooklyn. There, the firm bought and then leased space at 345 Adams St., a former municipal building, and according to the firm and the city, helped transform the area into a bustling shopping corridor.

The Touraine building, a luxury condo complex completed by Toll Brothers last summer, boasts high ceilings and ample natural light on the ground floor, qualities that are not found in older buildings in the neighborhood, according to Mr. Muss.

Retail condos have been hot lately, which the developer thinks is a function of the wider retail market's strength in general.



CoStar Group

Muss Development has purchased the retail condo at 865 Lexington Ave. for \$12 million.

Glenn Tolchin and Yoav Oelsner of Jones Lang LaSalle represented both the buyer and the seller, Lex 65, in the sale, while Amira Yunis of CBRE Group Inc. represented Le Pain Quotidien and Gregory Tannor of Cushman & Wakefield represented the landlord in the lease deal.

Correction: Amira Yunis of CBRE Group Inc. represented Le Pain Quotidien in the deal at the Touraine residential tower at 865 Lexington Ave. Gregory Tannor of Cushman & Wakefield represented the landlord, Muss Development. These facts were misstated in an earlier version of this article, published March 18, 2014.



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