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## **Vertical Expansion: Philip House**

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Philip House -- image from Redundant Pixel

Philip House, at 141 East 88th Street, is seeing a vertical expansion, and YIMBY sat down with architect Alan Rose to discuss the approximately 13,000 square foot addition. The new space atop the existing roof will allow for five new penthouses, and the one unit currently on the market is listed for \$11.5 million.

YIMBY in bold.

### **How did you create the space?**

The addition began with two water towers on either end with Palladian arches, and two penthouses [originally] built for staff. The old units will be demolished, making way for new ones between the water towers. Actually, the arches match the water towers.

### **What were the challenges with adding to a pre-war building?**

There was one major issue; because the structure is residential, the load for floors is 40 pounds per square foot. Adding floors is difficult because the columns were not designed for the additional load, so we had to utilize light construction techniques; luckily contemporary materials fit the bill, so there's lots of metal siding and glass. There is a certain cache to traditional architecture, but nowadays it is not *really* traditional — we wanted to be consistent with the pre-war details, but we still wanted to focus on glass. The siding is steel.



Philip House — image from [Redundant Pixel](#)

**Going forward, what are some techniques you see future developments using that can take advantage of ‘light’ construction?**

Pre-fab is going to be very big, and it will make things much more affordable. We’re just starting to work with pre-fab walls and floors, and modules; the change is enormous.

**Do you see these methods being used on luxury construction?**

No — while pre-fab is impressive, I think we see it applied to more mundane things, like dormitories. There’s a certain attraction in the upper market to uniqueness, and pre-fab does not cater to that.



Philip House — image from [Redundant Pixel](#)

**And what about the penthouses at Philip House do you like most?**

Well, there will be five new units, with three duplexes. Those are impressive, but the sense of scale is very important, and if you look at the addition, it relates more to a house than a building. The penthouses sit above the mass of the old structure, and really have an intimate sense about them, despite being located atop [Philip House].