

## Procida Figuring Things Out

### Finance veteran working out finances at stalled luxury developments

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William Procida Inc. has been tapped as an advisor to handle a pair of swanky construction projects that have stalled.

At Trump Plaza Jersey City, Billy Procida and his team have been retained by developer Metro Homes as investment bank and advisor for the Trump Plaza II portion of the plan — an unbuilt companion tower for Trump Plaza I, which is completed and is the tallest residential building in New Jersey.

Metro Homes, which put the second 50-story tower on indefinite delay, last August defaulted on construction loan payments and iStar Financial took over the first tower. Early this year, officials re-branded the residential building with the Trump Plaza Residences name, brought in big-name designer Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz to up the elegance factor and began using Ivanka Trump as a spokeswoman. With Metro Homes, Procida is also handling the Esperanza residential project on the Jersey Shore in the town of Asbury Park.



Procida estimated that Capital One, the lender for the unbuilt Trump tower, delivered a \$20 million loan for the project.

The Metro Homes projects are "ready to go" with plans and permits and could take advantage of today's lowered construction costs and be completed in time for the housing market's up-cycle, Procida said.

"If I break the first-quarter of next year and deliver in 2013, that's got to be a good play," he said. "It's a question of making everybody happy, though."

With experience as a lender, developer and restructuring advisor, the three-decade real estate veteran said he has sat on both sides of the table.

"The courts are slow, unpredictable and costly," Procida said. "Better solutions can be achieved outside of the courtroom when smart, reasonable business people put their heads together."

Procida's firm also announced it is working as an advisor for the lender of Five Franklin Place, an ultra-luxury project in Tribeca where construction never made it past the first floor. Procida, who represents bridge lender HCP Realty Investors in the matter, said an original \$28.25 million loan for the project has accrued to more than \$40 million. A big to-do had been made over the unveiling of the design for the planned 55-unit residential building. It was Dutch architect Ben van Berkel's first major U.S. project and it featured black metal bands encircling the core structure, changing widths and twisting as they go. Developer Sleepy Hudson began construction in 2008 and unit price tags of \$2 million to \$16 million had been set.

Procida said he could not discuss too many details regarding the project at 369-371 Broadway but said the lender is pursuing all legal remedies until there is a satisfactory settlement.

"They are looking for a swift resolution versus some long wrangled out process," he said. Procida's work on the Trump and Sleepy Hudson projects is just another example of how devastating the market has become for some developers.

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