

Kiss the Ring: City Pols Weigh Heavy on Development in These Major Markets

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Ken Fisher discusses the influence local officials have in changing the skylines of major real estate cities, such as New York, in *The Real Deal*. As cities prepare for a new president and social movements increasing, the question arises—how much control do local politicians have over development? In New York, developers seeking to construct a building that meets zoning and construction codes meet no obstacles. All other buildings must meet a challenging approval process, the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure, which requires industry expertise, political savvy, an understanding of the community, and money.

“The rezoning process is not for the faint-hearted or the undercapitalized,” said Ken. An application costs at least \$250,000, requires majority vote of City Council, and is scrutinized by various entities. Despite the result, the outcome can ultimately hinge on the one Council member for the district in which the project is planned.

Even as the city continues to grapple with the COVID pandemic, developers continue to encounter City Council members who act in their district’s interest instead of the best interest of the city. “I don’t think the Council has internalized just how bad the city’s financial condition is right now,” Ken said.

To read the full article, [click here](#).

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