

BROOKLYN

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HELLER ORGANIZATION

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FRANCIS DZIKOWSKI© FRANCIS DZIKOWSKI/ESTO

With arched windows and a mix of bricks, 101 Bedford Ave. is a striking departure from Fischer's earlier work in glass and steel.

Who knew one of Brooklyn's most notorious architects would design one of Williamsburg's nicest new buildings?

But that's exactly what Karl Fischer has pulled off at 101 Bedford Ave. across from McCarren Park.

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"He's known for bland, generic high-rises, although he has been changing it up lately," said Cate Corcoran, managing editor of Brownstoner, the real-estate obsessed blog.

"This is one of the better, maybe the best Karl Fischer design we've seen."

Last decade, sites like Brownstoner and Curbed nicknamed Fischer "Hot Karl" because many viewed his buildings as uninspired, even insipid.

Considered by many to be a "developer's architect," happy to accommodate his clients at the risk of his work's overall appearance, Fischer has struggled for acceptance in the hypercritical world of New York City real estate.

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KENDALL RODRIGUEZ/FOR NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

“Karl Fischer Row,” three towers on the west side of McCarren Park, are the kind of projects Fischer has been criticized for in the past.



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The amenities at 101 Bedford are almost too many to count: A doggy spa, PGA pro golf simulator, wine-tasting room, sky-lit indoor pool, even an ATM in the lobby.

But he has never struggled for acceptance from developers, particularly in the Hasidic community that has developed so much in Brooklyn over the past decade.

Fischer has done more than 40 projects for them and other clients in the city since 2005.

“He’s the easiest guy to work with,” said Yoel Sabel, a developer of 101 Bedford — which Fischer has been doing for a decade.

Fischer credits a transformed market for his transformed look.

“During the boom, people wanted modern; they wanted glass,” he said.

He also blames the sales people for dictating over-the-top designs.

“The marketing people often drove what a building looked like,” Fischer said. “It was not always the best result.”

At 101 Bedford, Fischer drew on the area’s historic buildings hence the heavy use of brick and big, loftlike windows.

“The building fits in,” said Ward Dennis, co-chair of local group Neighbors Allied for Good Growth. “If you try to stand out, and you don’t look good, it’s that much more obvious.”

But inside, 101 Bedford could not be more indulgent.

“We thought of every possible perk,” broker Adam Heller said.

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MATT CHABAN/NY DAILY NEWS

Rooftop "beach" at 101 Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg.



KENDALL RODRIGUEZ/FOR NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

The tower of 200 Franklin St. in Greenpoint, another Fischer confection, sits awkwardly on top of a row of shops.

In addition to the usual gym, pool and parking, there is a pro tour golf simulator, a doggy spa with Keith Haring decor, a wine-tasting room, a simulated beach on the sprawling roof, even an ATM in the lobby.

"Why not?" Sabel said.

Even residents of 101 Bedford have been fooled.

Sabel recounted how he was showing a tenant around his new two-bedroom penthouse (monthly rent \$6,750).

The guy walked out onto the terrace and looked across McCarren Park, to a row of three towers on Bayard Street, known derisively as "Karl Fischer Row."

"He gets this look and says, 'You can really tell the difference between a good architect and a bad one,'" Sabel recalled.

Renters agree. The first two phases of the building are already 90% leased after two months. The third phase hits the market with open houses Sunday.

(END)