

Micro living in urban cities research papers examples

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Introduction

Micro living is increasingly becoming a popular trend in major cities today prompted by the need to minimize the consumption of space. This trend to a great extent is prompted by the increasing population of people in major town centers and city dwellings. The city of New York is particularly picking pace with the trend where apartment buildings are increasingly becoming smaller and smaller. The lack of space requires that several adjustments be made to maximize the space in the house. Maximization of space is done through various approaches of micro living that are ultimately meant to utilize a small space in the apartment buildings. This paper analyses micro living in the city of New York presenting several factors pertinent to the discussion particularly in regard to the future of housing in the city of New York.

Micro Living in the City of New York

Micro living refers to living in apartments that are quite small in size that range between 400 and 250 sq. feet. A micro apartment is more likely defined as a studio that covers averagely 400 sq. Feet are quite similar to a

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college dorm room. The apartments are built to house singles and young adults who are not married and live alone. The space is quite constrained to house more than one person and hence can only comfortably accommodate one occupant at a time. The need for the development of micro apartments in the City of New York is largely driven by the growing numbers of young adults venturing into the City seeking job opportunities and means of livelihood. Hence, the establishment of mini apartments will serve to accommodate these young adults who often have little than \$ 1, 000 USD a month to spend on rent (Sophia).

There is increasing debate on the viability of micro apartments as a solution for city living in the light of growing concerns about the increasing cost of housing in the city centers. In addition, there is also growing concern of the increased number of city dwellers where more and more persons are continuously venturing into city centers in search for jobs. More often than not, jobless and without a place to live, housing solutions immediately available are quite expensive to afford. The mayor of New York City, Mayor Bloomberg, in 2012, testified to experiencing this dilemma in the same city where he had to make do with living in a studio apartment for 10 years before he made it big by becoming the mayor. Evidently, micro living in the city of New York presents opportunity for persons living in the city to take advantage of the options available in micro living solutions which the mayor termed as affordable living (Jennifer).

According to Jenifer, the key secret in micro living lies in the utilization of space within a small apartment. Essentially, micro living requires space-saving techniques that work to incorporate the various amenities that a

usually big enough house has to offer. Similar sentiments have been forwarded by Claudia who notes that dealing with tiny spaces in small homes requires that one develops space saving techniques which ensure that storage spaces are utilized to the maximum. In this regard, the main attribute of micro living apartments in Manhattan is built to have hidden storages that ensure maximum utilization of space in every part of the apartment. The micro apartments in Manhattan are built in three levels or layers in order to utilize space between the floor and the ceiling. Whereas micro apartments are to a great extent regarded as to make good use of space, criticisms have been advanced that brand them claustrophobic i. e. giving a feeling and impression of closed, squeezed and limiting space area. To address claustrophobia, the micro apartments in Manhattan are built to have high ceilings especially in the bedroom area so that the occupant does not feel constrained by the space (Claudia).

The move to spearhead the development of mini apartments in New York City is driven by a couple of factors one of which has to do with analysts' projections that, by 2030, 60 percent of the global population will have moved to urban dwellings particularly in city centers. Another element that drives the move by Mayor Bloomberg to construct mini apartments is the growing demand for micro living by single and young couples in New York City who are intent making a decent living in the City, but are constrained with resources on renting spacious apartments that retail at very high rates and rents. Statistically, the demand for mini apartment living had gone up to 1.8 million units by July of 2012 when Mayor Bloomberg rolled out the project to build more units. At the time, the available units could only house

a million households. These factors serve as the inspiration behind Mayor Bloomberg's move to bring change to the City of New York (Dolasia).

The Manhattan mini apartments are built to provide a home that has the completeness of space and feelings of homely environment despite the limited space that the apartment utilizes. To achieve this, the design has been tailored to fit several aspects of what a conventional home would entail. These incorporate the living room, a bedroom and a terrace looking out to the outdoors. The first level in the house is made to accommodate the living room, the bathroom and the kitchen. Above it is the second level which accommodates the bedroom. The other floor on top of the bedroom is meant to accommodate a terrace where the occupant can step to the outdoors without having to leave the apartment building (Claudia).

The largest apartment in the project covers approximately 300 sq. feet and resembles a tool box in design. As a strategy to save on space, the apartments are built to serve multiple purposes in various locations of the house. For instance, the living room contains a foldable table which can be converted into a study area while in the ceiling space has been utilized to form a place for storage that somewhat resembles a Volkswagen Jetta booth which is accessed using a steep ladder. Even quite amazing to revelers is the fact that architects were able to fit in a Juliette balcony that doesn't protrude out of the building. The inbuilt terrace serves a great purpose of letting in fresh air into the apartment as well as the double purpose of offering the occupant a view of the outdoors. Such a superior design does not only provide the occupant of the mini apartment with facilities that are found in a standard house, but also provide them with the necessary comfort to ensure

that the occupant has decent living standards in line with the stipulations of New York City housing construction stipulates (Dolasia).

As earlier mentioned the cost of housing in the City of New York proves quite expensive for residents and hence, development of units is tailored toward affordability that will ensure that more people can afford housing units in the city. Mayor Bloomberg pointed out in 2012 that the Manhattan project for mini housing is expected to come to completion in the year 2015, and the housing units developed are expected to retail at between \$940 - \$1, 870 USD a month. At this average rent range, most youthful single New Yorkers are expected to afford a decent living. Notably, a City such as New York by legal restrictions requires those housing units spaces do not exceed the minimum requirement of living space that is 500 sq. Feet, however, the mini apartment project developed by Mayor Mark Bloomberg in 2012 are exempt from this requirement. This exemption is informed by the need to ensure affordability of the housing units coupled by the need to utilize the space available for construction of new housing buildings in the municipality of New York City (Sophia).

Micro living is majorly driven by the cost of housing in urban dwellings the trend is replicated in other major cities, in the US where young adults are increasingly finding it necessary to adopt to such housing units. In Seattle for instance, the micro units are more affordable than in the city of New York with rents as low as \$700 dollars. The micro units in the city are, however, tailored to accommodate just a single person with the general trend in the area such that residents in the buildings share certain resources and space. For instance in an apartment building dubbed McConnell's the residents in

the building are majorly composed of college students where 90% of them pursuing degrees in their career choices. With tuition costs on the rise in the US colleges, the students are left with very little to spend on accommodation. As a result, they do not mind small space and sharing spaces such as kitchen space with fellow students and tenants in the building is not a big issue. Further, the mini apartments in Seattle are smaller ranging between 375 sq. Feet and 250 sq. feet that only allow a bed space that can be converted into a multiplicity of rooms such as bedroom, living room and study area. In essence, the trend towards the development of housing in New York has come at a time when there is a growing need for development of housing solutions in urban dwellings that provide a decent living at affordable rents (Porterfield).

Conclusion

Primarily, the developments of mini apartments in the City of New York are built to provide affordable housing units. It is because most of New York City residents who are young adults who live alone mainly seeking employment opportunities and a chance for investment in the City. Constrained with resources coupled by the ever increasing rates of rents in the City, New Yorkers are continuously requiring affordable housing units that can house an individual comfortably without compromising the standards of decent living. The achievement of this objective heavily relies on mini apartment development designs that incorporate aspects of a home in a small space that can be utilized by the occupant for various purposes (Porterfield).

The aim of mini apartment architects is to develop units that are small enough to be affordable but at the same time incorporate all the

requirements of what a normal home requires. The architect's bank on space utilization by maximizing the use of the available spaces in the mini apartment. For a start, the utilization of space requires that certain aspects of the mini apartment serve multiple purposes. As such the Kitchen could double as the living room while the bedroom could double as a study. The multiplicity of purpose is made possible by adopting several techniques in the utilization of the available space. As suggested here in the spaces below the staircase can be used as storage cabinets or can fit in a closet, while the bed can double as a couch when folded up which transforms the bedroom into the living room area in an instant (Dolasia; Claudia).

Fundamentally, affordable housing through the construction of mini apartments in New York is purposed to meet the demands of an ever growing population in the City that is largely composed of young adults living alone. More so, projections are such that the City of New York keeps attracting youthful people who are seeking employment opportunities in the City. As such the future, can only promise to drive up the demand for affordable housing given the growing number of single people moving into New York each year. The ambitious plan developed by New York City Mayor Mark Bloomberg promises to ensure that the capacity of the housing industry in the City grows to accommodate the demands for affordable housing. What is more, the project not only provides affordable living but also makes use of limited space in the City to provide residents of New York with decent living housing solutions at affordable rents and rates (Porterfield; Sophia).

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