

THE INSIDE TRACK

Get Access by Granting Access

Setting the Scene

Currently, we're trying to get the eighth cycle Local Law 11 work accomplished at a property we manage in Greenwich Village. I found out when we were starting the project from the contractor that they're going to need access to the building next door. But we have not been given access.

Following the Action

When your contractor is selected and you're ready to go to contract, you should try to get a sense of the impact your project is going to have on the adjoining buildings in the area. It's very important to know this at least six months before the work is to begin.

First, you've got to satisfy the adjoining property's insurance requirements. Some buildings might request a license agreement in which they license the space to you for the short period of time you are utilizing their space. Some properties might require that you pay their legal fees in drawing up the agreement. They might require you to pay for their engineering fees to review the drawings that you have for your project. They might even require that your own engineers spend time meeting with their engineer and their property manager to try to identify potential problems.

Also, they want very detailed schedules – how long will you be there? They want assurances. They want deposits of money. They want non-refundable payments from the building for the inconvenience of utilizing the property.

Doing It Right

As a professional in the industry, I can assure you that it's important to establish good relations with buildings next to you. At some point in time, the shoe will be on the other foot and they may want to access your property. Who are the supers and the property management companies in the neighboring buildings? You should have an open dialogue. Don't wait until the last minute because you never know what people are going to spring on you. Even with the best of intentions, there might be delays that are unavoidable. Know what you're dealing with.

There are a lot of politics in being a good neighbor.

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