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Hudson Yards Has Eye on New York Fashion Week

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CULTURE SHED - VIEW FROM HIGH LINE AT 30TH STREET
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DILLER SCOFIDIO+RENFRO IN COLLABORATION WITH ROCKWELL GROUP

A rendering of the Culture Shed.

Photo By Rendering by Diller Scofidio + Renfro in collaboration with Rockwell Group

Hudson Yards is pushing to be the next home for fashion week and has Diane von Furstenberg and the Council of Fashion Designers of America supporting its cause.

“In all likelihood, fashion week will come to Hudson Yards. It needs a permanent home,” said Jay Cross, president of Hudson Yards, during a preview of the massive West Side mixed-used development on Tuesday at the New York Center for Architecture in Greenwich Village.

“I am super excited about the Culture Shed,” von Furstenberg, chairman of the CFDA, said Wednesday, in reference to the new multipurpose center to be built at Hudson Yards. “It will be a huge cultural center, and yes, a wonderful place for fashion week.”

Cross and other officials of Related Companies, which is developing Hudson Yards, said the Culture Shed component of Hudson Yards is being created with four runways, studios, exhibition space and a dramatic 140-foot-high canopy that slides along tracks to create indoor and outdoor space. The Culture Shed is being privately funded, with von Furstenberg on its board and spearheading the drive to raise money to build it.

Cross said it was about a \$300 million project, separate from Related’s involvement with Hudson Yards, though

Related is providing “bits and pieces” so the Culture Shed integrates into Hudson Yards, considered the largest private real estate development in the history of the city. He characterized the Culture Shed as “nondenominational,” meaning it could be used for a variety of events from concerts and award ceremonies to art and fashion shows. “The programming is flexible.”

Diller Scofidio + Renfro and the Rockwell Group are designing the Culture Shed, to be situated on West 30th Street between 10th and 11th Avenues. The design is currently going through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure, or ULURP, process for approval. Renderings revealed an airy, soaring structure made of steel and glass, comprising 198,000 square feet of space and five floors. “As Culture Shed expands and contracts, it will work in many configurations, welcoming multiple events simultaneously and serving diverse artists and audiences from across New York City and beyond,” said a spokeswoman for the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Liz Diller and David Rockwell have designed “an amazing place that becomes smaller and larger, according to the needs,” said von Furstenberg. “Our family foundation has made a financial commitment to Culture Shed, and I am proud to sit on its board,” she added, noting that most of the money for the Culture Shed, which is seen being operational in 2017, has already been raised.

In 2006, when von Furstenberg became president of the CFDA, she had a meeting with New York’s then-deputy mayor Dan Doctoroff. “He asked me what I wished for, and I said, ‘Give us a pier for fashion week.’ Dan smiled and we started to talk. The idea of Culture Shed was born.”

A spokesman for IMG, which owns Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, declined comment. Fashion week is currently held at Lincoln Center.

Steven Kolb, chief executive officer of the CFDA, said that Hudson Yards has involved the CFDA in the design of the Culture Shed, with the “ultimate result of it being a potential home for fashion week.” He said he’s met with Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who has also been supportive of relocating fashion week to Hudson Yards, and other city officials. Kolb said for the Culture Shed to be viable for fashion week it would require backstage facilities, large check-in areas and a lot of space that’s flexible for different purposes. “Our interest is not in being producers of fashion week, but that the infrastructure complements the needs of the designers,” said Kolb, noting that Culture Shed is not for profit.

Hudson Yards will also include a 750,000-square-foot retail center intended to draw global luxury brands, contemporary brands, fast-fashion retailers and stores specific to certain cities, according to R. Webber Hudson, executive vice president of leasing for Related. He said Colette would be an example of the type of retailer Hudson Yards wants to attract. Dining, a food market, a cinema and access to the number 7 subway will also be part of the center, being designed by Elkus Manfredi Architects. Talks with retailers and brands are under way, but leases are not expected to be revealed until close to the end of 2013 or at the International Council of Shopping Centers convention next May.

Hudson Yards also includes a public square and huge office towers. So far, Coach, L’Oréal USA and SAP will occupy the South Towers. With these lease agreements, the South Tower is more than 80 percent committed. Related Cos. is negotiating to relocate Time Warner to Hudson Yards from the Time Warner Center on Columbus Circle, which Related developed and could buy from Time Warner.