



Park51 Developer to Build Condos Next to Islam Museum

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News broke last week of developer **Sharif El-Gamal's** controversial plans to build a three-story, Jean Nouvel-designed museum "dedicated to exploring the faith of Islam and its arts and culture" at 51 Park Place, but now another less controversial and more expected aspect of the project has been revealed: **El-Gamal's Soho Properties** is also going to build a tower of condos at neighboring site **45 Park Place**. Industry professionals had previously expressed doubt that El-Gamal would be



able to find people to collaborate with — "I can't imagine anyone getting comfortable enough," one anonymous executive told **The Real Deal** — but that does not appear to have been the case, as two architecture firms and a construction manager are already lined up. Still, given El-Gamal's **past troubles** with his other real estate holdings, as well as the fact that a certain faction of people remains vocally opposed to the idea of a Muslim anything being built in Lower Manhattan, this is certainly a project that you're not done hearing about.

The building at 45 Park, where, as with 51 Park, demolition permits have already been filed, will be designed by **Michel Abboud** of **SOMA Architects** along with **Ismael Leyva Architects**. Though the specifics of the design have yet to be released, the tower will consist of glass and steel and will rise to **619 feet**. Construction is expected to begin this year, and to wrap up in 2017.