New Landlord, Old Tenants, Hard Questions

Innovative tactics in converting an S.R.O. to a hotel.

BY CLAY DIVER

Innovative tactics in converting an S.R.O.

The East 25th Street side of the Martha Washington, which is being converted to a tourist hotel at an estimated cost of $49 million.

T he city currently stands as a case study in the challenges of converting S.R.O. buildings into tourist hotels. The Martha Washington, located at 25th Street and Market, is one such building. The hotel, which opened in 1928, has been undergoing a significant renovation to become a tourist destination.

The conversion process involves removing existing tenant units and repurposing the space into hotel rooms. This has led to significant displacement of current tenants and raised questions about the impact on the community.

Tenant perspectives vary widely, with some expressing concerns about the loss of their homes, while others see the conversion as an opportunity for better living conditions. The process has been contentious, with legal battles and community meetings playing a crucial role.

The city has implemented regulations to address these issues, including tenant relocation assistance and preservation of affordable housing. However, the challenges of balancing economic development and community needs remain.

As the conversion continues, the city and developers will need to address ongoing questions about the impact on tenants and the broader community. The Martha Washington, once a symbol of the city's history, is now a case study in the complexities of urban transformation.