

Questions Loom Following Deadly Manhattan Parking Garage Collapse

Parking structure had open safety violations dating to 2003, including cracks in slabs and missing concrete. by Nadia El-Yaouti

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, April 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Residents in Lower Manhattan remain rattled after the partial collapse of a parking garage that left five injured and one dead. The collapse happened at around 4 p.m. Tuesday on 57 Ann Street in the Financial District. The sudden collapse prompted the evacuation of the parking garage, the attached building, and other nearby areas.

Pictures and videos of the scene circulated online with nearby residents alerting the community via the popular Citizen's app. Individuals who were at the scene when the collapse happened reported that the four-story parking garage suddenly caved in, sending vehicles, cement, and other debris falling to the bottom floor. Footage of the collapse shows a plume of debris and dust rising as someone yells "Get out! Get out! Get out!"



Leandros A. Vrionedes, New York
Personal Injury Attorney

Law enforcement and fire department officials responded to the scene in minutes, helping to evacuate individuals who were inside. Officials detail that there were six workers inside the building when the collapse happened and that four of them were taken to the hospital. There has only been one confirmed fatality, and authorities believe everyone who may have been in the garage at the time is accounted for.

During a news conference, Mayor Eric Adams did not elaborate on the extent of the injuries of those who were hospitalized, but added that service workers and under individuals were evacuated from the building due to it being "completely unstable." Officials have since sent out a team of drones and a robotic dog to continue surveying the area.

According to the city's Building Department records, the building was owned by Anne Street LLC. Lance Howard is named as a contact for the company and has not yet issued a statement

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regarding the collapse. The New York Times has reported that according to the city’s buildings commissioner, Kazimir Vilenchik, the building has open violations dating back to 2003; however, plans were filed in 2010 to correct the issues. Among these violations were “first-floor ceiling slab cracks” and “missing concrete covering steel beams.”

The sudden collapse of the parking garage comes roughly two months after New York’s Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH) published its annual report on

construction fatalities. The [NYCOSH “Deadly Skyline” report](#) covers the state's safety stats as they relate to construction workers and the construction industry as a whole.

The most recent report highlighted alarming numbers including a drastic increase in workplace fatalities in the construction industry. According to the data, worker deaths increased by 41% between 2020 and 2021—an alarming 41 deaths compared to 61 deaths in 2021.

Also noted in the report were changes in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) involvement in construction-related deaths. While average OSHA fines increased from \$44,779 in 2020 to \$67,681 in 2021, OSHA has continued to conduct fewer inspections as compared to pre-pandemic numbers.

The findings of the latest NYCOSH report were recently reported on www.LawCommentary.com (see NYCOSH ‘Deadly Skyline’ Report Details Increase in Construction Worker Fatalities for 2021 by Nadia El-Yaouti, published March 31, 2023). In that article, we asked New York City personal injury attorney [Leandros A. Vrionedes](#) to comment on the findings in the report. Regarding this present garage collapse, Mr. Vrionedes expresses dismay that a building so dangerously unsafe was allowed to exist for so long without addressing its deficiencies through maintenance, repair, or other necessary measures.

“Buildings don’t just collapse for no reason,” Vrionedes argues. “Typically, negligence on someone’s part is to blame, such as if the building was constructed defectively or negligently maintained.” Vrionedes continues, “Ultimately, responsibility for the collapse likely falls on the building owners, although there may be multiple parties at fault.”

The parking garage appears to be owned by a limited liability company (LLC), which is a corporate structure that shields the owners from personal liability, but the company itself could be held liable for any negligence of its owners or employees. The NYC Department of Buildings also requires such structures to carry at least one million dollars in general liability insurance.

The buildings throughout Manhattan are known to be some of the oldest in the city with the median age of a surviving residential building being around 90 years old. With an ever-growing

population and a seemingly scaled-back involvement in building safety by OSHA, residents are horrified by the recent collapse but are not entirely surprised.

In a report by local digital outlet, amNewYork Metro, residents throughout Manhattan voiced their looming concerns. Resident Nicole Pinel who lived directly across the parking garage shared, "So I actually walked past the garage 10 minutes before it fell," adding, "I was just shocked but not kind of shocked, really just due to the fact that this building seems very outdated, it needs help, it is weathered, and I'm surprised that it hasn't had an issue prior." Another resident Chad Scott shared, "The building is in disarray for like years. It's really bad."

Authorities continue their investigation into what caused the collapse. While officials have not yet ruled out the building's age and integrity as the cause for the collapse, they have expressed that they are also investigating whether or not there was an excess of vehicles parked in the garage.

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