

THE REAL DEAL

Decision to Unseal East 51st Street Crane Collapse Settlements Appealed

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The documents detailing the wrongful death settlements in the 2008 East 51st Street crane collapse that harmed 31 people have been ordered unsealed by a Manhattan judge, the New York Law Journal reported. The defendants appealed the decision yesterday, *The Real Deal* has learned.

Justice Carol Edmead said that there was no justification for withholding the settlement amounts from the public now that all seven Labor Law wrongful death cases have been settled. Edmead had temporarily sealed the documents after one of the trials so that previous judgments wouldn't impact the ones pending.

Though two settlement cases tied to the collapse remain, Edmead wrote in her Dec. 22 decision that they are fundamentally different from the ones detailed in the settlement and "do not present the same concern of 'piggy backing' on the settled cases."

The defendants' appeal came as no surprise to **Adam Leitman Bailey**, whose 301 East 51st Street self-titled law firm represents Crave Ceviche, a restaurant that was damaged in the collapse.

Crave sued the same developers and crane operators in 2008 and had asked the court to unseal the prior agreements to facilitate its own settlement negotiations, which are currently underway, Leitman Bailey told *The Real Deal*.

By knowing the value of the previous agreements, as well as the value of the defendants' insurance policies, Crave (and other plaintiffs) can determine the upper limit of a potential future deal, he explained. "There's only so much money in the pot for all the parties to get," he said. [NYLJ]