The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

City Duma Seeks to Buy 3rd Building

By Lilia Biryukova

October 18, 2010



To make room for 10 new deputies, the Moscow City Duma is looking to purchase a third building — possibly the nearby Marine House business center, which could cost $50 million.

Valery Vinogradov, an acting deputy mayor and City Hall's representative to the City Duma, announced on Friday that he was leading a special working group of officials and lawmakers to study the purchase of a new building for the deputies.

Specifically, they are discussing the purchase of the Marine House center, which is near the City Duma's other two buildings, Vinogradov said.

Combined, the two buildings the City Duma occupies now — at 22 Ulitsa Petrovka and 4 Rakhmanovsky Pereulok, Bdlg. 2 — are larger than Marine House, which has 8,160 square meters of space, said Andrei Klychkov, one of the Duma's three Communist deputies.

Deputies interviewed by Vedomosti could not name the precise amount of space they now occupy.

The Marine House, located at 4 Rakhmanovsky Pereulok, Bldg. 1, is the most convenient building for the Duma to expand into, an official in the Mayor's Office told news agencies. The unidentified official added that Moscow's parliament wanted to purchase all of the space in the building.

City Duma Speaker Vladimir Platonov said the acquisition was necessary because when the new Duma forms in 2013, it will be expanded to at least 45 deputies, from the current 35.

A different building could be purchased, he said. But even without the added lawmakers, the Duma does not have enough space, Platonov said, adding that lawmakers have offices of 16 to 18 square meters, while their aides get offices of the same size.

Each deputy is allowed to have up to five advisers on staff, and if their offices get any more crowded, it will become difficult to work, said Klychkov, the Communist deputy.

There is not enough space to fit the deputies in one building, meaning that even the Duma leadership is spread between the two existing buildings, a Duma official said. The lawmakers also occupy a few rooms in buildings at 19 and 21 Ulitsa Petrovka, where the parliament's archive is stored.

If the staff were reduced, lawmakers would be comfortable in their existing space, said Sergei Mitrokhin, head of the Yabloko party and a former City Duma deputy. In addition to their aides, the 35 deputies have 282 other staff working there, he said.

Lawmakers had also discussed the possibility of constructing a building in the Moskva-City business district, but that would have been far more expensive than purchasing the additional space, Klychkov said.

Platonov said the new real estate would require additional expenses in the city budget. No funds are allotted for the purchase in this year's budget or the draft of next year's budget.

This year's budget allotted 1.16 billion rubles ($38 million) for all of the City Duma's expenditures. Roughly the same amount is planned for next year.

The average price per square meter in a building like Marine House is $5,000 to $7,000, or at the very most $10,000, said Andrei Zakrevsky, senior vice president at Knight Frank. That would suggest a price tag of $35 million to $65 million, which Klychkov said would be too expensive for the city now.

There could also be difficulties in reaching a deal with the building's owners, a firm called Morinvest. A spokesperson for the owners sent out a letter Friday saying no decision had been made to sell the business center.

A Moscow real estate consultant said there are just 243 square meters of space available for rent in the center.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/10/18/city-duma-seeks-to-buy-3rd-building-a2284