

What Home Will Top Hamptons Real Estate Market in 2016?

By Wallace Figg | March 13, 2016

In the annals of American real estate, only six home sales have broken the \$100 million barrier (with one other landing right on the \$100 million number). Not surprisingly, two of those deals took place right here in the Hamptons—a \$103 million sale on Further Lane in 2007 and the eye-popping \$147 million deal that was Barry Rubenstein's purchase of 67 Further Lane and a pair of connecting lots in 2014, which remains not only the most expensive home price ever paid here on the East End, but the most expensive anywhere in the USA.

Now it appears the second most expensive home purchase in the history of the Hamptons, and another one for the \$100 million-plus club, may be on the brink of going to ink, if a reported \$110 million deal goes through for 93 Lily Pond Lane, 101 Lily Pond Lane and 97 Lily Pond Lane. *The New York Post* reported that the three properties purchased back in 2014 for \$93.9 million may be selling, and if so it will trail only Rubenstein's buy in the rarefied air of pricey Hamptons home deals.



Should the deal come to fruition, East Hampton would surely be the odds-on favorite to make it a three-peat atop the list of priciest sales in our area this year. Looking at the annual report of Hamptons Top 10 Most Expensive Sales 2015 from Town & Country Real Estate, the home turf of Jerry Seinfeld, Steven Spielberg and other A-Listers once more grabbed the title it earned in 2014 with the \$57.3 million sale of 226 Further Lane.

The next five properties on the 2015 final tally meander into Montauk (the much-ballyhooed \$48.7 million deal back in December for Andy Warhol's former estate, Eothen, which J. Crew CEO Mickey Drexler bought in 2007 for \$27 million), then into Southampton to fill out the Top 5: \$40 million for 28 Gin Lane, \$38 million for 1100 Meadow Lane and \$37 million for 784 Meadow Lane. The honors at Number 6 go to Water Mill, where 493 Rose Hill Road went for \$29.5 million.

But at Number 7, there's East Hampton once again, and a familiar-sounding street: 249 Further Lane sold for \$28.5 million. "Lily Pond, Further Lane and Meadow Lane are the crown jewels," Town & Country Real Estate CEO Judi Desiderio says when asked if East Hampton—particularly with the reports of that trio of Lily Pond Lane properties above—will forever remain king of the Top 10 hill.

Aside from those famous street names, which will certainly continue to command top dollar, other aspects of a home always drive prices here—some aspects more than others. Desiderio notes in her report that nine of the Top 10 sales last year were waterfront homes, and that seven of those nine were on the ocean. That, she says, is a trend that isn't likely to change among the ultra high-end sales. "Waterfront—particularly oceanfront—is emperor."

All those regal properties together generated \$354.5 million in sales in 2015. Whether the trend at the top will continue depends on a number of factors, not the least of which seems to be how the bulls and bears will run. "The high end seemed to run a seven-year cycle," says Desiderio. "And apparently Hamptons high-end sales follow banner years on Wall Street."

From 2010 through 2015, the annual number of home sales between \$10 million and \$19.99 million has jumped from 24 to 44, while those in the \$20 million and over range went from 3 in 2010 to 12 last year (peaking at 19 in 2014). Looking at 2016 and the prices we saw in last year's Top 10, don't be surprised to see some shifts at both ends of the upper echelon. But those movements may not be where you'd expect. "I believe we will see the Number 10 slot lower," Desiderio says, with a nod toward the \$23 million deal for 377 Jobs Lane in Bridgehampton last year. "But the Number 1 may rise."