

Luxury home sales jump in New York's Hamptons

HERBERT LASH | July 18, 2017

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Luxury property sales in the Hamptons, New York's weekend haven for the wealthy, are on the upswing thanks to a buoyant stock market, with four closings over the \$20 million mark in the three months ended June compared to none last year, real estate data show.

Residential sales in the Long Island villages of East Hampton, Southampton and Bridgehampton came roaring back in the second quarter from a lackluster period a year ago, a report by brokerage Town and Country Real Estate said Monday.

Closings in the \$10 million to \$19.9 million range jumped to 10 from four and all but one of the 14 sales at the high end during the period occurred in the three towns, the report said.



A beachfront residence is seen in East Hampton, New York, March 16, 2016. PHOTO: Jeffrey Basinger

The sales point to a brighter outlook for the economy and Wall Street, whose performance is tied like an umbilical cord to real estate sentiment in the Hamptons, said Judi Desiderio, chief executive officer of Town & Country in East Hampton.

"When the market does well we're going to do well," said Desiderio, a broker in the Hamptons for 36 years.

The good times spur sales as the wealthy take money out of the stock market to invest in hard assets, she said.

"What are they going to do? They're going to buy art, they're going to buy jewels, they're going to buy luxury real estate, whether it's here or South Beach or wherever it is," Desiderio said. "But that's what they do."

The highest-priced sale was a four-bedroom, 2.5 bath home for \$31 million in May described as modest by publication 27East.com. The 2.6 acre property, with 199 feet of beach front, was bought in 1984 for \$175,000, the publication said.

The median home price rose 10.1 percent to \$1.1 million, while the total value of all sales jumped 21.7 percent, Town & Country said, using data from The Real Estate Report Inc of West Islip, New York.

Sales in the nine other Hamptons markets for the most part improved, though prices and volume declined in Amagansett, Montauk, Shelter Island and the areas outside Sag Harbor and East Hampton.

However, the outlook for the remainder of the year is bright, Desiderio said.

"I'm predicating that the rest of the year, especially the third quarter, we're going to see activity in all markets, as opposed to just the high end," she said.