

Bridgehampton NOMH: The Hamptons New Hot Market?



The home at 54 Sawasett Avenue in Bridgehampton, on the market for \$6,395,000, is located in Bridgehampton North (NOMH).
Courtesy of Saunders & Associates

By Arlene Gross

Bridgehampton North — the area north of Montauk Highway near the Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike, is turning into a sizzling hot Hamptons market.

“It’s *the* up-and-coming area of the Hamptons right now,” says Ed Gaetjens, a real estate salesperson for Saunders & Associates, which has an office close to downtown.

Gaetjens recently found the buyer for 44 Sawasett Avenue in what we’ll coin, Bridgehampton North of Montauk Highway (NOMH), an area many find appealing for its location. The transaction, which was set to close after this issue went to press, is essentially for the land and its potential. The 0.63-acre property comes with a teardown home that went on the market for \$1.8 million.

The property, which was on the market for 27 days, was listed by Nick Hemby, a colleague of Gaetjens’ at Saunders, who also recently sold 126 Narrow Lane, a block away from the Sawasett Avenue property.

People are interested in the area because it’s close to everything. “And the low taxes,” says Hemby, adding, “The school district is definitely appealing to a lot of people now, too.”

Hemby grew up in the area and has seen the change firsthand. “People really appreciate being able to walk to Main Street, in a more neighborhood-friendly atmosphere, where, for the most part, the homes are not overly obtrusive,” he says.

Though real estate prices have spiked, “It still feels very much like the Bridgehampton I remember.”

Location, Location, Location

Having recently sold 85 Pheasant Drive in Bridgehampton North, Jessica Von Hagn, a real estate agent with Compass who is currently representing properties on Norris and Lumber lanes, has also witnessed a spike in interest in Bridgehampton NOMH.

“I think it’s one of the villages where it’s now becoming more popular,” Von Hagn says (Bridgehampton is technically a hamlet of Southampton Town, though many refer to the downtown as a village given its picturesque, walkable Main Street with its small shops, restaurants that offer outdoor seating, galleries and even a public library.

“People are not so focused on south of the highway. They like walking into Bridgehampton village,” she says.

The area between Lumber and Butter lanes is the heart of horse country in the Hamptons, Von Hagn notes.

“But you’re still in close proximity to Bridgehampton town and you can zip down Ocean Road to the beach,” Von Hagn says. “I generally reference Bridgehampton as the hub of the Hamptons, because you can shoot to Sag Harbor. You can shoot to East Hampton. You can still get to Southampton. From a convenience factor, it’s one of the best places to be and you’re close to the ocean.”

For his part, Gaetjens has focused much of his efforts on selling homes and properties in Bridgehampton NOMH. He recently sold several homes on Norris Lane and Edgewood and Sawasett



Nancy and Jeffrey Silverman purchased a half-acre on Norris Lane four years ago and built a 5,000-square-foot home with a pool.

Courtesy of Nancy Silverman

avenues and is currently an agent for new construction on Narrow Lane and Sawasett.

"I've seen a huge price appreciation and some really big development going on over there in the last five years. It's a really up-and-coming area," Gaetjens says.

The area is attractive to lots of buyers because you can easily walk to Bridgehampton village shops and restaurants and it's quite close to the chic Topping Rose House hotel, the former Bull's Head Inn that was restored and renovated a decade ago and has since turned into a popular spot for dining and wellness, as it features a Jean-Georges restaurant and spa. Arthur & Sons, an old-school Italian eatery from Manhattan, opened an outpost a bit further down on Turnpike, near Narrow Lane, last summer.

Homeowners with friends visiting from the city can easily walk from the Hampton Jitney stop on Main Street or the train station on Maple Lane, notes Gaetjens.

"People can come out and not have to worry about having a car," Gaetjens says. "You can bike to the beach on Ocean Road. You're not car-dependent in that area and people like that."

North of 27, you won't find the massive estates on multiple acres of land that dot the landscape south of the highway, with most lots hovering around a half-acre in size, which means lower maintenance costs and closer neighbors.

"It's more of a community," Gaetjens says. "It's not rural. This little area between where Narrow Lane is, Montauk Highway, Norris Lane and Bridgehampton-Sag Turnpike, it's more of suburbia there, but people like it. They like the ability to be close to town, close to the beaches and not have to worry about having to drive everywhere you go."

Buyers are predominantly second homeowners looking for retreats for the summer, weekends and holidays, notes Gaetjens.

"The homes that are priced correctly and land over there that have 4 or 6 tenths of an acre, they don't last," Gaetjens says. "People buy a house over there, if it's an older home, they'll either renovate it completely or they'll knock it down."

Hemby sold his family home in the neighborhood over the winter for \$1.18 million and the 30-year-old, 1,300-square-foot ranch quickly got an interior makeover and landscaping trees were added for privacy. "We got more for the house than many thought. The location is what sold it. The location is invaluable."

The three-bedroom, two-bath house is now listed



A rendering shows a house that will be built on a 0.34-acre property at 131 Narrow Lane later this year. The asking price: \$4.995 million. Courtesy of Saunders & Associates



An area just north of Montauk Highway, down to Narrow Lane, has become increasingly popular. Luis Matos

for rent at \$30,000 per month, touting its proximity to the village, beach, train and Jitney.

Across the street at 131 Narrow Lane, a 0.34-acre lot with a 3,500-square-foot house that is supposed

to break ground later this year is asking \$4.995 million. The plans call for five bedrooms, five-and-a-half bathrooms and a finished lower level.

From Second Home to Comfy Neighborhood

Four years ago, Gaetjens sold Nancy and Jeffrey Silverman their Norris Lane half-acre property on which they built a 5,000-square-foot saltbox cedar shake five-bedroom, seven-bath home with a pool and a pool house.

When they first moved in, the Silvermans used it as a second home, but have since sold their primary residence and are now living in Bridgehampton full time.

"We have total privacy," says Nancy Silverman. "We cannot see another house from anywhere on our property. It's completely hedged in."

The number one requirement for the couple was being able to walk to town.

"We love to walk to dinner and walk home," Silverman says. "We feel like it's a good place. We can age well here, always being able to walk to town and not drive when that's an issue."

The Silvermans knew they wanted a home in the Hamptons and decided that Bridgehampton would be the perfect location.

"Bridgehampton is so central," Silverman says. "We get to Sag Harbor, no problem, no traffic. We can take back roads to East Hampton. We can get to Southampton. It's just very conveniently located and it's so beautiful. We love the beaches. We love being close to Sagaponack."

When they bought the property, there was a farm on the corner with horses.

"That's how much farmland there was," says Silverman. "It's a nice combination of newer homes and older homes, a lot of full-time people here. It's a little neighborhood within the hamlet."

After living over the years in the city, New Jersey and East Hampton, coming home to the Hamptons seemed like the right move.

"This is where my husband and I first met," Silverman says. "We had a blind date at the American Hotel. So we kind of went full circle and came back to where we started."

A 1,200-square-foot house at 126 Narrow Lane, which sold over the winter for \$1.2 million, is now listed for rent this summer at \$30,000 per month. Courtesy of Brown Harris Stevens

