

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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U.S. | NEW YORK | NY REAL ESTATE COMMERCIAL

In Springdale, You Can Leave the Car at Home

Residents of the Stamford neighborhood say its walkable streets make it feel like a community



Hope Street is home to several businesses in the Springdale section of Stamford, Conn. *PHOTO: CLAUDIO PAPAPIETRO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

By **MELANIE LEFKOWITZ**

Updated May 8, 2015 10:01 p.m. ET

Springdale is part of Stamford, Conn., but it has a distinctive character all its own: Walkable streets, a bustling commercial strip, even a Metro-North station.

“We work really hard to keep that community feel,” said Jennifer McKeon, president of the Springdale Neighborhood Association.

The fact that many residents can—and do—walk everywhere, from the train station to the shops on Hope Street to each other’s houses, is a major factor in creating and

sustaining that sense of community, she says.

“I can walk to the restaurants, and the movie theater, and the dry cleaners, and to get my nails done,” Ms. McKeon said. “People walk by [each other’s] houses every day and stop and say hello and actually have a conversation.”



Owner Johnny Cubukcu works at Sophia Farmers Market on Hope Street in the Springdale section of Stamford on Wednesday. *PHOTO: CLAUDIO PAPAPIETRO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

Springdale is in northeastern Stamford in Fairfield County. The city, with a population of 126,500, is about 35 miles from Manhattan.

Residents and real-estate brokers say Springdale is prized for its convenience, a 10-minute drive to the urban center of downtown Stamford and a short distance from Darien and New Canaan. From the train station, commuters can travel to Grand Central Terminal in about an hour. The Merritt Parkway is a short distance away.

“It’s all very convenient, yet it’s all part of Stamford, so you have the beaches available to you...and Stamford has a thriving downtown, if you want to go beyond Springdale,” said Elayne Jassey, of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties.

“You can be in a really nice residential neighborhood but you’re very near all kinds of restaurants, movie theater, all the conveniences,” she said.

In recent years, Springdale has expanded, with new retail space and apartment buildings in various stages. Hope Street, the main thoroughfare, is undergoing renovations intended to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety and to beautify the strip, Ms. McKeon said.



The Weed Memorial and Hollander Branch of the Ferguson Library. *PHOTO: CLAUDIO PAPAPIETRO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

“You get pushback and excitement at the same time,” Ms. McKeon said, of the additions to the neighborhood. “Some people think it’s great because there’s affordable housing, and then there are others who really want to watch that we don’t expand too quickly.”

Real estate in Springdale is slightly lower than the median values of Stamford.



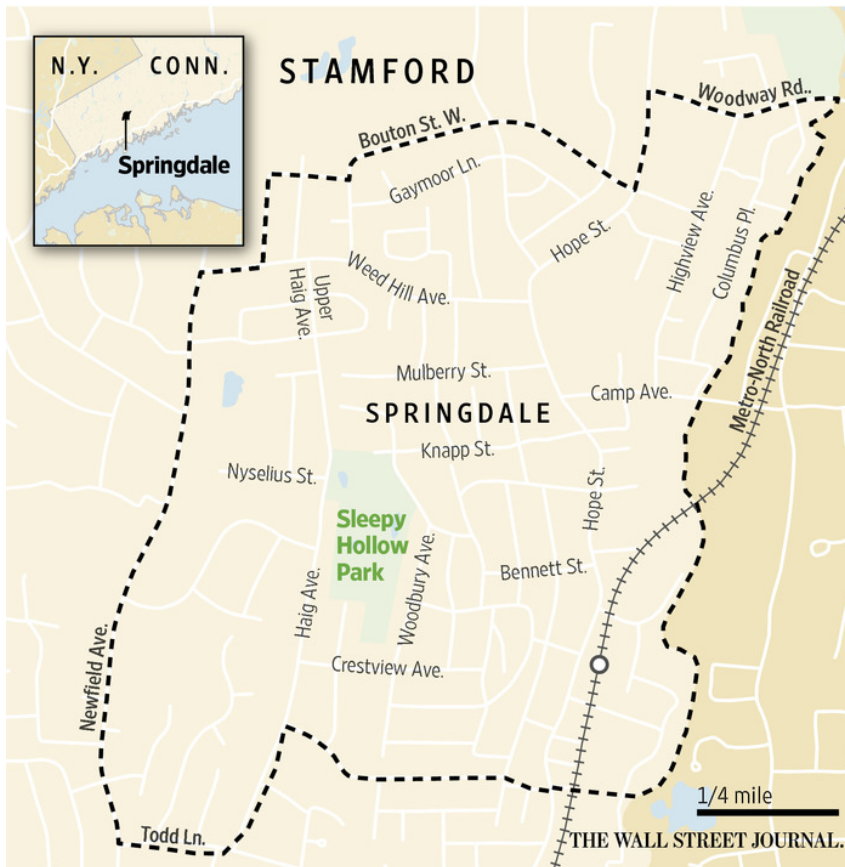
Mike Fleming, center, helps a customer at Dairy Inn in Springdale. *PHOTO: CLAUDIO PAPAPIETRO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

Some single-family houses sell for as little as \$350,000, brokers say. The average asking price for the two dozen or so single-family houses now on the market is \$570,000, said Kevin Quick, a broker with William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty, and the average asking price for the 15 or so condos for sale is about \$350,000. The average asking price for all of Stamford is about \$640,000, he says.

Property taxes generally run \$6,000 to \$7,000 a year for houses now selling for about \$500,000.

Many of Springdale's single-family houses are well-maintained older homes dating to the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. New buyers are drawn not only by relative value, but by the neighborhood feel, brokers say.

"There are a lot of shops, restaurants...a lot that sort of sustains that little community with not just day-to-day shopping and grocery but things to do, and people like that," Mr. Quick said. "It's a dynamic little microcosm in Stamford."



Parks: There are few parks within Springdale, but residents have access to Stamford city parks including Cove Island Park, with sand beaches on the Long Island Sound. The Stamford Museum & Nature Center, with art exhibits, farm animals and educational programs, is a short distance away, as is the Sterling Farms Golf Course, a public golf course on 144 acres.

Schools: Springdale is part of the Stamford school district, and most students attend Springdale Elementary

School, Dolan Middle School and Stamford High School.

In 2013, Springdale elementary was categorized by the state as "progressing," the second-highest of six classifications, according to the 2012-13 Connecticut District Performance Report. The middle school and the high school were categorized as "transitioning," the third-highest category.

Nearby private schools include the King Low Heywood Thomas School, an independent prep school with students in prekindergarten through 12th grade.

Dining: The Amore Cucina & Bar, serving Italian cuisine; Olio, a New American restaurant; and the Village Table, serving American food, are all on Hope Street.

Shopping: Local shops include the Heart of Gold jewelry store; the Sophia Farmers Market, a grocery store, both on Hope Street; and the DiMare Pastry Shop, on Largo Drive South. Downtown Stamford is a short distance away.

Entertainment: The State Cinema is on Hope Street.

IF YOU'RE BROWSING FOR A HOME...

<p>\$519,000</p> <p>93 St. Charles Ave.</p> <p>This house has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen with an eat-in atrium and a family room with brick fireplace and sliding doors. There is a deck, a flagstone patio and a koi pond.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listing History: On the market for about a week • Property Plus: Short walk to train and shops • Property Minus: Doesn't have a basement • Listing Agent: Adriana Morrell of the Higgins Group • Open House: By appointment 	<p>\$795,000</p> <p>184 Bouton St. West</p> <p>This Colonial has five bedrooms, three and 1/2 bathrooms, an open kitchen with designer appliances, a formal dining room and a family room. There is a finished lower level, a deck and an in-ground pool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listing History: On the market for about a week • Property Plus: Attached two-car garage • Property Minus: Some bathrooms could use updating • Listing Agent: Peter Rosato of the Relocation Group • Open House: By appointment 	<p>\$699,000</p> <p>338 Eden Road</p> <p>The contemporary house had three bedrooms and three full baths. There are open living and dining rooms, fireplaces in the living and family rooms, and a deck and a patio with an outdoor fireplace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listing History: On the market for two weeks • Property Plus: Exposed brick and vaulted, beamed ceilings • Property Minus: Doesn't have a basement • Listing Agent: Helen Dennis of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty • Open House: By appointment

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