

# Real Estate

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The historic Italianate Victorian farmhouse at 26 Morningside Drive South was built in 1853. It's longtime owners, noted artists Walter and Naiad Einsel, were given a Westport Historic District Commission Preservation Award.

## ON THE MARKET

# Italianate farmhouse has charming history

By Meg Barone

**WESTPORT** — The historic Italianate Victorian farmhouse at 26 Morningside Drive South, built in 1853, is the place where noted artists and illustrators Naiad and Walter Einsel shared most of their 47-year love story.

At 3,000 square feet, the white clapboard house with black shutters may be average in size, but within its walls resided boundless amounts of love and talent. The love Naiad and Walter shared is well-documented in the collection of artwork they created for each other over several decades, heart-related gifts hand-crafted for every Valentine's Day, birthday, anniversary and other special occasions.

"Art from the Heart: A Collection of Unique Valentines designed by Naiad & Walter Einsel" was published in 2008 and showcases the depth of their love and artistic creativity. Walter Einsel (1926-1998) was an art director for NBC, and Naiad Einsel (1927-2016) held a similar position at CBS. Their artwork was published in many magazines, corporate ads, record album covers, movie posters and television commercials. They were hired to create an exhibit at Disney World's Epcot Center and were the first married artists to create stamp designs for the U.S. Postal Service. Naiad received a Westport Arts Awards Lifetime

### ABOUT THIS HOUSE

**STYLE:** Antique Victorian Farmhouse, Italianate style  
**ADDRESS:** 26 Morningside Drive South

**PRICE:** \$1,950,000 (for both lots, 20 and 26 Morningside)

**ROOMS:** 10

**FEATURES:** Two lots totaling 3.14-acres, level and gently sloping property, barn/art studio with full bath, proximity to Greens Farms train station, short drive to local beaches, walking distance to Post Road (Route 1) shops and restaurants, across the street from Greens Farms School, one fireplace, one wood stove, covered front porch, screened porch, bluestone terrace, secret garden, fruit trees, two-car attached garage, four bedrooms, three full and one half baths

**SCHOOLS:** Greens Farms Elementary, Bedford Middle, Staples High School

**MILL RATE:** 16.86 mills

**ASSESSMENT:** \$877,900 (for 26 Morningside)

**TAXES:** \$14,801 (for 26 Morningside)

**ASSESSMENT:** \$313,200 (for 20 Morningside)

**TAXES:** \$5,281 (for 20 Morningside)

Achievement Award in 2011. They were inducted into the Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame.

"Our Valentines were one of the most important things we did with our art each year ... and they were

See *Farmhouse* on C2



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One wall of the family room has built-in bookshelves and cabinetry. French doors lead to a bluestone terrace and yard.



The two parcels totaling 3.14 acres at 20 and 26 Morningside Drive South contain the main house and a barn, left, that served as the art studio for Walter Einsel. His wife, Naiad, also an artist, had her studio in the main house.

Real Estate



The family room has French doors that lead to the raised bluestone terrace with a pergola and the backyard.

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**FARMHOUSE**

From page C1

really from the heart," Naiad Einsel said in a 1999 interview, one of many. She also commented on the place where she lived. "I really do love it here. Part of it is Westport itself and part of it is the house," she said.

Their 10-room house, the Charles B. Sherwood House, is also noteworthy. In 2005, the Einsels received a Preservation Award from the town's Historic District Commission, and in 2007, the property was designated a Local Historic District. It comprises two parcels, 26 Morningside and 20 Morningside, totaling 3.44 acres in a neighborhood of half-acre parcel zoning. The Einsels' two lots include 26 Morningside, which has 2.63 acres with house and barn/studio, and 20 Morningside, a 0.81-acre vacant lot.

While its walls could use a fresh coat of paint and the kitchen and baths need updating, the house has good bones and lots of charm.

"From what we could see, the house overall seems to be very stable and in good repair. ... It clearly merits preservation and will be a wonderful house for someone who appreciates quality construction, artisanal detailing and historic character in a beautiful natural setting," said Gregory Farmer, of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. "Our walk-through confirmed that the house is a well-constructed and nicely-detailed example of the Italianate style. ... The original features are mostly intact, especially on the exterior and in the main rooms. ... Italianate-style houses are admired for the deep

porches, high first-floor ceilings, natural light and natural ventilation. The Einsel house has all of these and more," Farmer said.

There is a wrap-around porch on the front of the house. Inside, the formal living room has a fireplace, and the formal dining room has three sets of French doors — two to the porch and one to a large screened porch. Off the living room is an office with a half bath. Above it is a private wing with a bedroom, wood stove and full bath.

The spacious family room has a fireplace and built-in bookshelves. French doors lead to the bluestone terrace and backyard. The kitchen has a Vulcan four-burner range with a griddle, two sinks on separate counters, some glass-front cabinets and a door to the front porch.

On the second floor, there are two more bedrooms and a full bath. One of the bedrooms served as Naiad's art studio. Walter's studio was located in an 864-square-foot barn on the property. It was built in 1970 and has a full bath and skylights.

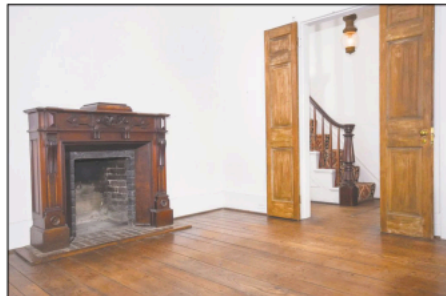
The property contains landscaping of open lawn, mature trees including towering evergreens, shrubbery and a blanket of pachysandra.

The location of this house makes it desirable. It is walking distance to shops on Post Road (Route 1), sits across the street from Greens Farms Elementary School, and is a short ride from the Greens Farms train station.

For more information or to make an appointment to see the house contact Joan Wright of William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty at 203-247-5868 or joan@thewrightbome.com.



The sizable screened porch provides attractive views of the 3.44-acre property, which is in a neighborhood that has half-acre zoning.



The formal living room has a fireplace and French doors that separate it from the center hall and dining room.



Walter Einsel's art studio was located in an 864-square-foot barn on the property. It was built in 1970 and has a cathedral ceiling, full bath and skylights.

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