



Real Estate Report: Brisk Sales Shrink Real Estate Inventory

Beth Young | November 4, 2016

Houses were selling briskly in the third quarter of 2016 on the East End when compared with the same quarter last year, and the pickings left out there for prospective buyers are getting slim.

According to several newly released real estate reports, median sales prices dropped on the South Fork, while they held their own on the North Fork compared with the same quarter one year ago.

The Corcoran Group's Corcoran Report says that the median sales price on the South Fork declined 8 percent to \$900,000, while the median price on the North Fork declined 1 percent to \$471,000.

The Corcoran Group reported that "sales activity was robust in the Hamptons, with 14 percent more closings reported this quarter compared to a year ago."

Corcoran reported that the number of closings on the North Fork were 18 percent higher than the third quarter of 2015, with the number of sales in Southold up 38 percent and the number of sales in Cutchogue/Mattituck/Laurel up 30 percent.

The Corcoran Group reported 587 South Fork sales in the third quarter, up from 515; and 167 sales on the North Fork, up from 141.

Other reports tell a similar story. Reports can vary due to different definitions of the geographic areas covered by the report.

Douglas Elliman's Elliman Report showed just 2 percent more sales on the South Fork — 517 total sales, up from 507 in the third quarter of 2015. The average number of days on the market declined to 142 from 161. They also reported a 13.2 percent decline in median sales price, to \$825,000.

Douglas Elliman reported a 19.9 percent jump in the number of sales on the North Fork, with 199 sales, up from 166. They reported the number of days on the market slumped to 118 from 126. They reported a .2 percent decline in median sales price, to \$515,000.

Town & Country Real Estate reported a 5 percent increase in the number of South Fork houses sold, with the median price dropping 13 percent to \$850,000. They reported a 7.7 percent increase in the number of North Fork houses sold, while the median price edged up 3.3 percent to \$470,000.

Suffolk Research Service, Inc., the only local real estate statistics provider not affiliated with a real estate firm, is also the only service that breaks down their statistics by each of the five East End towns, and they see Riverhead Town as a bright spot in the third quarter.

SRS reported 176 sales in Riverhead in the third quarter of 2016, up from 135 in the same quarter one year ago, and they also reported an 8.5 percent increase in Riverhead median price to \$385,000.

SRS reported a 24.4 percent decrease in median price in East Hampton Town, to \$875,000, with 166 houses sold, up from 164 in the third quarter of 2015. They reported a 13.6 percent jump in median price on Shelter Island, to \$920,000, with 22 homes sold, up from 20 in the prior year quarter.

SRS reported a 6.7 percent decline in median price in Southampton Town, to \$782,859, with 386 houses sold, down from 437 in the third quarter of 2015, and

a 4.9 percent increase in median price in Southold Town, with 122 houses sold, down from 134 in the prior year quarter.

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The Elliman Report for the Hamptons says that "listing inventory declined on a year-over-year basis for the fifth consecutive quarter. There were 1,533 listings, down 10.4 percent from the same period a year ago."

Elliman also reported that listing inventory on the North Fork declined 23.4 percent to 472 homes on the market in the third quarter.

Elliman reported that the high and the low end of the market were more active than the middle on the South Fork in the third quarter. They reported sales above \$1 million on the South Fork made up just 40.8 percent of the market, the lowest market share in three years. They also reported a 29 percent jump in sales above \$5 million and a 24 percent decline in sales between \$1 million and \$5 million.

Town & Country Real Estate breaks down its sales by neighborhood, and there were a few stand-outs in their third quarter report.

Town & Country reported a 37.5 percent jump in the number of sales in Jamesport, Aquebogue, South Jamesport and Baiting Hollow, but they also reported a 3.03 percent decline in median sales price in those areas. They also reported a 12.9 percent increase in number of houses sold in Mattituck, Cutchogue and Laurel, with median sales prices edging up by 6.12 percent in those areas.

Overall on the North Fork, Town & Country reported an 11.76 percent increase in the number of sales under \$500,000 and a 28.57 percent decline in sales between \$1 million and \$1.99 million. But they reported three sales between \$2 million and \$3.49 million, compared with none in the third quarter of 2015.

Town & Country reported a whopping 123.4 percent increase in median sales price in East Hampton Village, to \$5.25 million, with a 60 percent increase in number of homes sold, and a 14.45 percent decline in median sales price in Montauk, to \$875,000, with a 113 percent increase in number of homes sold.

Town & Country reported a 57.93 percent jump in median sales price in the Sag Harbor area, with an 11 percent decline in the number of homes sold. They reported a 15.94 percent jump on Shelter Island, with the number of homes sold remaining steady at 12. They reported a 29 percent decline in median price in Westhampton, but a 97 percent increase in the number of sales.

"2016 Third Quarter Home Sales in the Hamptons was, well frankly, all over the place," said Town & Country CEO Judi Desiderio in her statement accompanying the report. "Looking back at our last bull market of 2014 and clearly you see the pull back since then."