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If You're Thinking of Living In/Glenville Area of Greenwich, Conn.; Prestige Address and Schools at Discount

By **CHERYL PLATZMAN WEINSTOCK**

WHEN Andrea and Lawrence Levine wanted to move from their Stamford apartment into a house last winter, they had a plan. "We figured it would be a wise investment to buy a home in a town like Greenwich because it is so well known for its schools, among other things," said Mrs. Levine, a lawyer at Katz & Katz in White Plains. "We were going to look there and see if there was something we could afford. If not, we would move on."

Mr. Levine, a systems analyst at Pitney Bowes in Stamford, and his wife first looked in Old Greenwich but became discouraged when they were outbid on homes in their price range. Then they looked in Glenville, a small, hilly neighborhood that was originally a mill town and that, Mrs. Levine said, was "more reasonably priced than Old Greenwich." Last April, the Levines closed on a four-bedroom, two-bath Cape Cod for less than \$450,000.

The price of a home in Glenville is not the only thing that attracts young couples like the Levines. Susan and Jeffrey Hanley, associate director of the Builder's Institute, a building and realty company in Armonk, stumbled upon Glenville when looking to move from their co-op apartment in Rye, N.Y. They bought a four-bedroom split-level in 1998 for \$479,000.

"We were surprised to find that this is a very normal neighborhood," said Mrs. Hanley, a homemaker with three children. "Given that it's Greenwich, it's not a pretentious neighborhood at all. There are a lot of young families here, and in the summer we hang out and barbecue in each other's backyards and we wash our cars together with our kids. It's also a great neighborhood to trick or treat in. I'm glad we found this place."

Lucy Ann Macaluso, a sales associate with Coldwell Banker in Greenwich, said: "Glenville is really a well-kept secret. But when people do find out about us, it usually takes a while for them to find a house because there are not enough houses here to fill everyone's needs. I had one buyer who waited almost one year."

Ms. Macaluso attributed strengthening sales of Glenville in recent years to its small-town feeling; its variety of housing, including small split-levels and Cape Cods and multifamily dwellings to large colonials and Tudors that range from \$300,000 to several million dollars; and its proximity to the Westchester County Airport, major highways and shopping.

Greenwich's town planner, Diane Fox, said, "I think Glenville is definitely going to continue be a growth

area for us because of its opportunity for land variability and zoning variety."

Kathy Adams, a sales associate at Country Living Associates in Greenwich, said that first-time home buyers could find 1920's-era 1,200-square-foot cottages and Cape Cods on quarter-acre lots for \$360,000 to \$450,000. Occasionally, she added, buyers can find an exceptional buy, like the 1928 two-bedroom, 1,100-square-foot house that sold last year for \$210,000.

Larger, 2,600-square-foot Victorians and farmhouses that may need remodeling range from \$450,000 to \$600,000. Also in this price range buyers can find two-family homes, many of them on Pemberwick Road. Colonials in reasonable condition and newer contemporary homes on one-acre lots range from \$625,000 to \$1 million. Homes with river views, historic ones, stately Georgian colonials and gracious Tudors can range up to \$2.5 million, Ms. Adams said. These homes are generally in the area of Weaver Street, Riversville Road and Bailiwick Road.

John D. Rockefeller's brother, William, settled in Greenwich more than 100 years ago. According to Lolly Prince, Greenwich's first selectwoman, his descendants own hundreds of acres of land in Glenville.

"The Rockefellers have a great track record of doing very thoughtful, deliberate development, which has enhanced our community over the years," Ms. Prince said. "We're looking forward to their developing the first 39 units of a 60-unit parcel."

SEAN SHAY, a partner in Fresh Meadow Builders L.L.C. in Darien, Conn., who is project manager and builder for the development, said that of the 74 acres in the parcel, 28 acres will remain undeveloped as open space. The 39 colonial-style homes in the 5,800-square-foot range will be priced at \$2.8 million to \$3.5 million.

Ms. Adams said the condominium market in Glenville was as active as the single-family house market. Last year, the number of condos sold was about equal to the number of single-family houses that were sold, she said.

Last October, Ronald Quigley, an investment banker at BNP Paribas in Manhattan, and his wife, Natalie, bought a 4,300-square-foot town house at Pheasant Run, a condo complex. "We didn't just settle for our home," Mr. Quigley said. "For us, this town house was the optimal choice because of its privacy, security and space. It was a fantastic buy at \$661,000. All the houses we looked at in this range needed \$200,000 to \$300,000" in renovations.

THERE are several condo complexes in Glenville. A two-bedroom 1,000-square-foot unit costs \$375,000 in River Run, while a 2,500-square-foot unit at Lyon Farm brings \$1.4 million. Lyon Farm, a 75-acre, 191-unit complex, is bordered by conservation parkland and includes two swimming pools and tennis courts, Ms. Adams said.

There are no apartment buildings in Glenville, but Ms. Adams said that a two-bedroom rental in the neighborhood's condominiums or in many two- and three-family houses ranged from \$1,700 to \$3,600.

But the diversity of housing options is not the only lure for buyers in Glenville. "Residents have a Greenwich address and they have all the amenities of Greenwich for a more affordable price, like the Greenwich schools," when they buy in Glenville, Ms. Adams said.

Dr. Roger Lulow, superintendent of the Greenwich Public Schools, said that by 2010 the population of

his district would exceed 10,000 students, up from 8,800 now. But, he said the district was prepared for the increase. It has just finished a \$45 million renovation that provides space for more students in the high school.

"One of our greatest assets is that we have a diverse population in a town with this amount of wealth," Dr. Lulow said. "What would surprise many about Greenwich schools is that 20 percent of our students are minority students, including Asian, Hispanic and African-American students."

He said his biggest challenge involved expectations. "This is the wealthiest community in Connecticut with the highest taxable income in Connecticut," he said. "These people have high expectations for our kids, and we try our best to meet them."

Last year, the district opened what it says it hopes will be the first of many magnet schools, the International School at Dundee, for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The curriculum offers an interdisciplinary approach intended to enrich and broaden student understanding of literature, history, science, art and music. In the fall, another magnet school will open, focusing on language arts and social studies.

Dr. Lulow calls Greenwich High School "the crown jewel" of the system. "You couldn't find many high schools with our architectural design, quality of space and breadth of curriculum," he said. Greenwich High offers students a choice of 18 advanced placement courses.

Eighty-two percent of last year's graduating seniors went on to four-year colleges. On the College Board tests last fall, students averaged 544 in verbal and 565 in math, considerably higher than the statewide averages of 494 and 506, respectively.

Dr. Lulow said that roughly one-third of the students who reside in the district went to private schools in and around Greenwich, a number that he said had remained constant over the last 20 years.

FOR recreation, Glenville residents can play basketball, baseball, soccer and tennis at the 44-acre Pemberwick Park.

Besides offering residents a full-size gymnasium and meeting rooms, the Western Greenwich Civic Center has a 10-acre park that includes ball fields and a children's playground. Glenville residents also have access to all of the town's parks and recreation, which include, among other things, four public marinas, two island and two shore beaches, the Dorothy Hamill Skating Rink and the 18-hole Griffith E. Harris Municipal Golf Course.

Glenville was originally called Sherwood's Bridge, named for the viaduct that spans the Byram River and that honors one of the neighborhood's earliest settlers, the Sherwood family, said Susan Richardson, archivist for the historical society of the town of Greenwich.

It was a textile manufacturing town that centered around its mill. The Byram Manufacturing Company opened in 1814. It changed hands several times, before becoming the Hawthorne Mill Company and, ultimately, the American Felt Company at the turn of the century, Ms. Richardson said.

Mill work brought an influx of Irish immigrants to the neighborhood through the 19th century. By the late 19th century and into the early 20th century, Polish immigrants also sought work in the mill, Ms. Richardson said.

Though American Felt closed in the late 1970's, some residents still think of Glenville's boundaries as the small area that surrounds the mill. There is even some dispute about its boundaries among town officials and realtors.

One of the last mill buildings standing, the New Mill and Depot Building, Hawthorne Woolen Mill, which was built in 1881 along with a railroad station for a spur line that never materialized, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Around the 19th century the neighborhood became known as Glenville. It got the name because from the top of any hill in the area a person could see down to Glenville Road, Ms. Richardson said. It had its own post office from 1850 to 1959, when it became a substation of Greenwich, she said.

The waterfall that once powered the mill still cascades near the 1881 mill building, which now houses shops, living space and the Centro Ristorante and Bar.