

# School system and quality of life earn praise in Tenafly

By JENNIFER PINTO  
SPECIAL TO OPEN HOUSE

With its excellent school system, beautiful residential and downtown sections, and proximity to New York City, the borough of Tenafly has managed to retain its property values and to attract buyers and builders consistently through the years.

Calling his town an "oasis," Mayor Peter Rustin said residents who work in New York City face a short commute to the George Washington Bridge, which is about 10-15 minutes away by car. Mass transit is limited to buses, but residents can expect to arrive at the Port Authority in 45 minutes.

"Tenafly is a very green town and has an extensive array of services," said Rustin, who has lived in the borough for 31 years. "We like to think that our mix of services, as well as the level and quality of services is probably the highest in the area, which allows people to accept our level of taxes."

## SCHOOLS BRING IN BUYERS

Rustin and local Realtors say the No. 1 reason young families move to Tenafly is because of the schools.

"We have a school system that's usually rated in the top five of the state - and in my mind rightfully so," said the mayor.

Anat Eisenberg of Prominent Properties Sotheby's International Realty (201-341-4765) said the success of the borough's school system impacts residents in a positive way.

"The better the schools are, the higher demand is to move to the town," she said.

Eisenberg has lived in Tenafly for 18 years and has been involved in real estate for 13 years. She said besides the lure of the schools, Tenafly is a quality suburb that's "close enough to the most exciting city in the world - New York City."

"We really have a nice place for those who work in the city but who also want to raise a family in a safe environment," she said.

Susan Hakim-Kronfeld of Prominent Properties Sotheby's International Realty (201-914-4791) has lived in Tenafly almost her entire life and has been a Realtor for 10 years.

She also praised the school system and the camaraderie that grows among students as they attend the middle school and high school together. She

said the close-knit feel among families and parents fosters a desire to live in Tenafly.

"Resale value is excellent here because everyone wants to live here for the school system," she said. "Even in the hard economic times we've had, home prices really haven't gone down in Tenafly compared to other towns."

## GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO BUY IN TENAFLY

"There are all types of homes in Tenafly," said Hakim-Kronfeld. "We have beautiful acreage lots with nice homes; we have beautiful homes on smaller lots and homes in every price range now down to \$350,000. We have two-family homes and garden apartments and we have townhouses, so there are many opportunities to reside in Tenafly in any fashion."

Eisenberg said larger homes on bigger lots can go from the \$500,000s up to more than \$4 million.

"There is the opportunity to buy homes at a little bit of a lower cost right now, which I've never seen before living here my whole life, so it's a good opportunity to buy," Hakim-Kronfeld said.

"It's a wonderful town for families," Mayor Rustin said. "We have a mix of synagogues and churches, which gives people many options. It's also a very safe community; we have an excellent police force."



JOE CAMPORREALE

Held in June, the Tenafly 5K Run and Dog Walk is one of the premier races in the region. More than 1,500 runners participated this year.

## PLENTY TO DO IN TOWN

Eisenberg said Tenafly's downtown is lovely and features businesses that are open late, such as Café Angélique (cafe.angelique.com), which also has live music.

"Especially for people who come from the city who may be reluctant to move to the suburbs because businesses close early, in Tenafly we have businesses open later," she said. "We have very good restaurants and a stimulating community."

Hakim-Kronfeld added that Café Angélique (housed in the town's historic train station) is a great place to meet for a cappuccino and lunch.

"It's a nice gathering place for family and friends, and it's special to have it right in the center of town," she said. "We also have a movie theater, which is wonderful, and it has four screens in it."

Mayor Rustin said residents and visitors can participate in town-wide events throughout the year.

"Many of the events are put together by nonprofit organizations," he said.

"We have a Fourth of July event; we have Jenna's Rainbow (jennasrainbow

.org), which is an event in memory of a young girl who passed away while in elementary school. We have places like the African Mission (smafathers.org), which is a hidden gem, and they have an event once a year. The farmers' market (tenaflyfarmersmarket.com) on Sundays brings people from out of town. We have concerts in the park in the summer."

Along with various parks throughout the borough, the Tenafly Nature Center provides a serene space in which to exercise, relax and enjoy nature.

"The nature center is a place that people can go to study nature or to be absorbed by it," Rustin said. "It makes you feel like you're 1,000 miles from city life. We also have the JCC on the Palisades (jccotp.org), which is one of the largest facilities of its kind in the country. And it runs the gamut from recreation to special needs to seniors to a wonderful music, arts and theater department."

"It's such an inclusive community here," said the mayor. "I'm very proud of Tenafly; I think we're doing very well."

## ABOUT TOWN IN TENAFLY

### POPULATION

14,488, including:  
 ■ White, non-Hispanic: 9,475  
 ■ Asian: 3,799  
 ■ Hispanic: 776  
 ■ Black: 128

### HOUSING FIGURES

■ Avg. Residential Tax Bill 2010-2011: \$13,669  
 ■ Median Sales Price from Oct. 2010 to Oct. 2011: \$774,000

### PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mackay, Maugham, Smith and Stillman elementary schools; Tenafly Middle School; and Tenafly High School  
 ■ Graduation rate for Tenafly High School: 99.6% (state: 94.7%)

### POINTS OF INTEREST

■ David Johnson Park & Gardens (corner of Engle Street and Westervelt Avenue) features a greenhouse, meeting room, gazebo and walking paths.  
 ■ Roosevelt Common (Riveredge Road and Jefferson Avenue) contains the historic Theodore Roosevelt Monument, as well as a pond, tennis courts, walking paths and play areas for kids.  
 ■ Sunnyside Park (Oak Avenue and Wilkins Place) includes play areas for children and various fields for softball, baseball and soccer.  
 ■ Huyler Park (Downtown Tenafly) site of the summer concerts and Memorial Day ceremonies, as well as memorials to Tenafly veterans.  
 ■ Tenafly Nature Center: A nature preserve of nearly 400 wooded acres with trails and a pond to ice skate on in the winter (313 Hudson Ave.).  
 ■ Tenafly Public Library (100 Riveredge Road)  
 ■ Knickerbocker Country Club (188 Knickerbocker Road)

### TOWN SERVICES

■ Tenafly Senior Center (20 South Summit St.) provides monthly events for senior citizens in town, and the Social Services Dept. serves as an informational and referral hub for residents and sets up transportation for seniors. (201-569-2159 or tscenter@optonline.net)  
 ■ Tenafly Youth Center (100 Riveredge Road): With a membership card, youth can have access to computers, video games and sports equipment.

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One of the jewels of Bergen County, Tenafly is famous for its schools, small town charm, eclectic housing styles and a cosmopolitan population make up that give Tenafly its unique flavor. Established in 1894 by Dutch settlers Tenafly takes its name from the Dutch meaning the land of ten lakes. Population: 13,806 • Zip Code: 07670 • Median Family Income: \$115,244

 \$2,350,000	 \$1,700,000
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