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People relax at Transmitter Park at the Greenpoint waterfront on Aug. 14.

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Townhouses on Russell Street in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, on Aug. 14.

Brooklyn's Northernmost Neighborhood Greenpoint Follows in Williamsburg's Steps

By Jason Lu
Epoch Times Staff

NEW YORK—Buried between two mammoths, Manhattan and Brooklyn, lays the emerging neighborhood of Greenpoint.

Known for townhouses, good schools, and a large Polish community, Greenpoint has long been a neighborhood for families but is entering the development spotlight with full force.

In the past four years, Greenpoint has come a long way in terms of artistic, culinary, and commercial progress. Newcomers—young and energetic, enterprising youth filled with the fire for creativity—have set the stage for the neighborhood's transformation.

John McGovern is one such resident. An energetic first-time homebuyer at the time, John entered the neighborhood during the great migration of tech-related jobs to the New York area. Greenpoint, then the ugly duckling on the edge of Brooklyn, began its transformation into the beautiful swan.

"There is a change of the guard," as McGovern explains, "people here moved from a lot of other places, Pacific Northwest, Portland, San Francisco … and those cultures bring a lot of 'Hey I'm going to make something and I'm going make it happen.'"

> Greenpoint's got that green feeling to it, lots of dogs, lots of parks, lots of trees.
>
> *John McGovern, Greenpoint resident*

Greenpoint's Evolution

First-time homebuyers, working for startups or the tech industry, came to the area like little children flocking to a jingling ice cream truck on a hot summer day.

"It's calm but not boring. There is nothing about Greenpoint that feels frantic or fast-paced city like," McGovern said. "But you can get to that if you wanted."

Now, over 7,000 residential units are in the pipeline and retail is filling out. A lack of previously long established businesses, together with the young population, has resulted in an innovative and creative atmosphere. The neighborhood is right next to Williamsburg, but has been considered quieter and safer.

"There is always something new to discover, new things that are opening up constantly. … You can walk two or three blocks in a new direction you haven't been to before and discover a new treasure," said McGovern.

Despite its growing population, Greenpoint still keeps its charm and pockets of rural-like peacefulness.

See Greenpoint on ***W12***

Moving With Children? Three Need-to-Know Tips for Finding a Family-Friendly Apartment

By Lucy Cohen Blatter

Believe it or not, back-to-school season is nearly here, and now seems as good a time as any to offer advice—culled from our personal experiences as parents—to help you when you're making a move with children in New York City.

1. Get in the (School) Zone

For parents of young children, school zone is often the greatest decider of where you'll live (unless you plan to send your kids to private school or have kids older than elementary-school age).

Before you sign any papers committing to a new home, confirm that it's in the school zone you think it is by calling the school's parent coordinator.

A zoned school is a neighborhood school, which is meant to accept all children within certain boundaries (note: there are lots of options for unzoned schools, too, just when you thought this would be easy).

You may want to check out Insideschools.org, an online source of independent information about zones, specific school profiles, and the application process. Once you've narrowed down your ideal school list, you can use StreetEasy's Advanced Search options to find apartments in the right zone or district (which is much broader than a school zone).

Before you sign any papers committing to a new home, confirm that it's in the school zone you think it is by calling the school's parent coordinator (they all have them).

We also recommend Googling around and even asking potential neighbors (or parents at a nearby playground) about any imminent zoning changes, which do happen.

2. Spot a Child-Friendly Building

Life with small children can be much easier in a building that is truly "friendly" to families. Buildings in good school zones, of course, are more likely to be family-friendly, as are buildings with larger apartments.

If there's a bike room, check to see if there are lots of little bikes. A playroom that looks clean and stocked with newish equipment is also a sign of a bumper crop of children and a building that caters to them.

Parent friends (and potential play-date partners) in the same building are a major plus. If you have small kids, you may want to check out the lobby of a building you're interested in during the day to see whether there are a lot of little kids coming in and out.

3. Think Long and Hard About Stairs

Plenty of parents live in a walk-up with children—and an in-unit washer/dryer combined with FreshDirect grocery delivery can take some of the edge off—but it's not easy.

The first thing you should do before you take a place without an elevator is ask the landlord or property manager whether you can leave strollers downstairs.

Lucy Cohen Blatter is a writer for BrickUnderground, a popular and trusted New York source of real estate advice online.

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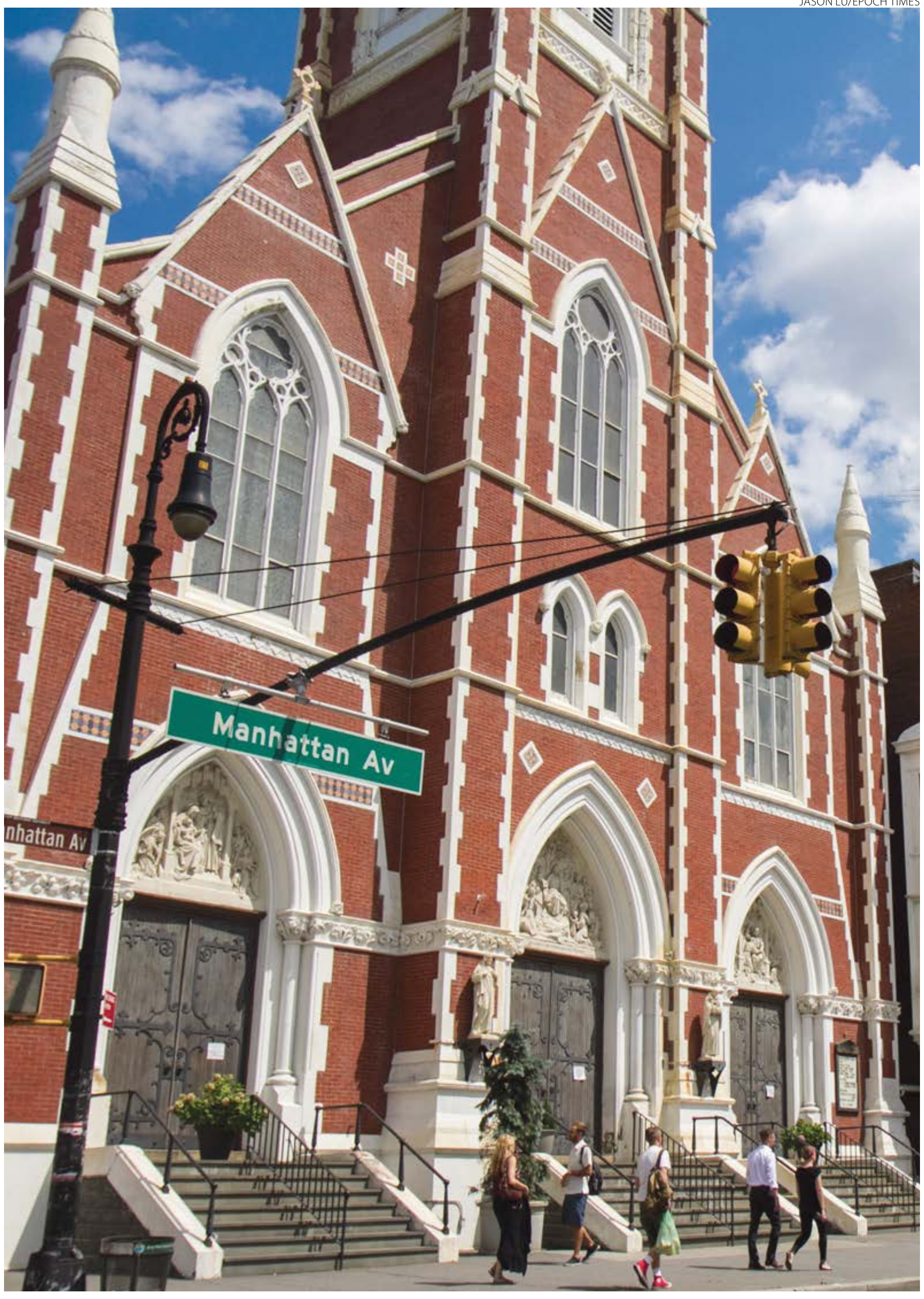

A church on Manhattan Avenue in Greenpoint on Aug. 14.

Brooklyn's Northernmost Neighborhood Greenpoint Follows in Williamsburg's Steps

Greenpoint continues from ***W11***

Ever since that time, Greenpoint property values have been increasing. In fact, many residents now find themselves sitting on property with twice the equity. Greenpoint once carried the wonderful candy of low initial property prices.

Still, Greenpoint represents a shire dream.

First-Time Buyers

As Manhattan home prices shine to record levels, the buyer's dream is becoming more of a fading flame. For the tight-budget buyers, there is almost no escape from the constrictive yet still expensive condos; little closets where simple tasks, such as fitting a new television, can be a challenging "Tetris" level.

You want the restaurants down in Flatiron and the ease of transportation in Brooklyn. But at the same time, you are sick of always worrying about space. You want to extend your arms and not touch the corners; you want to jump around and not bang your head on the walls. Space, this basic human necessity, is a luxury in the city.

However, in Greenpoint, where the Williamsburg L train is just a few bike pedals away, the homeowner's dream can still be a reality.

"People find that they can get a better value over at Greenpoint," said Win Brown, a local real estate specialist with nearly a decade of experience. "The market is booming. People are seeing the value in buying these old homes and fixing them up."

A Greenpoint brownstone home at 270 Sterling Place with 4,700 square foot of floor space is being offered at $420 per square foot. While at nearby Williamsburg, similar listings will cost around twice as much. In fact, the Williamsburg $1,200 median price per square foot is a towering giant compared with little hobbit Greenpoint, which has an overall median price of merely $750 per square foot.

"We see a lot of people selling their condos in Williamsburg and moving to Greenpoint," said Brown.

"Maybe they started in a two bedroom condo. But now, they are buying into a townhouse. … They are buying into the Brooklyn brownstone dream."

New Construction

In the next few years, the Greenpoint tranquility will start to see some hassle. Tens of thousands of new residents may move in over the next few years, and the accommodating developments have not been without opposition.

A few steps away from the Greenpoint waterfront, with the spectacular view of hundreds of Manhattan skyscrapers in the distance, the first building under the Greenpoint Landings Associates' 5,000-unit mega-development broke ground this month.

The first building, 21 Commercial St., will contain 93 units along with 2,500 square feet of ground-level commercial space.

Along with another project on 33 Eagle St., the two developments will put a total of 1,400 affordable new housing units into the Greenpoint market.

These two developments are only the initial launches to the other Greenpoint projects that will add 5,500 new residential units. As many as three new high-rises with a total of 350,000 square feet are planned at 49 Dupont St. alone. One block down the road, the 720-unit high-rise is planned to break ground at 77 Commercial St.

To accommodate the increasing population density from these new residential developments, two multimillion-dollar waterfront parks expansions, Box Street Park and Newtown Barge Park, will begin construction next year. Both of these parks will a include waterfront terrace to allow passive recreational activity near the water. At Box Street Park, residents will even find accessibility beyond the gorgeous waterfront, by the river and the kayak docks.. While close by, visitors at Newtown Barge Park will find its historic tree canopies: the only waterfront site that will preserve pre-existing mature trees.

These new recreation developments will add to the many parks already existing in the area.

"The name Greenpoint has that in it," said local resident John McGovern, "when you are in the city, it's hard to escape the tons of buildings all around you. … Greenpoint's got that green feeling to it, lots of dogs, lots of parks, lots of trees."

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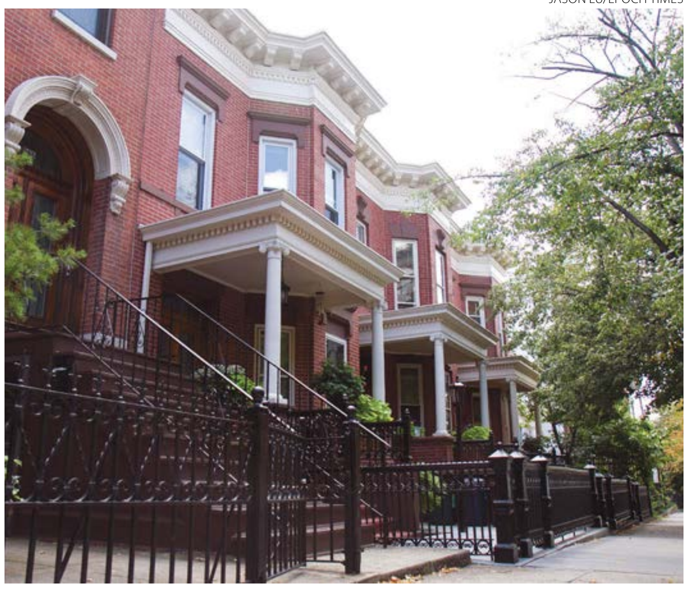

Brownstone houses on Milton Street in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, on Aug. 14.