

VOLUME IX / ISSUE 2 / MARCH 2021

# BEHIND THE HEDGES

HAMPTONS REAL ESTATE & LIFESTYLE...STEP INSIDE

**CLOSING TIMES:  
THE ADAM MILLER GROUP TOUTS  
HALF-BILLION IN CONTRACT NOW**

**PRESERVATION OF JOHN STEINBECK'S  
SAG HARBOR HOME EXPLORED**

**THE GREAT HAMPTONS LAND RUSH**

**REAL ESTATE ROUNDTABLE**

[BEHINDTHEHEDGES.COM](http://BEHINDTHEHEDGES.COM)

PHOTO BY OLIVIA CRUMM

# CLOSING TIMES

## THE ADAM MILLER GROUP TOUTS HALF-BILLION WORTH OF REAL ESTATE IN CONTRACT

BY TAYLOR K. VECSEY

Adam Miller brought an elevated level of expertise to the Hamptons when he relocated here, while maintaining the laid back vibe that attracts people to the area. Since opening his own law firm in 2007, the Adam Miller Group has acted as counsel on more than \$4.5 billion in real estate transactions on the East End.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bridgehampton-based firm has been in even greater demand, as there was an incredible boom. While it has been a challenging time for all, Miller understands how to get deals done in a time of extreme transition.

Miller was one of the many people who relocated to the East End after the September 11 terrorist attacks. At the time, he was working in the real estate division at Proskauer Rose, a very large and prestigious international firm in New York City, and spending summers and weekends in Montauk. In the year before the attacks, he spent many months in the Twin Towers working on a deal for a client who wanted to buy the World Trade Center, involving a level of easements that make the standards ones in the Hamptons seem small.

"I recall having, in the city, the beach cam on the corner of my computer and saying, 'I think it's time I really put some effort into this move,'" he says.

In the end, it was a fire in his building during which he had to carry his 13-year-old Labrador down 28 flights of stairs that cemented his decision to move out of the city.

By 2003, he had an opportunity to manage a satellite office of a large firm in Bridgehampton. He and his wife sold their apartment



A \$45 million deal the Adam Miller Group handled in 2020.

in the city and bought in East Hampton, where they have now lived for the better part of 19 years.

After finding his footing in the East End real estate market, he opened his own firm in 2007. A three-sport captain in high school, leadership is something he has always enjoyed, he says. He wanted to brand a firm on his own.

"Being professionally casual is always what I wanted to do," he explains of his philosophy. "I'm in Birkenstocks right now," he says to a chuckle.

"To me, what people want when they're out here is professionalism and responsiveness because they are in their happy place. They don't care what you wear," he says. "I just decided it was time to sort of blaze my own path."

The firm name was strategic. "I named this firm a Group for a reason because I know this work takes a group effort," he says. "I'm a little bit of a nonconformist in that way. I started a group, as opposed to just a law firm. I believe we're only as strong as our weakest link. My paralegals are second to none and I know that. . . These larger deals require a lot of attention not only from lawyers but from

paralegals."

He started his firm from his house, using a spare bedroom as an office. He had two paralegals who took "a leap of faith to come sit in my kitchen and living room every day."

It was an interesting time.

"If you recall, 2007 was the year of the crash," he says. "The timing couldn't have been worse." Asked how he got through that difficult period, he says, "I just continued to do good work and I think the dedication and the prior skill, I don't know, I think it won out."

As the real estate market emerged from the economic crisis, Miller moved the firm to an office space in Bridgehampton. There are now four attorneys and four paralegals that the firm took over three office spaces, and he would take a fourth if there was one. Centrally located, they work from Quogue to Montauk.

It has become one of the top three firms on the East End in terms of volume. He's proud of the Rolodex the firm has built and credits broker relationships.

When *Behind The Hedges* spoke to Miller, he had \$611 million in deals in contract.

"God only knows how much

since we've closed since COVID, certainly hundreds of millions," he says. In one deal, a client bought an Amagansett property in April for \$45 million.

Miller also attributes the firm's success to relationships.

"I say that without your word or your honor, you have nothing," he says. "So I can honestly say that we pride ourselves on that." Members of the Adam Miller Group are known to be approachable. "There's not a polarizing person here."

The year has been incredibly busy as people fled the city for the Hamptons during the COVID-19

pandemic. For Miller, he started off 2020 in Jamaica celebrating his 50th birthday (one he shares with Bob Marley, he notes). "Then we got back from Jamaica and everything sort of flipped," he says.

"The first two weeks, there was nothing but panic about people wanting to get out of their deals and me wondering what I was going to do with the rest of my life," he says. Then came the influx of buyers, ready to make the leap, much as Miller had done in 2003, to move to the South Fork.

"The local community rallied in a way that made me so proud of being here. It became a safe haven for people," he says. "From mid-April to now, it's been none-stop. To the point where the real estate industry is grateful and exhausted, both at the same time."

He does not see the pace slowing down anytime soon. Even with the arrival of the vaccines, he thinks people will continue to make the South Fork their permanent residence or at least live here in some hybrid way.

"Everyone has evaluated lifestyle," he says. "It's another shift. A 9/11 kind of shift."

GAVIN ZEIGLER FOR SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY



HOUSEHOLD  
STAFFING

Personalized Service

## Meet Exceptional Domestic Staff *in as Little as 3 to 10 Days*

Interview. Trial. Hire. *It's that simple.*

100%  
Guarantee

### Committed to Recruiting Candidates *Meeting Your Unique Needs*

Established for over 26 years, our domestic staff recruiting process has a first-class reputation among our clientele through our personalized service and attention focused on you and your needs. Reliability and Efficiency: We're experienced in placing top quality household staff within private homes across the country.

#### We Place

- Nannies
- Housekeepers
- Teachers/Tutors
- Domestic Couples
- Governesses
- Drivers
- Chefs/Cooks
- Companions
- Newborn Care
- Personal Assistants
- Estate Managers
- Butlers

Contact Us Today

(212) 282.1200

HOUSEHOLDSTAFFING.COM



PREFERRED  
PROVIDER



TRUSTED  
PARTNER



4.7



4.8