

Sustainable, Eco-friendly & Green...all add up to Smarter Real Estate

metroGREEN+BUSINESS

[Home](#) [Business News](#) [Expert Q & As](#) [Publisher's Watch](#) [Press Releases](#) [eNews Service](#) [Green Jobs](#)

FEATURES

[Development](#)
[Housing](#)
[Communities](#)
[Personal Space](#)

INSIDE

[From the Editor](#)
[Publisher's Note](#)
[Entryway](#)
[Area Spotlight](#)
[In the Garden](#)
[Special Section](#)
[House Horoscopes](#)
[Back Porch](#)

RESOURCES

[Real Estate Listings](#)
[Business Directory](#)


55+: THE NEW FACE OF ADULT HOUSING

BY SUSAN HODARA

If the term "senior housing" conjures notions of elderly residents slumped in wheelchairs and pureed meals served on trays, think again. As the baby boomers approach the other side of middle age, they are tackling the golden years with the same energy, ingenuity, and panache as they have the rest of their lives. And catering to this growing sector of the population are residential options that make aging seem, if not welcome, then at least far more attractive than ever before.

A newer form of community targets those ages 55 and over who are healthy, vital, and interested in the opportunities that come with grown children and a sufficiently padded retirement account. Called Active Adult or 55+, such communities are structured around independent living. They are condominium complexes that often include common indoor and outdoor areas, parking garages, and in some cases, local transportation. Most cater to their youthful residents by offering such amenities as fitness facilities complete with exercise classes and swimming pool; onsite walking and biking trails; and a shared clubhouse with card room, billiards room, full kitchen, and library; and planned activities such as shopping excursions and book club meetings to foster socializing among residents. Building maintenance, including landscaping and snow removal, is handled by the management.



Last July, Patricia Reilly, 75, moved into Woodcrest Village, a 90-unit Active Adult development in Mount Kisco that has been occupied since spring 2005. Reilly, a lifelong Mount Kisco resident who raised her six children as a single mother, and who served as mayor of the Village from 1999 to 2003, had been living alone for 10 years when she decided it was time to make the move.



"It dawned on me that one person in a six-bedroom house didn't make sense," she says.

Selling her house to one of her sons eased the transition, as did divvying up among her offspring the possessions she didn't have room for in her new abode. And she has never looked back.

"I'm close to what's familiar," she says, "and there are a lot of plusses to this lifestyle." Those include no longer worrying about property maintenance, and living on one floor. "The washer and dryer are right there," she says.

Reilly, who is a nurse, still works as a nurse substitute in area schools and serves on several committees in town. She says her daily habits have remain the same. "First thing in the morning, I go to church, and after mass, my sister and brother-in-law and I go to the diner. I have lots of friends in the area, many of whom moved here, too."

Active Adult Communities

55+ housing communities are structured around independent living. They are distinguished from senior residences by offering wide range of amenities for their youthful residents, which may include a clubhouse with fitness facilities and exercise classes, a pool, meeting rooms, kitchen, and library, as well as walking and biking trails.

Woodcrest, she continues, feels like a community—but for her, not a senior one. "Life goes fast," she says. "I'm 75, but I don't feel any different from when I was 45. I am, at this stage, very active."

And thus the ideal candidate for Active Adult living. Active Adult communities are distinguished from Assisted Living, which provide personalized support services for seniors who need help with the activities of daily living, and Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs), with levels progressing from independent living to assisted living to nursing home care. Active Adult housing requires at least one occupant of at least 80 percent of the units to be 55 or older, according to Diane Houk, executive director of the Fair Housing Justice Center in Manhattan.

What's Driving the Trend?

Of an estimated increase of 1.7 million people in New York State during the 30 years from 1995 to 2025, the New York State Office for the Aging projects that while the population under 60 years of age will grow by only 3 percent, the 60-and-older population will grow by 40 percent. It is this group, largely comprised of baby boomers, that is driving these innovations in adult housing.

"Our buyers are sizing down from a big house, looking for maintenance-free living," says Margaret Schneider, vice president of marketing and sales for Cappelli Enterprises in Valhalla, the developers of Trump Park Residences, a 55+ condominium complex in Westchester's Shrub Oak (www.trumpparkresidences.com; 914-245-0055). "They're people in their 50s, in their 60s, or in their 70s who think of themselves as in their 50s. They're choosing a lifestyle, not just a place to live."

Psychologically, Active Adult housing is more easily acceptable than other options. Says Sharon Ebert, a vice president at Wilder Balter Partners, headquartered in Elmsford and developer of several 55+ complexes in Westchester, "Because this is 55+, buyers do not perceive it as senior housing."

Continued

1 | 2 | 3 | Next »

[Subscribe](#) | [Where to Find](#) | [Advertise](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#)
[Home](#) | [In This Issue](#) | [Article Archive](#) | [Press Releases](#) | [Business Directory](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Houses For Sale](#)

SCHEIN MEDIA

Copyright © 2003 - 2009 Schein Media
[privacy policy](#) | [terms of service](#)