

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

July 29, 2016

Closter, New Jersey



The Closter Nature Center in Closter, N.J., covers 136 acres that include ponds, brooks, meadows and forests. *PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

By

KATHLEEN LUCADAMO

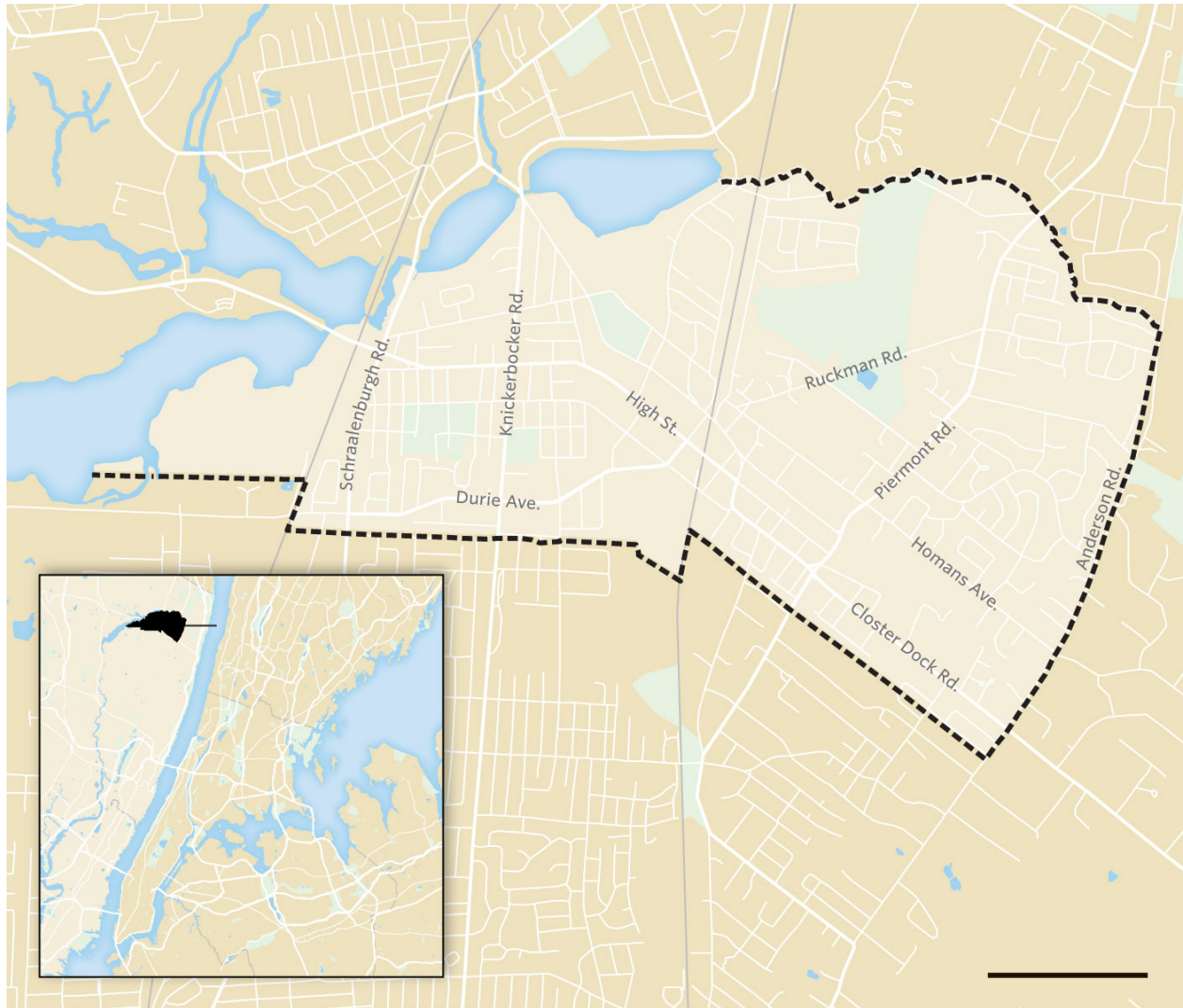
Updated July 29, 2016 12:17 p.m. ET

Closter, N.J., has a reputation for good schools and plenty of parks, but what has folks talking these days is a shopping center.

The mall, Closter Plaza, is getting a new look and new retailers. And the changes have the Bergen County borough thinking about its future, said Mayor John Glidden.

“It’s really exciting the entire town,” Mayor Glidden said. “It’s going to improve the look of the town because the developers are doing a first-class job.”

Closter, New Jersey



Shopping center developer EDENS acquired Closter Plaza in 2012 with the goal of creating a high-end, one-stop place for organic treats, trendy exercise classes and apparel boutiques, said Chief Executive Jodie McLean.

“We spent a lot of time thinking about the best merchandising mix and wanted to make sure it was reflective of the community that was here,” said Ms. McLean.

The lineup of new tenants includes Target; [Whole Foods Market](#), which plans to open this fall; CycleBar, an indoor cycling studio; Bareburger, a restaurant chain that dishes up organic and all-natural meat and produce; Indigo Chic Boutique; BlueMercury, a beauty products store; and a Cinemex movie theater. Kidville, a place for children, is already open.



The new Closter Plaza is getting a Whole Foods Market. Celebrity chef Jose Garces has plans to open two restaurants. *PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

Celebrity chef Jose Garces signed on to open two restaurants in spring 2017: Village Whiskey, a burger and bourbon place, and Mexican-themed Distrito.

“When we looked at the area, we liked that it was an established community,” said Rob Keddie, chief executive of the Garces Group, which operates Jose Garces restaurants.

Real-estate agent Henry Song is getting requests from some of his clients to see properties in Closter because they know about the new shopping opportunities. Others, he said, are impressed by the schools and parks but are pleasantly surprised to hear about the stores.

“It’s a great addition to the area and Bergen County in general,” said Mr. Song, who is with Douglas Elliman Real Estate.

Closter, about an hour from New York City by bus or car, is made up mostly of single-family homes.

The 3.3-square-mile borough has about 8,400 residents. Its strong Korean community attracts workers at South Korea-based [LG Electronics](#) in Englewood Cliffs, N.J., said Mr. Song.

“It is easy for non-English speaking Koreans to come here and they set up a large support system,” said Mr. Song, a Korean-American. He also is contacted by many families who are moving from the New Jersey waterfront to Closter for better schools and more space.

Listing prices for homes generally range from \$650,000 to \$1 million, Mr. Song said. The annual property tax bill on a \$675,200 home, for example, is \$15,118, according to Mr. Glidden.

Mr. Glidden doesn’t expect the renovated plaza to change the fabric of the family-friendly town. “There is something interesting going on in town now. It’s sort of a renaissance,” he said.



9/11 Memorial Park. PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Parks: The Closter Nature Center covers 136 acres that include ponds, brooks, meadows and forests. Veterans Memorial Park has ball fields, a playground and a band shell. Mollicone Park is home to another baseball field. Schauble Park has a jogging path, a playground and more ball fields. Amendola Park is a quieter place that the parks department reports is good for meditation. Ruckman Park has tennis courts, a roller rink and a playground. High Street Park has a playground and workout stations.



Hillside Elementary School. PHOTO: STEVE REMICH FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Schools: Hillside Elementary School serves students in prekindergarten through fourth grade; 84% met English Language Arts standards and 83% meet math standards in the 2014-15 school year, according to the state education department. Tenakill Middle School serves students in grades five through eight; 86% met reading standards and 77% met math standards the 2014-15 school year, data show. High-school students attend Northern Valley Regional High School in Demarest. The average SAT scores of the 2015 graduating class were 583 in critical reading, 618 in math and 606 in writing, according to the school's website.

Dining: The many options include Sear House, a steakhouse, and Locale Café and Bar, an Italian restaurant. Buon Gusto also dishes up Italian cuisine. Spring, Ewha Won and Homung Nangmyun serve Korean specialties. Red Maple Luncheonette is popular for breakfast

Entertainment: Belskie Museum of Art & Science, built in memory of sculptor Abram Belskie, is a 3,000-square-foot gallery that showcases the works of national and international artists. There is a summer concert series on Fridays in Veterans Memorial Park.

If You Are Browsing for a Home:



\$495,000

25 Poplar St.

This Cape Cod home has four bedrooms and two bathrooms. Features include a large front porch, hardwood floors, a finished basement, a fenced backyard and a one-car detached garage.

Year Built: 1949

Square Footage: 1,598 not including the basement

Lot size: 0.26 acre

Property Plus: Large stone fireplace

Property Minus: No central air conditioning

Listing Date: June 27

Listing Agent: Suzanne Summers of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage

Open House: By appointment



\$1.4 million

116 O Shaughnessy Lane

This home has four bedrooms, three full bathrooms and a half-bath. Its eat-in kitchen has two center islands, two dishwashers, two sinks and a walk-in pantry. There are fireplaces in the family room and the dining room. The master suite has a sitting area, two walk-in closets and a bathroom with skylight. The home also has a finished basement, a temperature-controlled wine cellar and a three-car garage.

Year Built: 1974

Square Footage: 3,811

Lot size: 0.45 acre

Property Plus: Large backyard

Property Minus: No bathtub in the master bathroom

Listing Date: June 13

Listing Agent: Rebecca LaPira of RE/MAX Fortune Properties

Open House: By appointment



\$638,000

326 Piermont Rd.

This home has three bedrooms and two bathrooms, a fireplace in the living room, an office/den, and eat-in kitchen and a laundry room. It also has a patio, an above-ground swimming pool and a two-car garage.

Year Built: 1961

Square Footage: 2,264

Lot size: 0.37 acre

Property Plus: Pool

Property Minus: Kitchen needs updating

Listing Date: June 13

Listing Agent: Nini Wong of Friedberg Properties & Associates

Open House: By appointment