

James Lane

— Real Estate & Design —

Spring 2024

www.jameslanepost.com



LUXURY REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS WITH
MEKA BROWN

Michael Burns

Maestro Of Luxury At Burns Real Estate Development

By Ty Wenzel



For Michael Burns, founder of a renowned Hamptons-based construction company, Burns Real Estate Development, the journey to creating iconic homes is synonymous with the region's hybridized classic and modern vibe that began long before his ventures in the luxury real estate market. In a recent sit down on his new build on Brennan's Moore — one of the most secluded waterfront locations in Water Mill — Burns shared insights into his architectural journey and the vision behind his acclaimed projects.

His smile is arresting — wide and grateful for being able to do what he loves. Sitting down on a post-rainy day, he gave a tour of the somewhat outdated manor he will demo the following day to make room for another Burns Real Estate Development masterpiece.

"From the time I was in high school, in my architecture class, I always thought about modern design," Burns reflected on his early inspirations. "When I started my company, my first houses were modern homes in Chappaqua and Briarcliff, but that market was focused on primary homes. When I came to the Hamptons, I wanted to build 'luxury vacation homes.'"

Seeking expanses of open sky and vast land for pools and tennis courts, Burns envisioned what he termed a "Dream Vacation Home" and set out to bring it to life in the Hamptons.

His homes, hailed for their distinctive style, capture the region's essence, blending modern aesthetics with timeless elegance. "I have always strived to evolve with the times, incorporating the latest and best features of the moment, but always building homes with a great flow — I believe, the key to success. Lots of sizzle and steak!" Burns remarked on his design philosophy.

"The first major residence I built in the Hamptons was in Wainscott. I had an idea to make it the first 'Hamptons Designer Showhouse' in a newly built home, with all the bells and whistles," Burns recounted, highlighting his commitment to innovation. "It was a spectacular traditional home with a modern upscale interior. We created a successful charity event, and during that time, a buyer came in, and the rest is history."

When asked about his favorite towns to build in, Burns expressed a fondness for Bridgehampton and Sagaponack, citing the allure of open skies and the quintessential Hamptons ambiance. Burns is immersed in two ambitious projects, including a "Modern Barn Style" home in Water

Mill and an 8000-square-foot estate in Sagaponack, each exuding extravagance and showstopping water views.

Reflecting on the pandemic's impact, Burns acknowledges its challenges while emphasizing the importance of staying attuned to evolving buyer needs.

"It was a very difficult time for everyone, trying to sustain my business and keep all my subcontractors working. Also, reevaluating what home buyers changing needs were, all while not getting sick," Burns reflected on navigating the challenges of the pandemic.

As trends evolve, Burns remains committed to incorporating smarter home technologies without compromising design aesthetics. "I think the major direction is 'smarter homes' simultaneously keeping in mind that homebuyers are not computer tech wizards!" he quipped.

Incorporating green technologies is also a priority for Burns, who emphasizes the importance of energy-efficient, well-insulated homes to reduce carbon footprints.

When not building luxury homes, what does Burns do for fun? "My wife and I love to travel! We also love the arts and are consummate theater, music, and art lovers — being lifelong New Yorkers, we have no trouble fulfilling our desires," he shared, offering a glimpse into his life beyond construction.

As Michael Burns continues to shape the landscape of Hamptons luxury real estate, his commitment to innovation, sustainability, and timeless design sets him apart as a maestro of home construction in the region.

To learn more, visit burnsrealestatedevelopmentcorp.com.



Exceptional Hamptons Hospitality Offerings

A Selection of Hotel & Restaurant Opportunities for Purchase Across the South Fork

Popular Restaurant & Bar With Hotel Suites Boasting Full Ocean Views



685 Old Montauk Highway, Montauk

Located on the historic Old Montauk Hwy, The Surfside Inn is a rare offering of an inn, restaurant, & bar with ocean views only a short distance from the Downtown of Montauk. The grandfathered use of hotel suites makes this property impossible to replicate! The restaurant has an impressive main dining room, lounge area & bar. There is also an outdoor dining/ deck area with covered porches & picturesque views for all day enjoyment. This establishment has been galvanized as a go-to hot spot by locals and tourists alike. All day, all season appeal. The Inn occupies the second and third level of the building; boasting 11 rooms and stunning views of the ocean. Convenient access to the beach and the Downtown. Potential to reconfigure/optimize the rooms. The 0.43-acre site also features a detached garage and front/rear parking. A truly unique and established destination!



63 S Euclid Ave, Montauk

Iconic Downtown Restaurant & Bar With Staff Housing. Tremendous Business Potential in a Visible Location.



161 Second House Road, Montauk

Famous Resort with 19 Keys, Manicured Grounds, Restaurant, Nightlife Room, & a Staff / Rental House.



32 Lighthouse Rd, Hampton Bays

Newly Renovated Waterfront Restaurant & Resort with Incredible Views of Shinnecock Bay.



363 Beach Road, Hampton Bays

Waterfront Restaurant & Bar. Newly Renovated. 150 Seat Interior & 375 Person Exterior - Tremendous.



**HAMPTONS COMMERCIAL
REAL ESTATE TEAM**

Hal Zwick
Licensed RE Salesperson
hal.zwick@compass.com
631.678.2460

Jeffrey Sztorc
Licensed RE Salesperson
jeffrey.sztorc@compass.com
631.903.5022

@hamptonscommercialre | hamptonscommercialre.com

**COMPASS
COMMERCIAL**

Hal Zwick, Jeffrey Sztorc, Licensed Real Estate Salespersons, Real estate agents affiliated with Compass are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Compass. Equal Housing Opportunity. Compass is a licensed real estate broker located at 90 Fifth Avenue, 3rd Fl, NY, NY 10011. All information furnished regarding property for sale or rent or regarding financing is from sources deemed reliable, but Compass makes no warranty or representation as to the accuracy thereof. All property information is presented subject to errors, omissions, price changes, changed property conditions, and withdrawal of the property from the market, without notice. To reach the Compass main office call 212.913.9038.



Photos courtesy Douglas Elliman

Meka Brown

A Deep Dive Into The Hamptons Luxury Market

By Ty Wenzel

On the East End, where opulent properties grace many corners and discerning buyers seek the epitome of coastal living, Meka Brown of Douglas Elliman stands as a beacon of expertise in the realm of luxury real estate. With a rich background in the region and a passion for crafting unforgettable living experiences, Meka shares her insights into the dynamic landscape of Hamptons real estate.

Meka, how long have you been in real estate? What got you into it?

Coming from a family of builders, it feels as if I've been in real estate forever, but technically, since 2012. After changing my major more than a few times in college, I tried my luck with some careers not quite connected to real estate. Inevitably, I landed a job working for a real estate-based private equity firm in Manhattan.

Once I accepted that every career that interested me was indeed relative to real estate, things became a lot easier to navigate. Working a traditional office job wasn't exactly the career that married my lifestyle, so in 2016, I got back into development, moved back to the Hamptons, and officially became a real estate agent with Douglas Elliman.

Are you local to the region?

Yes, I was born and raised in Long Island. I've always lived between the Hamptons and New York City. The majority of my life has been in the Hamptons; it will always feel most like home. It's where I hope to get married and raise a family one day. It's also probably where I will retire.

You have experience in building. Can you explain how

you are/were involved with the development side of things?

Finding the land to build is the area of development that I give most, if not all, of my attention to. The lot and location determine what will be built and how much it will likely list for. The Hamptons is land-driven, so a lot goes into securing a great land deal, especially in this market. Outside of selling the newly constructed property, finding the land is where knowing development and also being a real estate agent work in my favor most!

What sets luxury real estate in the Hamptons apart from other markets?

It's a secondary market where, post-Covid, it has become even more desirable. The majority of homeowners and/or visitors in the Hamptons are New Yorkers. In contrast to needing a passport or booking a flight, you can just get in your car and get here. I've watched the Hamptons go from a summer weekend getaway to a full-time situation for many of my clients and friends. It has become so multifaceted. In the summer, you enjoy the Hamptons for the social scene and beaches, while in the off-season, it gives a cozy countryside escape.

How has the demand for luxury properties in the Hamptons evolved?

Having become such a multifaceted destination, you have buyers who are looking for homes with more than just summer in mind. Aside from certain factors such as interest rates, war, or election year, the demand for both buying and renting homes continues to increase drastically.

What are the key factors buyers in the luxury market

look for when considering properties in the Hamptons?

Buyers want resale value; they want to purchase a property that will not only appreciate but will also make them money while owning. A lot more buyers are not only purchasing properties for personal use but to add to their rental portfolio.

What specific amenities or features are highly sought after in luxury homes on the East End?

Tennis courts have always been desired and add to the value of a property tremendously. Recently, both pickleball and padel have become extremely popular. Alternatively, to tennis, clients are now asking for pickleball or padel courts. I recently decided to get padel lessons after having a court installed for a client. I learned just about everything one could possibly know of the sport while organizing the installation, so much so that I felt obligated to actually learn how to play!

How do you navigate the unique challenges of selling luxury properties, such as pricing and marketing strategies?

Finding comps these days to support pricing properties or land has changed a lot since Covid. Sellers are still a little high on the pandemic prices, and buyers are long overdue for a deal. I spend a lot of time reminding both to reside in the present. I do my best to read and stay on top of almost everything that trades in the Hamptons. Whether it's an oceanfront modern or a small cottage in Springs, I like knowing exactly when a deal closed and for how much. Whenever someone asks me how the market is, and they always do, I love giving them an accurate answer!

What neighborhoods or areas in the Hamptons are currently experiencing increased buyer interest?

The dividing lines between north and south of the highway are really becoming blurred. So many properties north of the highway are trading at prices that make me blush. Due to land availability, a lot of neighborhoods that were less desirable have now become the best option. In the last two years in both the Shinnecock Hills and North Sea area in Southampton, I've sold over three new development homes and have three

more coming to market.

How do you establish and maintain relationships with high-net-worth clients in the luxury market?

I'm the definition of a people person. I love connecting and meeting new people every day with no intention of making them a client. Naturally, having a lot of high-net-worth individuals around me, whether family or friends, I'm continuously in spaces where I'm introduced to everyone. Many of my clients are people I networked with outside of real estate or simply met at a friend's dinner party. So much of my business comes from personal referrals, and I love that for me. I credit it all to truly being personable. I rarely tell people what I do for a living and I think that goes a long way once they find out!

Can you discuss any notable property sales or transactions you've been involved in recently?

I just closed on a property built by Hamptons Building Group in Southampton yesterday — 66 Shinnecock Hills Road — last ask was \$4,495,000. I also went into contract this week on an amazing property in Bridgehampton — 279 Mitchells Lane,

which was this year's Hamptons Real Estate Show House. This property was really fun. We threw so many great events there this past summer. It was listed at \$11,995,000. I work mainly with new development and closed a lot of land deals last year, so I have many great projects coming to market soon. My favorite at the moment is a spec home recently completed in Southampton. Having found the lot and worked closely with designing, it's the first project I'm fully involved with from start to finish — 354 Saint Andrews Road W in Southampton. Currently on the market for \$3,995,000.

What advice would you give to buyers or sellers entering the luxury real estate market in the Hamptons for the first time?

Buy with the intention to sell and sell with the intention to buy. Everything should be traded continuously here. It's a place where your investment will appreciate. If you think more about trading and less about keeping, you'll look at properties in a completely different light. Not every house will check all your boxes, and that's okay because another one is being built this very minute that might. Owning a property in the Hamptons in itself is such a true luxury!





COLDWELL BANKER
RELIABLE REAL ESTATE

Prestige • Pedigree • Power
THE GLOBAL LUXURY DIFFERENCE



RACHAEL HULSE
LICENSED ASSOCIATE REAL ESTATE BROKER
RHULSE@CBHAMPTONS.COM • 631.902.0488



NEW CONSTRUCTION MASTERPIECE BY TOPAZ BUILDERS

34 TURTLE POND ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON, NY | \$4,495,000

7 BEDROOMS • 7 BATHS • 5300 S.F. • 3 FLOORS • 1.01 ACRES

A BOUTIQUE OFFICE WITH A GLOBAL REACH

91 JOBS LANE, SOUTHAMPTON, NY 11968



LOUIS BOUGATSOS
LIC. REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON
631.506.1008



JESSICA BELL
LIC. REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON
917.969.1643



DENISE BORNSCHEIN
LIC. REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON
631.871.6201



PAUL HENNEFORTH
LIC. REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON
631.793.5249



RACHAEL HULSE
LIC. REAL ESTATE BROKER
631.902.0488



RICHARD RAWDIN
LIC. REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON
631.680.7205

COLDWELL BANKER RELIABLE REAL ESTATE

• COLDWELLBANKERHAMPTONS.COM •

WESTHAMPTON BEACH
631.288.0400

HAMPTON BAYS
631.728.8070

SOUTHAMPTON VILLAGE
631.287.7707

BRIDGEHAMPTON
631.613.1660

NEW YORK CITY
718.921.3100

BAY RIDGE BROOKLYN
718.921.3100

BENSONHURST BROOKLYN
718.921.3100

BEDFORD STUYVESANT
718.921.3100

Joanna Buchanan

A Journey Of Global Inspiration In Home & Garden

By Ty Wenzel

Extensive travels and diverse upbringing have shaped Joanna Buchanan's journey through color, texture, and pattern. With roots in Hong Kong and experiences across Europe and India, Buchanan's 20-year career in fashion retail has deepened her appreciation for the artistry around the world.

Her commitment to sourcing expertise from various countries underscores her belief in producing her collection in the best possible locations. By partnering with small businesses in China, India, and the Philippines, she aims to ensure quality and support dedicated artisans who share her brand's values and goals.

The genesis of Buchanan's line of luxe seasonal accessories, holiday decor, and gifts stems from childhood memories and family heritage. Inspired by her mother's love for holiday decorating and her great-grandmother's vintage ornament collection, Buchanan sought to reimagine holiday decor with a touch of vintage sophistication and glamour.

These include rhinestone-studded wine stoppers, metal straws, hair pins, and much more that make luxurious gifts. Her homes in New York City and Connecticut serve as tangible reflections of her global experiences. Furnished with treasures collected during her travels, they showcase her ability to curate modern colors, chic patterns, and eclectic furnishings into cohesive, elegant spaces.

Yet, Buchanan's garden truly inspires her work. The natural elements in her garden influence the designs she creates, infusing them with the beauty of the outdoors and adding a touch of organic elegance.

In Joanna Buchanan's world, luxury is not just about material opulence but also about celebrating craftsmanship, heritage, and the beauty found in the everyday.

Through her journey, she invites us to explore the world with open eyes and find inspiration in the rich tapestry of cultures and experiences surrounding us.

To learn more, visit joannabuchanan.com.





Real Estate Confab

A Robust Rental Season In Full Swing

By Ty Wenzel

The internet has been lit up with local brokers sharing how the East End rental market is robust. Who better to ask than our local salespersons and brokers? We posed the question: “How is the rental season doing so far in 2024, and are there any new laws that we should be aware of?”

Harald Grant, Sotheby’s International Real Estate

The 2024 summer rental season has started off strong. All three of the Sotheby’s International Realty Hamptons offices are reporting an uptick in rental business and leases signed. The rental market will continue to be strong since there is very little inventory for sale. This year, we are seeing people wanting to stay “closer to home” or make a home in the Hamptons this summer, instead of planning big trips to other parts of the world.

Sotheby’s International Realty has very complete lease procedures that are updated regularly to reflect any new laws and ordinances. We either include or disclose issues about the Suffolk County hotel tax for rentals 30 days or less and FEMA flood data for renters and their renter’s insurance. As local towns and villages modify their rental registrations, we accommodate, by way of our legal teams, any such changes and updates. In the digital world, we are able to share all of our inventory with anyone — anywhere. To be a successful broker, one needs to also have rental inventory varying in price and location. Whether you want to be on the beach or in the village, we have it all.

The Zellman / Lambert Team, Town & Country Real Estate

It appears that the 2024 season will outshine 2023 by a considerable margin. With last year’s European vacations in

the rearview mirror and ongoing global circumstances, many of our clients have expressed their preference for staying closer to home this Summer. Consequently, we’ve noticed a notable increase in rental inquiries spanning all villages and towns.

Regarding legal compliance, we maintain a proactive approach in ensuring that the landlords we collaborate with keep their Rental Registrations up to date. The necessity of this precaution became glaringly evident after the 2022 fire tragedy.

It is our responsibility to leave no stone unturned in ensuring the utmost comfort and enjoyment for the tenants we work with, and we are equally vigilant in ensuring comfort for our partners/landlords. We meticulously vet tenants to the best of our ability and maintain constant communication with them from lease signing until we personally welcome them on day one with the keys in hand. With many of our tenants being repeat renters, we understand how to ensure their comfort and make them feel at home. We strive to provide them with our recommendations for the finest local resources, including restaurants, shops, and transportation options. We are readily available to address any inquiries they may have, whether or not they are new to the area.

Sheri Winter Parker, The Corcoran Group

I’ve gotten lots of inquiries! People are taking their time to find the perfect rental. It is such a great way to experience all the North Fork has to offer. Not a new law, but rental permits are required for every property, and we now must display the rental permit numbers in all advertising, including social media. Each rental must be clean and organized. Everything must be in working order. It is always fantastic when the landlord creates a house manual

with any information that a tenant could need... everything from how to work remotes to favorite spots to get morning coffee or dinner!

Cindy Scholz, Compass

Well-appointed rentals are moving, and location is important. Many reasonable renters scooped homes in January this year.

Hamptons pricing commands four-star hotel standard accommodations. As owners, it is easy to overlook bedding that might be tired, or paint could use a touch-up. Bring in a professional set of eyes and use a stager or designer to give the home a simple refresh. Remember you can write these expenses off the rental income. Important to invest in your home if you want the best return.

Bonita DeWolf, Christie’s Real Estate Group

The 2024 rental season is proving to be more vibrant than the last two years. Landlords are recognizing that rental prices were inflated in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic and are now adjusting their pricing more reasonably. In 2023, several houses did not rent at all, or rented for less time than the owners had anticipated. Savvy landlords are considering last year’s history when pricing in 2024 and offering properties during multiple different time periods throughout the summer. Landlords who are more flexible stand a better chance of renting out their properties, as our tenants have indicated a preference to stay closer to home this year and avoid traveling overseas.

Landlords who enhance their homes for guests by making improvements, small or large, are the ones whose houses rent the quickest. There are straightforward

and cost-effective updates landlords can implement to make their properties more appealing, such as investing in new bedding and linens, decluttering the space, and enhancing the outdoor areas to create an inviting atmosphere. As soon as weather permits, it’s a good idea to place outdoor furniture outside. Until then, the best option is to show the property through photos taken in warm weather and plan to update them this Spring if improvements or renovations have been made.

Angela Boyer-Stump, Sotheby’s International Real Estate

The rental season is off to a great start! We are seeing an increase in activity compared to last year. We think this may be due to more tenants having to be in the office this summer — traveling abroad may be limited for some and agents in the Hamptons are ready to help clients secure a home here! It also feels like landlords seem to be subtly reducing pricing from the Covid rates and the market, while still flooded with inventory, feels strong.

Summer 2024 in the Hamptons will be in full swing before you know it! Landlords should prep well ahead of when they want to list their homes. The new rental permit rules and regulations have delayed a few owners from being able to market their homes online because of delays by the Building Department in issuing rental permits. Owners should apply for their permits and permit extensions as soon as they know they want to rent! As they say, the early bird catches the worm!

I have a suggested rental checklist that I’m happy to provide for homeowners. A few items that come to mind, replace your smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries before a tenant takes occupancy

and make sure all lightbulbs in the house are working.

Ahhhh ... and propane tanks! There is nothing more frustrating for a tenant than to arrive excited about their stay only to find out the grill hasn’t been cleaned and the propane tank is empty! Most homeowners know to clean their homes and leave them tenant-ready but many forget to check their grill! With rentals being so popular, there are also management companies that can be on call for landlords who will be away during their home rentals. These companies are very helpful on and off-season.

Jake Sinacori, The Corcoran Group

Rental season 2024 has been off to a strong start with repeat clients eager to get leases signed, and first-time landlords breaking into our opportunistic rental market. For those first-time landlords, or any landlord, a legal change that should be noted is the ability to collect greater than one month’s rent in advance for a property that is classified as a “seasonal use dwelling unit.” Eligibility for such properties is met by adhering to these three requirements. The lease term must be less than 120 days, the property must be your primary residence, and the property must be registered with its respective town/village as a “seasonal use dwelling unit.”

In preparation for a great rental experience, I always recommend in-person showings despite the ease of virtual showings. If I were a tenant, I would prefer to see a property in person and know it is not a fit before signing a lease and paying for it! Lastly, I would advise landlords and tenants to obtain a renters insurance policy that can protect the covered party in an unforeseen event, at a rather nominal cost.

James Lane Fest

A weekend with James Lane Post
at Sound View Greenport

**A perfect blend of fashion, art,
wellness, and dining, for guests to
enjoy as they relish the beauty of
the North Fork.**

Friday, October 18 –
Sunday, October 20

Sound View Greenport
58775 County Rd 48, Greenport

Bookings Available Starting May 24

James Lane
– POST –

**SOUND
VIEW**
1935
GREENPORT NY