

The New York Times

Life Led Them to Brooklyn, but to Which Two-Bedroom Condo?

A couple moved up from Asheville, N.C., to be closer to their children and grandchild. On the checklist: a newer building and fun things to do.



Amy and Paul Silverman in Brooklyn, where they looked for a two-bedroom condo for about \$2 million. Kate Glicksberg for The New York Times

For a dozen years, Paul and Amy Silverman lived in Houston, where he worked as an oncologic radiologist. The couple later discovered Asheville, N.C., when they visited for a medical conference, and eagerly moved there after Dr. Silverman retired in 2012.

“We thought we would spend the rest of our lives in Asheville,” Ms. Silverman said. “Everybody said, ‘Why don’t you retire where your kids are?’ But I wanted a place where they could visit and get away.”



Their house had a gorgeous view of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the couple enjoyed the outdoorsy surroundings, with hiking, kayaking and fly-fishing. Ms. Silverman, 72, a former teacher, was an active volunteer. Dr. Silverman, 73, gardened and tended beehives. After taking a class in hand-built ceramics, he began crafting [vintage tools and cameras from clay](#). “It’s like woodworking, but instead of pieces of wood, you roll clay into slabs and build things,” he said.

Shortly after arriving in Asheville, Ms. Silverman developed macular degeneration, and her vision grew increasingly hazy and distorted. During the pandemic, she stopped driving, which made life in Asheville untenable. She felt imprisoned in the house.

“We went to lunch with a friend who said, ‘You need to leave now while you can still do stuff,’ and we went home and put the house on the market,” Ms. Silverman said.

That was a year and a half ago. “It was sad to have to leave under these circumstances, but you have to deal with what life gives you,” she said. The Asheville house sold for \$1.84 million.

Both Silverman children were in New York — their daughter in Chelsea and their son, with his wife and 6-year-old, in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn. Brooklyn reminded the Silvermans of Boston, where both are from. (They met as camp counselors in New Hampshire.) So they decided to relocate within walking distance of their son’s family.

For a price up to about \$2 million, the couple sought a relatively new condominium with two bedrooms, two bathrooms and private outdoor space. They preferred a quiet street with proximity to subways and plenty of natural light to help with Ms. Silverman’s low vision. And they wanted to be near a gym, though their son reminded them that a gym in the building was both possible and preferable.

They also realized the value of some kind of third place. “The thought of being either in the apartment or finding a place outside it, like a coffee shop, would be a very limited and binary decision that would not be enjoyable, especially in inclement weather,” Dr. Silverman said. “When we found that some buildings had common space, that became a priority.”

There were few options within walking distance of their son’s family. “Most of the larger, more amenitized buildings are in Downtown Brooklyn,” said their agent, Tamara Abir, a salesperson at Compass.

The condo units the Silvermans considered were similar inside, with around 1,200 square feet, private outdoor space, large living/dining areas that had open kitchens (always with a dishwasher and an island or peninsula), and a stacked washer-dryer. They also offered useful extras like walk-in closets, five-burner stoves and double bathroom vanities.

Among their options:

No. 1

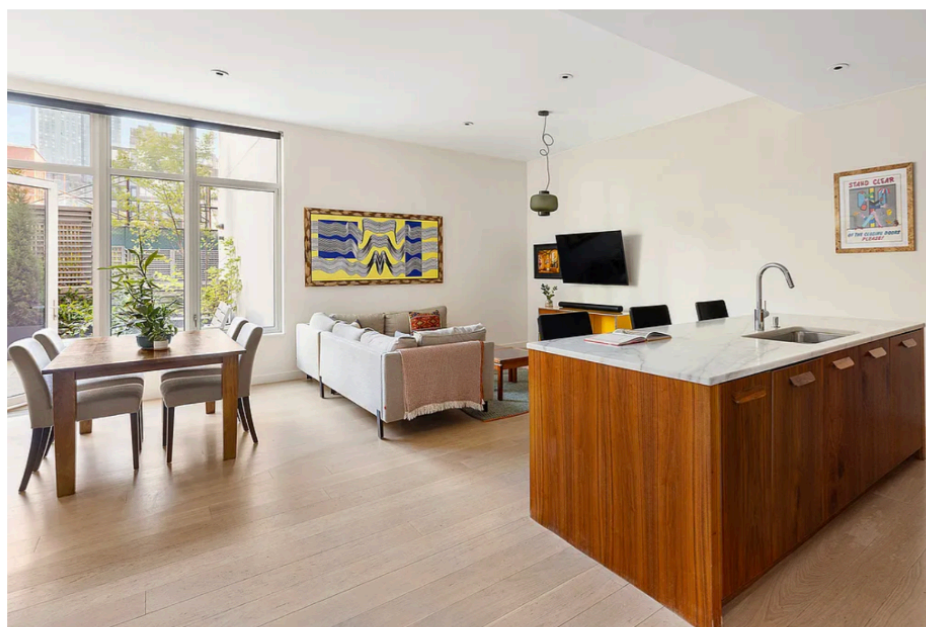
Pacific Street, Boerum Hill



Kate Glicksberg for The New York Times



This two-bedroom was in a six-story, 38-unit building from 2017, with all rooms opening to a 500-square-foot terrace complete with water and utilities. The open living area had a kitchen island, high ceilings, and floor-to-ceiling glass doors out to the terrace. The building, located on the corner of busy Atlantic Avenue, had a landscaped roof terrace, gym, lounge, playroom and library. It was two blocks from the Atlantic Avenue-Barclays Center transit hub. The price was \$1.999 million, with monthly costs of around \$3,300.



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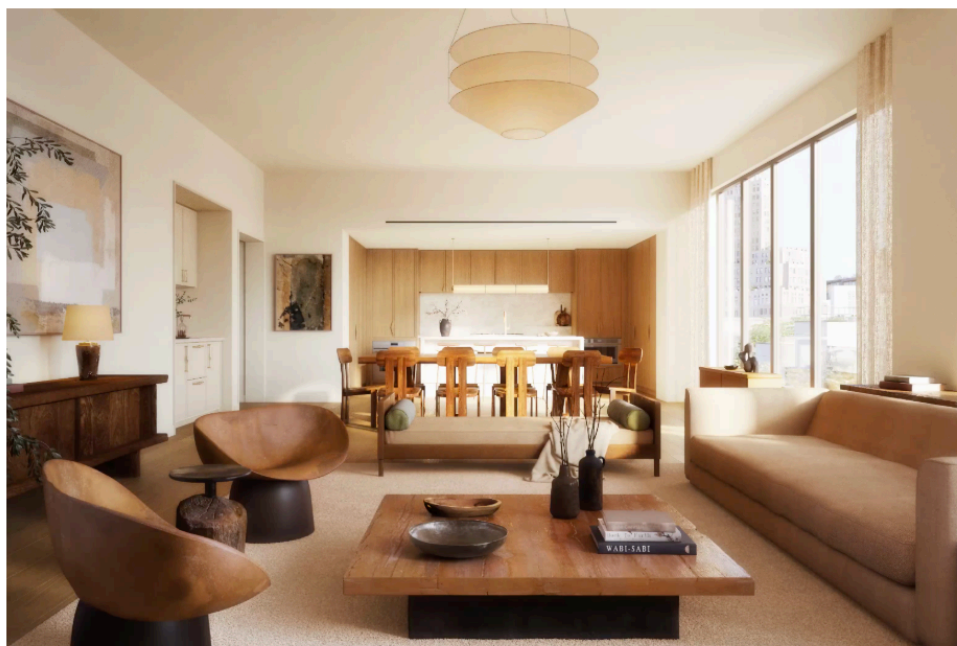
No. 2

Bergen Street, Boerum Hill



Kate Glicksberg for The New York Times

This two-bedroom was in a seven-story, 105-unit building that was brand new, meaning they'd be among the first residents there. All of the rooms had south-facing light through large windows. The kitchen was carved into a wall and set off by a breakfast bar. The balcony covered 125 square feet. The amenity-filled building had two furnished roof decks, a private park, a game room and ceramics studio. It was three blocks from the Atlantic Avenue-Barclays Center stop. The price was \$2.3 million, with monthly costs of around \$3,000.



Avdoo & Partners Development Marketing

No. 3

Butler Street, Park Slope



Kate Glicksberg for The New York Times

This two-bedroom, in a 2020 building with 12 stories and 32 units, had a 340-square-foot terrace and two big entryway closets. Six triple-pane windows in the living room faced Downtown Brooklyn. The bedrooms were on opposite sides of the apartment; the second bedroom was small. The building, which was on the corner of busy Fourth Avenue, came with a gym and a furnished roof deck. The closest subway was the R train, four blocks away. The price was \$1.85 million, with monthly charges of almost \$3,000.



Douglas Elliman

Find out what happened next by answering these two questions:

Which Would You Choose?

Pacific Street, Boerum Hill

Bergen Street, Boerum Hill

Butler Street, Park Slope

Which Did They Buy?

Pacific Street, Boerum Hill

Bergen Street, Boerum Hill

Butler Street, Park Slope