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Arcadia Book Corner

[The Option of Urbanism](#)

by Arcadia partner, Christopher B. Leinberger.

Americans are voting with their feet to abandon strip malls and suburban sprawl, embracing instead a new type of community where they can live, work, shop, and play within easy walking distance.

[Views of Seaside](#)

by Seaside Institute.

A book about the iconic community of the New Urbanism-- Seaside-- developed by Arcadia partner, Robert Davis.

[Last Harvest](#)

by Witold Rybczynski.

A book about American development told through the lens of Arcadia's New Daleville community in Chester County.

Greetings!

The East Coast snow storms of this past week were a sort of grand experiment in living without the automobile. When your car is buried in more than a foot of snow--for the second time in days--you know that driving is not an option.

In my neighborhood of [Narberth](#), a walkable Philadelphia-area Borough built mainly in the early 20th century (imagine Mayberry, only better), we have been snowed in like everyone else. But, unlike more auto-oriented places, life manages to go on in the snow in Narberth, only without the car. Last Saturday, my wife and daughters trudged through the snow to buy bread at the [Narberth Cheese Shop](#) and croissants at [Le Petit Mitron](#). Wednesday, we walked to town and picked up cold cuts at [American Family Market](#), whose proprietor, Angelo, insisted on staying open even though it was a both a blizzard and his birthday. That evening, with cabin fever setting in, the girls and I donned our ski gear and hiked up to [The Greeks](#) for dinner with friends.

For our family, the snow days were no hardship at all. If anything, the neighborly sharing of shovels and snow blowers, the hours spent sledding at [Narbrook Park](#), and the snowy trudges to town were special blessings, blessings pretty much unique to dense, walkable places like Narberth.

Speaking of Narberth, in this month's newsletter, we are pleased to report on a new residential development we are doing in my hometown, the Narberth Arbors, and to provide a preview of Arcadia's soon-to-released [analysis](#) of the last ten of years of building permit data in the Delaware Valley. Don't miss the pop quiz below.

Stay warm,



Jason Duckworth

Arcadia's new *Narberth Arbors* launches with strong sales.



Much of Arcadia's work is the development of new communities that emulate the walkability, mix of uses, and compact design of great old towns and boroughs such as Narberth Borough on the Philadelphia Main Line. When the opportunity arose to actually build in such a splendid community, we couldn't resist.

The [Narberth Arbors](#) are four green homes being developed by Arcadia Land Company in walkable Narberth Borough. Built by rapidly growing builder, [Cornell Homes](#), and designed by Main Line architect, [Cheryl O'Brien](#), the Narberth Arbors will be luxurious modern homes on the inside but Narberth neighborly on the outside. With deep front porches and early 20th-century styles, the Narberth Arbors will feel as though they've always been part of the neighborhood.

Sales opened in December 2009 and, as of today, we are sold out. Two of the four homes are under contract and the remaining two are going to contract within the week. Average prices exceed \$900,000. *The Narberth Arbors* has received plan approval and we expect construction to commence this spring.

The Narberth Arbors are being built to the standards of the NAHB's green building program, ensuring superior energy efficiency, improved home air quality, and a reduced environmental impact during development and construction.

If you have any questions about *The Narberth Arbors*, please contact Jason Duckworth at (610) 649-5400 x27 or at jason@arcadialand.com.

A big surprise from southern Delaware:

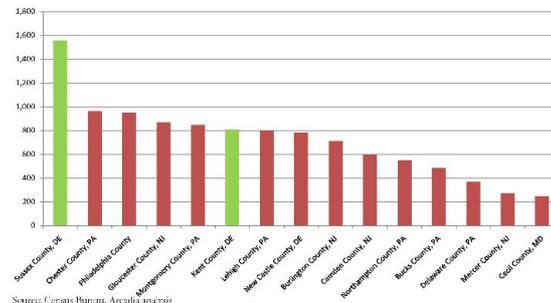
preview of Arcadia's regional building permit analysis, 2000-2009.

Pop quiz for those in the Delaware Valley:

1. Since 2000, which county's housing market was the fastest growing in the Delaware Valley?
2. In 2009, which county's housing market was the largest in the Delaware Valley as measured by number of building permits for new homes?

Sussex County, DE is region's largest new home market

Total building permits, 2009: by county



Source: Census Bureau, Arcadia analysis



[For source data and larger version of chart click [here](#).]

If you answered Kent and Sussex counties, Delaware, respectively, you are correct. Kent County added 29.4% to its housing stock in the last ten years and, in 2009 and in every year since 2005, Sussex County has topped all the counties in the Delaware Valley in building permits. Sussex County now has 50% more building permits than the next largest county, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

With nearly as many building permits in 2009 as Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties (Pennsylvania) combined (2,361 vs. 2,664), Kent and Sussex Counties are big markets that have been among the most resilient in our region.

As part of our consulting practice to banks, Arcadia's [Development Services](#) group has performed several market studies for residential developments during the last year in southern and central Delaware. With new affordable housing geared mainly towards retirees looking for low taxes, resort living, and proximity to home (e.g., Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York), Sussex County offers a compelling value proposition to the 55+ crowd that is unlikely to change in the near future.

These insights are just part of a broader analysis of building permit data from the Delaware Valley from 2000 to 2009 that we are completing and intend to publish in the near future. You can review this excerpt of the data at our [web site](#).

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