

Palm Beach Daily News

REAL-ESTATE

Trio of related Palm Beach house sales tops \$39M, involves 4 families

In related sales, three Palm Beach houses recently changed hands on North Lake Way, Angler Avenue and List Road on Palm Beach's North End.



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Palm Beach Daily News

Updated May 11, 2026, 1:49 p.m. ET

Like falling dominoes, three related house sales have closed recently on the North End of Palm Beach, involving four families and totaling nearly \$40 million.

The chain of transactions began when Suzanne Durst and her real estate developer husband, Douglas, parted with their two adjacent houses for a combined \$23.25 million through two sales recorded within a month of each other.

In the latest of those deals, a family trust in the Dursts' names was on the seller's side of an outdated 1950s-era house at 1333 N. Lake Way, which sold for \$14.9 million via a deed recorded May 4.



With a white perimeter line added to define the lot of nearly a half-acre, a photo illustration shows an outdated Palm Beach house at 1333 N. Lake Way that just sold at land value for a recorded \$14.9 million. *Ryan Walblay, Global Video Pros/Provided By Margit Brandt Of Premier Estate Properties*

On a lot measuring a little more than a half-acre, the house on North Lake Way had been marketed as a tear-down for its land value. The property had been in the Durst family since late 2015, when the family trust bought it for a recorded \$2.9 million, records show.

The same family trust was involved in the early-April sale of the Dursts' other house — a newer residence on a smaller lot at 250 Angler Ave., immediately north of their other home — for a recorded \$8.35 million.



Built in 2015 as a custom home by Douglas and Suzanne Durst, a Palm Beach house at 250 Angler Avenue on a corner lot of North Lake Way sold in early April for \$8.35 million. *Ryan Walblay, Global Video Pros/Provided By Margit Brandt Of Premier Estate Properties*

The buyer on North Lake Way was aviation executive Austin C. Willis, who was no stranger to the North End. He and his wife, Mary, just sold their home at 218 List Road for about \$15.93 million in a transaction recorded at the courthouse at the end of April. Austin Willis had paid a recorded \$2.95 million for the List Road house in 2014 and had it homesteaded in the latest Palm Beach County tax rolls.

The Willises sold the house on List Road to Christopher B. Asplundh Jr., whose family made its fortune in tree-trimming and landscape business.



A remodeled Monterey-style house built in 1959 at 218 List Road sold for \$15.925 million at the tail end of April on the North End of Palm Beach. *Legendary Productions/Provided By Sotheby's International Realty*

Douglas Durst is chairman of The Durst Organization of New York City, a family company that develops and owns commercial and residential properties. The president of the firm is Durst's cousin, Jonathan "Jody" D. Durst, who served as trustee of the trust that sold the two houses in Palm Beach. Douglas and Jody Durst's late grandfather founded the company.

Willis is CEO of Willis Lease Finance Corp., a Coconut Creek-based family business in Broward County that provides aviation services, including leasing airplane engines to commercial and freight fleets.

The Dursts' trust sold the house on Angler Avenue to James "Jamie" A. Rooney III and his wife, Karen, who bought it as trustees of The SJ Trust, the deed recorded April 7 shows. With ties to California, Jamie Rooney is CEO and senior partner at Sapien Capital, a wealth-management firm with offices in Miami and Los Angeles, among other cities.

Although they share the same surname, the Rooneys are not part of the famous Rooney family that owns the Pittsburgh Steelers and has strong family ties to Palm Beach, the Palm Beach Daily News has confirmed.

On North Lake Way

The former Durst house on North Lake Way was built in 1956 and has four bedrooms and 3,815 square feet of living space, inside and out, records show. On the northeast corner of Ocean Terrace, the two-story house has a 75-foot heated lap pool on its south side and an east lawn large enough to accommodate a second house.



The 1950s-er house that just sold for \$14.9 million at 1333 N. Lake Way in Palm Beach has a lap pool built in 2016 on the property's south side. *Ryan Walblay, Global Video Pros/Provided By Margit Brandt Of Premier Estate Properties*

Agent Margit Brandt of Premier Estate Properties held the listings for both of the Dursts' former homes. She had originally listed the two houses in early 2024 for \$29.6 million as a single compound that comprised a little less than an acre. By July 2025, the price for the compound had dropped to \$24 million.

In September 2025, Brandt re-listed the houses separately, with the one on North Lake Way asking \$16.1 million and the other on Angler Avenue priced at \$8.9 million, the MLS shows.

The Dursts had used the house on North Lake Way as a guesthouse for their home next door.

Agents Todd and Frances Peter of Sotheby's International Realty represented Willis in his purchase of the house on North Lake Way.

Todd Peter and Brandt declined to comment for this story.

Willis now has the opportunity to get access to a community beach cabana — maintained by a neighborhood association — at the east end of Ocean Terrace. An entrance to the Lake Trail is near the property to the west of the house.

On Angler Avenue

The Dursts' built their four-bedroom house on Angler Avenue as a custom home, completing it in 2015, property records show. They had purchased the property for \$1.35 million in 2013. On the corner of North Lake Way, the lot encompasses three-tenths of an acre.



French doors open to a garden area at 250 Angler Ave., which recent changed hands for \$8.35 million on the North End of Palm Beach. *Ryan Walblay, Global Video Pros/Provided By Margit Brandt Of Premier Estate Properties*

The two-story, Colonial Revival-style house has four bedrooms, a two-car garage and 4,718 total square feet. The two wings of the house wrap around the front motor court.

The interiors feature hardwood floors and dark wood millwork. In the main living area, French doors open to a covered-loggia. With a center work island, the kitchen has a dining area and another bank of French doors. Upstairs, doors in the the primary bedroom open onto a terrace.

Agent Kim Raich of Sotheby's International Realty negotiated for the Rooneys in their purchase of the house on Angler Avenue. Raich declined to discuss the sale.

The Rooneys appear to be making plans relocate to the island from their lakeside home in West Palm Beach at 2719 Embassy Drive in the Lands of the President development off North Congress Avenue. Brandt has that contemporary-style house, completed in 2023, under contract after listing it for just under \$5 million in March, according to the MLS. Her listing shows that it has four bedrooms and a little more than 6,000 total square feet. The Rooneys bought it through a revocable trust for \$3.1 million in May 2024.

On List Road

The Willis family sold their Monterey-style house on List Road to Asplundh via a deed recorded April 29, just before Austin Willis bought the house on North Lake Way. Asplundh's professional resume includes leadership positions at Asplundh Tree Expert Co., headquartered outside of Philadelphia in Horsham, Pennsylvania. The international company offers tree-trimming and a host of other landscape maintenance services.

The Asplundh family has deep roots in Palm Beach, and Asplundh landscape crews are often seen working at properties on the island.



With a covered loggia and dining patio, the pool area at 218 List Road in Palm Beach was designed for entertaining. The house just sold for \$15.925 million, the price recorded with the deed. *Legendary Productions/Provided By Sotheby's International Realty*

Built in 1959 but later remodeled, the house on List Road has four bedrooms and 6,138 square feet of total living space. The property comprises three-tenths of an acre on the ninth street north of the Palm Beach Country Club. It is the fourth lot west of the beach and is on the south side of the street, backing up to Via Marila.

As they had done in the transaction on North Lake Way, the Peters team at Sotheby's acted for the Willis family in the sale on List Road. The agents had listed the house at \$16.9 million in early January, and the price never wavered before the sale before the sale closed April 28, the MLS shows.

The Peters also represented Asplundh in his purchase of the List Road house.

The Peters' sales description mentioned the property's "exceptional outdoor space, including a generous front yard, a large south-facing pool with terrace, loggia, summer kitchen, and a service entry with a two-car garage accessed from Via Marila."

The foyer is finished with Versailles-pattern wood flooring, the living room has a gas-powered fireplace and the formal dining room connects to the kitchen. The kitchen's layout includes a breakfast area and a center island with pull-up seating.

Members of the Asplundh family have bought and sold other Palm Beach properties over the years, courthouse records show. Among those properties is a lakefront estate at 1334 N. Lake Way, directly across the street from the house the Dursts just sold Austin Willis at 1333 N. Lake Way. The Asplundh estate at No. 1334 has been in the family since 1987, when Christopher Asplundh Jr.'s parents, Ellen and the late Christopher Asplundh Sr., bought it.