

May 20, 2016

Sen. Ron Wyden's other home: NYC townhouse on the market for \$7.5 million (photos)



U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) has a few more demands dogging his docket: He splits his time among homes in Portland, Oregon, D.C.'s Capitol Hill and New York City, where his wife, Strand bookstore heir Nancy Bass Wyden, who owns a classic Manhattan rowhouse. (The Oregonian/Oregonlive)

A politician's life includes commuting back and forth between Washington, D.C. and a home state where voters want time and rivals require attention.

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) has a few more demands dogging his docket: He splits his time among homes in Portland, Oregon, D.C.'s Capitol Hill and New York City.

At 67, he's the father of five, with two grown kids from his first marriage and 8-year-old twins and a 3-year-old daughter with his second wife, Strand bookstore heir Nancy Bass Wyden, who owns a classic Manhattan rowhouse.

But maybe the Wydens are getting ready to let go of some obligations.

Nancy Bass Wyden's 5,300-square-foot townhouse at 236 East 19th St., between Gramercy Park and Augustus St. Gaudens Playground, is on the market for \$7.5 million.

And what a Manhattan mansion it is, with six marble fireplaces and formal rooms bedecked in ornate crown molding underneath high ceilings.

The top floor of the five-level residence has three of the five bedrooms, one of 3 ½ baths and an office illuminated by a skylight. Other floors contain a wood-paneled library and several dining areas.

The galley kitchen is on the garden level so the home cook needs to haul meals upstairs to the dining room, which is adjacent to a massive living room.

The back walls of the dining room and the master suite above it have been opened up for expansive panes of glass. No one will notice the modern touches from the street since the front facade remains a quintessential brownstone walk-up.

The narrow, Anglo-Italianate building was constructed in 1848 with a plain basement and brick upper facade. The stoop leads to double front doors, which open to the grand living room with chandeliers, arched entryways and stained-glass pocket doors.

There's a 220-square-foot terrace on the top floor and access to the not-yet-developed roof. A balcony overlooks the big – 532-square-foot – brick-walled backyard with a century-old Ailanthus tree. There's a cherry tree in the tiny front garden.

The value of this home overshadows Wyden's multilevel home in Capitol Hill that he bought for almost \$1 million in 2007, according to public records. Or his Craftsman house near Berkeley Park in Portland's Eastmoreland neighborhood that he purchased with his wife for \$935,000 in 2011.

A story in 6sqft, a NYC real estate, design and architecture blog, reported that Nancy Bass Wyden purchased the Lower East Side townhouse for \$4.7 million in 2011 from the original family, the Baers, who were cutlery manufacturers. Baer family members lived in the house for more than 150 years, according to listing agents Emily Beare and David Beare.

Bass Wyden co-owns the famous independent Strand bookstore, which her grandfather founded in the East Village in 1927. A young Patti Smith and other rockers stocked books at the store that's best known as boasting it has "18 Miles of Books."