Attracting families to Pottstown

Pottstown’s best champions can be those who already live and work here. Late in 2006, Ryan Procsal, a professional woodworker, bought a duplex at 352 Walnut Street. “I was in the construction business, and I recognized the house was built much better than houses they’re building today,” he says. His tenants on the second floor helped pay his costs until the summer of 2009, when they moved out. Procsal then began converting the building into a single family dwelling.

That same summer, he met Athena Singer, a Pottstown teacher’s aide who was renting an apartment nearby. They married two years ago, and Athena was subsequently promoted to teach art at Pottstown’s Rupert Elementary School.

Meanwhile, Ryan was elected councilman representing Pottstown’s first ward.

Athena spoke so enthusiastically about Pottstown’s schools that her brother, Noah, and his wife, Devon, decided to sell their house in Spring City and buy one in Pottstown. Singer works as head of maintenance for an Exton apartment complex, so the commute was about the same.

“Our son Silas was having trouble at his school in Spring-Ford,” Noah says. “But as soon as he enrolled in Pottstown, he did a 180-degree turnaround. He immediately began to thrive in Robin Anderson’s kindergarten class at Lincoln School.”

The Singers were also impressed with the quality of Pottstown’s housing. “Our house in Spring City was less than 1,100 square feet,” Noah says. “Here in Pottstown, we bought a 3,000 square foot home for $89,000 in move-in condition. In fact, we felt something like kids in a candy store. We didn’t want to spend more than $100,000, and we had lots of houses to choose from selling for less than that.”

The Singers bought a house just a few doors down from the Proscals. Now, they don’t just have a great house, they’ve got great neighbors.

Councilman Ryan Procsal, far right, with his wife, Athena, and their newborn son, Asher, stand in front of their home at 352 Walnut St. At left are Athena’s brother, Noah Singer, and his wife, Devon, with children, Silas, 6, Caelan, 4, and Magnolia, 1½. The Singers recently bought a house at 378 Walnut St.