

## Preparing a Home for Sale

Houses sell every day of the year *regardless* of the time of year *or* the type of market we are experiencing. This is important because you never know when a "ready, willing and able" Buyer will want to see your house! Sellers are most optimistic at the beginning of marketing. Every day when they wake up they are wondering *if* today is the day! Most likely it is not and, over time, the enthusiasm will wane especially if a house has been on the market for a long time or been marketed several different times. Sellers should discuss any concerns to see how to address them. Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results makes *no sense*. An honest discussion may help.

Two thoughts must be discussed. First, *selling* a house is **NOT** the same as living in it! However you "live", Buyers visiting a house have expectations. While they should not judge housekeeping, they will make decisions about what they see. A Seller should always be ready to show their house to a stranger: denied appointments may not be re-scheduled and a serious Buyer may not be able to come back when convenient for you.

Second, the Internet changed the way Buyers view houses: they can now see inside your house before deciding to make plans to visit to see inside. This means that your pictures have to help make them want to see inside and the number of showings is far less than in years past because your "initial showing" really takes place online. This means that a Buyer has most likely made a conscious decision to want to see inside rather than needing to because they had no idea what the inside looked like. Buyers are better informed than before.

As you would expect, the asking price is the **#1** factor they consider and it should relate to your location, features and condition. As they say, "sellers determine the price; buyers determine the value". When you pick your price, YOU determine who your competition is. Can Buyers find what you are selling for less somewhere else *or* can they find more for what you are asking?

As far as preparing your home for marketing, Sellers know their house all too well and may be overly concerned about some things. Balance "seeing the trees" with "seeing the forest". I like to walk the entire house with my clients, both inside and out, and categorize what I see in one of three ways: things not to worry about, things that are "marginal" and things to consider addressing (this includes municipality and appraisal issues). Feedback and the level of interest will help clarify items in the first two categories. My job as your representative is to communicate your willingness to be reasonable with a Buyer's request and to encourage them to make an offer.

I see potential items to address in two specific ways: first, some items may add "value" (be careful: MOST repairs will not return your investment!) while others will simply help you sell sooner (this is especially helpful if you are buying another house and interest rates and prices are rising, especially if you are "moving up"); second, you can only do what fits into your budget.

I look at a listing period as evolving: day one is a "snapshot". From that point expect things to change: houses will come on the market, some will sell, some will come off the market, and prices will change. My job is to constantly evaluate the "evolving" market, keep you informed, make ongoing recommendations and assist my clients in responding to the market. Some may be able to *or* need to be very aggressive and get a quicker sale while others are able to *or* must proceed a little more slowly. One size does not fit all so, in addition to having a strategy that works for you, you need a REALTOR whom you can depend on. We are your eyes and ears.

One of my slogans I use is that this is no time for inexperience, empty promises or false expectations". I would be happy to discuss your specific situation at your convenience.