

# PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR LISTING

Here are some steps to prepare your home for listing. I would be happy to discuss these suggestions in more detail – and to provide hands on help to accomplish them.

**IT'S A FACT: Properties that sold in 2009 for more than 110% of the current assessments -- had characteristics in common.**

**They could be described as:**

- **Neat, clean, tidy, and uncluttered**
- **Airy and immaculate**
- **Well presented, with furniture thoughtfully laid out**
- **Nicely decorated**
- **Well maintained**

## **De-cluttering**

We are aware of the value of your keepsakes and mementos. In order for visitors (i.e. potential buyers) to visualize themselves living IN your house, and how they could make it THEIR home – we advise our sellers to

Remove as many personal objectives and decorative pieces as possible.

That includes removing framed family photos from table tops, minimizing the number of appliances on counter surfaces, and putting away treasured items on your bureaus, shelves, and elsewhere in your home. Where it's valuable antique china on display or knickknacks from your travels – the rule is:

The less the better!

This is true in the kitchen, where we often want as many of our appliances, dishes and storage containers cleared off the counter tops.

The impression we want to give is on of space ...

## **Have a garage sale**

Since you'll be de-cluttering – or is it time to do a major spring clean – then consider your options? Can you go through your closets one by one and jettison clothes and items you probably will never wear or use again? Now is the time to have a garage sale, call the local organizations that can use your old stuff, recycle or take items to the “nearly new” shop. Your cupboards shouldn't be jammed to the rafters; the garage itself

should be neat and organized. It's asking a lot – but if there is time to do so, the effort will pay off.

### **De-personalizing**

Because you will be moving to a new home soon anyway – take the opportunity NOW to pack up some of the personal items and photos, books, decorative wear (candles for example), and to present a clean and tidy appearance for your viewers.

We know that you treasure your memories of your grandmother and value her unique collection of antique sewing scissors, but not everyone will. Put them away for safekeeping.

### **Furniture placement**

We can help you assess each room and find ways to show off your spaces and assets – maximizing the light, or highlighting a particularly desirable feature. That will sometimes mean changing the layout of furniture. Please know this:

It's got nothing to do with taste ...

But a few changes can simply help buyers visualize themselves in your house – and reflect what buyers are looking for.

### **Neutralize**

It's not that people don't like bright colors – but not everyone likes aqua, or red, on the dining room walls. If there is an opportunity to neutralize, by putting on a fresh coat of neutral colored paint – that's great. If not, we can find simpler ways to provide a soothing look and feel, sometimes simply by replacing your red towels with taupe ones, for example. Or by changing the floral bedspread with a more neutral white duvet cover. Again, it's not a question of taste, but rather presenting a product that will appeal to the greatest number of buyers.

### **Lighting**

The mood of a room is affected significantly by the quantity and quality of the lighting. We can help assess this aspect of your home and provide some guidance as to how to present a lighter, brighter product.

### **For open houses or showings**

For our clients, we have developed a checklist of “to do” items prior to any showings or open houses (the latter may require additional work). Nothing beats the look and smell of fresh flowers.

## **First impressions**

How does the front of your home look as a prospective buyer approaches it? We can provide an objective assessment as to how to improve that first impression, how we might liven up or tidy up the presentation of your home, in ways that don't necessarily have to cost an arm and a leg.

## **Landscaping**

Every situation is unique, but there are few homes that could not benefit from some attention to landscaping. At the very least, whether the rhododendrons are in bloom or not, the grass and bushes should be kept trimmed, plant pots emptied of last year's geraniums, and the yard tidy and neat. If there is a budget for further improvements, or it's possible to purchase some fresh additions to the garden, the investment can be worthwhile.

## **Small repairs**

Fix the small things you've been putting off – the leaky faucet, the sticky door, the broken latch on the fence, and the hole in the wall ...

## **Big repairs**

Anticipate problem areas that might require a larger investment and let's talk about it. If your roof leaks and needs replacing, you may want to consider doing it before putting your home on the market. Prospective purchasers may want to discount your price if a major repair is required.

## **Cleaning**

Invest in professional housekeepers if possible, to clean the carpets, clean the windows, and do a 'number' on your home from top to bottom. This may be one of the last things you do prior to the listing of your property.