

# CLASSIFIED REAL ESTATE



## REAL ESTATE NEWS

# Time to prepare house for spring selling season

BY MARY RODRIQUE  
STAFF WRITER

The daffodils are droopy. The mud is deep. Sunshine is a fond but distant memory.

Fear not, home sellers. Realtors offer these tips for sprucing up your home during these gray sunless days.

"The most important thing is curb appeal," said Joan Lorenz, senior sales associate of Real Estate One, Farmington.

"Even though it's not always the case, if people see messy on the outside, they're going to think

messy on the inside.

"Get rid of the dead flowers. Trim shrubs that need trimming. Make sure the driveway and sidewalks are clean. Pick up debris. "On the inside the biggest thing is cleanliness and lighting. The house should look bright and cheery. Put the lights on, even if the sun is shining. Keep closets and cupboards neat. People do check these things."

Add Nancy Opherall, a Realtor in the same office.

"Keep the outside looking clean, even if it doesn't need painting. We recently showed a

house where the front was full of cobwebs."

Overall appearance makes a big first impression, says Tom Berta, an agent for Red Carpet Keim in Detroit.

"Clean carpets, no peeling paint, cleanliness and no clutter," Berta offered.

A seller wants to make a good first impression, says Dan Boycott, associate at Century 21 Redford.

"Keep the house clean, especially if you have pets. Odors are a turnoff. Also if you have clothes you're not wearing hanging in

your closet, get rid of them. It will make your closets look bigger.

"You want your home to look nice, warm, neat and clean."

"When we show a property, the big thing right now is an emphasis on making it look lived in," said Tim Courtney, associate for Remerica in Plymouth. "Fresh flowers wouldn't hurt. People walk in, they either fall in love or not. There isn't a whole lot you can do about it."

Mary Lou Hardoin, Home Master Realty in Livonia, says clean windows make a big impression. "One thing that surprised me is

how quickly prospective buyers will notice dirty windows. So keep them clean. Also the outside appearance should look appealing. It doesn't have to be professionally landscaped — just neat and clean."

"Some sellers have asked that viewers remove their shoes. And people don't seem to have a problem with this. They'll do it without being asked if they see new carpeting."

"Just keep the house as clean and as picked up as possible. Wide open is very appealing," Hardoin said.

Odors and noise can be a turn-off, says Lorenz of Real Estate One.

"Avoid cooking strong-smelling foods before a showing," she said. "A little cinnamon simmering in a pot on the stove gives the house a nice homey smell."

"Also noise is important. The home should be pretty quiet. Keep televisions turned off and no blaring stereos. We used to say soft background music was a good idea, but the idea now is that it might be distracting. And all pets out of the way. Cleanliness is important. I can't stress that enough."

# Purchase agreement should provide for assessments

CONDO  
QUERIES



ROBERT M. MEISNER

I am buying a condominium and am concerned about the possibility of additional or special assessments being levied. How do I insure that I am protected between the time that I sign the purchase agreement and for that matter, six months after the closing?

Your purchase agreement should provide that any additional or special assessments that have been levied by the board of directors be payable by the seller. Payment on an additional or special assessment that has been levied and are due after the closing should be covered in the purchase agreement, presumably providing that the seller will give you credit for these assessments at the closing, assuming that protection of the assessments is not acceptable to you.

Short of a specific provision in

the purchase agreement, there is nothing you can do other than try to ascertain whether the board of directors has any intent to levy a special or additional assessment based on the economic or financial circumstance of the association. The more you know about the condominium association before you buy, the better off you will be.

I am a condominium board member who is concerned about our resident manager not having a written contract. The

relationship between the association and the resident manager in regard to the conditions for termination. If the employee resident manager thinks that he or she can only be terminated for cause, you have a serious potential problem if you want to terminate the employee for any other reason or if the board does not agree with the employee's interpretation of the arrangement. A written agreement should be entered into as soon as possible that clearly sets the rights of the respective parties, including the rights of termination.

Direct the board's attention to the increasing amount of litigation that is ensuing in regard to employment relations. There should be no question in terms of

Robert M. Meisner is a Birmingham attorney concentrating his practice in the areas of condominiums, real estate and corporate law. You are invited to submit topics you would like to see discussed in this column by writing Robert M. Meisner at 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 467, Birmingham Farms 48025. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion. To leave a voice message for Robert Meisner, dial 953-2047, mail box 1871.

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