

# ST. LEONARD

## *Make the Move to St. Leonard*

### *The Secret to Selling*

The information on these pages will give you strategies for choosing a realtor, getting the best sale price for your existing home and preparing for moving day. You can depend on the professional St. Leonard staff to help you with every step.

### *Tips for Choosing the Right Real Estate Agent*

Finding a realtor who will really work on your behalf is critical. Here are some tips for you to consider when selecting the right person to help you sell your home.

#### *Get Referrals*

Ask friends who have recently sold homes if they would recommend the agents they used. Was the agent aggressive on the seller's behalf? Did the agent execute the marketing plan and provide timely reporting? Were they happy with the overall level of service they received? Ask the agent where most of their listings are located and where they live. Be sure to select a realtor who is familiar with your area.

#### *Interview at Least Two Agents*

Real estate agents are independent business people, and some are more successful than others. It's important to get to know the person who will sell your home, and meet with them face to face. Ask lots of questions: Does the prospect have an active real estate license in good standing? Is selling houses a full-time career? Is this agent a member of a local Board of Realtors? Does he or she belong to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS)? Is the agent a Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES) designated with a committed focus on assisting seniors? Work with someone you like — but don't be afraid to ask for references from past clients.

#### *Get a Handle on the Marketing Plan*

The agent's marketing plan should identify who the target buyer is and what steps will be taken to promote your house to them. Information about your house should be available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day, online, in print, or both. Ask for a copy of the marketing plan for your records.

#### *Don't Just Focus on Commission*

Commission vary from agent to agent. But just looking for the agent who charges the lowest commission can be a mistake. For example, say Agent A charges a 7% commission while Agent B only charges 3%. It may seem like a no-brainer to choose Agent B, until you learn that Agent A pays the purchaser's agent a 4% commission, while Agent B only pays 1%. Which agent do you think the buyer's agent will want to work with most? Information about the percentage of an agent's commission can be found in their right to sell agreement.



# *Sell your Home in Record Time*

According to real estate experts, there are some steps you can take to help make your home stand out from the pack and attract buyers. ***Don't give up before you try.***

## **Make the Price Right**

Median existing home prices have dropped in the past year. That means you can't use the price a neighbor sold his house for a year ago as a guideline in pricing your home. The best advice real estate experts have is to price your property just slightly below the asking price for comparable homes in your neighborhood. That move will stimulate interest and generate more foot traffic.

## **Clear out the Clutter**

A house filled with clutter, knick-knacks, worn carpet and furniture are clear turnoffs for potential buyers. Organize closets. Rent storage as a temporary home for those personal items that are eating up valuable space. You might also consider hiring a "home stager" — a sort of interior designer who specializes in making homes attractive to buyers. Ask your St. Leonard Community Relations Specialist for more information about this service.

## **Get a Handle on Repairs**

Have your home inspected by a whole house inspector before you put it on the market. This will give you the opportunity to make any necessary repairs yourself rather than getting bogged down in the negotiation process. By having your home inspected early, you'll avoid any unexpected surprises when the buyer's inspector makes his or her assessment.

## **Every Picture Tells a Story**

Most people begin their searches online. Your agent will take pictures of your home and the more photos you can include; the better able prospects will be to determine if your home is the right fit for them. Be sure to include pictures of bathrooms, kitchen, master bedroom and a sunny day shot of your home's exterior.

## **Offer Incentives**

Motivate prospects by offering something a little extra to sweeten the deal. That extra may be an offer to pay closing costs or points on a mortgage. You could also throw in that flat-screen TV in the entertainment room if you aren't planning to take it with you.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

A small investment in home staging can lead to big rewards in selling your home! StagedHomes.com reports, "94.6% of Accredited Staging Professional's staged homes sell on average in 35 days or less." Home staging professionals can make your home look bigger, brighter and dressed to sell. They can create an outdoor curb appeal using landscaping and minor outdoor repairs. By reducing clutter or moving furniture, a staging specialist can accentuate the spaciousness of rooms and by adding touches of color or accessories will enhance the warmth and desire of your home.