



THE
MICHAEL-SULLIVAN
GROUP

2020
EDITION

THE SELLER'S GUIDE
TO GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR HOME

WE CREATED THIS PACKET OF INFORMATION SPECIFICALLY TO HELP HOMEOWNERS PREPARE THEMSELVES FOR THE EXPERIENCE OF SELLING THEIR HOME.

WHEN SELLING A HOME, YOU MAY HAVE TO MAKE QUICK DECISIONS; THEREFORE IT WILL BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROCESS GOING IN.

OUR LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET EXPERTISE MEANS THAT WE ARE ABLE TO INTERPRET ALL THE DATA THAT DICTATES THE OPTIMUM SELLING STRATEGY AND, OF COURSE, TAKE THE TIME TO LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND YOUR CHALLENGES AND GOALS AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ALONG THE WAY.

IN THE MEANTIME, WE HOPE THAT YOU'LL TAKE THE TIME TO REVIEW THE ATTACHED INFORMATION AND ASK US ANY QUESTIONS YOU HAVE. WE APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EARN YOUR BUSINESS AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE POSSIBILITY OF WORKING WITH YOU!



Your Motivation to Move

WHETHER YOU'RE SELLING YOUR HOME ON YOUR OWN, OR ARE MOVING YOUR SPOUSE AND FAMILY, IT'S IMPORTANT TO SIT DOWN TO DISCUSS THE MOTIVATIONS FOR THE MOVE. PUTTING YOUR HOME ON THE MARKET AND GETTING IT SOLD IS QUITE THE PROCESS, AND IT HAS A LOT OF FAST MOVING COMPONENTS. ESPECIALLY BASED ON HOW DESIRABLE YOUR HOME IS, A SALE CAN HAPPEN THE MOMENT YOUR HOUSE GOES ON THE MARKET.

PLANNING AND EVALUATING YOUR MOTIVATION TO MOVE OUT OF YOUR CURRENT HOUSE WILL GIVE YOU A BETTER CHANCE OF COMPLETING THE SALE, STRESS-FREE. YOU CAN HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT YOUR NEXT STEPS WILL BE, AND CAN HAVE YOUR AGENT ASSIST YOU WITH THE TRANSITION INTO A NEW HOME. DISCUSS WITH YOUR AGENT IF YOU WILL NEED HELP FINDING ANOTHER HOME LOCALLY, OR IF YOU NEED A REFERRAL FOR AN AGENT WHO CAN HELP YOU TRANSITION COMFORTABLY INTO A NEW HOUSE IN A DIFFERENT STATE/COUNTRY.

MAKE SURE WHEN IT COMES TIME TO TALKING WITH AN AGENT AND PUTTING YOUR HOUSE ON THE MARKET, THAT YOU ARE CERTAIN SELLING IS THE RIGHT DECISION FOR YOU AND/OR YOUR FAMILY. HAVING COLD FEET IN THE MIDDLE OF A TRANSACTION CAN CREATE LEGAL ISSUES BROUGHT ON BY THE BUYER, SO PROTECT YOURSELF BY ENSURING THE DECISION TO SELL IS WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU IN YOUR CURRENT SITUATION. ONCE YOU HAVE THE MOTIVATION TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP IN YOUR LIFE, DISCUSS WITH YOUR AGENT HOW HE OR SHE CAN HELP YOU MOVE FORWARD.



Your Property Details

Write down your personal property information to get prepared for the selling process. How much do you want for your home?

HOME ADDRESS: _____

BEDROOM COUNT: _____

BATHROOM COUNT: _____

SQFT: _____

PURCHASE PRICE: _____

LIST PRICE: _____

PROPERTY CONDITION: _____

EXTRA HOME FEATURES: _____

The Importance of an Agent

AGENT REPRESENTATION NOT ONLY BRINGS IN A SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER SALES PRICE, BUT THE PROTECTION THAT COMES WITH EXPERIENCED GUIDANCE CAN ENSURE YOU AVOID THE PITFALLS OF LEGAL SITUATIONS THAT CAN ARISE IF A SALE IS NOT HANDLED PROPERLY. NOT ONLY DO YOU HAVE A GREATER CHANCE OF A HIGHER SALES PRICE WITH THE USE OF AN AGENT, BUT THE STRESS IT RELIEVES YOU FROM THE PROCESS IS SIGNIFICANTLY IN IT'S OWN MEASURE. AGENTS HAVE THE SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO HAVE YOUR HOME SECURELY SHOWN BUYERS, AND BUYERS THAT ARE ALREADY PRE-APPROVED TO PURCHASE.



HAVING A GREAT AGENT BY YOUR SIDE MEANS THE LEGAL DOCUMENTS AND DISCLOSURES ARE WRITTEN UP AS THEY SHOULD BE, IN ORDER TO PROTECT YOU FROM ANY TROUBLES BUYERS MAY ATTEMPT TO CAUSSE. ALTHOUGH DIY CAN BE FUN IN MANY INSTANCES, IN SUCH AN EXPENSIVE TRANSACTION IN YOUR LIFE, HAVING THE HELP OF A REAL ESTATE AGENT PROVES TO BE FAR MORE BENEFICIAL THAN THE ANTICIPATED SAVES OF NOT HIRING ONE. AND IN MOST CASES, THE ANTICIPATED SAVINGS ARE ATE UP BY OTHER MEANS OF THE TRANSACTION; SO SELLERS WITHOUT AN AGENT ARE LEFT TO THEIR OWN DEVICES IN A STRESSFUL SITUATION. HIRING AN AGENT THAT WILL WORK HARD FOR YOUR BEST INTEREST DURING THE TRANSACTION, IT WILL BE WORTH YOUR TIME.



Finding the Perfect Agent

Finding the right professional through the sale of your home is an invaluable asset. You want to make sure you get the most out of your property!

- WORKS & NEGOTIATES FOR YOU, NOT THE BUYERS BEST INTEREST.
- CAN PROVIDE AN ACCURATE MARKET ANALYSIS OF YOUR HOME.
- HANDLES THE SCHEDULING OF BUYER TOUR REQUESTS AND ENSURES ANYONE VIEWING IS PRE-APPROVED.
- ABLE TO NAVIGATE LEGAL CONTRACTS TO ENSURE YOU'RE BEING TAKEN CARE OF, NOT TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF, WHEN SELLING YOUR HOME.
- HELPS YOU NAVIGATE THE SELLING PROCESS TO EASILY TRANSITION INTO YOUR NEW HOME.
- A GREAT AGENT STAYS AWARE OF LOCAL AND FEDERAL LAWS, THAT ARE EVER CHANGING, IN PERTINENCE TO HOME SELLING.
- YOUR AGENT WILL HELP YOU NEGOTIATE THE BEST PRICE AND BEST TERMS SO YOU AREN'T UNDERSTANDING YOUR HOME.

Understanding the Market



WE ALL WANT THE MOST OUT OF OUR HOME, IF WE CAN MAKE MORE THAN WE PUT IN IT, THE BETTER! KEEP IN MIND THAT MARKET CONDITIONS ARE ALWAYS CHANGING AND THIS CAN IMPACT THE VALUE OF YOUR HOME. RELYING ON SITES LIKE ZILLOW OR TRULIA TO GIVE AN ESTIMATION OF YOUR PROPERTIES VALUE CAN LEAD TO DISAPPOINTMENT. THEIR VALUE CAN DIFFERENTIATE BY UP TO 20% OF WHAT THEIR ZESTIMATES CLAIM, THEIR WORDS, NOT OURS. THIS IS WHY IT'S IMPERATIVE TO HIRE A PROFESSIONAL TO PROVIDE A TRUE ANALYSIS OF YOUR PROPERTY SO YOU CAN HAVE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT YOUR HOME IS WORTH IN CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS. YOU CAN THEN MAKE THE DECISION OF SELLING YOUR PROPERTY IF IT'S THE RIGHT STEP TO TAKE BASED ON IT'S VALUE.

The Current Market

WE ALL WANT TO GET THE MOST VALUE OUT OF OUR HOMES. LET'S BE HONEST, THEY ARE AN EXPENSIVE INVESTMENT, WITH A LOT OF MONEY AND TIME PUT INTO THEM. HOWEVER, IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION WHAT THE MARKET ACTUALLY VALUES YOUR HOME FOR, BECAUSE IF THE HOME IS OVERPRICED, IT WILL SIT STAGNANT ON THE MARKET WITHOUT ANY WRITTEN OFFERS.

IN REAL ESTATE, THERE IS A SOLUTION TO EVERY HOME THAT DOESN'T SELL, AND THAT'S DECREASING THE PRICE. AND IT'S NOT ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR AGENT'S EFFORTS, BECAUSE THEY CAN BE PULLING EVERY TRICK OUT OF THEIR HATS TO MARKET YOUR PROPERTY, BUT IF YOUR LOCAL MARKET SHOWS THAT YOUR HOUSE ON PAPER IS OVERPRICED, IT SIMPLY WON'T SELL.



WE'D LOVE A CASH BUYER WHO WILL FALL HEAD OVER HEELS IN LOVE WITH OUR HOMES, ENOUGH SO THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO PAY OVER THE APPRAISAL. AND ALTHOUGH THIS CAN HAPPEN, IT IS INCREDIBLY RARE, AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED ON. MOST BUYERS APPLY FOR A MORTGAGE TO PURCHASE A HOME, AND THE BANK WILL NOT FINANCE YOUR SALES AMOUNT IF THE APPRAISAL COMES BACK LOWER.

BY LISTING YOUR HOME AT THE CORRECT MARKET PRICE, NOT ONLY CAN YOU GUARANTEE A MUCH FASTER SALE, YOU CAN ALSO AVOID THE HEADACHE OF GOING UNDER CONTRACT WITH A BUYER, WITH THE ANTICIPATION OF A CLOSE, ONLY FOR EVERYTHING TO FALL APART TOWARDS THE END BECAUSE THE APPRAISAL VALUES DID NOT MATCH UP. I WILL DISCUSS A REALISTIC PRICE POINT FOR YOUR HOME. ITS IMPORTANT TO CHOOSE TO LIST AT A PRICE THAT ENSURES IT'S SALE, AT A VALUE THAT WORKS BEST FOR YOU, IN TERMS OF WHAT THE MARKET WILL ALLOW. KEEP IN MIND THAT LISTING IT SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN IT'S VALUE IS GOING TO HAVE A GREATER LIKELIHOOD OF A BIDDING FRENZY THAT DRIVES UP THE COST THAN EXPECTING AN OFFER ON AN OVERPRICED HOME.



Prepping to Sell

BE SURE YOUR HOME IS PREPARED BEFORE IT HITS THE MARKET. YOU WANT TO ENSURE IT'S PORTRAYED IN THE BEST LIGHT TO GET THE BEST OFFER.

- IMPROVE YOUR LANDSCAPING AND CURB APPEAL, SINCE THAT IS THE FIRST THING BUYER'S SEE.
- MAKING AS MANY REPAIRS AS YOU CAN AFFORD TO. UNLESS YOU PRICING IT BELOW MARKET VALUE TO SELL AS-IS, TAKING THE TIME TO MAKE REPAIRS CAN GET YOU A BETTER OFFER.
- IF YOU CAN, REPAINT YOUR HOME. ADDING A FRESH COAT OF PAINT TO A LIVED-IN PROPERTY CAN HELP IT FEEL LIKE NEW.
- REMOVE TOO MUCH CLUTTER AND STORE AWAY AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.
- DEPERSONALIZE THE HOME BY REMOVING FAMILY PHOTOS, SO YOU GIVE BUYERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENVISION THEIR OWN LIVES IN THE HOUSE, INSTEAD OF FEELING LIKE THEY ARE INTRUDING INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S.
- ORGANIZE YOUR CLOSETS, YES PEOPLE LOOK IN THERE, SHOWCASE THEM!
- CLEAN, CLEAN, CLEAN. WE RECOMMEND HAVING A PROFESSIONAL CLEANER COME IN RIGHT BEFORE YOUR HOME IS LISTED, THEN BE SURE TO KEEP IT CLEAN FOR EVERY SHOWING.
- ELIMINATE BAD ODORS. YOU MAY HAVE GOTTEN USED TO SMELLS IN YOUR HOME, BUT HOME BUYERS WILL BE ABLE TO QUICKLY PICK UP ON PET AND SMOKE ODORS.
- KEEP YOUR DECOR AND FURNITURE SIMPLE AND LIGHT. YOU WANT TO SHOWCASE THE SIZE OF THE HOME WITHOUT IT BEING OVERWHELMING WITH TOO MUCH STUFF. IF YOU CAN AFFORD TO, WE RECOMMEND HAVING IT PROFESSIONALLY STAGED.

#BEFORELISTING

56%

**OF HOME BUYERS
ARE PUT OFF BY
BAD ODORS.**

#BEFORELISTING

70%

**OF HOME BUYERS
ARE PUT OFF BY
ANY STAINS OR WET
PATCHES ON WALLS.**

#BEFORELISTING

15%

**OF HOME BUYERS
ARE DISAPPOINTED
WITH CLUTTERED
HOMES.**

#BEFORELISTING

54%

**OF HOME BUYERS
SAY DULL LIGHTING
MAKES A HOME
UNATTRACTIVE**

Selling Overview

Selling a home can be daunting. We're breaking down what goes into the process.

- **Step 1:** Find the perfect real estate agent and let them know you're ready to sell your home.
- **Step 2:** We can provide a market analysis of your property to give you a better understanding of its value.
- **Step 3:** You'll go over in detail any steps your agent recommends to get your home in the best selling condition.
- **Step 4:** We will then schedule professional photos and videos and will begin the extensive marketing of your home.
- **Step 5:** Once you've received an offer, we will review with you the term and conditions of that offer.
- **Step 6:** After an offer is accepted and the negotiations are done, you'll go into a 30 to 45 day contract period, while the buyer's lender works to secure the full loan.
- **Step 7:** During this transaction period, home inspections and appraisals are conducted.
- **Step 8:** We will then work with you to negotiate repair requests the buyer's make.
- **Step 9:** If all conditions have been met for the mortgage approval and all parties have agreed to negotiations, then you get to make your way to the closing table.
- **Step 10:** After the purchase contract has been signed at the title company, your sale is then complete.

Real Estate Attorney

Why do I need a real estate attorney to sell my house?

The closing attorney acts as the “quarterback” of the closing process, performing many time consuming tasks preparing a transaction from intake to closing.

Customarily, a seller’s attorney in Massachusetts has the following responsibilities:

- Generate the first draft of the purchase and sale agreement
- Order mortgage payoff statements
- Assistance with any title clearing efforts such as obtaining old mortgage discharges, death certificates
- Draft the quitclaim deed and power of attorney
- Prepare trustee’s certificate
- Obtain condominium 6d certificate, smoke detector certification, final water/sewer readings (Realtor typically will obtain these as well)
- Representation of seller at closing

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detector Certificate

Whenever a home is sold in Massachusetts, it is required that the home is inspected by the local fire department for properly working smoke detectors, as well as carbon monoxide detectors.

Massachusetts has had their smoke detector law in place for decades and is designed to save lives. A property can not change hands without a certificate issued by the local fire department.

According to the carbon monoxide regulations, you need to have a detector on each finished level of the home. Further there must be a detector placed within ten feet of all the bedroom doors. The detectors do not need to be hard wired. A plug-in or battery operated detector meets the requirements and usually the most viable choice. Here are all the types are carbon monoxide detectors that are allowed:

- Battery powered with battery monitoring;
- Plug-in (AC powered) units with battery backup;
- AC primary power (hard-wired – usually involves hiring an electrician) with battery backup;
- Low-voltage or wireless alarms with secondary power; and
- Qualified combination smoke detectors and CO alarms

Please refer to the Massachusetts Guide to Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Requirements for more details.

MA Title V Requirements

When selling your home in Massachusetts that has a septic system, it is important to know about the Title V Requirements as required by the state.

The MA Title V septic inspection examines all of the components of a septic system to ensure it is functioning properly. Septic systems can pass, fail, or conditionally pass a Title 5 with further evaluation from the local board of health. Title 5 inspections are valid for two years, and with annual service, it can be good for up to three years.

If You Fail: The Septic Company, as well as the town's Board of Health, will guide you on what steps need to be taken to move forward.

If You Conditionally Pass: Only one, or some, components of the septic system will need to be repaired or replaced.

If You Pass: The report will be reviewed by the Board of Health, and you will receive your 18 page certified report.

Please refer to my list of preferred Title V Inspectors and be sure to schedule one prior to listing, the sooner the better!



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