



REAL ESTATE NEWS

Newsletter Vol. 1

November 2013

Welcome!

Welcome to the first edition of the new Wakefield & Associates newsletter. We want to start by thanking you for all your support and referrals over the last 7 years as we achieved levels of sales placing us in the top 6% of all Berkshire Hathaway Home Services agents nationally and Leading Edge Society award. 2013 has seen even more activity and we're not even finished yet! We are so excited to move into this next phase of our real estate growth and keep you up to date on what our team is doing. Our company, Prudential CT Realty was also acquired by Berkshire Hathaway Home Services and our new company name is Berkshire Hathaway Home Services-New England Properties. Our goals are to share with you the most pertinent and hyper local real estate news, our successes, community work, and tips that we hope you will find relevant and helpful in today's real estate market. There are lots of changes happening, the market is on the move and we want to keep you in the know. Please feel free to pass this along to anyone you think it would benefit. If you know of someone who would appreciate our level of service, please contact us with their name and business number, we will be happy to follow up and take great care of them! Spread the word! Inventory is low, rates are low and good things are happening!

Client Quote of the month:

"Ligaya not only exceeded our expectations in helping us find a home, but she also positively changed our opinion about the value of a Realtor. Her knowledge of the market, property values, and details of each home was obvious and she was an excellent coach throughout the course of negotiations. Her attention and care made us feel as if we were her only client! We simply couldn't have found the perfect home without her."

Ryan & April Cleckner

In this newsletter:

- **Featured listing & just sold!**
- **Hyper local market update!**
- **Ten weekend projects to improve your homes value!**



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Just Sold!:

286 West Trail

\$1,100,000



86 Gillies Lane

\$275,000



39 Maple Tree Ave #5

\$580,000



Turnkey Town House!

This month's feature listing!

612 Black Rock Turnpike, Fairfield

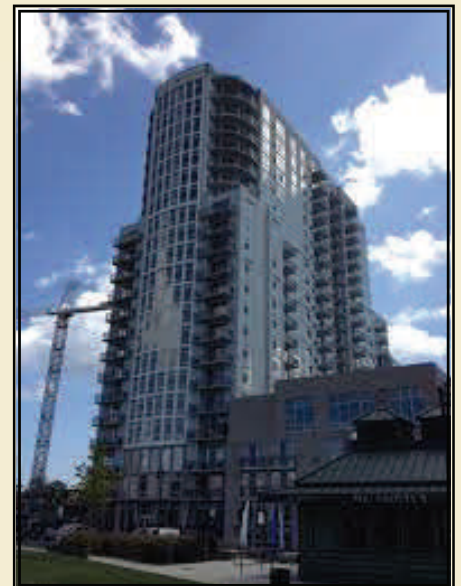
\$319,000

Built in 2002 and feels like new! Fantastic end unit town house condo in self-managed tri-unit complex. Lovely granite, LG & GE stainless appliances, pantry, huge Eat-in-Kitchen, hardwood floors and a fantastic floor plan. Unit garage + one reserved space, Low Common Charges and an easy commute to all the amenities of downtown Fairfield or NYC. The perfect home for the discerning buyer.

Hyper-local Market Update!

- **Harbor Point Developer sells complex for \$98.8 Million dollars!** New York City based Clarion Partners buys "Infinity Apartment" building from BLT And Lubert-Adler real Estate funds. "There is a solid demand for luxury apartments and rental prices remain strong." "There is a lot of excitement about how businesses and company headquarters are bringing vibrancy to the area" said Ligaya Wakefield, a Realtor at the Stamford office of Prudential CT Realty.
- **Homes Sales going Up!** Home sales were up throughout Fairfield in the first half of 2013 as buyers took advantage of low mortgage rates, avoiding the prospect of higher interest levels as the year progresses. Many real estate agents have reported receiving multiple bids for more desirable homes as inventory levels remain limited.

* Source-Stamford Advocate Business Section



10 Weekend Projects To Improve Your Home's Value

You don't have to shell out big bucks to get a better price for your home. These easy, inexpensive fixes will add value to your home without breaking the bank



1. The de-clutter weekend- "De-cluttering should be the first job sellers cross off their list before starting any other project. Moreover, it gives the illusion of space. Get a friend, colleague or casual acquaintance (who won't mind offending you) to walk through your house and give it to you straight. What is distracting? What needs to go? Figure out a way to get your clothes, books, appliances, papers, toys, art and photos under control. Shoving everything into cabinets, closets and the garage is not the answer. People will look there and think, "If they can't fit everything in there, neither can I." Pack things away in boxes and put them in the attic or put them in storage. "You have to think, 'What can I live without?'" For the next few months.

2. Make over your cabinets

"The kitchen is the most important room in the house to get right. And cabinets are often one of the biggest problems. You don't need to get your cabinets refaced or replaced to make them look presentable. If they're scratched or look dated, just spring for a couple of cans of paint and put a new finish on them. White and other light neutral colors work best for most kitchens and bathrooms. If you have a larger kitchen that gets a lot of natural light, you could even try a dark chocolate brown or black. Once you're done painting, don't neglect the finishing touch: the hardware. It's an accent that people notice. Choose something simple and relatively modern for the pulls, preferably in a brushed nickel. Steer clear of brass, brightly colored glass or anything decorated with pictures of birds or flowers.

3. Patch and paint

A fresh coat of paint in the living room, kitchen and master bathroom — the most important rooms in the house — will pay big dividends. Just don't try to jazz things up with bright colors. The most universally appealing shades are neutrals: yellow-based tones such as off-white, mushroom, medium brown or taupe. And stay away from anything too dark. It will make the room look small. A few more paint don'ts from the pros:

- Don't try to experiment with accent colors or walls. (Most people don't get this right.)
- Don't choose four or five different colors in the house. A satin wash of one color or a couple of related colors should flow smoothly from room to room.
- Don't leave those wallpaper borders up when you paint. Their time has come and gone.
- Once you're done painting, don't ruin the fresh look by re-hanging too many of your family photos or pieces of art.

4. Spiff up your home's curb appeal

"One quick way to entice more buyers into your house is to spruce up what they see from the street. Spend a weekend cleaning or replacing your mailbox, putting up new street numbers that match the style of your house, cleaning your storm door and windows and touching up chipped paint on your front door. You want their first reaction to be, 'Isn't that cute; doesn't that look nice. Take a good hard look at your landscaping and trim back any shrubs around the front that are unruly. Get rid of lawn ornaments, toys, leaves and other debris from the yard, as well as those tools or construction materials propped against fence. If you see bald spots, plant a flowering shrubs. A pot of flowers by the front door, or flowering plants along the walk is a nice touch. Power-wash your driveway and walk (and the house, if you have vinyl siding). A tidy front yard makes buyers more willing to come inside for a look."

5. Fix your lighting

"You don't have to go crazy here. Just replace anything damaged, dated or distracting. Get rid of that Hollywood dressing-room-style lighting that frames your bathroom mirror, or at the very least, replace all of the bulbs. Ditch that tacky, low-hanging chandelier over the dining table and replace it with a simple pendant lamp hung a little higher — at least four feet from the top of the table. Ditto for that energy-efficient, but oh-so-ugly fluorescent tube in your kitchen. "Nothing looks good under them."

6. Get fabulously clean floors

“Flooring is one area where none of our experts seemed to agree. So your safest bet is to spend very little and leave that choice to the buyer. You don't want to invest in something that someone is not going to like. Settle for a floor that looks spic and span. If you have very dirty carpet, rent a steam machine and get out the stains. If you have hardwoods, buff and polish them, agents say. And if you have a vinyl floor that is horrendously loud or damaged, consider putting down some vinyl stick-on squares in a light color to keep it from becoming a distraction, Dahl says. If you are very handy and can find a bargain at your local big-box store, you might be able to afford a Pergo or cork replacement for a small kitchen.”

7. 'Dress' your house

“Once your house has been cleaned, patched and painted, it's time to think about the best way to show it off. Home stagers and flippers say it pays to spend a little time on new "clothes" for your house. In the bathroom, that means replacing your old shower curtain with a new model that is lined and made of fabric. Buy a new bath mat that is simple and not too bright — one like the type found in hotels is great. In fact, the look of an upscale hotel bathroom is what you are going for, because it looks peaceful and doesn't make you think too much about the people who have used it. Adding fresh rolls of toilet paper before you show the house helps with that effect. Buy a set of towels that actually match and hang them from a nice-looking towel bar. Clear the counters and make sure accessories such as the toothbrush holder or soap dish are coordinated and look elegant. In the bedroom, consider your comforter. Is it stained, ripped or dated? If so, consider buying a new duvet cover or spread to keep the focus on the room, not your questionable taste. And take a good hard look at your window treatments. Keep it light, bright and simple. Tie back dark or flouncy curtains, or replace them with pre-made panels.”

8. Create an impression of extra rooms

“Most people are willing to pay a premium for a little more breathing room. But no one is going to add on just to sell his or her home. One way you can give buyers more livable area is to spruce up your garage or basement. Organize the tools, sporting goods and other items in your garage and get them off the floor, as much as possible. Make sure there's adequate lighting and clean or polish the floors. You want it to be a space where people can imagine spending hours tinkering on some craft or woodworking project. Likewise, if you have a basement, spend some time clearing and cleaning the floor, installing adequate lighting and shelving, and sprucing up the stairs and entrance. You could even try out a sealant for concrete floors. People see these as extra rooms they want to finish. If you don't have a basement, perhaps a sitting area in the backyard, with some pavers, outdoor seating and a few large potted plants, a flower bed or water feature”

9. Tackle the small stuff all at once

“Instead of spreading out those annoying minor repairs over several months or a year, why not take care of them all at one time? When you show your house, little problems such as a leaky faucet or a cabinet that sticks can be distracting. You don't want to put up doubts in people's minds about whether they are buying a good solid house. You want the attention to be on your home's potential, not its problems. So make a list and invest a not-so-fun 48 hours in fixing those broken drawer slides, replacing moldy caulking around the bathtub and fixing that cracked tile or broken step leading down to the basement.”

10. The finishing touches

“Lastly, before you open your house to buyers, make sure you've got the details down. Replace old, yellowing or brass switch-plate covers with new ones made of brushed metal. Likewise, swap out old brass doorknobs and hinges and replace them with something more up-to-date.”

*Sourced from MSN Real Estate