

Open houses provide valuable role in home buying

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If you've ever bought or sold a home, you're probably familiar with open houses and the role they can play in the sale or purchase of a home. Open houses are a marketing tool which can help give a home exposure, allowing several potential purchasers to view properties over the course of a day or two — usually on a weekend.

In addition to holding open houses for the public, real estate practitioners also conduct open houses for other real estate professionals. This gives them a chance to promote their listings with other practitioners who may have suitable buyers who would be interested in these particular properties.

Hints for Vendors

If you're a vendor, your real estate professional will provide you with some helpful hints on how to make your property more marketable.

First of all, your property should be in top-notch condition to create a favorable and lasting first impression with potential buyers. Keep your lawn trimmed and tidy. Also make sure that all trees, hedges and shrubs look neat — not unruly. Trim branches that block the view

of your home or hide some of its best assets.

Repair any unsightly cracks or holes in your walkway or steps that could prove to be a safety hazard. And don't leave tools and toys strewn around the front or backyards. These detract from your home, making it look like an obstacle course. They could also prove to be hazardous if someone tripped over them.

If your trim or siding looks dirty, wash it using an appropriate cleaning solution. (Your hardware store can probably give you tips on what's best to use.) And if your paintwork is peeling or blistering, it's time for some cosmetic surgery. A little paint can go a long way to enhance the marketability and curb appeal of your home. If you're unable to tackle the job yourself, hire a professional for best results.

Indoors

Indoors, open up curtains and blinds to let in as much natural light as possible. This helps show your home to its best advantage. And be sure to move any clutter out of sight and rearrange furniture that might impede traffic flow.

Rooms should also be thoroughly aired and as fresh as possible — particularly if you have pets or someone in your family is a smoker.

Vacate the Premises for the Day

Your realtor will recommend that you leave

the premises during the open house to help make prospective buyers feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible. If you're in the house, purchasers are likely to be more intimidated and reluctant to give your home the thorough viewing it deserves.

You want people to fully appreciate all the attributes your home has to offer — and they may not feel like opening closets and cupboards or talking about decorating possibilities if you're in the house. Make arrangements for you, your children and pets to have a day-long outing during the open house. (After all, you don't want Fido jumping on or barking at prospective buyers — and you certainly don't want purchasers to mistakenly let fluffy, your indoor cat, out the back door.)

Secure Valuables

Before you leave, put all personal property like jewelry, medications and fragile items well out of harm's way, in a safe, secure storage place. Don't leave any money lying around. To make sure everything is secure and ready to receive visitors, quickly inspect your home with your realtor just before you leave.

Realtors know that it's important to control traffic in and out of open houses and to have a register for all visitors to sign.

If you have any particular concerns about the open house, don't be afraid to talk to your real-

tor to see what suggestions he or she might have.

Tips for Buyers

On the flip side of the coin, if you're a buyer attending open houses, keep in mind that viewing an open house is a privilege.

Also keep in mind that the realtor on duty is acting as host of the vendor's behalf. The salesperson should be treated with the same respect you would give the vendor.

When asked to identify yourself at an open house, you should sign the guest register. The vendor has the right to request that you sign the register, providing your name, address and telephone number.

It's also important to refrain from wandering through the house without the salesperson present. If the realtor is busy, wait until he or she is able to show you around. After all, the real estate professional will be able to point out the features of the home and answer any questions you may have.

When attending open house, it's also important to clarify up front who you're working with — particularly if you've been viewing homes with another real estate professional. Keep in mind that the realtor you're working with has gone to a lot of effort on your behalf and won't get paid a commission if you switch to another realtor.

JUST LISTED!



\$229,900

Main floor family room with a cathedral ceiling and two skylights. Renovated "Barzotti" kitchen. Walk-out lower level. Cable T.V., town water & school bus to front door. Country ambience with town convenience. Huge 26' x 50' garage/workshop with a 16' clear height.

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ELEGANT ENTERTAINING



\$189,900

The income from the one bedroom in-law suite in this home will help you with your mortgage payments. Please hurry! This gem won't last long.

Set a new standard of living in this spacious custom-built bungalow. Sunken L.R. with a double sided marble F.P. opening to the D.R., Master B.R. has large ensuite with Jacuzzi tub. Call listing agent for further details.

\$235,000



RARE BEAUTY

Located on Commercial Street, this lovely 4 bedroom home overlooks 16 Mile Creek. Features built-in electric air cleaner, air conditioning, bath w/whirl pool.



98 ACRE FARM

60 AC workable, balance very scenic rolling land with forest, stream & springs. Stone home (circa 1840) features 4 bed, separate dining & living room, updated windows, kitchen & bathroom; orig. bank barn with 9 horse stalls, finished workshop. Call Yvonne at 878-2095.

JUST LISTED



\$189,900

Located on an extra large lot within walking distance to the "GO" station. Features include 4 bedroom, spacious family room, rec. room & a swimming pool separately fenced. Don't miss out, call our number 878-8101. Barbara Crowe**


DECEIVINGLY SPACIOUS BUNGALOW

This modern well decorated home features a cozy sunken living room with a F.P. separate D.R., holly-wood style kit. and a rec rm. which just needs brdrm. Priced at a modest \$164,900.

UPGRADES GALORE

Such as windows, roof shingles, and new carpet. Fridge and stove included. Extra large patio doors in living room overlooking floral and evergreen trees. Master bedroom with 2 p.c. ensuite & much more. Call Joyce for details.

\$117,000

HOME AND INCOME

Spacious 4 bedroom brick, unique design, hot tub for winter enjoyment, inground pool for summer fun, separate in-law suite makes this home affordable. Call Yvonne at 878-2095.



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East of Milton - charm & character abound. Recently resingled & redecorated. Natural gas furnace. It's lovely & worth viewing.

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\$539,000

48 ACRES

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\$679,000

10 ACRES

Perched on the Escarpment overlooking Milton with a view of the Toronto skyline. Unique design for that special buyer.

\$129,000 - 81 MILLSIDE

2ND FLOOR

2 bathrooms, 2 bedrooms, 2 balconies. Sunny, bright, clean & just lovely. All you have to do is move in!

\$349,000

42 acres with large driveway. North-east corner of Burnhamthorpe & Tremaine.

\$159,000

Almost 9 acres. One of the best & prettiest lots available. Clear & high. W. well for building site. Woods & stream behind for your pleasure.