

Beyond Curb Appeal

In the May & July issues, we examined the importance of curb appeal to draw buyers into a home. A summary might be that a tastefully designed, well-maintained exterior creates the perception that happiness can be found within. If curb appeal is the invitation to approach and even enter, what's next?

Whether we're planning to offer maximum appeal to ourselves and our guests, or if we really are preparing a house for sale, we have a threshold to cross. At least 50% of our home's ability to attract buyers is behind that closed front door; a place infrequently shared - until we open it to the world to see.

Barbara Ballinger, in her article "Beyond Curb Appeal" in the April 2004 issue of Realtor Magazine (National Association of Realtors-Publisher) examines what today's buyers are looking for and offers, "they are looking for some degree of WOW!

Beyond the improved stature for a laundry room, which elevated this utility space to the main or second floor years ago, today we're seeing mud rooms and theater rooms. These new rooms have come fast on the heels of bigger, better-equipped kitchens, spa-like master bathrooms, and larger studies, libraries, or family rooms -- the later designed to replace the disappearing formal living room".

And, from other's perspectives, it's time to take the price/SF attribute off of it's pedestal. It's important but not a very good way to figure out whether a house will make a nice home. When we look at SF alone, how can we factor in the presence in the kitchen, e.g., of features like a second refrigerator, built-in freezer drawers, an extra dish drawer, a range that would make a gourmet cook drool, or porcelain or natural wood floors and top-of-the-line cabinets? SF tells us nothing about such amenities.

Today's homes beckon us to think outside of the box and to get beyond curb appeal. Not every house can accommodate or even cost justify a 1st or 2nd floor laundry room, yet if we take the step to add one and the plan doesn't provide for such basics as a place to hang clothes, a wall-mounted ironing board, somewhere; an energy-efficient, front loading washer and dryer, maybe we're not thinking far enough outside of the box? Food for thought.

My Real Estate News

Properties for Sale

4614 Hickman Rd - \$86,900

3127 Lindlavista Way - \$133,900

6859 Dakota Dr, WDM - \$ 319,900

Recently Sold Listings

1223 40th St - DOM 3

LP - \$115,900 SP \$115,900

3922 57th St - DOM 6

LP - \$89,900 SP \$91,000

7235 NW Fisher Ln - DOM 103

LP \$269,900 - SP \$259,000

Some Recent Sales

1534 Wilson Ave - \$105,000

2102 SW 35th St, Ankeny - \$ 148,700

7235 NW Fisher Ln - \$259,000

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all my clients who enabled me to reach, in 6.5 months, my 12-month "Iowa Realty Tigerland Goal" for 2005.

Thanks to each and every one of you!

I always enjoy helping clients reach their goals in real estate ownership.

Trees Rock!



Ready to plant a tree? The city of Des Moines Forestry Department can help at 283-4950.

Trees to avoid? Ash (except Mountain) because of the emerald ash borer. Good alternative? Autumn Blaze Red Maple (1997 Tree of the Year - Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association).