

Joan O'Meara

The Key to Your Home.

Honest, Insightful, Successful



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Realty Check



Joan O'Meara, Associate Real Estate Broker for Coldwell Banker/Country Properties in Rye, discusses Home Staging in the local real estate market.

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by C. Anderson with
Joan O'Meara

That First Impression... Can It Be Staged?

The Rye/Harrison area has just finished a busy first quarter. Many buyers flocked to new listings, resulting in quick offers with multiple bids. And though some may think a house sells itself in such a market, a few extra steps can help sellers get the best price in the shortest amount of time. One way to achieve this is through **home staging**, a fairly new—but increasingly popular service in the real estate arena. With some professional design and color advice, flow adjustments, de-cluttering tips, and furniture repositioning or streamlining, your home becomes more open and inviting to prospective buyers.

Joan O'Meara, ranked in the top 1% of Coldwell Banker agents nationwide, has done countless walk thrus in the Rye/Harrison area, giving her a keen sense of some fundamental staging tips that can help sellers. But for true professional design insight, she recommends a qualified designer perform a staging consultation, which is often followed up by some prioritized 'fixes'.

How Staging Can Uncover Your Home's Maximum Potential

Staging can range from a walk thru with recommendations for quick fixes to a full redecorating from top to bottom, including some renting of

furniture. But sometimes all that is needed are a few fixes in only part of your home. "It's amazing how a simple redesign in even just one or two rooms can make everything work and grab the buyer's attention," says O'Meara. "It's important to remember that you're selling your home—not what's in it. But if you properly arrange what's in it, you can create that fresh, spacious atmosphere that will enable prospective buyers to visualize themselves—and their lives—within that house."

In fact, O'Meara feels so strongly about the results, that she is currently offering to pay for the staging consultation* for sellers. Ranging from \$200-\$500 for the basic services, O'Meara is confident that this initial staging assessment is worth every penny for promoting a property.

Well respected area designer Min Miles Greenberg, Allied Member ASID, explains that it's "really smart to brush up... and it brings an awareness to the homeowner to make their home look as best as it can." With an objective eye, she offers a 2-hour staging walk thru, in which sellers can voice specific concerns they may have prior to listing. A list is then created and ranked. Her greatest asset? A trained eye that can make any room look bigger. And a skill whereby she really can sense what will be in the buyer's mind when looking at a certain house.

Increasing Your Home's Sale-ability

With the help of a home stager, you can make sure that first impression is a memorable one. With a talent to emphasize your home's assets and minimize its flaws, stagers can also work with agents on the current trends and marketable features.

Staging professionals and organizations are cropping up daily, perhaps as a result of the interest generated by decorating and home makeover programs on television. In a competitive market, if the other listed homes are being staged, then you may want to consider that step, too. Greenberg defines staging as "the art of preparing a home for resale."

And as O'Meara has seen, a minimal upfront investment can dramatically impact the value of a home and increase its marketability, leading to a quick sale with a strong selling price. A client who relocated from a comparable housing market in CA explained the current trend is for sellers to coordinate a pre-listing inspection and staging before listing their house. The CA rule of thumb: spend 1% of the listing price—and it will pay off.

A recent Rye client described, "I never expected such an amazing transformation...so quickly. Staging created this aura that was so appealing, the offers in the first weekend exceeded even our expectations."

So if you're planning to sell and want the advantage of added appeal, Joan O'Meara has set the stage for notable first impressions. (And why not act now, while the staging consultation is free!)

Do you have a real estate question you would like to ask Joan O'Meara for a future column? If so, e-mail her at jmomeara@coldwellbanker.com. Visit her website at www.joanomeara.com.

Joan O'Meara, Associate Real Estate Broker for Coldwell Banker/Country Properties in Rye, has achieved over \$80 million in sales and is the winner of numerous awards including the Coldwell Banker International President's Premier award for being in the top 1% nationwide and she was ranked in the top 1% of Westchester County Coldwell Banker agents for 2004. She is a Westchester native and has lived in Rye for over 13 years.

Min Miles Greenberg, Allied Member ASID, runs Encore Décor and is frequently seen on Cable TV's "Decorating Cents".

* Offer good to Rye area/Harrison residents who sign listing contract with Joan O'Meara; offer subject to change or termination at any time. Staging Consultation value is approximately \$200-500.