



JOAN O'MEARA
The Key to Your Home

REALTYCHECK



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How to Increase your Home's Value: The Top 10 Techniques with Insider Tips from Joan O'Meara

Written by C. Anderson, Contributed by Joan O'Meara

It's quite clear to Joan O'Meara, associate broker with Houlihan Lawrence's Rye/Harrison office, that a Seller who is prepared has the best advantage in today's real estate market. Frequently, Sellers preparing to list, as well as homeowners who may be considering renovations with future resale in mind, inquire as to what are the best improvements to undertake.

Here is a look at the Top 10, along with key insights. These value-boosters impact that ever-important first impression as well as the look and feel for move-in readiness.

1. EXTERIOR PAINT / SIDING Instant value is gained as soon as you refresh the exterior. The home looks cleaner, more modern and communicates "well maintained" to the Buyer. *Insider Tip: Choose a color that has wide appeal...ask a real estate professional or stager for guidance.*

2. LANDSCAPING / LIGHTING A little TLC to your property can go a long way. Sod, mulch, plants and trees can create a whole new inviting feel to your home. Modern and appealing exterior light fixtures are impactful, too. *Insider Tip: Look at your home's exterior in the dark...Buyers often drive by to get a feel of nighttime ambiance.*

3. WINDOWS / DOORS Updating windows and doors give your home an instant upgrade in style and energy efficiency. It can change the way both the exterior and interior looks and feels. *Insider Tip: A new front door was recently ranked #1 on the 2014 Cost vs Value report for Return on Investment.*

4. KITCHEN The hub of the home is an important selling point. If in need of updating, note that it's not always necessary to do a top-of-the-line dream kitchen remodel if you're not going to be there long enough to enjoy it. The alternative? Consider painting cabinets, updating hardware, countertops and plumbing fixtures. *Insider Tip: Granite isn't a mandate—*

consider other lower cost alternatives that give the same visual appeal, functionality and durability.

5. BATHROOMS Another key draw for Buyers, you can create that value boost with cosmetic updates including re-caulking, tile grout, painting, exhaust fans and cleaning. *Insider Tip: If you have chipped tubs, sinks and dated light fixtures, consider repairing or replacing these items. A little shine can instantly add value to the feel of a bathroom.*

6. FLOORING Buyers often immediately tune in to the floors. Lead the way with clean, contemporary and stylish flooring...with a seamless flow throughout. Fix or replace flawed areas, as a hole or stain can be an instant turnoff. *Insider Tip: Prep before you list: wash or wax hardwood, tile, laminate, or linoleum and steam clean carpets.*

7. INTERIOR PAINTING Find out what current colors are most popular and give your home a paint makeover. A fresh coat of paint adds instant ROI and move-in ready appeal, so don't hesitate to seek out professional guidance if you are unsure how to make this investment pay off. *Insider Tip: If you've loved your fuchsia dining room, appreciate the years and now put on fresh paint in a less subjective color before you list.*

8. INTERIOR LIGHTING Often overlooked, lighting can play a significant role in a Buyer's tour of your home. Well-lit homes can accent the best features and create a warm ambience. Lighting that is too dim can counteract your home's appeal. *Insider Tip: Beautiful kitchen counters? Show them off with under-cabinet lighting. Inviting fireplace with centerpiece mantle? Highlight this with appropriately placed recessed lighting.*

9. ROOF / FOUNDATION Ensuring that these fundamental areas of your home are in top shape is critical to your home's overall value...and offers less chance of surprising inspection problems. *Insider Tip: Consider a pre-listing home inspection, which can minimize possibilities of deal breakers and be an added bonus to Buyers if you share the report. Joan feels these are so important that she will cover the cost for Sellers (contact her for specific details).*

10. DEEP CLEANING A truly clean house communicates volumes. Buyers want a home that has been well maintained. A low cost value boost, if done deeply, this instantly pays off when a prospect walks into your home. *Insider Tip: Keep in mind all the doors and cabinets that will be opened. Beyond surface cleaning, Joan has three words of personal advice: declutter, declutter, declutter!*

A Glimpse into a Rye Seller's Path to Add Value

As Lynette Bard, a recent Rye client of Joan's stated, "the changes I made that added value to my home were all important and ranged from cleaning to finishing an unfinished basement." Key for Bard was studying the demographics of recent Buyers in the area—this gave her insight to make smart choices that would increase the value. "Sleeker light fixtures, still in keeping with the home's style, removing oriental rugs to showcase hardwood floors and replacing framed art with frameless contemporary canvases yielded a nice, open and spacious feel to the home that Buyers raved about."

Another successful factor was a rental pod to store at least 1/3 of every room's belongings. As an Interior Designer leading her business, Rue du Rix, Lynette may have a leg up in terms of techniques to stage a home. Yet her advice can help any Seller: to try and disassociate yourself from the house and possessions and how everything was when you lived in it. Be "objective and ruthless" when prepping — if Sellers can change their mindset that they are marketing a house — not their personal home — Bard believes the resultant look can be clean and clear to create that faster sale. With her own "really quick sale," she has the firsthand experience to back that up.

When considering upgrades within your own home, Joan points out the importance of not feeling compelled to go for top of the line or complete renovations — even in the Rye/Harrison market. As Buyers typically prefer to move in without having to take on any major work for a few years, Sellers want to aim for the feeling that major remodeling is not needed. Interestingly, mid-range upgrades can contribute to the value, the appeal and the move-in readiness for prospective Buyers.

Before any paint brushes or hammers are raised, Joan is happy to consult with homeowners for insights on home value upgrades or for recommendation of local, credible experts.



JOAN O'MEARA'S LISTINGS

DEAR NEIGHBORS

Hopeful that spring has finally arrived for good! As nature comes alive and outdoor spring activities start in abundance, it's always a great time to reflect on all that our local communities have to offer us.

Overall, the local Harrison real estate market is active as well: the total number of homes sold across the three Harrison zips (10528/10577/10580) rose 35% from 1Q2013 to 1Q2014, topping out at 23 up from 17. The most active of the three, 10577, had 12 sales in 1Q2014 up from 5 the prior year, with an average Square Footage of 4254, down from 5753. Harrison 10528 and 10580 were relatively stable in number of Sold homes, and interestingly the average Square Footage in 10528 jumped from 2239 in 1Q2013 to 4134 in 1Q2014.

Still considering putting your home on the market this spring? Or looking to the fall? Don't miss this issue's feature: *How to Increase your Home's Value: The Top 10 Techniques, with Insider Tips from Joan O'Meara.*

For all current Listing & Sold stats, visit joanomeara.com and click on the 1st Quarter 2014 Listing Summary link. As always, feel free to contact me with any real estate questions or for a complimentary market analysis of your home.

Enjoy the great spring weather,

Call Joan at
914-329-5329
or visit
joanomeara.com



\$1,825,000

151 Old Post Road / Rye 10580
5BR/4.1B / 3314sqft / **JUST LISTED**

Colonial on .52 acres. Fenced yard with patio backs to Packard Court with gates and path. LR, new custom kitchen, stainless appliances, large family room with custom JWH built-ins, guest BR with full bath, large office with French doors. Master BR with walk-in closets and bath with soaking tub, shower with seamless doors. Access to 3-car garage and more.



\$2,195,000

35 North Street / Rye 10580
6BR/3.1B / 3791sqft / **JUST LISTED**

Rebuilt, expanded Colonial on .46 private acres. Entry hall with shadow box molding, formal LR with wood burning fireplace, formal DR with French doors and transom window, kitchen with butler pantry. Master BR with vaulted ceiling, custom built-ins, surround sound, walk-in closet, private bath with Jacuzzi tub, steam shower, double vanity.



\$2,825,000

36 Maple Drive / Rye 10580
5BR/4.1B / 3740sqft / **JUST LISTED**

Spectacular cedar shake Colonial built by Susan Cappelli (SAC Development) and Thomas DeMasi (Alpine Construction). Custom millwork, exquisite finishes, 9 foot ceilings, 2 fireplaces, Red Oak hardwood floors, chef's kitchen with a butler's pantry, terrace and more. Finished lower level. Opportunity to customize!

PENDING

16 Helen Avenue, Rye 10580	\$ 1,695,000
51 Hewlett Avenue, Rye 10580	\$ 2,295,000
10 George Langeloh Court, Rye 10580	\$ 2,350,000
34 Helen Avenue, Rye 10580	\$ 2,495,000
34 Soundview Avenue, Rye 10580	\$ 2,695,000
458 Park Avenue, Rye 10580	\$ 3,000,000
9 George Langeloh Court, Rye 10580	\$ 3,100,000



\$349,000

66 Milton Road E22 / Rye 10580
2BR/1.0B / 1000sqft / **JUST LISTED**

Spacious, 2BR apartment in sought after Blind Brook Lodge. Large LR with fireplace, kitchen with dining area, hardwood floors and recently painted. Located near downtown Rye, short walk to train, shops, library, YMCA, restaurants and more. Gardens, playground, manned security gate.



\$2,275,000

11 Henry Street / Rye 10580
5BR/4.1B / 3479sqft / **FEATURED LISTING**

To-be-built 5BR cedar shake Colonial offers custom details, and exquisite craftsmanship. Built by Susan Cappelli (SAC Development) and Tommy DeMasi (Alpine Construction). Gourmet kitchen, stunning master bedroom suite, exercise room and more. Walk to Rye Golf Club. Opportunity to customize.



\$12,600,000

131 Kirby Lane / Rye 10580
6BR/7.3B / 11,531sqft / **FEATURED LISTING**

Waterfront custom-built manor. 1.16 acres on scenic Kirby Pond. Home features custom millwork, rich woods, soaring ceilings, gorgeous fireplaces, French doors open to terraces and astounding water vistas. Glass-wrapped indoor pool, elevator service. Completely rebuilt in 2005.

SOLD

203 Ardsley Rd, Scarsdale 10583	\$ 11,995/mo
1 Landmark Sq #511, Port Chester 10573	\$ 249,000
66 Milton Road E51, Rye 10580	\$ 397,000
66 Milton Road D21, Rye 10580	\$ 415,000
66 Milton Road F41, Rye 10580	\$ 459,000
25 Smith Street, Rye 10580	\$ 490,000
66 Milton Road K11, Rye 10580	\$ 595,000
74 Dearborn Avenue, Rye 10580	\$ 895,000
17 Overdale Road, Rye 10580	\$ 1,595,000
265 Milton Road, Rye 10580*	\$ 2,295,000
140 Florence Avenue, Rye 10580	\$ 2,395,000
4 Fairway Drive, Purchase 10577	\$ 3,725,000
9 Ann Lane, Rye 10580	\$ 4,395,000
3 Manursing Way, Rye 10580	\$ 5,495,000
12 Philips Lane, Rye 10580	\$ 5,500,000

As of 4/15/14. Note: All prices indicated are LIST PRICES. * Indicates Joan O'Meara represented both Buyer and Seller.

FUNFACTS

QUICKEST HOME SOLD / **21 Days**

\$3,995,000 List Price / 8600 sqft / 5 BR / 4.1 Baths

ACTIVE HOME: MOST EXPENSIVE, MOST PROPERTY

\$9,995,000 List Price / 15.420 Acres

6 BR / 5.1 Baths / 8533 sqft

OLDEST HOME SOLD / **1900**

\$1,705,000 List Price / 4 BR / 4.1 Baths / 2544 sqft

LARGEST ACTIVE HOME / **12,000 sqft**

\$7,995,000 Price / 7 BR / 8.1 Baths

OLDEST ACTIVE HOME / **1747**

\$9,900,000 List Price / 5 BR / 4.1 Baths / 7123 sqft

Source: HGMLS, Single Family Homes; 1Q (1/1/14-3/31/14); "Active" Home refers to homes listed in 1Q.

MARKETING HIGHLIGHT

Houlihan Lawrence Buyers & Sellers Reap the Rewards with both HL Facebook and HL University



- Houlihan Lawrence continues to add to agents' tools to maximize exposure for Sellers. Now, Sellers gain instant exposure for their Listing when it's easily flashed to all 1200 HL agents on the highly trafficked HL Facebook page.
- Buyers and Sellers benefit from the new HL University—which provides training and master classes to experienced agents. Deeper training enables HL agents to better guide both the purchasing and selling of homes.

Houlihan Lawrence, Market Leader in Rye/Harrison, is always exploring and introducing new tools to benefit both Buyers and Sellers.

MORTGAGE CORNER / IN THE KNOW

Kai Audett's insights on the local mortgage arena.

Multiple Offers, Contingencies and Mortgage Lending

A contingency is a stipulation written into a home purchase contract stating that a buyer agrees to buy a property only if certain benchmarks are obtained prior to closing on the purchase. The most common contingencies are for a home inspection, a mortgage approval, and an appraisal (to validate or confirm the purchase price).

If the buyer includes a mortgage approval contingency in the contract, for example, it means that the buyer will only complete the purchase of the property if they receive a commitment from a lender to complete his/her loan as requested, usually within 30 days. If the buyer does not receive a lender commitment they can walk away and get their deposit back.

When there are multiple buyers bidding on the same property, some buyers are opting to waive contingencies as a way to win the bid on the property. This can be risky unless the buyer is well informed on their options. For the savvy buyer, a non-contingent offer can be a very effective negotiating tool as long as they fully understand the pros and cons. It works especially well when no mortgage is needed. However, if a mortgage is needed to buy a property, waiving contingencies can put a buyer's deposit at risk unless the buyer knows for certain a mortgage can be obtained.

Read the full Multiple Offers, Contingencies and Mortgage Lending article at joanomeara.com

Thoroughbred Mortgage is a mortgage banker offering exceptional services and very competitive rates and closing costs. Call Kai Audett at 914-419-0530 for more details. Licensed in NY and CT 207039. Equal opportunity lender.

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HARRISON/PURCHASE SAMPLINGS Houlihan Lawrence 1st Quarter 2014 Real Estate Transactions

Single Family Listings

Property Address	Listing Price	BR/B	Sq. Ft.
137 Temple Street	\$ 489,900	2/1	1040
12 Lockwood Place	\$ 799,000	5/4	2685
463 Harrison Avenue	\$ 965,000	4/3	3123
24 Winfield Avenue	\$ 1,100,000	4/3	3134
22 Cypress Point Dr	\$ 1,150,000	4/4	3761
3 Beverly Road	\$ 1,350,000	3/2	2247
29 Crawford Road	\$ 1,375,000	5/4	3175
19 Ponds Lane	\$ 1,395,000	6/5	4316
180 Highland Road	\$ 1,565,000	6/3	4681
15 Mount Holly Drive	\$ 1,659,000	6/6	6439
16 Ponds Lane	\$ 1,699,000	4/5	4000
11 Park Drive S	\$ 1,879,000	4/5	2450
57 Rye Ridge Road	\$ 1,895,000	5/6	5600
37 Stratford Road	\$ 1,990,000	5/4	3806
18 Griswold Road	\$ 1,995,000	5/5	3984
122 Lincoln Avenue	\$ 2,049,000	4/3	3516
49 Stratford Road	\$ 2,150,000	5/6	5800
400 Polly Park Road	\$ 2,195,000	4/8	4311
34 Griswold Road	\$ 2,295,000	7/6	4390
37 Winfield Avenue	\$ 2,475,000	6/8	4911

Single Family Listings

Property Address	Listing Price	BR/B	Sq. Ft.
100 Woodlands Rd	\$ 2,595,000	6/7	4865
152 Woodlands Rd	\$ 2,800,000	5/6	5200
8 Timber Trail	\$ 2,895,000	5/5	5825
21 Beverly Road	\$ 2,949,000	6/5	5776
1 White Oak Circle	\$ 3,195,000	7/9	8200
40 Lincoln Avenue	\$ 3,350,000	5/7	6800
4350 Purchase St	\$ 3,375,000	5/7	7582
2 Hampton Road	\$ 3,395,000	7/8	6678
7 Timber Trail	\$ 3,995,000	5/6	6300
3 Star Farm Road	\$ 3,995,000	5/6	7785
19 Winfield Avenue	\$ 9,900,000	5/5	7123
3999 Purchase St	\$ 9,995,000	6/6	8533

Single Family in Contract

Property Address	Listing Price	BR/B	Sq. Ft.
42 Post Place	\$ 489,000	3/1	1070
9 Iroquois Trail	\$ 995,000	7/7	4332
41 Pinehurst Drive	\$ 1,175,000	4/3	2880
6 Westview Drive	\$ 1,195,000	3/5	3450

Single Family in Contract

Property Address	Listing Price	BR/B	Sq. Ft.
5 Braxmar Lane	\$ 1,275,000	4/3	2526
12 Pheasant Drive	\$ 1,295,000	4/4	3900
9 Ophir Drive	\$ 1,549,000	4/5	3783
2 Claiborne	\$ 1,565,000	4/4	3424
34 Rigene Road	\$ 1,585,000	6/6	5850
7 Old Woods Drive	\$ 1,799,990	5/6	5417
7 Muchmore Road	\$ 1,899,000	5/5	4372
6 Stone Bridge Road	\$ 4,195,000	5/6	8962

Single Family Sales

Property Address	Listing Price	BR/B	Sq. Ft.
26 Pinehurst Drive	\$ 939,500	4/4	3554
29 The Crossing	\$ 1,150,000	3/4	3400
5 Purchase Hills Drive	\$ 1,495,000	5/5	4210
1717 Purchase Street	\$ 1,705,500	4/5	2544
87 Winfield Avenue	\$ 1,995,000	5/5	3914
5 Sycamore Court	\$ 2,085,000	6/5	7600
4 Fairway Drive	\$ 3,725,000	8/11	8647
9 Timber Trail	\$ 3,995,000	5/5	8600

Source: HGMLS; Houlihan Lawrence transactions; 1Q (1/1/14-4/4/14). Includes all houses in 10528 Harrison School District, 10580 Harrison School District & 10577 Purchase (Harrison School District) Note: All prices indicated are LIST PRICES. If your home is currently listed for sale, this is not a solicitation. Not responsible for typos; information provided is deemed accurate.

Harrison/Purchase 1Q 2014 Single Family Housing Sales Summary



	10528		10577		10580	
	1Q14	1Q13	1Q14	1Q13	1Q14	1Q13
# of Homes Sold	5	7	12	5	6	5
Avg Days on Market	161	175	248	164	222	132
Avg List Price	\$1,591,800	\$798,914	\$1,488,250	\$2,052,800	\$1,697,167	\$1,979,800
Avg Sold Price	\$1,494,000	\$754,179	\$1,373,583	\$1,887,500	\$1,480,833	\$1,774,000
Avg Sq Footage	4134	2239	4254	5753	4227	4792
Avg Price/Sq Ft	\$365	\$346	\$326	\$332	\$339	\$352

*Includes all houses in 10528 Harrison School District, 10580 Harrison School District & 10577 Purchase (Harrison School District). Source: HGMLS; Single Family Homes; 1/1/14-3/31/14 and 1/1/13-3/31/13.

• Latest Harrison & Purchase Sales & Listings Stats
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The Wall Street Journal
 and Real Trends annual report
 ranked Joan O'Meara in the
 top 25% of the top 1000
 agents nationwide.

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