

CAPE HAZE CORRIDOR REPORT

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Special points of interest:

- Staging your property for sale may help it sell faster and at a better price. Details inside!
- Lennar Corp. has received zoning approval for a 300 unit condominium complex on Hwy. 771.
- For the first time, the average price of a lot in several Rotonda West neighborhoods exceeded \$100,000.

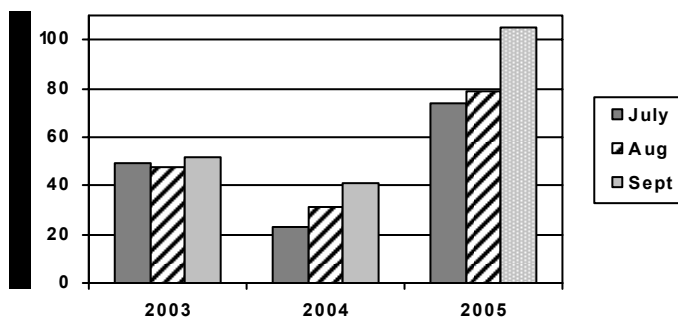
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SIGNS OF MODERATION

Real estate prices continued to rise significantly in our Cape Haze communities in the third quarter of 2005, while the volume of local sales activity reported in the Englewood Multiple Listing Service (MLS) dropped somewhat.

The volume decrease combined with an increase in the inventory of properties available for sale suggests that the long expected moderation in the rate of price increases may be beginning. As an example, the data below from Trendgraphix, Inc. shows that the inventory of homes available for sale in Rotonda in the third quarter this year is well above the third quarter inventory levels of recent years. Unless the number of buyers rises significantly, this increased inventory means buyers have more homes to choose from and more leverage in negotiating prices.



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If you are considering selling your property, setting a realistic sales price will be key to success in today's more competitive market. And, you'll want to ensure that your home stands out from the competition. "Staging" is a proven home and condominium preparation process designed to help properties sell at better prices and in less time. On page 2 in this edition of the *Corridor Report*, you'll find an article describing the staging process. As part of my comprehensive real estate marketing programs, I am pleased to announce that I now offer a free staging assessment from an accredited staging specialist for every house and condominium that I list for sale.

As always, I hope you'll find this issue of the *Cape Haze Corridor Report* informative. If you are interested in buying, selling, or just discussing real estate in our area, please give me a call or send me an e-mail.

Regards,

Pam Neer

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CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPMENTS

During the third quarter, infrastructure work continued at the Hammocks and the Landings at Coral Creek sites along Placida Road, and construction progressed on the Hacienda and on other projects in the Rotonda area. In addition, several "new" projects for the Cape Haze peninsula were discussed by County planning and zoning organizations.

(Continued on page 3)

Cape Haze Corridor Shorts:

The new 42,000 square foot Englewood YMCA building is now open on Medical Boulevard near Englewood Community Hospital. Facilities include a gym, fitness center, pool, game room, and exercise classrooms.

Jam's on Placida Road has a new menu, a new chef, and a new martini bar.

Daniel's Prime Steak and Seafood is scheduled to open shortly at the old Bella's site on Cape Haze Road.

Rotonda's newest park, Broadmoor Memorial Park overlooking the Rotonda River, opened with a ribbon cutting in September.

In July, *Golf Digest* magazine ranked the greater Punta Gorda/Port Charlotte area 3rd among 330 U.S. metropolitan areas as a place for golfers to live.

Cape Haze Corridor Quiz:

1. *What was the name of Grove City's first hotel and when was it built?*
2. *How did the town of El Jobean get its name?*

(See page 4 for the answers.)

GIVING YOUR PROPERTY A COMPETITIVE EDGE: STAGING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

"Staging" is a term used in the real estate industry to describe the process of preparing a home to sell for the best price and in the shortest amount of time.

While some principles of staging are part of the actions many local home owners complete in preparing their house or condominium for sale, staging as a formal process has not been used extensively in our area. It is, however, widely used in many parts of the country and studies have shown that it does help homes sell closer to their listing prices and in less time.

So, what's involved in staging your home? We can logically divide the actions involved into two overlapping phases:

Staging Phase 1: Clean It Up

Staging Phase 2: Set the Stage

Staging Phase 1: Clean It Up

The "clean it up" phase involves actions that many homeowners can undertake without help from a staging professional. This phase involves both physically cleaning your home and visually simplifying it by reducing clutter.

The clean-up starts on the outside where potential buyers will be getting the first impression of your home. The exterior checklist on page 3 gives you some key areas to consider as you prepare your home's yard and exterior. A clean, sound roof and strong "curb appeal" go a long way toward creating a positive first impression for your home.

As the buyers tour the interior of your home, you want to make them comfortable that the home is well-maintained and minimize distractions that will keep them from focusing on the house itself. The interior checklist on page 4 provides suggestions on what's involved here. By either doing your own "deep cleaning" or hiring a cleaning firm to help, your bathrooms, kitchen and floors should all sparkle when potential buyers arrive.

For most sellers, the hardest aspect of this phase is reducing clutter. All of us are different in how much we have accumulated in our homes, but some experts suggest that a good rule of thumb is to remove 50% of the items in each room and one-third of the clothes and boxes in each closet. Since you'll be moving anyway, it's much better to get rid of things early by holding a yard sale, packing personal collections up and moving them to storage, or giving unused items to charities.

Staging Phase 2: Set the Stage

Phase 2 is the set of actions that literally "set the stage" to help the buyers visualize how they might live in your home. While a staging professional can provide helpful suggestions for the clean-up phase, "setting the stage" is the phase where the specialist often provides unique ideas and value. Think about the way a builder's model home looks when you walk-in. The furniture is tastefully placed and blended. Fresh flowers may be on the dining table and a bottle of wine and wine glasses may be set out on the kitchen counter. Lighting is set to highlight each room and your eyes are drawn to the home's best amenities and views.

Many things a staging professional proposes can be done at little or no additional cost to the seller. Other recommendations can be more involved and it is always the seller's choice whether to implement the stager's suggestions.

Staging Services for Pam Neer's Clients

As part of my home listing services, at no charge to you, I am pleased to offer all of my listing clients a staging assessment from an accredited staging professional.

As part of this assessment, the staging representative will visit your house or condominium and you will receive a detailed checklist of recommended staging actions for your specific property. Together, we will review the checklist, discuss any costs involved, and determine which items you choose to implement. If needed, I can provide you with names of local home repair experts and the staging firm can provide design services.

Staging your home is a smart competitive tool and part of my overall marketing program to sell your property. If you are considering selling, please give me a call at 941-830-0999. I'll be happy to provide a free Comparative Market Analysis for your property, tell you more about my comprehensive marketing program, and connect you with recent clients who can describe my unique personalized selling approach!

CONDOMINIUM DEVELOPMENTS—CONTINUED FROM PG 1

In July, the County Planning & Zoning board recommended initial approval of a future land use change for the Wildflower golf course at Gasparilla Pines and Placida Rd. that could allow for a "planned development" community on this 79+ acre site. The developer has indicated that condominiums or townhomes are likely to be part of the site plan. A lengthy cycle of county and state reviews will be required before any development of this site could begin.

In August, the Charlotte County Commission approved a zoning change to allow Lennar Corp. to build a multi-family development on 131 acres at the northern edge of South Gulf Cove off Highway 771. Lennar's announced plans include 300 condominiums and 108 townhomes. The South Gulf Cove Advisory Committee supported approval of the zoning change.

In September, preliminary planning discussions began at the County Development Review Committee for a 422 unit development on Placida Rd. across from the Hacienda site. For continuing updates on condominium developments in the Cape Haze area, visit my website at www.PamNeerRealEstate.com or give me a call at 941-830-0999.

3RD QUARTER REAL ESTATE SALES SYNOPSIS

Based on data from the Englewood Multiple Listing Service (MLS), lot prices across the seven neighborhoods in Rotonda West were up significantly for the third quarter of 2005 (3Q05) compared to 3Q04. Increases ranged from 44% year-to-year in Pebble Beach to 67% in Pine Valley. For the first time, the average lot price in four Rotonda communities (Pinehurst, Long Meadow, White Marsh, and Pine Valley) exceeded \$100,000. However, there are signs of some buyer resistance to the higher prices. The volume of MLS reported lot sales was down by 15% and the average days on market (the time from listing a property to signing a contract for sale) increased significantly.

Rotonda homes also showed strong price increases in the third quarter. Price increases ranged from 14% year-to-year in Broadmoor to 57% in White Marsh. Average home prices in Oakland Hills topped the \$200,000 mark for the first time, rising to \$224,523. And, average sales prices went over \$400,000 for the first time in a Rotonda neighborhood, averaging \$400,750 in White Marsh. As with lot sales, home sale volumes reported in the MLS were down compared to 3Q04. Days on market data was mixed, rising in some neighborhoods, but decreasing in others.

Outside Rotonda, the volume of third quarter sales data is too low to draw statistical comparisons. There was a small flurry of lot sales in Cape Haze where seven lots changed hands at prices ranging from \$175,000 to \$600,000. In general, price trends across the Cape Haze peninsula remained positive.

Staging Your Home for Sale – Phase 1: Clean It Up	
Exterior Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspect the roof and gutters. Repair any roof issues. Ensure gutters are clean and painted.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wash the windows and keep them sparkling
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure all landscaping is neatly trimmed. Lower any shrubs that may be blocking windows. Use mulch to control weeds and consider adding some blooming flowers to your beds. Keep the grass cut.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remove toys, lumber, trash cans and gardening supplies around the outside of your property. Store these items in the garage or remove unused items.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspect your home's paint job. Consider whether a fresh coat of paint would make your property more appealing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make your front door a focal point that welcomes the potential buyer. Polish the doorknob and lock. Put down a nice welcome mat. Set a large, potted plant to one side. Add a seasonal wreath to the door.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remove smaller items from the patio, porch, and pool areas. Arrange the furniture to suggest an inviting environment.
Interior Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Continued on page 4.</i>

"Our agent, Pam Neer, did an excellent job. She worked with us to find the lot we wanted; and she followed-up, and kept us informed, of every aspect and every detail of the transaction.

We have been impressed with her caring attitude and with her business acumen. We would certainly use Pam again and would recommend her to others."

- Edward & Juanita Furner

PamNeerRealEstate.com is the website to visit for useful information on:

Properties:

- ◆ Real estate for sale by neighborhood (MLS listings).
- ◆ Featured local properties.
- ◆ Condominium and townhome developments.
- ◆ Recent Property Sales Reports.
- ◆ Loan amounts you may qualify for on your next real estate purchase.

Communities:

- ◆ Overviews of our major neighborhoods.

Area Links:

- ◆ Useful local websites for government, newspapers, golf courses, restaurants, attractions, and more.

Cape Haze Corridor Report:

- ◆ View online copies of current and past issues.

The material in this newsletter comes from multiple sources and is deemed accurate, but not guaranteed.

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Cape Haze Corridor Report

"We recently purchased a property in Englewood and Pam Neer represented us. The transaction was unusually difficult and drawn out.

Pam gave us exceptional and honest services. We will recommend Pam to all our friends."

- Trudy Carlin &
James Bomen

Answers for the Corridor Quiz:

1. According to Diana Harris, writing in the Englewood Sun-Herald, the Tarpon Hotel was built on the bay in Grove City in 1893.
2. El Jobean got its unusual name from its founder, Joel Bean.

PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY FOR SALE

Look inside for more tips on "staging" your home to sell !

Staging Your Home for Sale – Phase 1: Clean It Up

Interior Checklist

- Taking it one room at a time, remove clutter and excess furniture. Consider the guideline of removing 50% of the items in each room. Pack up personal collections and most family pictures. Put extra furniture in storage or have a garage sale.
- Clean-out the closets! You don't want to take all those old clothes and broken appliances with you, so get rid of them now instead of later.
- Deep-clean the kitchen. Make surfaces sparkle. Store away appliances and knick-knacks that you don't use on a regular basis. Clean the inside of the microwave, the oven, and the refrigerator. Straighten up the drawers. Take the magnets, memos and pictures off the refrigerator.
- Make the bathrooms spotless. Remove personal items from countertops. Ensure clean, folded towels are out. Consider a transparent shower curtain to make the room look bigger.
- Brighten each room. Ensure all light bulbs are working and increase the wattage if the fixtures allow. When a showing is planned, open the curtains to let the natural light in. Touch up any damaged spots on the walls and consider whether a new coat of paint in a neutral color would make the room look better.
- Ensure all appliances are in good working order and none of the faucets are dripping.
- Get rid of odors. Air out the house before showings. Use potpourri, lightly scented candles, or cedar chips if desired, but don't introduce strong new smells to mask other odors. Where possible, move kitty litter and pet toys out of sight.
- Vacuum and dust regularly. If needed, have carpets professionally cleaned.