

May Sales: Slow but steady

by Andy Dodge, CRA

Westmount's real estate market continues to hold onto its record-high prices but volume is way off what is typical for May, usually one of the best months to sell real estate.

While a typical May will see upwards of 20 sales, only 13 have so far been reported for Westmount one- and two-family dwellings. One condominium was sold in May, along with four co-operative apartments ranging in price from \$342,500 to \$495,000.

The lowest price for a single-family dwelling last month was \$792,000, among the highest minimum prices for a month in Westmount's history, and eight of the 13 sales were above the \$1 million mark, but there were none over \$2 million with the highest reported price at \$1,775,000. The average price in the month was \$1,201,538, but when compared to the average valuation the "typical" Westmount home's value stayed just below \$1.3 million, roughly where it has been since late last fall.

While prices have basically been moving sideways, our figures indicate only one of the 36 houses which came on the market in May actually sold during the month, an indication that the market may be turning, at least for the summer. Most people who want to move during the summer months have now found their houses and demand typically drops in June. This could pull the prices down at least temporarily, and an economic slowdown might accelerate this; still, for now prices seem to be holding.

The adjacent-Westmount market is equally sluggish, with one cottage and a duplex sold north of Westmount, two more to the west and no houses being contracted on the eastern side of the city or the "Golden Square Mile" downtown. The four that sold ranged in price from \$650,000 to \$1,195,000, somewhat lower than for Westmount proper but still strong.

The Westmount sales included six homes which had been on the market for more than 100 days each, only two which sold within ten days of being listed, for an average 150 days. The average has been rising month by month since February, and includes one property which was on the market for more than two years, another over a year and two others more than 200 days.

No matter how we look at the future, from a historical standpoint the notion of a \$1.3 million average house in Westmount is staggering.

