

Copyright, Li Read, 2019

June, 2019.

June. It's a lovely hiatus month, between two real estate market moments: it straddles early Spring and Summer market patterns.

June also welcomes graduations, weddings, school's out/summer holidays enthusiasm, and, on the great Pacific Northwest Coast, it can often be a showery weather month.

Gardens are in full array, roses are at their abundant bloom best, farmers markets, vineyard tastings...the opulence of Salt Spring's rural heritage surrounds us.

At this hiatus moment, between two real estate sales patterns, it's evident that entry level priced properties were where the action was in our short (due to weather vagaries between December 20 and end of March) early Spring cycle.

The upper tier priced properties don't usually begin to see activity until after the Victoria Day Holiday Weekend, in mid-May.

Between mid-May and end of October, our real "season" takes place...and it invites buyers, in all price ranges and seeking all property types, to come forward to view.

The listing inventory remains very thin. We are seeing price reductions, but are also seeing that the very few new listings coming onstream are at higher price points than would have been the case in the previous year. Everything on the table at once means we are in a transition market...with an apparent upward momentum. Few listings, coupled with buyer desire, can lead to price increases. This outcome may not be evident until mid to late August.

I do this market update at the beginning of a month. June can have a "pause" in the first two weeks. Perhaps it's about those family celebrations, but it might also be that late June begins summer travels and so early June is calmer.

At the beginning of June, then, we have 124 residential listings on the market. This does not separate out townhomes or waterfronts...it's just residential/dwellings listings. There are 79 lots/acreages on the market. There have been 60 "solds to date".

This is an extremely low listing inventory, particularly in the entry level priced categories. Most sales remain in that entry level price segment.

Of the 124 residential listings, at beginning of June, there were 12 under 500,000. A further 10 were under 700,000. Another 19 were under 800,000. A further 18 were listed below 900,000. Seven listings were under 1,000,000. There are 40 listings between 1 & 2,000,000. There are 12 listings between 2 & 3,000,000. Five listings are between 3 & 4 million.

Of the 79 lots/acreages, without separating out waterfronts, at beginning of June, 27 were listed under 300,000. There were 20 listed below 500,000. Another 16 were listed below 600,000. A further 10 were below 1,000,000. Six were listed between 1,020,000 and 2,495,000.

Of the 60 "sold to date", 28 were below 600,000. There were 12 sales below 800,000.

Another 10 sales were below 1,000,000. There were 10 sales between 1,000,000 and 1,700,000.

Patience is a part of all sales in all secondary home markets. A decision to buy is a choice...no one "has to" move to Salt Spring. In deciding about that choice, there are always time lags. Buyers do look in competing areas, "just to be sure". It can take three visits before a decision is made.

There are always issues facing all communities: for Salt Spring, the lack of affordable housing/work rental is also a problem. There are three public (and one private) affordable housing/rental options that are funded and permitted and they cannot go ahead because of the water moratorium.

Brought in by the three volunteer board members of NSSWD (North Salt Spring Water District) in 2014/15, this effectively prohibited connections to the water systems. There may be a capture/distribution issue on Salt Spring, but there is not a water shortage issue.

Water is under Improvement Districts at the provincial government level. The government has off-loaded Improvement Districts onto municipalities. Salt Spring is not a municipality...it is part of the Islands Trust. The CRD (Capital Regional District) out of Victoria could assume the NSSWD, but has not done so.

The lack of work rental options led to the Trust bylaw enforcement officer shutting down Airbnb/short term vacation rental options (STVR). This was done under the assumption that vacation rental landlords would then rent to regular annual tenants. This is the Trust response to lack of work rentals.

The lack of people wanting to rent to regular tenants has to do with the current provincial government's change to the B.C. Tenancy Act. The government canceled the Fixed Tenancy option, in Fall, 2017. This is why people do not want to be landlords to regular tenants...unless the owner moves in, one cannot give notice to a tenant.

The underlying issue, lack of affordable housing/work rental, gets back to the volunteer driven NSSWD moratorium on connecting to water systems. In our non-municipal form of governance, there is a lack of proactive oversight.

Hmmm.....

Meantime, the summer-summer season begins with June...and visitors to Salt Spring generate the economic well being of business enterprises. Check with the Salt Spring Chamber of Commerce for more information.

So, lovely June is upon us. Time to dine al fresco on restaurant decks and patios, to enjoy live music venues (Treehouse Cafe, Moby's, Woodley's), to meander Ruckle Park trails, to go jump in the lake (St Mary's, Cusheon, Weston, Stowell) and swim to your heart's content, to paddle board off Vesuvius, to kayak to Chocolate Beach, to enjoy Saturday and Tuesday Markets, to simply "be", and to definitely stop and smell those roses.

Seeking a real estate outcome on delectable Salt Spring Island? No matter the market trend in play at any given time, there is usually a way to make things work. Call me! Let's discuss. Your best interests are my motivation.

Meantime...it's June...enjoy.

Tel: 1-250-537-7647

E-Mail: LiRead33@Gmail.com