

# How (NOT) to Establish a Listing Price for Your House

by Kirsten Sharpe, The REALTOR for SENIORS™



**When selling a house**, there are many preparations and decisions to be made. Among these are light repairs from years of living in the house, plus decluttering to make your house less personal and more spacious.

Then there is the VERY important decision on how to establish the listing price. Let's start with how NOT to determine the price:

- **Don't** base the price on emotion. I have heard "I love my house so very much, and cared for it for so many years, that it should be worth more than my neighbor's house". But since the house hasn't been updated in 25 years, and it has worn carpet plus wallpaper from floor to ceiling, no amount of your love is going to transfer to the buyer's check book.
- **Don't** base the price on what you paid for the house. Or even on the investments you made in remodeling the kitchen and bathrooms. If your remodel was done a few years ago, you can reflect a larger percentage of that in the listing price, but not all of it. If your remodel was 20 years ago, it won't be relevant. Staying up with trends, materials and colors is expected by today's informed buyers (who watch a lot of HGTV)!
- **Don't** base the price on what you owe on your mortgage. Some sellers take their mortgage balance, add to it what they would like their proceeds to be, and feel that's a good selling price. But the market has nothing to do with your finances or the cost of your next dream home, or even the overall debt you might be carrying. These are all unrelated.
- **Don't** base the price on what internet websites say your house "should be worth". I had a client whose house was for sale and checked this "estimate" almost daily. It fluctuated more than the weather! These internet figures are not a reliable method on which to base your listing price.

**Do base the listing price on FACTS.** Your licensed Realtor has access to data on SOLD properties that are similar to yours in size, location, condition, updates and style. When prices are compared, you need to use the actual recorded sales price a buyer paid for a house similar to yours, not their listing price, because the sold price proves someone valued it at that amount. If a mortgage

lender was involved, the house most likely appraised at that cost, which is a very important market indicator.

Setting the right listing price, based on facts and a good comparative market analysis, will make all the difference in selling your house. Interview Realtors and ask for their credentials, such as having the Seller Representative Specialist certification and the Pricing Strategy Advisor certification

(both of which I have, plus I have the Senior Real Estate Specialist certification). Hire an educated and caring Realtor, so you have guidance and protection throughout the house selling process.

For a personal evaluation of your house, call **Kirsten Sharpe, Managing Broker/Owner of Sharpe Realty, LLC. 574-339-7959 or [www.TheRealtorForSeniors.com](http://www.TheRealtorForSeniors.com).**

