

September Sales: Hot!

by Andy Dodge, CRA

(NOTE: The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings which were reported by the local real estate agents as having been accepted in September, 2007. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses and prices cannot be made public, but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph on page xx offers a picture of these trends over time.)

Westmount's real estate market pulled out of the summer doldrums with a vengeance in September, with three sales topping the \$1 million mark and houses getting sold as soon as they were listed, twice at the full asking price and four other times within 5 percent.

Eleven sales have been reported for Westmount, about average in terms of volume until one considers that the volume so far this year is the best it has been since 2002. The average days-on-market was 71, but when one sale is removed from the list (501 days), the average plummets to 28, and in fact six of the eleven sales were listed and sold within two weeks.

The average price of the eleven sales was just over \$1 million and the average markup was 27.4 percent above municipal valuation, not quite as high as it had been in February, for example, but still one of the strongest figures since the new valuation roll came into force in January. Prices ranged from \$3 million down to \$478,000, and there still were more sales at the low end of the range than the higher end. It is apparent, though, that the \$1 million barrier is getting easier to crack by the day.

Two more condominium sales brought the third-quarter total to eight, the same number recorded in the second quarter, but markups moved up from 6.4 percent to 10.9 percent during that time. Also sold were three co-op apartments for prices ranging from \$440,000 to \$509,000, as well as a triplex which went for \$845,000.

Even in "adjacent-Westmount," agents kept busy handling terms for eight sales including two houses and a duplex in Côte des Neiges and a house in Shaughnessy Village, plus various duplex-type apartments and condominiums on Westmount's borders. House prices were more modest in a range from \$525,000 to \$700,000.

So for all the doom and gloom in the real estate market south of the border, good financial management and a strong economy have made their mark in Westmount. The rest of the Montreal area appears to be equally strong which will be good for the local market, since a hesitancy to buy real estate would eventually affect Westmount.