

October Sales: Still Sliding

by Andy Dodge, CRA

Westmount sale prices continued their slide in October, down some 17 percent since they peaked in November last year.

Volume rose slightly from September but is still well below average, with nine sales in October averaging \$1,073,944, some 18 percent above valuation. Prices ranged from \$490,000 to \$1,795,000, two sales were for less than their municipal value and the highest markup was only 53.5 percent. Four of the nine sales topped the \$1 million mark, but none was over \$2 million. Almost one in four of those houses still on the market is asking more than \$2 million, but there are no reports of sales in that category since August.

Only one sale involved a new listing, all the rest were properties which had been on the market for more than 100 days, including two which had been marketed for more than a year. The average days-on-market soared to 239 days; in September the average had been 187 days which was the highest figure in two years. The 239 is the highest we have on record since March of 2000. Some of this is because very little new real estate is coming on the market now, but much of it is because these listings have been on since the springtime, and owners are getting anxious. Those who listed in the past few months are willing to wait for the spring market, unless they get their price right away.

Two condominium sales were reported in October, both of flats in converted duplexes, for prices of \$380,000 and \$465,000. While the average markup of those two is only 2.7 percent, the average markup for the year is 17.5 percent, up significantly from last year when it was only 5.5 percent, an indication the condo market is still getting stronger.

Four houses sold in adjacent-Westmount areas, including two on Marlowe Avenue in Notre Dame de Grâce, one on Roslyn Avenue just north of Westmount and one on Seymour Street in Shaughnessy Village. Sales in these areas are generally up about 10 percent compared to last year, but the sample size is so small that it is difficult to be more precise about market movements.

Now that a provincial election has been called, the local market might be somewhat hesitant and volume might stay at a low ebb, but hopefully by next spring there will be a clearer idea of the direction of both the Canadian and world economies, which should bode well for Westmount's real estate market.

