

THE BRADFORD BRIDGE

COMMUNITY NEWS BY NEIGHBORS FOR NEIGHBORS

Volume 14, Number 1; Issue 151

January 2004

IT ALL BEGAN IN BRADFORD

First called New Bradford and then Bradfordton, this town was granted by Governor John Wentworth in 1771. It assumed its present name in 1787, the year of the national constitutional convention, when each state was called upon to decide whether America would adopt its constitution or not. Eight states had ratified and one more was needed when the New Hampshire delegation convened at Exeter that year. The Anti-Federalists were strongly opposed to the Constitution and prospects for approval seemed dim. By a parliamentary maneuver, however, the convention was adjourned for several months and reconvened at Concord. There, under the leadership of Colonel Thomas Stickney of Bradford as moderator, it approved ratification and New Hampshire forced the decision which gave America its constitution.

Colonel Stickney is celebrated in New Hampshire history for donating land and forty pounds in 1790 to build the Merrimack County Court House in Concord. A tablet in front of the Elks building commemorates his memory.

The town of Bradford did not, as is sometimes assumed, get its name from the famous

colonial governor, William Bradford, but from its parent town of Bradford, Massachusetts, which in turn took its name from the historic town in West Riding, Yorkshire, England, named Bradford or, originally, Bradforth.

As Bradford, Massachusetts grew in population, people of the surrounding neighborhoods – Haverhill, Salisbury and others – migrated to the north. Those of Bradford followed suit and applied for New Hampshire grants which were given at the close of the Revolution in Bradford, New Hampshire, these being readily made by the new government. The town of Bradford was formed out of what was known as Washington Gore and parts of Washington and Newbury.

Bradford today also contains the villages of Bradford Center and Melvin Mills. Among its outstanding natural features are Silver Hill (1940 feet) and Lake Massasecum on the town's eastern boundary.

Source: New Hampshire Town Names and Whence They Came, Elmer Munson Hunt, 1970; Evans Printing, Concord, NH

SPECIAL ELECTIONS

The Governor and Executive Council have announced special elections for State Representative from Merrimack County District 34, representing the towns of Bradford, Henniker, Hopkinton, Newbury, Sutton, Warner, and Webster. The election is to fill the vacated seat of Rep. J.D. Colcord who resigned to take the County Commissioner's seat vacated by Bernie Lamache.

The following have filed as candidates for the seat:

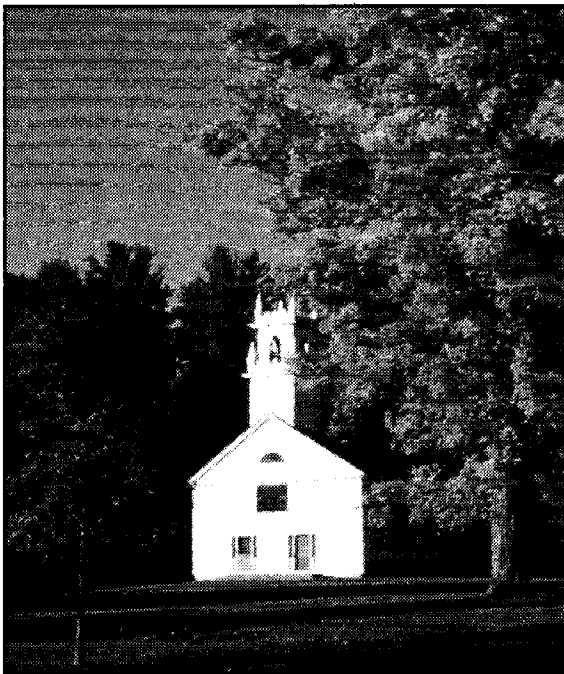
Democrat

- "Beth" Rodd, Bradford (PO Box 337, 03221)

Republican

- Timothy Troncone, Bradford (PO Box 2945, Concord, 03302)
- Fred N. Creed, Jr., Warner (576 Kearsarge Mt. Rd., 03278)
- "Jim" Powell, Newbury (70 Forest Brook Rd., 03255)
- Peter M. Russell, Hopkinton (289 Maple St., Contoocook, 03229)

There will be a Republican Primary Election on January 27, 2004. The Special Election between the Republican winner of the Primary and the one Democrat candidate will be on March 2, 2004.



The Old Bradford Meeting House in Bradford Center was built in 1838, on the site of the original meeting house built in 1795.

photo by Carey Rodd

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THE BRADFORD BRIDGE



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For those wishing to receive the Bradford Bridge by mail, the annual subscription price is \$12 to cover the cost of mailing. To subscribe, please send a check to the address above.

Advertising

The Bradford Bridge is a free community newspaper supported by advertisers. To place an ad, call Carol Troy at 938-6186 or send a FAX to 938-2995. Ad deadline is the 20th of the month.

Submissions

The Bradford Bridge is written by neighbors, for neighbors. Anyone is welcome to submit articles and/or photographs of interest to the community. The Bridge reserves the right to edit submissions for length or content. Send articles or letters to Beth Rodd/Bev Leo at the address, FAX number, or e-mail address above by the 20th of the month.

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KRSD ANNUAL MEETING

First Deliberative Session of the Kearsarge Regional School District (Annual Meeting) will be held Saturday, January 10, at the Kearsarge Regional High School at 9:00 am.

The Workshop

Next meeting of the Workshop will be an Antiques Roadshow with Eleanor Harris and Lyn Long on Thursday, January 8 at the Friendship House. Bring several items for appraisal and join Eleanor and Lyn for a delightful and informative afternoon. Bag lunch as usual at 12:00 noon with the program beginning around 12:45.

Clare Bensley

Computer Classes



Since the autumn of 2001, Bradford Area Community Center has offered elementary computer classes with Bev Leo and Bill Hatt, instructors. The structure of each class is somewhat determined by the needs of the students attending that day. We have covered using Word, Excel, Quicken, and Outlook Express e-mail. Bill has led many trips on the World Wide Web, teaching safe surfing, how to find information, and how to download patches and programs.

Recently, we took apart computers in class, cleaned them of dust, removed and replaced memory, and examined the inside of a hard drive.

Beginner classes take place on the first and third Fridays, Intermediate (Experienced) classes on the second and fourth Fridays. There is no beginning or end; join us at any time.

For information in joining this fun class, call 938-2996.

KRES at Bradford Parent Workshops

KRES at Bradford is offering several Parent Workshops this school year to keep parents informed. The workshops are offered Tuesdays from 8:45-9:45 am. Muffins, donuts, and coffee are provided. These workshops are free and open to the public and may be attended on a drop-in basis. No pre-registration is required. Please Join us!

Tuesday, Jan. 13th: Want to be a volunteer? Tips on how to be a terrific volunteer and cooperative learning and choice theory with Scott Bouranis, Peg Lyon, Mary Keegan-Dayton.

Tuesday, Jan. 27th: Helping your child with Reading and Writing with Kathy McKenna.

Senior Council

The public is invited to the Senior Council meeting and program on Saturday, January 10, 1:00-3:00 pm., at the Bradford Area Community Center. The program will be ADVENTURE IN 1960'S NEPAL, presented by Beverly Leo, giving her Peace Corps experience in talk and slides.

Admission is free, all adults and seniors are welcome. As always, refreshments will be served.

Phyllis Whall

Bradford Country Squares

The Bradford Country Squares will host a Class Level Square Dance at the Town Hall on Saturday, January 17 from 8:00-10:30pm. Lenny Stratton will call and Vera Prudhomme will cue. Admission is \$5 per person and includes refreshments. For further information, you may call Norma and Arlo Burns at 927-4454. Spectators are free and always made welcome.

—Bob & Shirley Trombley



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Planning Board Notes

Solitude Ridge Update: Reports from consultants—Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) on overall subdivision issues and Provan & Lorber for the road engineering—were delivered just before the December 9 meeting began, not in time for copies to be made and reviewed by the Board. At the request of Bob Stewart of RCS Designs, some of the issues raised in the reports were read aloud and discussed by Board members and the public. Several of the points raised by the review were set aside—signatures have been provided where needed, there are no burial sites on the property, and width to depth ratio is not an issue. (Subdivision Regulations do not allow lots where the depth is greater than three times the frontage width.) Others, such as review of legal documents by the Town Attorney and establishing the bond amount for road construction, must still be addressed.

Bob Stewart said state permits—Site Specific (Alteration of Terrain) and Sub-surface (Septic)—have been applied for; the Wetlands Permit will be submitted when there are no further changes to be made but a pre-application discussion has already taken place. The plat was reviewed for the extent of wetlands on site using a map provided by the Conservation Commission that was colored to indicate wetlands more clearly.

A motion was made to conditionally approve the subdivision, but, by a vote of four to three, the motion failed because the conditions to be imposed were not clearly identified. The public hearing was continued until January 13.

The Board then considered the application for a Street Plat to provide access for Solitude Ridge to West Road by means of a right-of-way, originally approved by the Planning Board in 1970 and extended to another lot in 1983. The applicant was advised that the road must be constructed to subdivision standards because there are more than three lots and there are no existing houses using the right-of-way. The Board voted to approve the Street Plat with two conditions: 1) the road is constructed to subdivision standards, as applicable, and 2) Solitude Ridge receives final approval.

On December 13, a site walk was held at Solitude Ridge, giving the public an opportunity to see the area and discuss any concerns. Representatives from the Planning Board, Zoning Board and Conservation Commission were led through the site. Bob Stewart pointed out the lots, driveways and building envelopes for each lot, roads, open spaces, the pond lot, wetlands areas and wetlands crossings, siltation fences, and other features from the plat. There was general agreement that the walk had been productive and much information was available despite the snow cover.

Other Business: A revised plat was received and approved for a two-lot subdivision on Day Pond Road for Elizabeth Bouley.

Jennifer Dow discussed the possibility of removing the “open space” designation from the 13 acres at the rear of her property on Fairgrounds Road, which had been required when the 3-lot subdivision was

Planning, Continued on Page 5

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Selectmen's Meetings

DECEMBER 2, 2003

Roll Call: Bruce Edwards, Chairman;
Peter Fenton, Selectman; Dave Pickman,
Selectman

Town Personnel: Cheryl Behr, Adminis-
trative Asst.

Minutes of the November 18th meeting
were accepted with the following correc-
tions:

1. Paragraph #1. The plans presented by Provan and Lorber did not satisfy the requirements of the Board of Selectmen. The Engineers will meet with the Road Committee on December 17th, at 7:00 pm.
2. Paragraph #7 should read ... the widening of Center and/or Cheney Hill Road been placed on hold.

Appearances:

1. Jim Powell and Steve Manley of the Rescue Squad met with the board of selectmen to discuss the need for the town to include "On Call" police coverage in next year's budget. The Rescue Squad believes the potential liability should be addressed by the board of selectmen. Selectmen will discuss with the Chief of Police.
2. Heather Cooper and Fred Hubley met with the board of selectmen to discuss the placing of a petition on the 2004 warrant requesting the town to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2500 for the Kearsarge Area Preschool to pay rent to the BACC and health benefits for their teacher. Selectmen recommended the preschool place a petition warrant article before the town. When asked, the selectmen did not agree to support the article at this time.
3. Tom Donison introduced himself to the Board of Selectmen as an area engineer and presented the board with a letter of qualifications requesting consideration and that of the planning and zoning boards for any future jobs requiring such skills.

Regular Business:

1. Accounts payable manifest signed by selectmen.
2. Refunds and abatements signed by selectmen
3. Supplemental warrant to correct property billing signed by selectmen.
4. Selectmen approved a one month extension from the estate of Sophie Burke, pending the approval of the executor by the probate court.
5. The selectmen voted to allow a town employee to accept a \$10 gift certificate.
6. The cemetery will have the trees removed from the boundary of Sunny Plains cemetery by Lemire Logging. The \$2000 cost will be charged against the Highway budget.
7. Selectmen reviewed the transfer station budget with Ken Anderson.
8. Selectmen reviewed the General Government Building budget. The selectmen requested Jarna Perkins, director of the Community Center, arrange a meeting with the BACC governance board for the December 16th meeting, to review contract signing.
9. Budget Committee meets on December 9, 2003.
10. Selectmen closed the meeting at 7:00 pm

DECEMBER 16, 2003

Roll Call: Bruce Edwards, Chairman;
Peter Fenton, Selectman; Dave Pickman,
Selectman

Town Personnel: Cheryl Behr, Adminis-
trative Asst.

Minutes of the December 2nd Selectmen's
meeting were accepted with the following
correction:

Selectmen Continued on page 11

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Rural Heritage Connection

The Rural Heritage Connection, a resource for land protection in Bradford, is now a non-profit corporation. Filing is complete with Town and State offices. The application for 501(c)3 non-profit recognition is in the works, and it is expected to be retroactive to the date of formation, December 11, making the donations that have already been received tax-deductible this year.

The idea behind the RH Connection is simple: owners of Bradford properties that have significant historical, recreational, and/or environmental values who want to see those values preserved are matched with appropriate technical assistance, tax information, and grants and funding sources if possible.

The timing could not be better.

This autumn a large lot adjoining the Bradford Bog on the East Washington Road came on the market. The Bog consists of a rare stand of Atlantic White Cedar and a "quaking" bog, a rare habitat in New England. The central portion of the bog and swamp was given to the Town in 1971 by the New England Wild Flower Society with a subsequent land donation from a timber company in the 1980s. Part of the cedar swamp, the part that harbors the oldest of these slow-growing trees, has remained in private hands. This piece is the lot that is for sale today.

The current owners of this lot, though perhaps not fully realizing the botanical

uniqueness of their property, felt it was special. They were immediately contacted and they readily agreed to withdraw it from the market. They are interested in protecting it from logging and development and have generously offered to reduce its price substantially for conservation purposes.

Efforts are now underway by the RH Connection, the Bradford Conservation Commission, and several state organizations to research funding sources to match the owner's needs. Though the prospects look good, it will take a concerted effort by all who value this unusual wetland to preserve it for the future. Please contact Miranda Levin at inthering@conknet.com or 938-6095 for more information, fundraising ideas, or to contribute in any way, large or small. You may also contact the RH Connection or send a donation at P.O. Box 296, Bradford, NH 03221.

The RH Connection meets on the second Monday of every month at the Bradford Area Community Center at 7:00 pm. At the next meeting, January 12, we will be visited by Brian Hotz, of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests and the Warner Conservation Commission, who will give us an update on the Sunapee-Pillsbury Highland Project and speak on the Forest Society's and Warner's efforts and successes in land protection. All are encouraged to attend.

—Ann Eldridge

Planning, Continued From Page 3

approved in 2000. When the road to Solitude Ridge is in place, road frontage for the back part of the lot might be available. A letter from Lucy St. John of CNHRPC cited State law to the effect that once an open space designation has been lawfully imposed it cannot be removed. She suggested that Town Counsel be contacted to see if any court decisions have addressed the issue.

A Preliminary Consultation was held with Chris McAllister for a 42-acre parcel on Forest Street. Jennifer McCourt of McCourt Engineering showed sketches of a conventional 17-lot subdivision of two that will be presented to voters at March Town Meeting. The ballot will contain zoning amendments dealing with "buildable" lots and a revised Wetlands Ordinance. A public hearing on these will be held on January 27. At Town Meeting, voters will also be asked to approve funding to continue work on the Master Plan and

to provide a Circuit Rider Planner to assist the public and the Board in carrying out the planning and zoning work of the town.

Master Plan: The Planning Board, through a sub-committee chaired by Doug Troy, began work on an update of the 1996 Master Plan. Mike Tardiff, Executive Director of CNHRPC, met with the group in December to prepare a community survey to be sent out the end of January. The survey information will be analyzed and discussed at public meetings to be held later in the spring. CNHRPC will assist the Board in preparing the updated plan to guide Bradford over the next five years and to develop zoning and subdivision regulations to implement the plan.

The Master Plan meetings are scheduled for Thursdays at 7:00pm at the Town Hall. Interested members of the public are welcome to attend.

Marcia Keller

Bradford Board of Selectmen

Bruce Edwards, Chairman
Peter Fenton
Dave Pickman
Cheryl Behr, Administrative Assistant

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Bradford**LETTERS**

To the Editor:

In the Kearsarge Regional School District, when the time comes to vote on the school budget, voters are presented with a ballot that gives them a choice between the school board's budget and the budget committee's budget. They are not given an opportunity to vote down the budget. The legality of this system has been called into question, and the Secretary of State's office and the Attorney General's office have been contacted and are looking into the matter. The Secretary of State's office seems to feel that all budget questions should be in a yes or no format and has referred the problem to the Attorney General's office. His office has determined that, when the budget committee was voted in, the charter was written in such a way that the choice would be between the two budgets and any other amended budget from the deliberative session. The attorney general at the time approved the charter and this is how we have voted ever since. The assistant attorney general has declined to comment for the record until this is resolved, but is obviously concerned about his predecessor's decision and is researching the reasons for it.

In the past, the budget committee's budget has been considerably lower than the school board's budget, giving the voters some choice. In recent years, the budgets have seemed to get closer and closer together (most likely due to a collaborative effort between the school board and the budget committee to present what they both think is a fair budget) and once were identical. This has given the voters at the ballot box very little choice or no choice at all.

When contacted, the attorney for the School District said that, in her opinion, the process is perfectly legal and has pointed out that the voters may attend the deliberative

session and amend either budget. Unfortunately, not all voters can attend these sessions (they are held on a Saturday when many people work) and many voters are physically unable to attend the meetings. Any attempt at amending a budget can be defeated at this session and never presented to the voters at the ballot. The attorney also stated that she feels we here in the Kearsarge Regional School District have much more of a choice than most school districts. But two identical or nearly identical budgets is not a choice. This doesn't appear to be a very democratic process.

Apparently there doesn't seem to be a statute that specifically says that the budget has to be presented in a yes or no fashion, but it is implied everywhere and would seem so obvious that it has never actually been stated. Investigation has shown that in some districts that have both a school board and a budget committee, the committees collaborate to present a single budget to the voters, who then get to vote yes or no. If the budget were defeated, the district would continue to operate under a default budget (a 5% increase over the previous year's budget plus any binding obligations such as teacher contracts).

It should be noted that concerned voters aren't necessarily against the budget or the school and are not casting aspersions on the job the school district does in educating our children. They would simply like the majority of the voters to have the chance to vote yes or no on any budget presented to them.

—Beatrice Howe

LETTERS continued on page 7

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Letters, Continued

To the Editor:

Early in December, the School Board was informed by Superintendent Brennan that the State Attorney General's office had been contacted by a citizen inquiring as to the legal implications of voters not being presented with the opportunity to vote in a way that rejects the proposed annual operating budget other than to not vote at all. In other words, some wonder if voters should be presented with three options: (a) the School Board's proposed budget; (b) the Municipal Budget Committee's proposed budget; and (c) None of the Above.

The District's legal counsel has been notified and is handling the matter with the Attorney Generals' office as that office does its work to research the question and respond to the inquiry. In the meantime, as it always has, the School Board will continue to work with the Superintendent and the MBC to finalize the proposals to be presented at the deliberative session on January 10th. These are the proposals that have been worked on for much of the past year and that have passed the scrutiny of those you've elected to develop and/or review them.

Over the past two years, the School Board has worked extensively with the Administration in redesigning the budgeting process so that principals and faculty seeking funding for program support must build stronger cases to explain to the Board, MBC, and citizens who are interested how the tax dollars are spent and how such expenditures align with the overall educational goals of the District. This was no small undertaking but has been accomplished and has resulted in a high degree of cooperation between all involved. In the past year, the SAU has also adopted a new set of financial control mechanisms, policies, and procedures that give our Superintendent and

new Business Manager unprecedented insight and control of the financial process in the Kearsarge District. This is a tremendous leap forward in the management capabilities at the SAU.

It seems that some of the frustration prompting the "None of the Above" inquiry stems from the fact that the School Board and MBC budget proposals have not differed greatly in the past few years. When you first elected me to the School Board five years ago, I immediately wondered why it seemed some folks called for the Board and the MBC to have an antagonistic relationship. I worked with others on the Board to begin developing our budget proposals in a way that could be explained to the MBC and other interested parties. Our new Superintendent and his staff have embraced this philosophy and the results show in stronger proposals and more agreement on what budget priorities should be presented to you. Alas, some still insist that the MBC budget must differ greatly from the School Board budget in order for voters to have a real choice. Others further insist that voters must be able to reject the budgets altogether. I am left to wonder how the schools might operate if no budget is passed.

If you feel strongly that the School Board budget proposal is inadequate or unsupportable, I encourage you to get involved in the process as it is conducted at open public meetings through the summer and fall of each year. If you feel that the people elected to either the School Board or the MBC fail in their jobs by cooperating and presenting you with the results described above, I encourage you to offer the citizens of our town alternatives at the voting booth and support the candidates who will best represent Bradford. As always, I thank you for your confidence and continued support.

Mark Fairbank

To the Editor:

Two things bother me about the proposed middle school and the altered high school. The first is the disproportionate school district tax burden that we in Bradford bear and the second is the real overall cost of these projects. New London and Newbury may very well favor this new construction, but will they also favor fair funding? There has been little indication of the latter.

It was 1996 when the district last tweaked the apportionment formula, changing the assessment from 75%, based on daily attendance and 25% on equalized property valuation to 60% and 40% respectively. Avoiding re-evaluation, New London and Newbury once again exacerbated the situation. I would suggest that this formula be revisited and a reasonable balance achieved before we impose this additional tax burden on Bradford.

Once we deal with the first issue, we really have to look at the overall cost that includes, not only the construction, but the equipping and furnishing as well as the ongoing operating costs, additional teachers, maintenance, etc. What will the total revised budget amount to? We had better look closely before we jump into this.

Dick Keller, School Board Rep. 1993-1996

BRADFORD

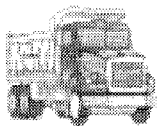


Very nice 1780's cape with attached 34x46 barn, fields & garden area, out-building pole barn 27x37, house south facing, very nice features, well kept with updates. 9 acres, 700' road frontage. Located on Rt 103 Bradford, south toward Warner.

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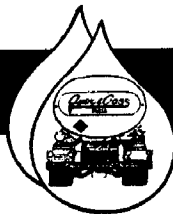
Real Estate Hints:



Winter Listings
by Laura Hallaban

Happy New Year! 2004 looks to be another strong year in real estate. Though interest rates did rise from a 40-year low, they still make buying a very attractive option over renting. While in years past it seemed like the Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee Region was strictly a vacation area with most people visiting in the summer and on weekends only in the winter, today there are many buyers who want or need to relocate here full-time. That is one key reason the real estate market has been so steady for so long. For these buyers, especially, winter is just as important as any other season in terms of finding a new home. Sellers, however, need to be educated about listing their house in the winter as many still believe it is best to start the selling process in the spring so as to avoid moving in bad weather. A recently published article in Broker Agent News outlines the top ten reasons to list your home during the winter. Here goes:

1. **Fewer Showings** – The buyers who are looking are usually more serious about making a purchase, so fewer showings may actually turn into more offers.
2. **Less Competition** – Your house will have less competition if most sellers wait until spring to list. Why be one of many when you can be one of a few?
3. **Homes Show Better During and After the Holiday Season** – Many people leave their trees up well into January and add decorations and candles around the house to make it feel cozier in the winter.
4. **January is the Biggest Transfer Month** – More corporate moves happen in January than any other time of the year.
5. **Timing** – By putting your house on the market now, you can more easily hit your moving goal of early spring than if you wait until then to list. Figure that you need time for it to go under contract and then it takes 30-60 days to close.
6. **More Time to Get Top Dollar** – As long as your house is priced fairly, listing early gives you plenty of time to market the property and get top dollar.
7. **Great Time to Shop** – If you are lucky enough to sell quickly, you will also be looking for a new home in the winter, so you may be able to find a great buy or lessen the chance of being in a bidding war.
8. **More Advertising** – Less inventory translates into more advertising than during the spring and summer months.
9. **More Attention** – Most agents will be able to devote specialized attention to your property during the winter months as they likely have fewer clients to manage.
10. **The Market** – Low interest rates translate into buyers who have more spending power, something that will also benefit sellers when they begin looking for their next home.



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