

Merrimack Valley

housingreport

An e-publication of UMass Lowell and the Middlesex North Registry of Deeds



University of
Massachusetts
Lowell

MIDDLESEX NORTH
REGISTRY OF DEEDS

Volume 3, Issue 6 June 2010

Five Month Overview of Real Estate Activity.....1
Home Safety: Child Injuries are Preventable.....3

Five Month Overview of Real Estate Activity

By Keith Vaillancourt

With 2010 nearly half over, it would be helpful to examine deeds, mortgages, orders of notice and foreclosure petitions for Haverhill, Methuen, Lawrence and Lowell to examine current trends and possibly deduce what the remaining 7 months could look like. Information from each city’s registry was compiled and assembled in basic tables for discussion. Table (1) contains all documents from January through May in 2009 and 2010. Table (2) contains the month of May for 2009 and 2010.

Changes in activity from month to month can often appear erratic and sometimes uncorrelated to state-wide housing trends, as real estate activity tends to be highly localized and varied from market to market. Despite these differences, the numerical amounts of each type of document from month to month are worth examining to compare local trends and gauge market

strength and recovery. The town of Dracut was included in the tables as an additional variable to represent more suburban areas. Dracut was convenient for its relative location to Lowell and Methuen and nearly comparable population size.

At this point, foreclosures and orders are still the most important set of data to examine. In all four cities, orders and foreclosure petitions are up significantly compared to the first 5 months of 2009. If these trends continue to the end of 2010, the total amount of orders and foreclosures could be higher than in 2009. Despite this, there are a few bright spots that could prove otherwise.

At Lawrence’s rate, it appears for a second year in a row, the city will have fewer foreclosures than Lowell, a city twice the geographic size and population.

Deeds, Mortgages, Foreclosures and Orders of Notice Recorded

May 2009 and May 2010 compared

	Haverhill		Lawrence		Lowell		Methuen	
	May-09	May-10	May-09	May-10	May-09	May-10	May-09	May-10
Deeds	101	102	82	105	227	167	83	78
Mortgages	197	133	115	111	132	194	222	120
Foreclosure Deeds	21	8	13	19	11	31	5	15
Orders of Notice	18	9	29	24	34	28	13	22

Lawrence had no increase in foreclosures at this point compared to the first five months of last year. The last time Lawrence had more foreclosures than Lowell was in 2008. The other bright area in the data was from Haverhill. It was the only city to have a decrease in both foreclosure petitions and orders of notice for May '10'. In addition, the number of orders in all four cities has been consistently declining since January.

Regarding deeds, the numbers appear to be mixed. There were few significant increases in Lowell and Lawrence. Haverhill, Methuen and Dracut had higher deeds in the first five months this year compared to last,

which could indicate the less urban areas are having a stronger recovery, or because housing markets are significantly different.

In the next few months there might significant decreases in deeds filed as the national "first time homebuyer's tax credit" has expired. Purchasing agreements had to be filed by April 30th and the deal closed before the end of June. After this month, increases in Haverhill and Methuen might decline. Again, the major issue that is hampering a stronger recovery is the continuing loss of income which can partly account for higher overall orders and foreclosure petitions. █

Table 1: Total Documents of Jan – May 2009 and 2010 Compared

Lowell				Lawrence				Methuen			
	2009	2010	% chg		2009	2010	% chg		2009	2010	% chg
Deeds	685	691	0.9%	Deeds	465	430	-7.5%	Deeds	332	351	5.7%
Mortgages	992	896	-9.7%	Mortgages	545	460	-15.6%	Mortgages	912	622	-31.8%
Foreclosure Deeds	105	161	53.3%	Foreclosure Deeds	118	118	0%	Foreclosure Deeds	25	54	116%
Orders of Notice	129	285	120.9%	Orders of Notice	124	239	92.7%	Orders of Notice	45	127	182.2%

Haverhill				Dracut			
	2009	2010	% chg		2009	2010	% chg
Deeds	431	470	9%	Deeds	223	244	9%
Mortgages	855	673	-21.3%	Mortgages	623	466	-25%
Foreclosure Deeds	72	90	25%	Foreclosure Deeds	19	42	121%
Orders of Notice	74	166	124.3%	Orders of Notice	27	57	111%

Table 2: Total Documents, May 2009 compared to May 2010

Lowell				Lawrence				Methuen			
	May 09	May 10	% chg		May 09	May 10	% chg		May 09	May 10	% chg
Deeds	227	167	-26.4%	Deeds	82	105	28%	Deeds	83	78	-6%
Mortgages	132	194	47%	Mortgages	115	111	-3.5%	Mortgages	222	120	-45.9%
Foreclosure Deeds	11	31	181.8%	Foreclosure Deeds	13	19	46.2%	Foreclosure Deeds	5	15	200%
Orders of Notice	34	28	-17.6%	Orders of Notice	29	24	-17.2%	Orders of Notice	13	22	69.2%

Haverhill				Dracut			
	May 09	May 10	% chg		May 09	May 10	% chg
Deeds	101	102	1%	Deeds	48	53	10%
Mortgages	197	133	-32.5%	Mortgages	162	91	-44%
Foreclosure Deeds	21	8	-61.9%	Foreclosure Deeds	1	8	700%
Orders of Notice	18	9	-50%	Orders of Notice	10	6	-40%

Home Safety: Child Injuries are Preventable

By Joann Vaillette

Unintentional injury is a major public health concern in the United States. Many of these injuries occur in our home. Moreover, children are disproportionately at risk for getting injured within the home. An average of 2,096 children younger than 15 die each year in the United States as a result of a home injury. In addition, for every home injury death there are approximately 650 nonfatal injuries [1]. Every parent wants to keep their child safe. There are easy steps that every parent can take to make their home safe.

Falls

Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries for all children ages 0 to 19. Every day, approximately 8,000 children are treated in U.S. emergency rooms for fall-related injuries. This adds up to almost 2.8 million children each year [1].

Use home safety devices. Home safety devices, such as guards for windows that are above ground level, stair gates, and guard rails can prevent children from unintentional injuries.

Remove clutter. Make sure that extension cords are placed properly. Keep home items stored in a safe area to help keep your active child from taking a dangerous tumble.

Supervision is key. Supervise young children at all times around fall hazards.

Burns

Every day, 435 children ages 0 to 19 are treated in emergency rooms for burn-related injuries and two children die as a result of being burned [1].

Be alarmed. Install and maintain smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in your home. These should be placed on every floor and near all rooms family members sleep in. Test your alarms once a month to make sure they are working properly.

Have an escape plan. Create and practice a family fire escape plan, and involve kids in the planning. Make sure everyone knows at least two ways out of every room and identify a central meeting place outside.

Cook with care. Use safe cooking practices, such as never leaving food unattended on the stove. Also, stove knob locks are an inexpensive way to keep young children from turning on the burners. Check water temperature. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.

Check water temperature. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.

Poisonings

Every day, 374 children in the United States ages 0 to 19 are treated in an emergency department, and two children die, as a result of being poisoned [1]. Active, curious children may try to eat or drink anything that's left out and within their reach.

Lock them up. Keep medicines and toxic products, such cleaning solutions, in locked or childproof cabinets.

Know the number. Put the nationwide poison

control center phone number, 1-800-222-1222, on or near every telephone in your home.

Read the label. Follow label directions and read all warnings when giving medicines to children.

In addition to helping families reduce the burden of childhood asthma, The Lowell Healthy Homes Program also works to resolve home safety problems. Children are particularly vulnerable to home injuries. For more information about how the Lowell Healthy Homes Program can help your family please contact Carla Caraballo at (978) 322-8541 or Bophamony Vong at (978) 322-8528. 

1. Home Safety Council, (2004). State of Home Safety in America. Retrieved from: http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/AboutUs/Research/re_sohs_w001.asp

Special Thanks!!

The Merrimack Valley Housing Report thanks its major sponsors for 2010:

**Merrimack Valley Regional Network to End Homelessness
&
Community Teamwork Inc.**

Upcoming Events in the Valley

Innovative Cities: Best Practices in Urban Development - June 17 - 19

The Innovative Cities Conference will be held from June 17 - 19 at the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center. Conference topics will include economic development, historic preservation, the creative economy, sustainability, housing, and education. For additional information, email info@innovativecitiesconference.com

The *Merrimack Valley Housing Report* is published by UMass Lowell and the Middlesex North Registry of Deeds

Richard P. Howe Jr., Editor
Richard.Howe@sec.state.ma.us

David Turcotte, Editor
David_Turcotte@uml.edu

Keith Vaillancourt, Research Assistant /Writer
Keith_Vaillancourt@student.uml.edu

Joann Vaillette, Publication Assistant/Writer
Joann_Vaillette@student.uml.edu

Center for Family, Work, and Community
University of Massachusetts Lowell
600 Suffolk Street, First Floor South
Lowell, MA 01854
Tel. (978) 934-4682
www.uml.edu/mvhousing

This project is funded in part by the Office of the Chancellor and the Office of Outreach. UMASS LOWELL

Subscribe to the Merrimack Valley Housing Report

To begin receiving this monthly e-publications, please e-mail David Turcotte at David_Turcotte@uml.edu