WILLIAMSBURG GOLF PROPERTIES HOME SALE ANNUAL SUMMARY

By Susan Krancer, REALTOR® Liz Moore and Associates January 23, 2009

What an interesting real estate market we have been experiencing over the last few years! We here in Williamsburg have seen home sales volume rise dramatically, and then fall just as dramatically. Take a look at the graph below of home sales in Kingsmill, Fords Colony, Governor's Land, Stonehouse and Greensprings (Greensprings West & Greensprings Plantation).



2008 HOME SALE VOLUMES

HOME SALES									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Ford's Colony	77	93	123	157	154	112	98	68	
Governor's Land	27	22	35	36	49	26	31	20	
Kingsmill	88	103	110	112	136	101	73	66	
Stonehouse	18	12	12	65	70	23	28	31	
Greensprings	35	59	80	67	45	28	28	22	

data is from the Williamsburg MLS

The huge sale volumes we saw in 2004 and 2005 will likely never occur again. It was fun while it lasted!

We continue to see a steady number of new buyer prospects who express interest in relocating here to the Williamsburg area. They are asking questions, reviewing homes online, and evaluating their options. We continue to have one or two new prospects visiting each week to tour our communities, and most of these folks have put Williamsburg at the top of their list of places to retire! Unfortunately, these buyers have houses to sell before they can make their move. Gone are the days when buyers would buy their new homes here in Williamsburg and then go back home and sell their old houses!

In spite of the huge sales volume decreases here in Williamsburg, most of our sellers have been slow to reduce their prices. You might say that many of our home sales are "elective", and the sellers are not truly motivated. This is especially true for the retirees who live here. They certainly aren't being transferred to another location for work. Many are making the decision to move closer to their children and grandchilden. They could move now, if their homes sell, or they could move next year. The time pressure is just not there in most cases



HOME SALE PRICE COMPARISON

AVERAGE HOME SALE PRICES										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008		
Ford's Colony	\$335,884	\$348,238	\$401,828	\$446,960	\$541,040	\$575,299	\$556,885	\$499,047		
Governor's Land	\$578,148	\$613,314	\$593,947	\$705,202	\$762,286	\$861,594	\$865,056	\$803,468		
Kingsmill	\$379,033	\$381,690	\$379,013	\$435,546	\$507,709	\$563,401	\$533,728	\$554,821		
Stonehouse	\$279,197	\$295,889	\$339,242	\$326,128	\$430,442	\$488,591	\$468,233	\$434,803		
Greensprings	\$321,657	\$301,482	\$338,270	\$338,270	\$465,693	\$485,291	\$544,150	\$493,428		

The chart below shows the total sales in James City County. Note that this looks different from the chart of the sales in the golf communities. The market is location specific! If you would like more information about your specific community, we would be happy to provide it for you.

So, when will we see improvement in the market? I watch for signals of a market shift every day. The key things I look for are: How many new listings do we have in the MLS today, and how many homes went under contract? I don't recall any days in 2008 where there were more sales than listings! As long as we continue to see more listings than sales, inventory will continue to build and prices will continue to fall. Look how wide the gap is between listings and sales in the chart below.



James City County - Homes

The data presented in these graphs comes from the Williamsburg MLS. Keep in mind that this report includes only properties that were listed in the MLS. Some new developments (e.g., Colonial Heritage, Stonehouse Glen) do not list their homes in the MLS, so only resales in those communities are represented here.

WILLIAMSBURG GOLF PROPERTIES LOT MARKET SUMMARY

By Susan Krancer, REALTOR® Liz Moore and Associates January 23, 2009

The lot market is even more depressed than the home market. The sales volume is now almost nonexistent. Take a look at the chart below:



LOT SALE VOLUME

LOT SALES										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008		
Ford's Colony	76	89	127	129	109	52	27	11		
Governor's Land	15	39	20	37	32	7	3	3		
Kingsmill	2	2	0	6	5	2	1	0		
Stonehouse	2	9	21	53	38	16	4	3		

Why has the lot market slowed so much more than the home market? I see several factors that are causing the current slump. Lots sales have always been driven by the builders and the demand for new construction. Now, most of the builders are sitting on the sidelines. Many of them got burned when the market showed down, and they were unable to sell off their inventory. Some have closed their businesses or declared bankruptcy. It's now extremely hard for many builders to get credit should they decide to get back into the market. And if they are able to get loans, it would likely be for just one house at a time, and builders like to have several homes underway at the same time.

You might think the drastic decrease in demand would increase the number of "bargains" on the market, but it hasn't yet. There have been only modest price concessions by most of the sellers. In Fords Colony, for example, the average lot listing price has actually increased in spite of the very weak demand. The lot sellers, like the home sellers, have been slow to reduce their prices in response to the weak market. Again, there doesn't seem to be a lot of urgency here from the sellers. They have unrealistic ideas about how much their properties are worth. Many of them overpaid originally when they purchased their lots from the developers, and they are unwilling to sell their lots for a loss.

We are also seeing very restrictive lending for lot purchases from our local lenders. Previously, a lot buyer could get a long term mortgage for the lot and pay it off over time. The rate was slightly higher than that of a home mortgage. Most of the banks and mortgage companies were willing to make this type of loan. Now, many of the banks are unwilling to make lot loans of any kind, and the ones that do are requiring larger down payments and limiting the loan term to one year!



AVERAGE LOT SALE PRICES

AVERAGE LOT SALE PRICES											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008			
Ford's Colony	\$79,334	\$75,433	\$82,269	\$102,276	\$153,656	\$171,294	\$183,425	\$188,227			
Governor's Land	\$127,383	\$198,834	\$176,405	\$208,529	\$227,562	\$404,129	\$474,167	\$411,333			
Kingsmill	\$201,400	\$410,000		\$277,833	\$328,840	\$397,500	\$430,000				
Stonehouse	\$68,000	\$104,417	\$75,198	\$87,011	\$101,104	\$130,263	\$115,750	\$94,333			

Buyers, on the other hand, are expecting to get a "good deal" in the market, and they aren't going to buy unless they feel they are getting a good deal. Competing areas of the country have seen larger price drops, and the buyers are looking for similar concessions here.

Keep in mind that these numbers are "averages" and there are some fairly wide variations.