

Redevelop high-end properties

For people who own houses worth crores, it will be far better to tie-up with a builder and raise floors, thereby earning some extra money

VIVEK SHUKLA

In the din of protests by farmers of Greater Noida and Noida for better compensation for the land that was already acquired by the government, a real estate clinic was organized in one of capital's elite clubs. It was held to answer all the possible queries of people sitting on properties worth crores in the upmarkets areas of the capital, including Malcha Marg, Greater Kailash, Hauz Khas, South Extension, Neeti Bagh and Uday Park.

Around 200 people attended the clinic. Most of them were senior citizens, keen to know as to how they can redevelop their properties; they had several questions for the expert panel. The expert panel comprised top officials from the NDMC, the HDFC, a law firm and a noted realtor.

Satwant Chawla, a retired banker, came to the clinic with his wife. "I have been living in a 400 sq yard house in Greater Kailash for the last 40 years with my family; now I am planning to redevelop my property as it is crumbling," and adds, "I hope the experts will help me in making up my mind whether it would be OK for me if I redevelop my house on my own if I should join hands with some builder."

Another elderly gentleman had some questions for the representative of a legal firm. "Will I still remain the owner of my property if I were to build floors on my house and sell some of them?" he wanted to know.

A senior official of the NDMC was asked several questions related to the status of regular water and electricity in case somebody builds floors on his house. Some also wanted to know whether they would be able to build a guardroom on stilted floor if they were to build four floors after bringing down their houses.

"To all those, I said they would get additional supply of electricity as well as water for three floors," the official, who does not wish to be identified, said. A banker from HFDC was asked a barrage of questions: "What is the maximum loan one can avail?"; "Can I apply for a loan to repay a housing loan availed by me from another bank/housing finance company?"; "What are the fees and charges payable and when?"; "How do I make an application for a home loan?" The banker had an answer for one and all.

Sanjay Khanna of Kailashnath Projects Pvt Ltd, who was among the expert panel,



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says that the response to the clinic was remarkable. Nothing was charged from those who took part in the clinic. "I told them (participants) that unlike property owners in other metros, people in Delhi are in a position to unlock the real value of their properties in a big way. They can join hands with builders who are into developing residential properties," says Khanna, adding, "There are a large number of people who do not have regular income but live in properties worth several crores of rupees. They can join hands with builders not only to retain their property but also to earn some extra money." Devinder Gupta, chairman and managing director of realty advisory DGS Realtors, says that as the value of real estate has doubled in the last 15 months and continues to shoot up year on year, living in bungalows is bound to become a thing of the past. "The younger generation is putting pressure on their elders to dispose of properties with huge values," Gupta says. Another banker, who attended the clinic, says: "There were several participants with priceless properties and quite unaware of this fact. They hardly know that the rates of properties in the capital have quadrupled in the last few

years. In fact, many of them are even unaware that the law allows for four storeys, plus basement and a still-level parking. That way, you can unlock the huge value of your asset without displacing yourself to some faraway suburb."

Khanna says: "After the clinic, I told many people planning to sell their houses to think twice before taking this step. I discouraged them by saying that if they sell the property they would have to face a lot of issues and that it is better to unlock the real value of their property. It would serve their cause in every possible manner." Property owners were also told by the panel that they must bear in mind that when they sell their property and buy another, they have to pay a broker's commission twice over; and for both, transaction commission one pays varies between 1-2% of the cost of the property.

Then there's a 6% stamp duty for every property transaction, so when you sell, the buyer pays stamp duty, but when you buy, you pay the entire stamp duty. By the time you wrap up the deal, you could have lost as much as 5-10% of your gain in money. And, in case you want to buy another property with the proceeds of the sale you could end up losing as much as 10-15% of the value as transaction costs in the entire process. Apart from this financial setback, there's the very real emotional loss that comes with selling a house that's been home for decades.

Gates: style and security statement

Unlike in the past, gates of houses are now both taller and stylish, satisfying the need for security as well as aesthetics

VIVEK SHUKLA

The gate of your house or apartment is the first thing that makes an impression on all those who visit your place. It goes without saying that a gate that is unwieldy, creaking or lacking a flourish in shape or colour becomes an eyesore.

There is a group-housing society in IP

on the list of a person planning to buy or construct a house. And, more often than not, quality, beauty and even size are often overlooked.

Sanjay Khanna, director of Kailash Nath Projects Pvt Limited, says that as recently as a decade ago, a gate was meant only to protect the house from intruders and there was little concern for beauty, colour, design or size. "Things have changed. Today, many homeowners

it takes one or two weeks to complete standard, well-ornate gates.

Heavier gates cost much more. Gate designers say that the rate, inclusive of labour charges, comes to Rs 100 per kg. An entry-level gate of 3-metre long and 1.5-metre high would cost around Rs 20,000.

Nazma Rizvi, a former lecturer at the capital's School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), says contemporary and classic-styled gates have many takers.



Extension, which is supposed to be the best and costliest; it has a huge gate with silver and blue colour. Honestly, it looks bad and spoils the image of the society too.

Admittedly, a decent gate that can keep burglars at bay is required outside your house, as well as the apartment. In recent times, the variety of gates have been changing and changing fast. Unlike in the past, they are now both taller and stylish. They are no longer simple and small.

Why this change in the look of gates? While it is not easy to find the exact reason, it seems that now, people are going in for the new models for security reasons. They also build high walls compared to earlier times, when the walls of houses used to be low, not more than five feet.

It goes without saying that when you enter a house, the gate is what catches your attention before anything else. Surprisingly, a gate is always the last one

spend large sums of money in buying or ordering custom-made showpiece gates. Security factor also weighs in," Khanna says. Realty experts say that the selection of a gate is important, as the choice can help save or squander money. "A homeowner must have a clear-cut idea about the size and design of the gate he wants and the money he would like to spend on it. And, before rushing to buy one, if he were to consult the architect who designed the house, it would be all the more better," says Sunil Jindal, the chief executive officer of SVP Group.

Surely, a bad looking gate mars the beauty of a house, and a gate too high or too long ends up blocking off the facade. A simple gate made of iron would cost you not more than Rs 15,000 and the price varies with the design. Designers say complicated sculptural designs require more welding, thereby increasing the cost. Labour charges also go up for complicated and intricate patterns. Normally,

QUICK BITES

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There have been cases where homeowners have commissioned a gate and the compound costing as much as Rs 5 lakh.

Despite a lot of euphoria over remote-controlled gates, they have not been able to make a dent in the market. Not many people opt for such gates. A dealer of cast-iron gates in Jagatpuri, in the capital, says that they have withdrawn the remote-controlled gates as there are not many takers. Periodic malfunction of these techgadgets may be one reason why they have lost public appeal, he says.

People who want to give a traditional touch to their houses never hesitate to spend an extra sum in making the entrance look posh. And, the dexterity in construction and the beauty of cast-iron gates are essential components in this enterprise. The size of a gate can vary with the length and breadth of the house. Measure the distance between the house and the gate before deciding on a design.

Pratap Sehgal, an author, says that his house in Rajouri Garden had small walls with a small gate till a couple of years ago, when he realized that burglars easily scaled small walls and gates. It was then that he realized the importance of high walls and a stout and tall gate.