'Passive House,' aggressive about energy savings, is under contract

Terms:

List of terms

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What is believed to be the Washington area’s first “Passive House” — a super-insulated, airtight structure that uses 90 percent less energy than a comparable conventional home — has a pending sale after first being purchased less than two years ago.

The owners, Ian and Lydia Kline, bought the clapboard-sided, four-square Craftsman-style house on Bethesda’s North Chelsea Lane in October 2011 for $1.435 million three months after it was completed. They recently put it on the market for $1.499 million; it went under contract four days later.

“My clients love their home, but they’re a growing family and just need more space,” says real estate agent Erich Cabe with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in the District. “It’s a five-bedroom home, but one bedroom is on the lower level and another is on the upper level, a really cool space with a loft. When you have young kids like they do, you really want them all on the same level.”

The 4,660-square-foot home, profiled in the Real Estate section in February, contains nine-inch-thick walls, 12-inch-thick roof panels and a super-efficient energy system that costs them only $200 a month to run.

Cabe says that the new buyers are very interested in the passive house features, but that other prospective buyers were equally interested in the home’s location within walking distance to the Metro, the neighborhood and the design.

“When you’re in it, you really don’t know it’s a passive house unless you look at the thick walls or notice that the outlets don’t look like traditional outlets,” Cabe says. “The owners even put in a fireplace that burns clean fuel but doesn’t have a traditional chimney.”

Gaithersburg’s downtown makeover

A new downtown is coming to Gaithersburg.

Construction has begun on Downtown Crown, a mixed-use development at the heart of Crown, a transit-oriented project under development in Gaithersburg just west of Interstate 270 and the Intercounty Connector.

Downtown Crown, which will have 260,000 square feet of retail space, will include a Harris Teeter grocery store, an L.A. Fitness center and 540 apartments.

The Cadence apartment complex from Bozzuto includes an outdoor kitchen, a fire pit for year-round outdoor entertaining, a media room for hosting a Super Bowl party or movie night, an outdoor swimming pool and a fitness center open 24 hours per day.

Plans for the town center also include a village green for outdoor concerts and festivals, and a farmers market.

Tip of the week

If you’re a senior and want to be fashionable yet safe in your home, try disguising a handrail as a chair rail.

That’s from Emily Henderson, host of HGTV’s “Design Star,” who this week oversaw a makeover of the home of 81-year old Fran Ferguson of the District, who lives at Sunrise Senior Living’s Connecticut Avenue complex, as a contest prize.

Henderson suggests installing the handrail in the middle of the wall. You can disguise it as a chair rail by painting the portion of the wall above it darker than the half of the wall beneath it.

3.35%↑

vMortgage rate: The average 30-year rate continued its downward slide this week, falling from 3.4 percent and inching closer to a historic low.
Pino bids adieu to no-reserve auction

As we reported last month, some real estate observers thought a plan by Miami home builder Sergio Pino to auction his 140-acre Horsefields Farm in Upperville without reserve or a minimum bid was just too risky.

It would have allowed the highest bidder, no matter how low the offer, to walk away with the property for which he paid $6.7 million in 2006 and was seeking $14.9 million.

Well, Pino decided to hedge his bets. By last week’s auction, he had changed his mind, opting for a minimum reserve of $5 million.

Seven bidders competed for Horsefields, but the highest offer was $4.2 million.

The house is now available in a traditional sale, listed with realty agent Rob Carney of TTR Sotheby’s International Realty in McLean for $10 million.

The farm’s stone manor house has six bedrooms, six bathrooms and space for entertaining. The grounds include a barn with 10 horse stalls. The property also has guest houses, a caretaker’s cottage, a custom-designed gym and a swimming pool.

Pino, who used the farm as a summer home, had said he hoped the auction without reserve would draw international buyers rather than only interest from the Middleburg area.


Links: