

In Spring, Homeowners Turn Their Attention to Landscaping and Lawn Care

Last week's column devoted just one paragraph to landscape improvements that might add value to your home. This week I'll address the topic at greater length and with less of a focus on improving the resale value of your home.

I sold my Golden home last year and moved to Avenida Lakewood (now called Solana Lakewood, under new owners), but I retain several ideas and opinions to share about the topic of landscaping and lawn care.

For lawn care, I hired a company to mow my lawn, but prior to that I purchased a corded electric lawn mower. Lowe's and Ace Hardware have the franchise for EGO battery electric lawn mowers, which I have

heard from others are the best. EGO makes many battery-powered yard tools, all of which use the same interchangeable battery. They have edgers, string trimmers, chainsaws, riding and push mowers, snowblowers, leaf blowers, you-name-it. Check out all the EGO products at www.EGOWaterPlus.com.

Consider for a moment how much quieter your neighborhood would be in the spring, summer and fall if everyone used electric yard tools! Also, it's well documented that small gas engines are major contributors to air pollution and climate change. According to the EPA, small gas-powered equipment such as lawn mowers and leaf blowers emit 242 million tons of pollu-

tants annually — as much as cars and homes.

As water bills increase, homeowners are wondering whether perhaps they should replace their Kentucky bluegrass lawns with something that requires less watering. I replaced my lawn with a slower growing sod, but it still required a lot of water. In retrospect I think buffalo grass would have been a better choice. Check with your water utility. The Colorado Water Conservation Board is providing funds to replace lawns, with rebates up to \$1/sq.ft. Visit EngageCWCB.org.

(Wouldn't it be smart of CDOT to install buffalo grass on all highway medians and shoulders?)

Xeriscaping is a good solution too, but I can't imagine dog owners and parents of young children wanting to eliminate grassy backyards for their pets and children.

Hardscaping is another matter. This refers to installing patios, retaining walls and walking paths, as well as occasional boulders. An "outdoor kitchen" is a great enhancement which you'll enjoy yourself and will ultimately help sell your home. For this you might want to hire a landscaping company. I can

recommend one or two if you call me, but I suggest you use Google first and interview multiple companies. Although we considered it, we never hired a landscaping company, so any recommendations I make would not be based on personal experience.

My house, like many Golden homes, was encircled by juniper bushes, but those are a fire hazard and should be nowhere near your home in case of an approaching wildfire. I noticed recently that the new owner of my Golden home had pulled out all the junipers, and she told me that it was for that reason.

Trees are great, but you need to be mindful about which species you plant and where. On the south side of your house, you want to plant deciduous trees, which will shade your home in the summer but allow the sun into your home during the winter. Limit evergreens to the north side of your house, and choose trees that won't shade your south-facing roof as they mature if you have or plan to install solar panels.

Please share your own landscaping ideas with me, and maybe I'll feature them in a future column. Thanks, and happy spring!



By JIM SMITH
Realtor®

Just Listed: Home Backing to Lena Gulch

This well-maintained 3-bedroom/2-bath tri-level with basement at **13065 W. 15th Drive** is located in Applewood Valley near the Denver West office park and Colorado Mills, with easy access to highways and shopping. The home faces south and backs to Lena Gulch, a year-round stream. (The home is above the flood zone.) The 0.31-acre lot is professionally landscaped front and back, with perennial gardens that are about to explode with color! Inside you'll find updated windows and baths and hardwood flooring on all three above-grade levels. This home has great bones, with an updated electric panel, newer roof, newer sewer line, newer furnace and A/C. The seller purchased this home with her late husband in 1986. You can tell that it is well cared for. There is no HOA, and there's room to park an RV without blocking the 2-car attached garage or 1-car carport. Listing agent **Jim Swanson (303-929-2727)** will be holding it open this **Saturday, April 29th, from 11am to 1pm**. A narrated video tour of this listing, inside and out, can be viewed at www.ApplewoodHome.online.



Solar-Powered Home in Geos Community

I have written many times about Arvada's Geos Community, where all 25 units, like this detached single-family home at **15062 W. 59th Place**, were built as all-electric homes, solar powered, designed to passive solar standards, using the latest heat pump technology, and super-insulated with CERVs to maximize indoor air quality. The garages are wired for charging EVs. Built in 2017, the idea was to be a model for the kind of construction needed to reduce the carbon footprints of residential housing. I have

done my part to publicize and promote it, but I have yet to see a metro Denver developer adopt this proven style of home construction. Indeed, the developer who purchased the adjoining land to build 130 "Geos Community" homes is not following the all-electric, geothermal, heat pump example of these original homes — and they're selling those new homes at a higher price per square foot than these homes have sold for. Bottom-line, this home is the only true all-electric Geos home you can buy, and it's priced to sell! Energy costs over the past 12 months averaged \$19.91/month, including charging the seller's EV. I spell out all the sustainable features of this home in a video tour at www.JeffcoSolarHomes.com, and I'm holding it open this **Saturday, 2 to 4pm**.



2-BR Townhome in Golden 55+ Community



Maintenance-free patio homes and 55+ communities are rare. This townhome at **1140 Ulysses Street** is in one of only two such subdivisions within the City of Golden. There are only 24 townhomes in this self-managed HOA, with low monthly dues and Golden's low all-inclusive property taxes. The units are all story-and-a-half, with a main-floor master suite plus a guest bedroom with ensuite bathroom and loft upstairs. There's no basement. There's a 2-car attached garage with 8+ guest parking spaces adjacent to this end unit. There's a large covered porch, visible in this picture, and the community's gazebo used for weekly happy hours during the summer is steps from this home's porch. The finishes in this unit, as in all the units, are high end, with hardwood floors. It's a community of happy and friendly neighbors, evident in the fact that there have only been four sales since 2016. **Agent showings are limited to this Thursday 1-6 pm** and during the open house this **Saturday, April 29, from 11am to 1pm**. Meanwhile, you can view a narrated video tour of this listing at www.GoldenTownhome.info.

There's no basement. There's a 2-car attached garage with 8+ guest parking spaces adjacent to this end unit. There's a large covered porch, visible in this picture, and the community's gazebo used for weekly happy hours during the summer is steps from this home's porch. The finishes in this unit, as in all the units, are high end, with hardwood floors. It's a community of happy and friendly neighbors, evident in the fact that there have only been four sales since 2016. **Agent showings are limited to this Thursday 1-6 pm** and during the open house this **Saturday, April 29, from 11am to 1pm**. Meanwhile, you can view a narrated video tour of this listing at www.GoldenTownhome.info.

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Jim Smith
Broker/Owner, 303-525-1851
Jim@GoldenRealEstate.com
1214 Washington Ave., Golden

Broker Associates:
JIM SWANSON, 303-929-2727
CHUCK BROWN, 303-885-7855
DAVID DLUGASCH, 303-908-4835
GREG KRAFT, 720-353-1922
AUSTIN POTTORFF, 970-281-9071