

Condominium Home Owners' Association

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Bulletin: 300-176

Condo Smarts

Headline: Strata can't stop open house

Topic: Open houses

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Dear Condo Smarts: Last weekend our condo went on the market and our realtor scheduled an open house for Sunday from 12-4.

When he showed up, the council president met him at the door with the strata bylaws informing him that open houses and the posting of signs was prohibited. I understand we still have an active market, but if we can't post a sign or hold an open house how are we supposed to be able to sell our home?

- Karen Carter, Kelowna

Dear Karen: The strata corporation cannot prohibit or unreasonably restricts the right of an owner to freely sell a strata lot.

While the strata may pass a bylaw that governs the activities, like sign locations, and times for showings and open houses, they cannot prohibit these basic needs of a vendor.

However; from the perspective of the strata council and owners, open houses and properties littered with signs can be a security risk and an unsightly detriment to property values.

An open house can be an advertised invitation to an unwanted visitor or thief. Once they have gained access to most buildings they can freely access most areas, placing the owners and residents at risk.

It is not unreasonable for a strata to require that the agent of owner meet open house guests at the entry and escort them to and from the suite.

Sign trees well located near building entries can be both tasteful and effective sales tools, solving the problems of massed real estate boards.

Remember you have rights as a vendor, but you still have obligations as an owner.

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