

Real Estate

Your guide to homes, property and apartments in Johnson County

HOME DESIGN

New home designs forgo the formal living room in favor of open space

By SUSAN SULLIVAN
BUILDERS ASSOCIATION OF GREATER INDIANAPOLIS

Whether you live in a sleek downtown condominium or a large suburban home, your living room says a lot about your lifestyle. If you are sophisticated or more laid-back, this area sets a tone for your entire home.

Increasingly, formal American living rooms, showcasing the home's finest furniture and kept in pristine condition to be entered only when company visits, are a thing of the past. Few buyers today want such "perfect" spaces that are seldom used. In fact, the majority dismiss them altogether.

The National Association of Home Builders finds kitchens are more important than formal living rooms, especially for baby boomers who want kitchens versatile enough for gourmet cooking and stylish enough for entertaining.

"Most floor plans today are designed for casual, not formal, entertaining. A large kitchen, preferably with high ceilings and tall

upper cabinets, which opens into a comfortable great room with a fireplace and lots of windows is the heart of most new homes," said Steve Masuccio of Westport Homes, which builds homes in Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Columbus, Ohio, and Charlotte, N.C.

Masuccio said consumers seek flexibility, with the option to use rooms for formal living rooms or home offices, for example.

"Home offices and other areas are currently more popular than formal living rooms. The



Few of today's buyers are choosing a formal, "company-only" living room. Instead, they want large, casual living spaces.

emphasis is on open space and easy access from room to room, not a formal space that is separate from the main living area."

Multi-functional living areas and "optional" spaces are more common in new home design. Cleto Kunce, of Indianapolis-based Signature Architecture, said,

"Spaces that are flexible and multi-functional are sought by new home buyers of all ages. Many individuals are looking for usable, quality spaces for themselves and for

entertaining family and friends."

Kunce said designers are also creating more light-filled lower-level spaces adaptable for casual family functions, such as exercise areas, game rooms, children's play rooms, high-tech media rooms and home theaters, art studios, guest quarters and offices.

Masuccio said most builders who do offer formal living rooms are making them smaller. "The typical great room, however, has grown dramatically," he said. "Consumers have driven this trend, so builders and designers are listening to what they want and need in a home."

Before you choose a floor plan, consider if a formal living room is a good use of your space. If you want a quiet area away from the center of the home for hosting business associates or other important visitors, a traditional living room is an appropriate setting. It is also a place where you might display fine furnishings, like valuable artwork. But if you have a busy family or prefer to live more informally, a formal living room may not meet your needs.

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 Very Updated Home \$169,900-35 Hazy Ct. MLS#2605405 3 Bedroom, 3 Bath Ranch w/finished Rec/Play rm. Stained Staircase. Nice size BR's 1/2 acre lot, large deck, formal DR, breakfast, living, family, lg laundry rm + sm. Bonus rm for office, etc. Ernestine Abrams 432-9979	 Elegant "Ashwood" Condo \$499,900-1582 Ashwood Ct. MLS#2601626 3BR (2MBD, Den + Sun Rm-Main). 3C-Gar. Easy access downtown, shops, restrnts, churches, schls. Open concept, wh wdwk, cthdrl cigs, granite, hrdwds, tile, blt-ins, wlk-ins, 2 turn & A/Cs. Strg + Joannie Burgett 965-4903	 Lamb Lake! \$524,900 4671 W. Cardinal Point MLS#2544261 5BR Ranch w/walk-out bsmt w/100 ft lake frontage on main part of lake with w/great views. Very open & light Gr w/frplc & formal din, sun room, rec rm w/frplc. Lots of storage. Covered 2 boat dock boat. Steve Burkhardt 216-5749	 This is a Must See! \$224,900 MLS#2609900 Terrific 4BR 2 story with a huge great room, formal dining room, private den & a basement. Large wood deck overlooks a pond & cul-de-sac location for limited traffic. Mike Cagle 216-4149	 Brown County Treasure \$549,900-3407 Raspberry Lane MLS#2574392 Incredible craftsmanship! 2 story GR, slipper shoe tub in master, brushed oak floors, 31 acres, 60x45 pole barn. Hike, hunt or hide! Tony Coykendall 626-7232	 Great Condo! \$83,000-593 Cielo Vista Dr. MLS#2571338 1st hole of Valle Vista Golf Course! Huge 2 story entry. Big GR w/built in entertainment unit. Master on main w/dbl closets & full deck! 2nd BR has private deck. Kay Dunaway 216-5857	 Newer Custom Built Home! \$164,900-1119 Tampico Rd. MLS#2522864 Sharp, clean 3BR/2 bath Ranch on Valle Vista Golf Course. New floor coverings & fresh interior paint in March '05. Ready to move into & enjoy the big open green space. Norma Edwards 216-3738
 Beautifully Maintained \$169,900-6657 Bloomfield Drive MLS#2604557 Brick Ranch w/in bsmt. 3BR/2 full baths, FR, in-ground pool w/nice deck & mini barn. Updated kitchen, ceramic flrs, all mechanicals. Great neighborhood - Bloomfield Estates. Virginia Engloff 847-8812	 Versatile, Upscale Condo \$149,900-7134 New Harmony Rd. MLS#2604520 Great location! Fresh paint & newer carpets, MBR w/full shower & lg walk-in closet. Vaulted ceilings & skylights in both FR & FR, crown trim, gas frplc. Finished 2C gar. Mel Fletcher 329-4989	 Prestigious Design \$565,900-4953 W. Benhaven Dr. MLS#2572434 Stunning two story entry, columns into two story GR, balcony overlook, library w/coffered ceiling + bookcases! Master suite on appl. Fin bsmt w/kit. Cliff Heidenreich 413-1167	 Cures Small-Space Blues! \$144,900-905 Nicole Way MLS#2568660 Lovely place to treasure! Charming, fenced Traditional-style enhanced by high ceilings, walk-in closets, plus a formal dining room, fireplace. 4BR/2 and 1/2 baths. Judith Jennings 216-3718	 Need Extra More Space? \$149,900-575 North Shore MLS#2609550 4BR/2.5 bath 2 story on the water. Large eat-in kitchen opens to a large family room w/ fireplace plus there's a formal living room. Huge backyard overlooks a pond. Tom Johnson 290-5310	 Great Condo - Reduced! \$154,900-476 Cambly Ct. MLS#2539650 Fantastic 2BR/2BA condo in great area. Close to shopping & major roads. This home features GR, Formal DR, spacious kit, adjacent brkfst rm & patio. 2C gar 24x24. John LaVine 216-4057	 Impressive! \$375,000-1677 Ashwood Dr. MLS#2602882 Condo w/3BD, 3Car gar, 2600 sq ft, MBD & Den on Main. Convenient. Laundry. Bonus Rm. GR gas frplc. Sep Dining & eat-in Kit. Hrdwds. Tile Cwn molding. Storage over 3Car gar. Home Warr. Nancy Lee 333-6071
 Ready to Build? \$63,000-4724 Hickorywood Row. MLS#2547838 This lot in prestigious golf course community of Hickory Stick is waiting for you. Owner has had the lot cleared for building & left just the right amount of trees for shade. Barb McKeel 290-3819	 In the Country but Close \$154,900-776 N 575 W. Bargersville MLS#2606761 Sharp clean 3BR/2 bath Ranch w/large kitchen on 6 acres. Close to St Rd 37 makes it easy access to Bloomington, Greenwood & Indy. Call to arrange tour! Georgia Miller 888-4000	 Elegance with Style \$499,900-6297 Deerfield Dr. MLS#275602070 4BR, 3C gar w/4906sf on 1/2 acre. MBD + Den on main. DR + Brkfst, Rec Rm. (Amenities + scrn porch, 1 1/2 frpls, hrdwds, tile, blt-ins, Wrkshp/stg rm). Comm pool/tennis. Karin Millis 418-5821	 Keeneland Crest! \$124,900-8217 Nuckols Lane. MLS#2560096 3BR/2.5BA 2 story! GR w/vaulted ceilings & gas frplc! Gourmet kitchen/breakfast rm w/white ceramic tile floor! LG MBR w/sep tub + shower + WI closet. Neutral throughout! 2 level deck + lg bkdyd. Teresa Mohr 328-6222	 Foxberry Trace \$139,900-3927 Chantry Way MLS#2555417 4BR 2-story in great area convenient to schools & shopping. Featuring LR + FR, lg kit w/laminate floors, upgraded cabinets & pantry. MBR w/full bath & WI closet. Steve Burkhardt 216-5749	 Oldefield Estates \$194,900-484 Georgetown Rd. MLS#2575667 Brand new M/I home featuring 4BR w/LR + Fam Rm w/frplc, deluxe master bath, 3 car garage & many upgrades! Buy now & move in February. Call for special financing! Noel Pottinger 670-5298	 Absolutely Stunning! \$699,900-4717 Hickory Wood Row. MLS#2572436 2 story w/radiu staircase entry. Heart of Pine entry, den, DR, oak 2 sty GR, gourmet kit w/waloclain tile + granite. Master suite on main, 3 bonus rooms, rec rm. Call for list. Steve Reel 590-REEL
 Affordable Franklin Home \$91,000-1069 Northpointe Dr. MLS#2603737 3BR/2 full baths, 1048 SF. Corner lot. Fenced backyard w/patio. Mini barn. Vaulted ceiling. Nice kitchen w/separate dining. MB has bath with walk-in closet. John Sims 339-6588	 Peaceful Setting \$154,900-776 N 575 W. Bargersville MLS#2606761 3BR/2BA 2 story w/FP in FR. 2 acres w/fenced backyard. 2C att, covered porch, eat-in kit w/breakfast bar + kitchenette on 2nd floor. All appliances stay. Martha Smart 216-4076	 Garfield Park \$69,900-1411 Corner Ave. MLS#2755479 Very nice Bungalow! Totally updated kitchen + many appliances! Good size bedrooms + bonus room, 1 1/2 baths. Covered front porch. Fenced yard. Mary Smith 319-0182	 Great Location \$139,900-344 Stoneybrook Grove. MLS#2607934 Fantastic 3BR/2BA Ranch w/neutral decor on great lot w/wood deck & privacy fenced bkdyd. LR + FR w/frplc opens to kitchen w/center island + breakfast rm! Wonderful master! Jon Sturm 224-7352	 Fabulous Mini-Farm \$369,000-1322 S. Morgantown Rd. MLS#2608616 Morgantown, IN Lovely 3BR/3BA updated home with sunroom & in-ground pool. 22 acres w/3 acre lake, 45x72 pole barn w/40x40 bldg, 30x60 bldg w/20x30 living quarters & so much more! Jim Tanner 435-2512	 Greenwood Stone Ranch \$114,900-171 W. Wiley St. MLS#2571281 3BD/2BA - Brand new roof & gutters! Updates incl - flooring, baths, fireplace, & more! Refinished hardwood floors & detailed trim work! Immediate possession! Cate Waggoner 216-6341	 Exceptionally Maintained! \$137,900-1074 Springwater Dr. MLS#2604006 3BR/2 bath Davis built Ranch. Vaulted ceilings in FR w/ceramic tiled gas frplc. Kitchen MBR & Bath! Laminate flooring in foyer. Master w/walk-in closet. Upgraded appliances. Lori White 216-4425



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