

**2007 Year-end update for St. George Island and Franklin County  
Real Estate Activity  
By Harry Plumblee**

Whew, I thought the year would never end! What a year for Real Estate Sales. I'll try to dispense with the numbers through a few short charts and get on with the current situation. But, I must say at this point for all you buyers who want a property in this area, now is the time! You can name your deal. Sellers want to sell and there are plenty of choices for you buyers.

<b>St. George Island Sales—1/1/2007 to 12/31/2007</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b># Sales</b>	<b>Total \$</b>	<b>Avg. Sale-\$</b>
Residence	33	\$36,115,900	\$1,094,421
Lots	17	\$9,648,000	\$547,529
Commercial	1	\$775,000	\$775,000

I won't belabor last year's situation by trying to make detailed comparisons with previous years results, but suffice it to say that total SGI sales in 2004, the peak sales year here, exceeded \$319M with 377 sales, or 7 times the production for this year, both in sales \$ and number of transactions. Curiously, the average price of a transaction on St. George

Island has increased about 8% since 2004.

<b>Franklin County (less SGI) Sales—1/1/2007 to 12/31/2007</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b># Sales</b>	<b>Total \$</b>	<b>Avg. Sale-\$</b>
Residence	57	\$14,360,550	\$251,939
Lots	38	\$7,689,500	\$202,355
Commercial	4	\$485,000	\$121,250

In the rest of Franklin County, which includes Apalachicola, Eastpoint, Carrabelle, Lanark, St. James, St. Teresa, Dog Island and Alligator Point, the sales \$ volume and number of transactions are down by a factor of 9 from the peak year of 2004. I think the numbers speak for themselves, so that is

it for 2007 as far as I am concerned.

The issue in Florida and much of the rest of the Nation is the subject of foreclosures. Nevada is leading the Nation in number of foreclosures per capita, and Florida is not far behind. Relatively, this area is not so bad off compared to some parts of south Florida, but we have our share of foreclosures as well.

Some properties are being offered through a "Short Sale" process. This means that the potential selling price is less than the mortgage on the property. This may mean it is a good deal for the buyer, but not necessarily. If the amount the bank and seller are willing to take (even if it is well below the mortgage amount) is more than the property is worth in this market, then it is not a good deal. But I believe there are some great deals on foreclosed properties and I can help you with this.

Other properties are being offered through auction. Quite a few have been held in the past 2 years with limited success. About the only auctions that seem to bring out buyers are the Absolute Auctions. We have not had many of these for obvious reasons.

My feeling is that the current situation in the stock markets should lead to money moving from stocks back into real estate. Certainly this won't result in a near term boom in real estate, but savvy investors recognize this is the time to get back into this market here. So, if you have wanted to own a property on SGI or any of the other gorgeous places in Franklin County this is the best time I have seen in my 13 years here in the Real Estate market. Also, long-term interest rates, as well as rates based on prime are way down and still dropping. 30 year conforming rates are down to about 5.5%.

Give us a call to get more information on properties that are selling for "give-away prices". For instance, would you believe a beachfront house on a 1-acre lot on the East End for under \$1,000,000, or a 1-acre lot in the Plantation for under \$200,000? Well these as well as other great deals are ready for the plucking.

Harry & Katrena Plumblee  
Weichert REALTORS® Anchor  
850 323 0969 (cell)  
850 927 3427 (office)  
Or contact us at [harryp@florida-beach.com](mailto:harryp@florida-beach.com)