

HISTORIC HOME SELLER'S GUIDE

Prepared to Sell

**A Seller's Guide for Historic Home Owners in the Fan District,
Museum District, Monument Avenue & Church Hill**

The Chris Small Group | Park 27 · Richmond, Virginia

A NOTE FROM CHRIS

Some Houses Simply Need to Be Understood

I've spent more than 40 years selling homes in Richmond, and if there is one thing I have learned about the Fan, the Museum District, Monument Avenue, and Church Hill, it is this: these houses were built by craftsmen who don't exist anymore, and they carry decades of character and story that today's buyers still fall in love with — but only when that story is presented right.

A historic home is not a spec house. It has original millwork, a porch that has held a hundred summers of conversation, maybe a mantel or a transom that's been there since Woodrow Wilson was president. Buyers researching these neighborhoods today are comparing your home, consciously or not, against move-in-ready renovations down the street. Presentation is what tells them your home has been cared for — not that it's a project.

That is exactly why I built this guide: a specialized playbook for getting a historic Richmond home market-ready, grounded in the same data-driven approach I'd use to appraise your home's value. Richmond's neighborhood Realtor for the Fan and the Museum District — and the market's top producer in both — I've built my business on knowing these blocks house by house, and on partnering with the right specialists to prepare each one to sell.

I hope this guide gives you a clear, confident starting point. I'd welcome the chance to walk your home with you.

Warmly,

Chris Small

Principal Broker | The Chris Small Group at Park 27

Today's Buyer Has Changed

The first showing happens online. The second happens in person — and by then, a buyer has usually already decided how they feel about your home. For owners of historic properties in the Fan, Museum District, Monument Avenue corridor, and Church Hill, that first impression is doing more work than ever, because buyers are actively comparing your original, untouched details against move-in-ready renovations just a few blocks away. Presentation is what signals “cared for” instead of “project.”

2%

Homes with an appealing online presence can command roughly 2% higher prices — about \$9,000 more on an average-priced home.¹

32%

Professionally photographed listings sell about 32% faster, and for higher prices, than listings with amateur photos.²

22–27

Zillow's own research finds 22–27 photos is the sweet spot for listing performance; homes with fewer than 9 photos are about 20% less likely to sell within 60 days.³

85%

83% of buyers' agents say proper staging makes it easier for buyers to picture themselves living in a home.⁴

For historic homes specifically, this is the whole game: buyers shopping the Fan, Museum District, Monument Avenue, and Church Hill are weighing your home against both fully renovated competitors and other original-condition listings. A strong online presence, professional photography, and thoughtful staging are how an untouched historic home competes — and wins — on its own terms.

SOURCES

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2. Luxury Presence, “How Often Should I Change the Images on My Site?” <https://www.luxurypresence.com/blogs/how-often-should-i-change-the-images-on-my-site/>
3. Zillow Research via Lens Collective, “Photo Count: Optimizing Real Estate Listings,” <https://www.lens-collective.com/journal/photo-count-optimizing-real-estate-listings>
4. Opendoor, citing NAR data, “Real Estate Photography Tips to Make Your Listing Stand Out,” <https://www.opendoor.com/articles/real-estate-photography-tips-to-make-your-listing-stand-out>

Preparing Your Historic Home for Sale

A checklist built specifically for owners of century-old Richmond homes — because preparing a historic property is not the same as prepping a standard resale.

- ☐ **Document the story.** Original build year, architect (if known — e.g., Carl M. Lindner’s work on the Gaslight Block), renovation history, and permits pulled. Buyers of historic homes pay for provenance, not just square footage.
- ☐ **Lead with original character.** Hardwood floors, moldings, mantels, transoms, stained glass, front porches — clean and restore them. Never strip away what makes the home historic.
- ☐ **Disclose modern systems.** A pre-listing inspection and disclosure of electrical, plumbing, and HVAC updates reassures buyers that the “bones” are sound, even where finishes remain original.
- ☐ **Get curb appeal right for the context.** Exterior paint, ironwork, and landscaping should read as intentional and period-appropriate. The first impression starts at the sidewalk — especially on Monument Avenue and along Church Hill’s rowhomes.
- ☐ **Declutter and depersonalize.** Clear every room so buyers can project their own life onto the home’s original architecture.
- ☐ **Fix the small things before photography.** Paint touch-ups, lighting, and window treatments. Small, strategic upgrades can create a six-figure difference in perceived value.
- ☐ **Plan for vacant staging when the home is empty.** If the home is vacant during the sale — common once an owner has already moved — plan for full vacant staging rather than leaving rooms empty. Empty historic rooms photograph smaller and colder than they really are.

THE NUMBERS

Why Staging Matters

Staging is not decoration — it is a data-backed investment with a measurable return, and the case for it is even stronger in historic homes.

85%

of staged homes sold for 5% to 23% over their listing price.⁵

**25 vs. 47
days**

Staged homes sell in an average of 23 days versus 47 days for non-staged homes — a 51% reduction in time on market — with an average staging ROI around 312%.⁶

3–30× faster

Per the Real Estate Staging Association, staging helps sell homes three to thirty times faster than non-staged competition, and can increase sale price by up to 20% on average; sellers who skip staging often absorb price reductions 5 to 20 times larger than the staging investment would have been.⁷

**75% of
sellers**

saw a 5% to 15% return over asking price on an average staging investment of about 1% of sale price.⁸

This matters even more for historic homes. Vacant historic properties — common during renovation-to-sale transitions — are the hardest to sell, because empty period rooms read as smaller and colder than they really are. Full vacant staging solves exactly that problem, as you'll see in the case studies ahead.

SOURCES

5. The Zebra, "Home Staging Statistics," <https://www.thezebra.com/resources/research/home-staging-statistics/>

6. Done & Done Home, "Most Important Home Staging Statistics," <https://ddh-home.com/most-important-home-staging-statistics/>

7. NAR / Real Estate Staging Association, "Why Staging Matters Even in a Seller's Market," <https://www.nar.realtor/news/styled-staged-sold/why-staging-matters-even-in-a-sellers-market>

8. RESA via NAR, "Why Staging Matters Even in a Seller's Market," <https://www.nar.realtor/news/styled-staged-sold/why-staging-matters-even-in-a-sellers-market>

THE PROCESS

The Park 27 + Jsquared Playbook

Every historic listing I take to market goes through the same design-consultation-first process, built in partnership with Jsquared Interior Staging & Design — a Richmond-based firm founded in 2011 by Johnathan H. Miller and Jon Miller.

1. Pre-listing design consultation — paint, lighting, and finish decisions, made before a single box is packed.
2. Renovation-design input, in some cases, before construction is even finished.
3. Full vacant home staging once construction and prep work are complete.
4. Professional photography and video, so the finished presentation carries through every channel a buyer sees.

Jsquared has staged thousands of homes across Central Virginia over 15 years, earned 100+ industry awards, and been featured on NBC, HGTV, FOX, and CBS.⁹ The firm is recognized by the International Association of Home Staging Professionals (IAHSP) for Home Staging Excellence, Design Excellence, and Client Care Excellence, and its founder has been named among the Most Influential People in Real Estate Staging by the Real Estate Staging Association (RESA).⁹

In the first half of 2026 alone, Jsquared completed 30 staging projects totaling a combined \$21.8 million in sales, with staged listings averaging 5% over list price and drawing offers in an average of just 12 days.⁹

“When we stage a vacant home from scratch, every piece we bring in has a job to do... A record price per square foot in a home this age tells you the staging did what it needed to do.”

— Johnathan H. Miller, Founder, Jsquared Interior Staging & Design¹⁰

SOURCES

9. PR Wire India, “Over 100 Awards and 15 Years Later, Jsquared Is Having Its Best Year Yet,” <https://prwireindia.com/press-release/over-100-awards-and-15-years-later-jsquared-is-having-its-best-year-yet>

10. EIN Presswire, “Richmond Fan District Home Sells \$255K Over Asking, Sets 2026 Price Record,” https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/924392868/richmond-fan-district-home-sells-255k-over-asking-sets-2026-price-record

The Playbook, in Practice

FAN DISTRICT — 2305 Grove Avenue

\$255,000 over asking¹⁰

Listed \$1,095,000 → Sold \$1,350,000

1913-built, 4BR/4BA detached home. Vacant at listing; full vacant staging by Jsquared.

\$466 per square foot — the highest price-per-square-foot recorded in the Central Virginia Regional MLS in 2026.

“Buyers shopping in this price range in the Fan expect to see a home fully realized, not an empty shell.”

— Chris Small

MUSEUM DISTRICT — 3210 Grove Avenue

\$67,050 over asking¹¹

Listed \$1,169,950 → Sold \$1,237,000 in 11 days

1921 Craftsman, 2,352 sq ft, with an architect-designed family-room addition by Charles Aquino, A.I.A. Jsquared consulted on the renovation itself before staging.

~\$526 per square foot.

“Small, strategic upgrades combined with expert staging can create a six-figure difference — improving both your listing price and your competitive position in the market.”

— Chris Small

SOURCES

10. EIN Presswire, “Richmond Fan District Home Sells \$255K Over Asking, Sets 2026 Price Record,”

https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/924392868/richmond-fan-district-home-sells-255k-over-asking-sets-2026-price-record

11. The National Law Review, “Museum District Craftsman Sells \$67,050 Over Asking in 11 Days — Park 27 and Jsquared,”

<https://natlawreview.com/press-releases/museum-district-craftsman-sells-67050-over-asking-11-days-park-27-and>

More Proof, Every Price Point

MUSEUM DISTRICT — 3330 W Franklin Street — The Gaslight Block

\$41,000 over asking¹²

Listed \$1,179,000 → Sold \$1,220,000

1927 brick Tudor designed by architect Carl M. Lindner. 4BR/4BA, with roughly \$200,000 in recent renovations.

The home had sold for \$1,000,000 in June 2025 before renovation and staging — a \$220,000 lift.

MUSEUM DISTRICT — 3209 W Grace Street

Sold above list¹⁵

Listed \$729,950 → Sold \$735,000

1924 brick row home, 3BR/2.5BA, near Scott's Addition. The fourth Park 27 + Jsquared collaboration to close above list price in 2026 — proof the process works at every price point, not just seven-figure listings.

“Not every staging project is a million-dollar listing, and honestly, homes in this range are where preparation can matter most.”

— Johnathan Miller, Jsquared

“This is the third time this year that a listing we prepared with Jsquared has closed above asking, and at three very different price points... That consistency is the point.” — Chris Small¹³

Staging's reach isn't limited to the Fan and Museum District: nearby, a Henrico ranch staged by Jsquared sold 51% (\$460,000) over its list price.¹⁴

SOURCES

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13. The National Law Review, “Museum District Row Home Sells Above Asking, Latest Jsquared and Park 27,” <https://natlawreview.com/press-releases/museum-district-row-home-sells-above-asking-latest-jsquared-and-park-27>

14. EIN Presswire, “Henrico, VA Home Sells \$460K Over Asking After Home Staging by Jsquared,” <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/923650647/henrico-va-home-sells-460k-over-asking-after-home-staging-by-jsquared>

The Story of a Sale

MONUMENT AVENUE — 3306 Monument Avenue

Six offers, closed well over asking¹⁵

Chris Small's own video case study

The home was groomed and staged by Jsquared, then professionally photographed and filmed by HD Bros. It was listed with a one-week delayed-showing strategy, then shown for five straight days.

It drew six offers, including a clean all-cash contract with no inspections, and closed well over the asking price.

WATCH THE STORY

See these sales come to life. Watch real walkthroughs from the Chris Small Group / Park 27 YouTube channel:

- [Story of a Sale: 3306 Monument Avenue](#)

The full walkthrough behind the six-offer sale above.

- [The Prestwould](#)

A tour inside one of Richmond's most storied addresses.

- [Thinking About a Career in Real Estate?](#)

Contact Chris Small at Park 27.

Subscribe to Park 27 on YouTube to see more Story of a Sale walkthroughs as they're released.

SOURCES

15. Chris Small Group / Park 27 on YouTube, "Story of a Sale: 3306 Monument Avenue," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBc9yDh33KU>

WHERE WE WORK

Neighborhood Notes

The Fan District

A dense grid of early-1900s rowhomes and detached Victorians and Craftsmans. Buyers want walkability to Carytown and VCU alongside preserved millwork and porches.

Chris Small is the Fan District's top-producing agent, and vacant historic listings here have set 2026 price-per-square-foot records when staged and presented correctly.

The Museum District

A mix of grand Tudor and Craftsman architecture along the "Gaslight Block" and streets off Monument Avenue. Buyers here range from move-up seven-figure buyers to first-time buyers stretching for a classic row home.

Chris Small is also the top-producing agent in the Museum District.

Monument Avenue Corridor

Richmond's most iconic streetscape — grand facades, formal room proportions, and a premium on curb appeal and a strong first photo. Buyers expect a fully realized, professionally presented home, not a blank canvas.

Church Hill

One of Richmond's oldest neighborhoods, anchored by St. John's Church and Libby Hill Park. Buyers are drawn to circa-1800s to 1920s brick rowhomes and Italianate/Greek Revival architecture with strong renovation upside.

Presentation and documentation of updates matter most here, since buyers are weighing historic charm against renovation cost.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Let's Prepare Your Home to Sell

If you own a historic home in the Fan, the Museum District, along Monument Avenue, or in Church Hill, the single best next step is a no-obligation walkthrough — before you list, before you spend a dollar on prep. I'll walk the property with you, tell you exactly where the story is strongest, and bring in the right team, including Jsquared, to get it market-ready with confidence.

There is no pressure and no cost to have this conversation. Let's talk about what your home is truly worth once it's presented the way today's buyer expects.

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