

NEW HAVEN REGISTER

William Raveis gets into home staging business

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By Luther Turmelle



An example of a kitchen staging by Raveis Refresh.

Shelton-based William Raveis Real Estate has announced it is launching Raveis Refresh, an operation that prepares homes for sale. “In real estate, we know first impressions count,” said Ryan Raveis, co-president of William Raveis Real Estate. Staged homes sell 87 percent faster and for 3 percent more than nonstaged homes, according to the National Association of Realtors. “We’re not going to suggest any improvement that doesn’t have an upside,” Raveis said. “We’re focusing on the high impact.”

The launch of Reveis Refresh comes as industry observers anxiously monitor the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on home sales. For part of March and all of April, Raveis said the number of homes listed with the firm were down compared to previous years. “But the number of showings has come roaring back now,” he said. “There is a lot of pent-up demand. We haven’t seen demand like this for a long, long time. “It’s very important that housing recovers because it touches so many professions,” he said. “There is an army of people attached to any real estate transaction.”

The idea of staging — decorating a home prior to putting it up for sale in a way to showcase its best assets and impress buyers — first emerged in the 1970s. At the time, it was an occasionally used tool employed to boost interest in vacant homes and hard-to sell properties.

It has since become a common “In real estate, we know first impressions count.” Ryan Raveis, co-president, William Raveis Real Estate practice. There are about 4,000 accredited staging professionals in the United States, including 21 in Connecticut, according to the International Association of Home Staging Professionals, a Colorado-based trade group.

Patti Stern has been in the business for 15 years. Her Cheshire-based staging firm, PJ & Co. has a warehouse filled with furniture and accessories that she rents for staging purposes. The coronavirus pandemic



Patti Stern of Cheshire has been in the home staging business for 15 years.

has forced Stern to make some changes to the way she does business. For example, to determine how a seller’s home would benefit from staging, Stern “tours” the house using Zoom or Face Time. She then provides preliminary, written staging recommendations. Once the client determines what level of staging they want, Stern prepares a box of rental accessories for each room that needs to be staged and instructions on how to position it. The box is then left on the homeowner’s doorstep. “This would include everything from sofa pillows, rugs, lighting, bedding, table top accessories, wall art, and anything needed to make the home a ‘wow’ for buyers,” she said.