

Zeroing in on Valuable Charlottesville Spot House Improvements

You don't have to be planning to sell your home to enjoy the benefits from what you might call a few 'strategic spot improvements.' These are limited renovations aimed at specific areas of a house—improvements that might not seem essential to Charlottesville homeowners after years of living with them, but which fresher-eyed visitors see as evidence of a property in need of renewal.

Spot house improvements can be most necessary in living areas that whisper, "*I'm a refugee from the 80's.*" Examples are rooms with popcorn ceilings; with faded green or pink bathroom tiles (really more like refugees from the 50's); or with dark, battered wall paneling. You don't have to be a single-minded *fashionista* to appreciate how such artifacts from days of yore can downgrade any Charlottesville home's appeal.

- The single most called-upon ammunition for duty in spot improvement is just what you'd expect: paint. A gallon or two can revitalize a room, either by a change in color or simply by brightening walls dimmed through decades of service. When it comes to scarred wall paneling, sometimes paint alone can provide the simplest spot solution—a true gift, since it means avoiding a teardown. Today's improved primers may even allow for skipping all but some light sanding between coats. Another area where paint or stain can be transformative is in the renewal of neglected kitchen cabinetry.
- Removing a pre-1980 popcorn ceiling can also be tackled as a do-it-yourself proposition. Experts recommend scraping a test area first to see if it comes off without wetting—if so, removal will be easy. If wetting helps, the job will be slightly messier. But if water doesn't soak in, it means that paint has been over-sprayed. That means tougher scraping—and a decision on whether professional help should be called. If a pre-1980 ceiling is suspected, lead-based paint or asbestos could be present. Charlottesville hardware stores sell inexpensive EPA-approved test kits for both. If either answer comes up positive, it means calling in the professionals—average cost is between \$1 and \$2 per square foot. Or just leaving the popcorn in place (it's harmless if undisturbed).
- As you would think, those 50's era colored tiles call for a professional solution. But they may not need to be replaced. Charlottesville professionals can save as much as 50% of what demolition and replacement would cost. New methods have been developed that allow tiles to be reglazed or refinished, and grout cleaned or replaced—then sealed for permanence.

The result of a few strategic spot house improvements can be remarkably cheering as we emerge from the dark days of winter. And the value in real estate terms can also be disproportionate. Especially if this spring finds you gravitating toward a change in your Charlottesville real estate footing, now is a good time to give me a call to discuss the many options at your disposal.



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SETH BATTON

REALTOR, ABR®, e-PRO®, GREEN®

Born and raised in the Shenandoah Valley of Central Virginia, I love everything outdoors. Most of my free time is spent hiking, rock climbing, playing water sports, or cooking out on the back deck with friends. As a child, my parents built me with the core values of a southern gentleman. Trust starts with honesty and honesty builds integrity. I'm a technology guru! One of my favorite hobbies is restoring old homes in depressed neighborhoods to meet the needs of our generation today. My mission is to build a career worth having, a business worth owning, and a life worth living. Being GREEN® is more than just the resource efficiency of your home. It's a lifestyle choice! Let's discuss how to minimize your carbon footprint in everyday life by simplifying your daily commute, decreasing your household energy costs, and boosting the efficiency and sustainability of your daily routine!

I'm an Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR®) with the National Association of Realtors. Which means I have extensive training to help walk you through the home buying process from start to finish. From lenders and home inspectors to mortgage agents and closing companies, together we will find the best home for your family's needs!

As an e-PRO®, I can show your home to over 500 million visitors today. And you don't even need to vacuum! Curb appeal isn't just about looking good from the street. It's about looking good from the digital highway!

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