

The House

My parents purchased the home in 2001 and I moved in 2004. My dad retired from the U of M, and I decided to move in after completing my undergrad at the Carlson School of Mgmt at U of M. I wasn't ready for the suburbs but definitely ready for a quite neighborhood with privacy. This house is close to virtually everything but in such a quiet neighborhood compared to other campus neighborhoods in which I've lived. When I moved in, I had a mold inspection done to ensure there was no mold anywhere because I'm severely allergic to mold and dust mites.

The house is basically maintenance free. There's a sprinkler system, and the lawn mowing and snow removal are taken care of. The lawn guy always goes out of his way to make the lawn and surrounding area looking clean and beautiful. Being that it's an end unit, there's a lot of room for someone to plant on the front, side and back of the house. Most of the plants I have are maintenance free. In the back, there's a rose bush that is beautiful when it blooms, a lilac tree and a few hostas. There are very few mosquitoes around here which makes time on the deck very enjoyable. I completed a major remodeling project in 2006 (please see attached list), and have done some every year since. Therefore, there is not much that needs to be replaced for both exterior and interior in the near future. It's an ideal home for someone with a busy lifestyle.

Unique features: We have the only unit with a fireplace. We are at an end unit in the most private location out of all the townhouses. It looks over to a hill/forest owned by the association. It provides the privacy of a suburban home with the convenience of being in the cities.

I got married last year and my husband and I have really enjoyed living here together. The only reason we are moving is because my husband is an artist and an opportunity came up for him to build an art studio at home so he can work more efficiently. Otherwise, we would be staying here for a long time.

The Neighborhood

What we will miss the most is the neighborhood and how convenient this location is. We love how we are close to everything. It's walking distance to the U of M and there's a U of M bus stop and a regular bus stop a block away. We border Roseville, St. Paul and Minneapolis, minutes away from any type of shopping, 8 minutes from both downtowns, yet we come home to such a quiet neighborhood. It's close to all the major highways such as 94, 35W, 35E, 36, 694, 394. You can go in virtually any direction quickly and easily.

There are only 10 townhouse units. Everyone who lives in the townhouse units has been here for a long time. The units are rarely available for sale. We only share a wall with one neighbor who travels a lot so she's really quiet and has lived here for over 10 years.

The only time it gets a bit loud is during the Minnesota State Fair. However, it has not prohibited most of our routine because we know how to get around here. There's an extra parking lot for the association available should you have any friends and family over during the Fair. Otherwise, parking is generally pretty good around here.

Association

The association fee is \$125 which is the lowest I've seen. We try to keep the fee low and affordable. All the exterior projects have been done in the recent past. The only project left to do in the next 10+ years is the retaining wall, which we are already saving for right now. We've also discussed getting maintenance free gutters. There will no need to raise the fees for a long time. I currently serve as the treasurer of the association so I know the finances well. It's a nice small association where everyone respects each other's decisions.

Home Improvements:

2005:

Replaced cedar siding with James Hardie Siding on front and side of the house, which is most of the siding on the house. It's maintenance free with a 50 year warranty. Freshly painted when installed. Roof and back deck were replaced in 1999. Replaced washer.

2006:

Kitchen remodeling: Replaced countertop, sink, faucet, garbage disposal, floor and all matching appliances (satin nickel dishwasher, stove, hood fan, and refrigerator). Painted all cabinets and wall.

Upstairs Bathroom remodeling: Replaced sink, light covers, light fixture, towel bar, and floor. Painted wall and cabinet.

Downstairs Bathroom remodeling: Replaced medicine cabinet, sink, cabinet, light fixture, toilet (can flush a baseball!), towel bar, floor.

Walk-in closet remodeling: Designed and replaced all shelving units, painted wall.

New floor in front entry way, hallway, dining room, kitchen, bathrooms, new tiles by fireplace, new carpet on stairs. Super easy to clean!

Replaced light fixtures and some outlet covers. Trying to get the house to match in the satin nickel finish.

New front deck replaced with cedar. Painted and stained front and back decks.

2007:

Tree removal, installed sprinkler system, reseeded lawn.

2008:

Painted all outside trims including windows, doors, soffit and fascia, garage, siding on the back of the house.

2009:

New screen doors front and back, exterior doors freshly painted exterior and interior. Windows are protected with coat of varnish. New handles on windows in dining room and hallway. New door knobs and locks with satin nickel finish. Both Decks were power washed and stained to protect cedar wood. Replaced air conditioner and 95% energy efficient furnace installed.