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Real estate news in brief (Feb. 21)

Banker: Watch the indexes

Bank of America Cool Springs Vice President and Home Loan Manager Chris Tabscott has been watching the indicators that affect home loan rates: mainly, inflation indicators like the Consumer Price Index.

Inflation at the consumer level has the potential to negatively impact bonds and home loan rates if it begins to rise.

The Consumer Price Index measures the average price level paid by consumers for a representative basket of goods and services in more than 200 categories. The December index showed there is not much inflation pressure at the consumer level. But the Producer Price Index, which measures inflation at the wholesale level, rose in December for the first time in three months, which could affect decisions made by the Federal Reserve Board to further taper its purchases of Treasuries and mortgage bonds.

Tabscott said that could have a big effect on home loan rates this year, and that's an important story to continue monitoring.

Get ready for spring

RepairClinic.com®, an online store for replacement parts for home appliances, outdoor power equipment and heating and cooling equipment, shared a list of money-saving tasks that will prevent problems for homeowners this spring.

- Inspect for wear and damage on lawn mowers, pressure washers, string trimmers, edgers and other outdoor power and landscaping equipment. Review owner's manuals, replace worn or damaged parts with new components and clean the equipment. Stock up on degreaser, filters, spark plugs and other essentials.
- Prune trees and shrubs. "By mid to late winter, your trees and shrubs have been dormant for a significant period of time," said Jeff Linderman, RepairClinic's resident landscaping specialist. "They may also have winter-storm damage. Now is an ideal time for pruning to enable spring growth."
- Replace the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and then test them. Check the expiration dates on first-aid kits and fire extinguishers and replace as needed. Review fire escape and other emergency plans.

Coming Sunday

By now everyone's heard tales about how hot the Nashville real estate market is and how a lot of homes are selling for full price after just a few days or weeks on the market. What's missing from those stories, however, is the work that went into getting those homes ready for sale.

Some of that work was catching up on deferred maintenance.

But more homeowners and Realtors are turning to home stagers to capture buyers with design.

See The Tennessean Sunday Real Estate section.
