

# 10 minutes with... Brandy Lane Homes, David Hirsh

by KARA KURYLOWICZ

**PICTURED** Brandy Lane Homes President and CEO David Hirsh in front of The Station, a new condo to be located on Wilson Avenue beside the subway. David travels by subway, bus, bicycle and on foot in search of just the right locations for his transit-friendly communities



## “WOULD I LIVE HERE?”

That’s the question David Hirsh, president and CEO of Brandy Lane, asks every time he considers building a condo at a new location.

“I put myself in my buyers’ shoes and look at everything from the location to the floorplan through their eyes because I was that person,” says Hirsh, who grew up at Keele and Wilson and has been building across the GTA for more than 25 years. “I get inspired and come up with solutions that work for them because I still think like they do. In our industry, that’s thinking outside the box!”

How close is the subway or the bus stop? How many minutes from my front door to downtown? Do I have to buy a parking spot if I don’t have a car?

“Transit brings a city to life – make it walkable and the people will come, and then the retail and the restaurants will follow,” says Hirsh.

Can I afford it? Will this floorplan work for me? Is this enough space for me and my partner? Do I want to look at this view 365 days a year? Will my sofa fit? How much will I really use the gym or party rooms? Those are the questions that buyers ask because that’s what matters to them.

“I’m practical – I know that I have to consider our buyers’ budget and lifestyle needs, then deliver the finishes and amenities,” says Hirsh.

Hirsh lives to scout strategic spots because location is the starting point for every Brandy Lane development. The visionary Hirsh travels the city, by subway, bus, bicycle or on foot, in pursuit of tired commercial space that’s squatting on what could be a topnotch residential location. Hirsh is committed to developing transit-friendly locations that offer singles, young couples and empty nesters access to the urban lifestyle at a price they can afford. Brandy Lane’s homes are perfect for those who want trendy boutiques or a night out without the hustle and the bustle or the downtown price tag. Buyers happily access the downtown core, but they go home to a quieter place they can actually afford because it’s not in the heart of the city.

Brandy Lane brings new life to old neighbourhoods

by putting a new spin on existing locations. For example, the company replaced a car dealership on the Queensway near Islington Avenue with Loggia, a two-tower condo with 316 residences. In the next month or so, Brandy Lane will start demolishing low-rise office buildings at Wilson and Avenue Road to put up The Station condos right beside the Wilson subway.

As much as buyers appreciate the superb locations, subway lines, bus and streetcar routes, functional space and within-reach pricing, genuine customer service is also key. Today, virtually every company across every industry sector promises outstanding customer service, but Brandy Lane stands alone because Hirsh really is just a phone call away.



“If you want to talk to me, pick up the phone and call me – I’m right here and I’ll talk to you,” says Hirsh.

Because he’s stood in your shoes, Hirsh knows how this purchase will affect you and just how much it means to you on every imaginable level. He understands that life takes unexpected turns – that’s why Brandy Lane never pressures prospective buyers and gives them the time they need.

“We want you to be completely comfortable and secure in your decision because we want you to be happy,” says Hirsh. “In one case, a buyer’s husband got sick right after her son went off to university. We held the price for several months, but returned her deposit when she decided to wait. Three months later, her circumstances changed and she came back to Brandy Lane.”

Hirsh knows how much consumers love to hate developers and although he knows that Brandy Lane can’t make

every customer happy all of the time, he does his best. For instance, he will personally explain the various challenges that can delay everything from demolition to the groundbreaking to the day you take possession.

“I may tell a buyer that The Station is delayed because the excavation crews found a large boulder underground and explain why that will push the entire project back although I don’t know by how much,” says Hirsh. “We expect delays, but we have no way of predicting who, or what, will cause the delay.”

He also does his best to give you what you saw and what was promised. That’s why the finishes you see in the models will generally be what you find in your unit the day you move in, providing of course, that the selected finish is still available from Brandy Lane’s supplier.

“Tell people the truth and help them understand – that’s a big part of great customer service,” says Hirsh.



## Snapshot

**NAME OF BUILDER** Brandy Lane Homes

“I know what really matters to Brandy Lane’s new home buyers for two reasons. When I began my real estate career, I listened to hundreds of buyers because I started as a front-line sales and marketing person. I also remember buying my first condo, my first semi and my first detached home. Then and now, whether I’m working with our customers or shopping for myself, I pay a lot of attention to the process. What makes it easy? What’s frustrating? What makes them walk away? What closes the deal?”

David Hirsh is a past-president of BILD and won its Presidential Award of Merit (2005) and the prestigious Riley Brethour Achievement Award (1994) from the Greater Toronto Home Builders’ Association (now BILD).

**BRANDY LANE’S MOTTO** “Customer first!”

**BUILDER TRACK RECORD** Since 1985, Brandy Lane has revitalized dozens of locations in the GTA and sold more than 2,000+ units, including condos, stacked townhouses and single family dwellings as well as commercial space.

**MARKET NICHE** Finding unique ways to transform underutilized sites into exciting, intimate urban communities, while making home ownership more rewarding and economical.

**CURRENT PROJECTS** The Station, Wyldewood, Village Mews

**PAST PROJECTS** Loggia Condominiums, Liberty Square, Liberty Walk, The Annex, Liberty Gate, Moonlight Bay, Credit Pointe, Fox Hollow, Liberty Village, Brookwood.

Why Brandy Lane? We look for the sites that other developers overlook so that we can bring consumers home to spaces that look good and feel right at the best possible price. President and CEO, David Hirsh takes customer service personally because it should be personal. He’s accessible and responsive because he knows that’s what customers need and appreciate.