



## Mike Baker

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## Rate Reckoning Draws Closer

Rates are dictated by the bond market and bonds are flashing a warning sign about volatility on the horizon. In other words, rates look like they're **ready to make a bigger move** in the near future, for better or worse.

This **isn't** readily apparent at first glance--especially when it comes to mortgage rates (which are still very close to all-time lows). Even when we look at a rate benchmark like 10yr Treasury yields, it seems that volatility has died down recently.



But the **absence** of volatility is actually the problem. Rates had been moving decisively higher early in the year as vaccines and fiscal stimulus fueled hopes of a quicker economic recovery. More recently, political gridlock and the delta-driven surge in covid cases took 10yr yields back in the other direction.

## National Average Mortgage Rates



	Rate	Change	Points
<b>Mortgage News Daily</b>			
30 Yr. Fixed	7.07%	+0.02	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.45%	0.00	0.00
30 Yr. FHA	6.51%	+0.02	0.00
30 Yr. Jumbo	7.26%	0.00	0.00
5/1 ARM	7.02%	-0.01	0.00

### Freddie Mac

30 Yr. Fixed	6.86%	-0.01	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.16%	+0.03	0.00

Rates as of: 6/28

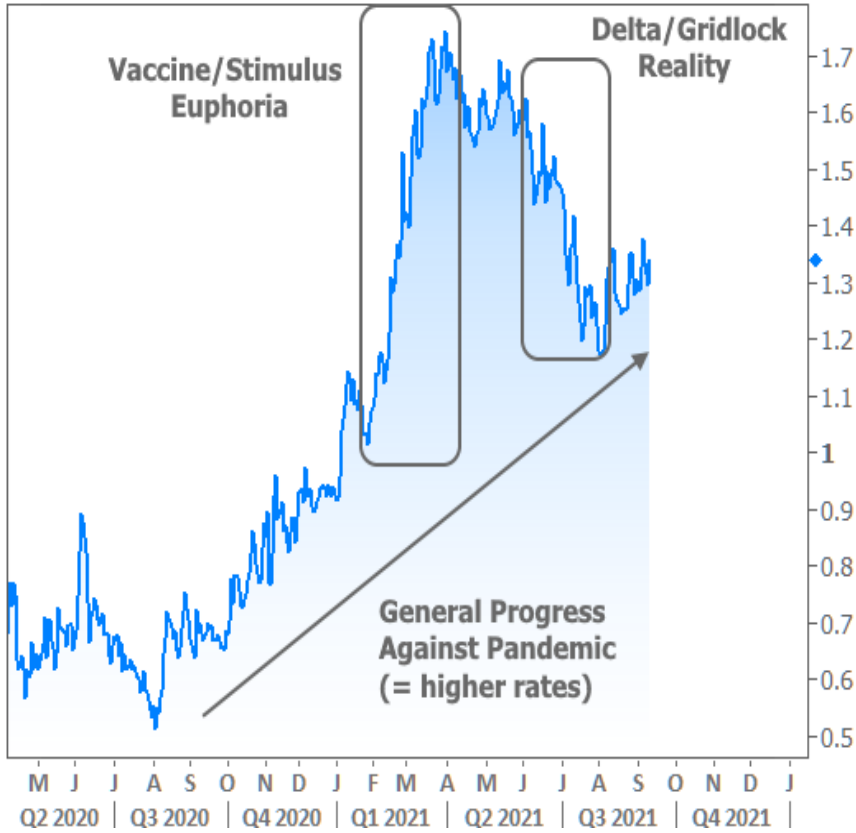
## Market Data

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 5.5	98.49	-0.45
MBS GNMA 5.5	99.10	-0.44
10 YR Treasury	4.3892	-0.0088
30 YR Treasury	4.5568	-0.0072

Pricing as of: 6/30 10:50PM EST

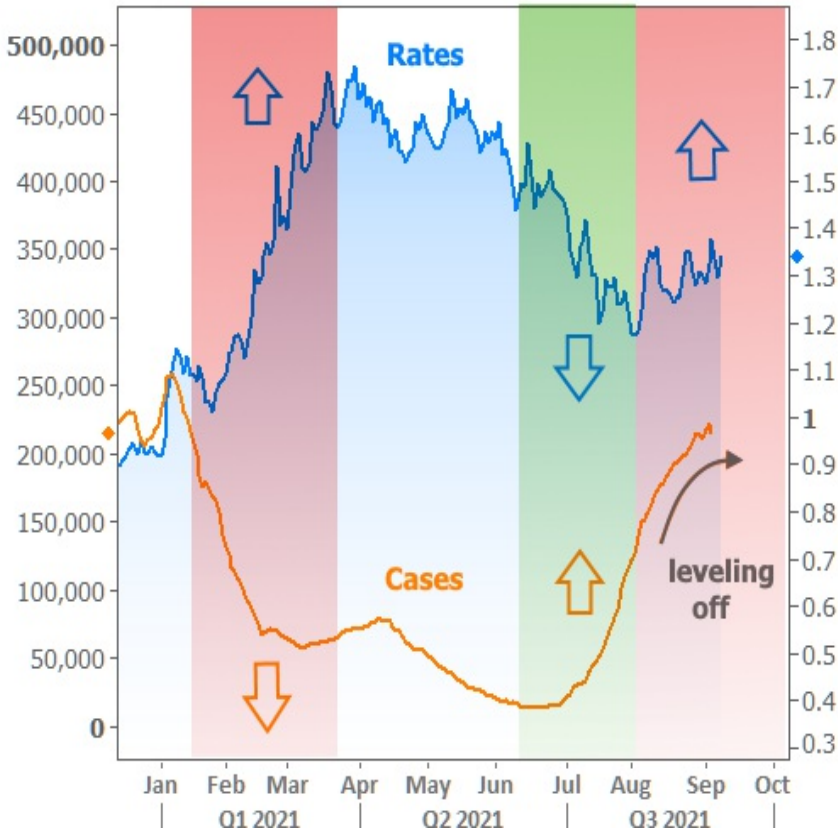
## Recent Housing Data

	Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Jun 12 208.5	+15.58%
Building Permits	Mar 1.46M	-3.95%
Housing Starts	Mar 1.32M	-13.15%
New Home Sales	Mar 693K	+4.68%
Pending Home Sales	Feb 75.6	+1.75%
Existing Home Sales	Feb 3.97M	-0.75%
Builder Confidence	Mar 51	+6.25%



Covid numbers are the **first part** of the warning. The growth in case counts is leveling off. This could be part of the reason that the trend toward lower rates has subsided in the past month. Rates and case counts have had a generally inverse correlation:

# US Housing Market Weekly



The bounce in rates is also occurring at an **important** level (1.20% in 10 year yields). As the following chart shows, this was the first level where rates paused when they were in free-fall at the start of the pandemic. It then marked the ceiling that blocked the only attempt to move significantly higher in 2020. Then in 2021, it was the last place that rates paused before their biggest post-covid surge.



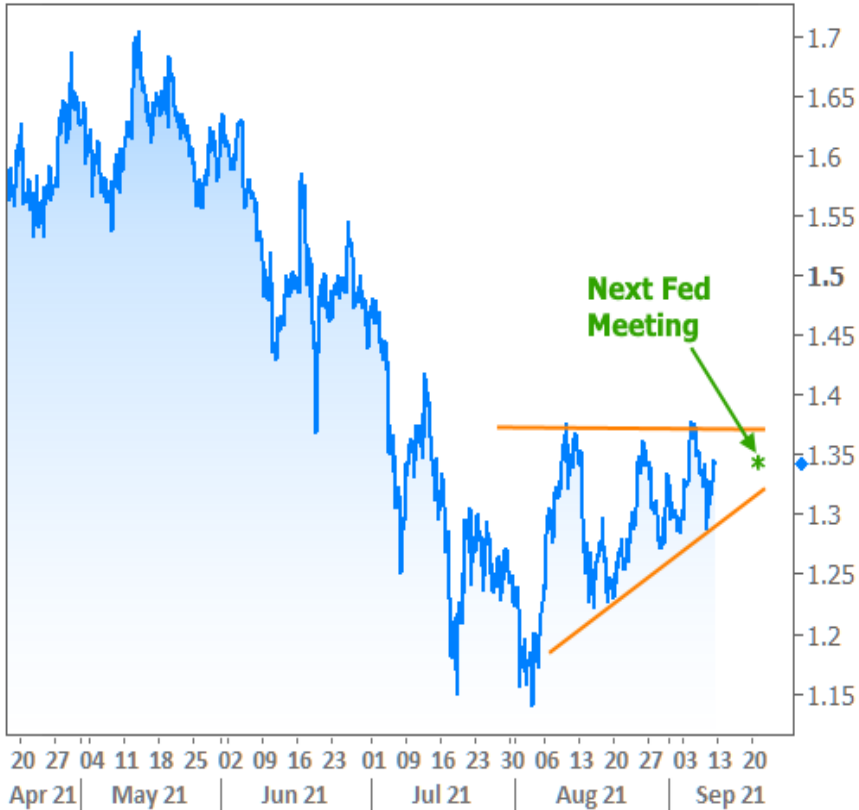
Zooming out to a very wide view, we find that current Treasury yields are **in the desert**, so to speak. This is the first time they've ever spent more than 2 weeks in this zone (referred to below as the "indecision" zone). Yields could rise quite a bit and still be considered historically low.



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The "macro risk" zone highlights the times where the global economy faced bigger challenges in the past decade and it would be no surprise for rates to convalesce there if the covid situation progressively improves.

Perhaps more importantly, that same improvement would render rate-friendly Fed policies **obsolete**. Incidentally, there's a fairly important Fed meeting coming up in 2 weeks, and it coincides almost perfectly with the consolidation in rates.



In other words, the compression of the rate range is **like the compression of a spring**. The only catch is that we don't know if it's being pushed against a ceiling or a floor. Generally speaking, if we get past this phase in covid (schools stay open, more people go back to work, case counts start dropping, etc), rates would most likely be springing higher.

If there's a covid resurgence and the labor market refuses to recover as fast as previously hoped, rates could easily move back to the recent floor marked by 1.15% in the chart above (which equates to the mid 2% range for best-case-scenario mortgage rates).

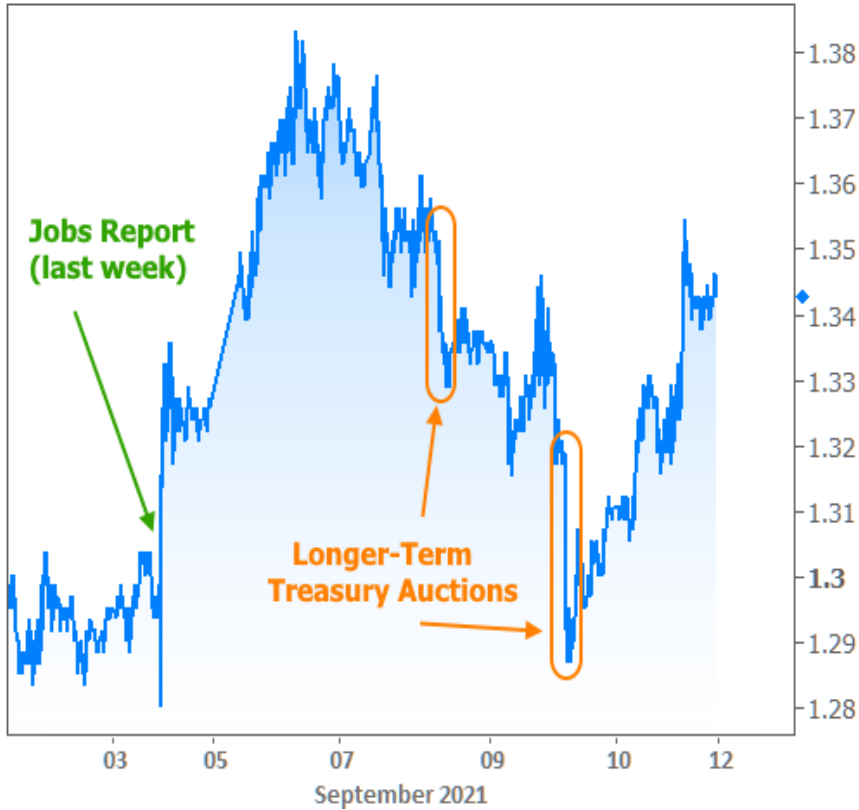
## A few side notes...

**The Fed isn't the only game in town**, and even if they were, their decisions depend on inflation and the labor market. Some people are very concerned about inflation, but the Fed maintains that current price pressures are most likely temporary side-effects of supply constraints. In other words, covid messed everything up and it will take some time for things to settle down. To their credit, the Fed admits they could be wrong, but assures us they have the tools to address that eventuality, if needed.

**Fiscal policy** is also a consideration. Fiscal spending implies the need for revenue or Treasury issuance. Treasury issuance creates additional "supply" in the bond market, and like anything else, higher supply means lower prices. Connecting the dots, lower bond prices mean higher rates/yields.

# US Housing Market Weekly

The market's concern over **Treasury supply** is constantly playing out in trading levels. This week offered a fresh example during the scheduled Treasury auction cycle. There were 2 longer-term auctions (Wed & Thu). Together, they accounted for more market movement than last week's jobs report (a notoriously big market mover). In this case, yields moved lower because the auctions went well. In fact, much of the upward movement after the jobs report is thought to reflect traders being cautious ahead of these auctions (big financial firms are **required** to submit bids).



**Bottom line:** multiple variables are colliding at a rather pivotal moment for the interest rate landscape and we're all but guaranteed to see more volatility soon. Moreover, if the variables align, the movement could be surprisingly big when compared to the recent range.

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## Real Talk

At The Rate Shop, we're not your average mortgage banker. We specialize in bringing you ridiculously low interest rates that will make you wonder what the other guys are doing. In fact the ONLY objection we ever hear is "your rates sound too good to be true". Well they're not, and here is why...

After 15 years in the retail banking world I was frustrated with the high interest rates that came from that business model. As I looked around at all the bloated layers of management and their expensive salaries and the overhead of running a larger company (think rent costs, employee health and benefit costs, payroll taxes, and on and on) it dawned on me that I was a part of the problem, and the solution, for me at least, was so easy to see.

Start my own mortgage brokerage shop. No expensive executive salaries, no expensive building to pay rent at, no unnecessary employees and all the costs that are associated with that. What happens when you cut out all the fat? You can provide lower rates and lower closing costs. It's simple. Now here is the best part, you still get great service from a local Kansas City Lender. My mission is to let everyone know that low rates and great customer service are NOT mutually exclusive.

Thanks for coming along on this journey where Low Rates meet Great Service. The two do NOT have to be mutually exclusive. It's just a lie that the big box mortgage companies have been telling you for years. Don't believe me? Give me a call or shoot me a text on my personal cell phone today and compare my rates and costs up against any other lender in the country, and be prepared to be blown away.

**Mike Baker**

