

Spotlight on Creating Curb Appeal

Ever wonder why landscaping adds so much to curb appeal? And just what exactly *is* curb appeal anyhow?

Several definitions can be found on the Internet, but let's use this one; Curb appeal is a real estate term meaning, "everything prospective buyers can see from the street that might make them want to take a closer look at a house for sale". I think it also applies to current residents, whether you rent or own, or even if you never think about selling.



Fortunately, there is a set of landscaping principles which keeps us within one standard deviation of the norm, and can even make the endeavor fun! But I'm getting the cart ahead of the horse.

Here is an exercise. Pretend you are a stranger cruising through your neighborhood,

and you know you would like to live there. As you pass your house, would you perform a "disappearing drive-by" even though you see the property is for sale, or would you think, "I'd sure like to get inside that house!" Most homeowners understand that the buyer will comparison shop until they find nearly exactly what they want. The first step is they have to get past the front door. That's much easier to accomplish when the grass is weed free and we've sweat some details in landscaping.

Let's say we agree that landscaping is important and that you know your spaces could use a makeover. Should you add a wildflower garden -- pretty as a picture the first year yet a troublesome hodgepodge the next? Or, do we plan for a highly-manicured, estate-like garden with exceptional curb appeal yet requiring constant attention and a 4-figure budget?

(continued next page ...)

(Credits for photos: Pg 1. Gary Roberts - 1535-41st St. Pg. 2 Craig & Susan McCoy - 1436 41st Place. Match to sample? :-)

Watch

Future Neighborhood Events

June 1

- DNA & 1st Christian Church Unite to bring you the 9th Annual Farmer's Markets --Wednesdays from 4-7PM

June 4

- DNA Annual House Tour Begins (sign at 31st and University gives details. @12 homes will be on the tour this year).
- 41st St 6th Annual Yard Sales Event - 8 to Noon!

June 5

- DNA House Tour Continues

June 8

- WPNA Board Meeting -CACC - 7:00PM
- DNA Board Meeting -1st CC - 7:00PM

Sept 17

- WPNA --Neighborhood Dumpster Day

More DNA info available at <http://www.drakeneighborhood.org/>

More WPNA info available at <http://www.neighborhoodlink.com>

**Mark your calendars for
June 4th, 2005!
41st Street Block Yard Sales
8:00 - Noon
(Between Forest & Univ.)**

Here are six basic principles to use when planning to achieve an exceptional landscape design.

- Repetition - or Duplication
- Variety - or Contrast
- Balance - Asymmetrical and Symmetrical
- Emphasis - or Focal Point
- Sequence - or Movement
- Scale - or Unity

In subsequent issues, we will examine these further. Should you like to influence content, email AndrewL@IowaRealty.com. TIA!



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Principles of Landscape Design

(...continued)

What we seek is a practical balance and a set of principles to guide us. And, for those who like having a goal to keep motivated, what about "creating a home with great curb appeal which we would love to come home to each night".

For those who want to receive top dollar, "paying attention to landscaping can add as much as 15% to a home's value". (See <http://www.freshairdesigns.com/articles/landscaping.htm> - "How Landscaping Affects Your Property Values" - Linda Anson.). Multiply the value of nearly any home in today's market by 10-15% and you get an impressive number!

Fortunately, amateurs with patience can make serious progress simply by doing what the professionals do -- develop a plan based on principles of design. Or, we might hire a professional who can quickly bring it all together. Either way, a well-thought out landscape plan is important and may be the shortest route to the desired end result (next column).

RE Listings Sold For My #1 Service Area

Year	Units Sold	Median SP	% Increase
2000	184	98,000	
2001	212	104,000	6.1%
2002	199	112,000	7.7%
2003	177	118,000	5.3%
2004	170	124,900	5.8%

Considering painting this summer? Need scaffolding? **FOR RENT** -- enough scaffolding and platforms to reach 2-story heights. \$75/wk (plus \$25 delivery), or save with 4 wks for the price of 3, delivery and pick up included!

Call Andrew L. at 274-0300 for more info.

Trees Rock!



Ready to plant a tree? The city of Des Moines Forestry Department can help at 283-4950. Get your name on the list for free trees (in parking strip only), or for selection advice.

Your editor is a tree nut and knows some great sources for very reasonably priced trees.