



DON'T
... do this to your neighbors!

SO MUCH FOR HARMONY

Some houses sit alone in a field. Most are part of a larger design: the streetscape, the neighborhood, the town. Even in older cities developed over centuries, we can usually “read” the history: one district is mostly Victorian—houses with vertical emphasis close to the street; round the corner to come upon a commercial stretch; walk a bit further and find bungalows and Dutch Colonials with deep front yards. Infill happens, always, but historically it has been done with common sense and respect. (No wonder the term “spite house” is used for the one that sticks out like a sore thumb!)

Our long-time reader Judy Murray explains that her street photo (top) shows a neat tract east of Detroit, along Lake St. Clair, one of many neighborhoods built here in the 1950s and '60s. Modest houses sit on similar lots, with the same setbacks and similar construction. Nevertheless, they're not cookie-cutter; façades vary, porches and windows differ, some houses have shutters. This consistency creates a welcoming harmony for residents and their visitors.

When one of the houses was sold, the new owners received a permit to “add a second storey and expand the existing mudroom.” Look what happened!



“Result of a Picasso–Dali collaboration.”

—paraphrasing Patrick Chelalom

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