

They like the look that brick provides

By Doug Funke
staff writer

The appearance, pure and simple, is what attracts homeowners and commercial customers to brick landscaping.

Lesley O'Neill of Birmingham said she just didn't think a wood deck would mesh architecturally with the house she shares with husband Bill. The O'Neills wanted to do something with a small plot in the yard that had been used as a garden and contained some old patio blocks.

"I had seen it (brick) at a shopping center in town," she said. "I just think it's a nicer look."

They contracted for a small brick patio and a brick ribbon walkway along the driveway.

"We've had a lot of positive comments. People out walking have stopped and said how nice it looks," Lesley said.

Paul Camilleri of Livonia has installed a brick patio, a brick walkway between the patio and a deck and a brick walkway leading to the children's play area in the yard.

"WE WANTED it to have a park-like atmosphere," Camilleri said of his newly built house. "Asphalt or cement would take away from that."

Camilleri and his wife, Karen, became more and more enamored with brick landscaping the more they saw of it over the years at builder shows.

"If I could afford it, I would have a brick driveway and sidewalk," he said.

Molly Kuclo, who lives with husband Tom in Northville, said there was no doubt in her mind what she wanted when an old brick walkway and porch steps started deteriorating in the house they bought last year.

More brick. "I fell in love with it. It really made an entrance to the house," Molly said.

"I've had nothing but positive remarks. In fact, another neighbor down the street is going to have Brickscape do something for them."

Even the woman who did our wallpaper and did the master bedroom called and said how nice it looked," Kuclo said.

'It provides the image the city wants to project — a positive, homey kind of image. The brick walkways add a sense of community pride.'

— Paul Sincok
of Plymouth

BRICK LANDSCAPING is going beyond residential.

"Again, it makes a statement about what they're doing, what they're about," said Joe DiFado, owner of Brickscape.

Mike Soulliere, owner of Soulliere Decorative Stone, said his company has done 43,000 square feet of brick landscaping at the entrance to the Detroit Zoo and 25,000 square feet at the Scott Fountain on Belle Isle.

Soulliere also did a brick patio some years back at Oakland Hills Country Club in Birmingham especially for the U.S. Open.

The patio was taken apart after the tournament and the bricks were reassembled at drinking fountains and other spots around the course.

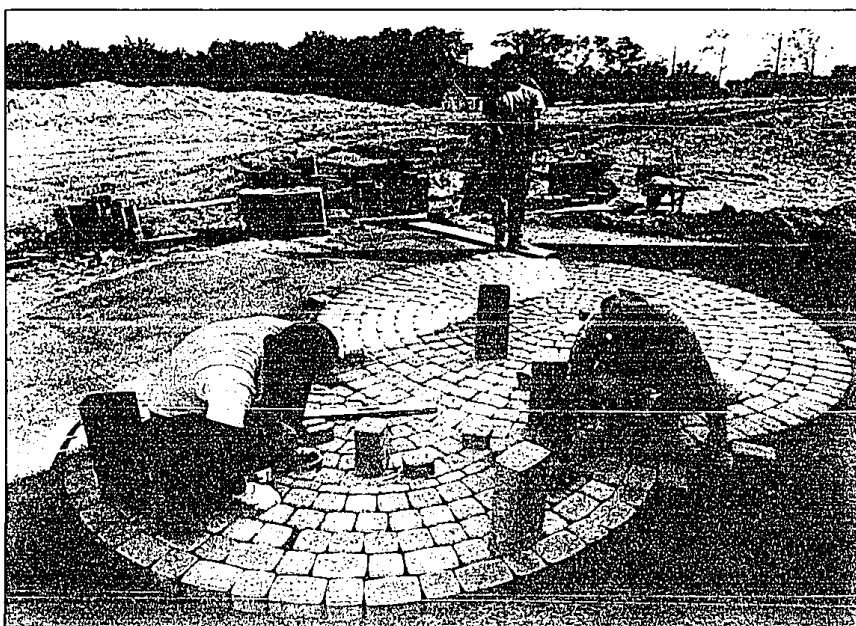
MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN downtowns also are going for the brick look in central business districts.

"It provides the image the city wants to project — a positive, homey kind of image," said Paul Sincok, assistant to the city manager in Plymouth. "The brick walkways add a sense of community pride."

The bricks installed around Kellogg Park in the early 1970s were financed by private donations, Sincok said.

Brick landscaping also projects a historical flavor, said Steven Walters, city manager in Northville, where Brickscape has done a number of projects including the area around the city's bandshell.

"Because they're more expensive, you try to get the flavor by doing accents, only the edge (of sidewalks) at certain points and crosswalks," Walters said.



Brickscape workers lay out a circle and fan design for a home in Pheasant Hills subdivision in Northville.

CHRIS BOYD

Bricks get the nod over concrete

Continued from Page 1

"TWO FACTORS we work on closely are building a base to handle what you want to handle . . . and total drainage."

"We pitch (slope) at two inches per 10 feet. By doing that, 90 percent (of water) will go over the top and the 10 percent that goes through the cracks will be handled by the slag," Soulliere said.

Bricks are more durable than concrete slabs because they're individually set and, therefore, can tolerate ground movements more, DiFado and Soulliere maintain. Bricks are

more dense than concrete and already have been cured before they're set.

Bricks also will stand up to snow shoveling and salt, Diane DiFado said.

Soulliere and DiFado each warrant their work for two years.

Price may be a drawback for some people.

WHILE IT'S difficult to generalize, brick landscaping, on average, will cost \$7.50 per square foot, concrete \$3.50, DiFado said. Soulliere estimated concrete work at \$3 per square foot, brick at \$6.9.

About a half dozen different styles of brick are available. Generally, the fancier the pattern, the more expensive the work.

But the total cost of the job depends on such factors as difficulty of preparation, size of the job and type of brick selected.

"It could be less expensive to use a more expensive brick that doesn't need as much cutting," DiFado said.

"Everyone has a different idea," he said. "I think more and more people know what they want. They kind of have an idea what they like and what they don't like."

Builders are starting to give

buyers the option of brickwork to traditional concrete or decks, Soulliere said.

"It's an upgraded choice," he said. "They're still green and still scared, but they're doing it more."

"Rich people, of course, had it first," Soulliere said. "Now the middle class is seeing it. They're looking at the longevity of it. They say, 'I can get concrete for the price, but it's going to crack. They look at the long-range investment now.'"

Both DiFado and Soulliere sell bricks retail and rent equipment to do-it-yourselfers.

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