

for people who choose to live in Pebble Creek, the still-being-built gated community in Davisburg. Of course, it doesn't hurt that the gates give Pebble Creek a look of exclusivity, even though the homes are not extravagantly priced for the thriving Springfield Township area.

"We getting a lot of Chrysler and General Motors transferees who work in Flint or Saginaw," says Lorimer, "and we have young professionals, retirees and empty nesters, too."

Despite the optimism about gated community living, Robert Marans, a University of Michigan professor of architecture and urban planning, has mixed feelings.

"Yes, there is a growing concern about crime in our society, and a gated community addresses that concern with its aura of security, but it's a false sense of security," he says. "An electronic gate pass isn't going to protect you from other members of society in the long run."

Mary Gail Snyder of San Francisco has been researching gated communities for a book she is writing with Edward Blakely of the University of Southern California. "We have not found evidence that gated communities are any safer than a similar community that is not closed off," she told The New York Times. "The major problem, still, is teenage property crime."

Snyder worries, too, that the trend means homeowners are privatizing public space.

"Public space will continue to be privatized in our society, but the movement toward these enclaves is going to be the exception, not the rule, and there will continue to be

traditional forms of development," says Marans.

Marans points to Victoria Park, a new, gated development of single family homes in Detroit. He recently took a group of students to tour the development.

"We went on a Saturday morning and the gates were open and there was no guard," recalls Marans. "The development was a replica of a typical suburb with its heavy reliance on the automobile." In other words, it was a suburb in the city, and Marans didn't like it.

Furthermore, notes Marans, a gated community's sameness will ultimately lead to a lack of vitality — the kind of vitality you find in a more diversified community — and even though people seem to crave the neat and orderly look now, they will eventually desire a more interesting environment.

"You can only control design and esthetic up to a point and then people revolt," says Marans.

The revolution may already be under way.

David Jensen is in the throes of planning a new, neo-traditional community in Beverly Hills built around two parks — a neighborhood in which residents won't feel the need to drive their cars all the time. He's working with prominent architects Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk of Miami, Fla., who were responsible for designing the much ballyhooed Seaside, Fla., community. Needless to say, there will be no gates or guardhouses.

"When you really think about it," says Jensen, "a prison is the ultimate gated community."

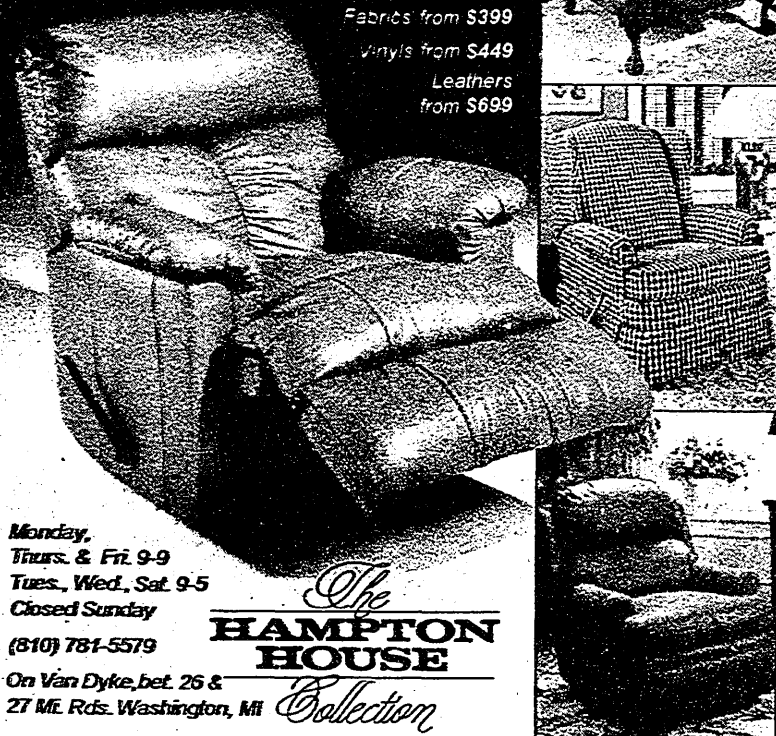
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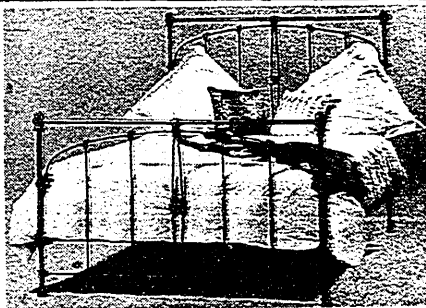
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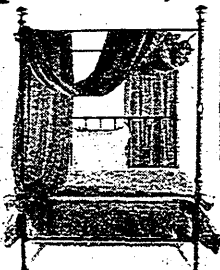
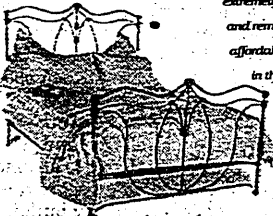
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