

Real Estate

PLUS

F1

COMICS F7
WEATHER F8



The front face of the house has a cantilevered mid section — like a flying buttress — that gives it an unusual profile. The owner says that since he painted it, the disparaging comments have ceased.



The colours are muted in the dining area off the kitchen, but a zebra-striped rug adds pizzazz.

21st-century chic

STORY BY SUSAN DOWN
PHOTOS BY JOHN MCKAY
Times Colonist staff

It takes guts to build the new house on the block, using a hip design that's sure to have the neighbourhood talking. During the five months it took to build their new home this year, Janice and Rob Mickelberry heard plenty of dissenting opinions from community critics, some not covert at all.

"I had people stopping to tell me — this was before we were finished — that this was the ugliest house they had ever seen," said Rob, adding that since they've painted the house, most of the negative comments have stopped.

A house design should reflect current design philosophies, says Mickelberry, a maverick devel-

oper whose company, Prodigy Development Services, has created some innovative small lot subdivisions in the area. "I'm getting a little tired of the faux heritage," he said. "I used to believe that the best way to go into a neighbourhood was to build something that actually suited the neighbourhood."

Ironically, he also built one of the oldest-looking homes in the vicinity right next door, a gabled, heritage-style house that he sold in 1997. That was before he started really examining the local residential architecture and saw everything from turn-of-the-century homes to bungalows from the 1960s and 1970s. "In every one of those periods, they built in the style of the period." Since then he has built a collection of modern homes throughout the city that aren't neo-

anything.
Please see SPECIALLY DESIGNED, F2

QUICK TOUR

Year built:
2002

Size: 2,200
square feet

Rooms: Four bedrooms, three bathrooms, office, dining area, kitchen, living room, family room, laundry room.