
Residential Site Analysis & Design Program

Scope: Residential Design for Established Landscape
Date: May 21, 2005

SITUATION

The property was developed thirty to forty years ago. The site is located in a subdivision inside the Atlanta perimeter. The site is hilly and shady; several trees greater than sixty feet exist. Thus, partial to full shade is the range of light for the site. The home's architectural style is unique and contemporary to the period of development.

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

The owner has retained us to design a landscape plan to enhance both curb appeal and window appeal – she desires visual enhancements to the property for her enjoyment now and as an asset on the market in the future.

ANALYSIS

Front Yard

The house sits 80 feet from the street. The front lawn is spotted with thirteen tall pines which provide partial shade. There are narrow paths of erosion which have cut into the lawn. Woody and herbaceous perennials are desired to mask this problem and also to retard further erosion.

A formal walkway is not established from the street or drive to the front entrance. A tall row of shrubs that separates the front entrance walk from view from the street is unwelcoming and hides the entrance. A new configuration for an entry walk is desired. The site slopes steeply away from the drive landing area and existing façade; topography is a major factor for consideration in resolution.

Side Yard

Erosion is also a factor on the south side of the house. Silt is frequently washed from the side yard into the carport. Foundation shrubs for erosion control are necessary.

Back Yard

The back yard is approximately the same size as the front yard. The back yard includes a wooden deck with a raised wooden walkway to a polygonal pool. A sunken patio is located on the basement, housing an outdoor stacked stone grill. This area is viewed from the media room through sliding glass doors.

The landscape has existing elements that provide a strong backbone for an intriguing design enhancement. Because of the established plant material, the new elements can be chosen and sited for maximum visual advantage; the functional requirements for this installation are few.

DESIGN PROGRAM

Design Theme

A curvilinear theme is proposed, to blend with the topography functionally as well as aesthetically. This theme will soften the contemporary architectural and compliment the woody setting.

Front Yard

A front entry walk will be constructed of ordinary wood deck materials. To either side, evergreen and deciduous shrubs, and woody and herbaceous perennials will be introduced to use a broad palette of shape, habit, leaf texture and color. The combinations specified offer visual interest throughout all seasons.

A White Firethorn is recommended for espalier on the front entry walk. This technique will provide an evergreen screen for the deck's supporting structure as well as lend seasonal interest to the entrance.

A meandering bed of day lilies and blooming herbaceous and woody ornamentals will be established along the current erosion lines, a perfect woodland bed for natural effect and functional erosion control.

Side Yard

Variegated privet is proposed behind the carport to exhaust collecting rainwater and prevent further silt movement. A quick growing evergreen shrub, privet will soon mask the AC compressor located here. A path of stepping stone will direct traffic from the drive turn-around to the back deck and pool area. Spring and summer flowering shrubs are specified for view from the path as well as the interior.

Back Yard

The area between the deck and the pool will be landscaped in a cross-axis configuration oriented on the existing wooden walkway. To make the most impact on a conservative budget, the sight line perpendicular to the walkway will be developed in a Japanese-inspired style, incorporating certain Zen elements such as pebble mulch, stepping stones and decorative rocks. A mulch-covered, stone lined dirt landing will allow access from the deck path to the remote garden bench located on the north fence. Both sides of the deck path are complimented by perennial beds.

On the opposing side a new bed will be established in the side of the small hill that rises toward the fence line, below the pool shed. This planting will incorporate woodland perennials and shade annuals in a vignette whose focal point is a garden gazing ball.

Perennials and woody ornamentals are specified for the long rectangular bed on the pool deck's edge.