

NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF LLPG PLANTING PLAN PROPOSALS – SPRING 2021

This narrative is accompanied by an annotated “map” of LLPG. The narrative will follow the usual approach to LLPG on Circle Lake Lane, first reaching the **South Entrance and Gathering Place**, then driving counterclockwise past **East Entrance**, followed by **East Woodland, Fern and Rock Garden, West Woodland, Meadow**, and **Meadow Edge**, completing the loop back to **South Entrance and Gathering Place**. Finally, we will discuss the centerpiece **Raingarden**.

South Entrance

This is a “welcome sign” for the LLPG. The basic structure is to be maintained, with a rail fence at the back (dividing the South Entrance from Gathering Place), a back row of *Itea virginica* (Virginia sweetspire) and a front row of *Fothergilla gardenia* (dwarf witchalder). *Euonymus americana* (Hearts a bustin) have been removed and potted, and the current perennials, *Amsonia tabernaemontana* (bluestar), *Anemone japonica* (Japanese anemone) and *Chrysogonum virginianum* (green and gold) will be removed to make way for ~5 sun-loving perennials that will be arranged in ~12 irregular groupings with the aim of providing more durable color through the spring, summer and fall.

Gathering Place

This small area hosts the Little Library and some seating. It is a natural vestibule for the LLPG. Just inside the South Entrance rail fence is a row of evergreen *Osmanthus fragrans* (fragrant tea olive), two large *Liriodendron tulipifera* (tulip poplars) and several *Cercis canadensis* (redbuds). A row of recently planted *Cornus florida* (dogwoods) and a *Cupressa arizonica* ‘Carolina Sapphire’ (cypress) enclose the west boundary of this vestibule. The ground is uneven and “dished”, collecting water and becoming muddy in rainy periods. During hot dry periods the ground is hard. To maximize the usable space and to minimize the visual impact of the Little Library, we propose moving the Little Library to back up to the entrance paved path, and to screen the Little Library from the paved path with a trellis supporting evergreen flowering vines. The “floor” can be “leveled” and graded to reduce puddling and direct the run-off towards the circular paved path. This “floor” can be covered with several inches of mulch pending consideration of installation of a porous hard surface. The edge around the “floor” is to be softened with mid-height perennials that will tolerate the shade and variation in moisture during the growing season. The hostas will be removed in the “floor” and “border” areas, as will the evergreen azalea that is excessively shaded behind the cypress. To improve the conditions for the trellis vines, we propose removing the redbud at the upper corner (near the LLPG sign) as well as the *Euonymus alatus* (burning bushes) along the paved entrance path. The latter will be replanted in the Rock and Fern Garden.

East Entrance

While the South Entrance has a paved graded path (ADA compliant), the East Entrance has large stone steps that are somewhat irregular. These stone steps are close to the paved parking area

along the outside of Circle Lake Lane, and they are flanked by banks that are planted with *Vinca minor* (periwinkle) and *Cornus florida* (dogwoods). The top of the steps is flanked by two *Ilex x 'Nelly R Stevens'* (hollies). All of these features are to be maintained. Along the south edge of the East Entrance an irregular line of *Deutzia gracilis* (slender deutzia) has been planted to soften the edge of the rock drybed. Variegated sedge currently edges the large stone steps - we propose replacing this with flowering evergreen plants with interesting foliage. To the northeast of the stone steps is a flat area that we propose to plant with two of the three *Callicarpa americana* (beautyberries) currently in the Raingarden, and flank those with *Cephalotaxus harringtonia* (plum yew).

East Woodland

The East Woodland transitions from the more structured East Entrance to the remainder of LLPG. This area hosts several large trees: *Carya ovata* (shagbark hickory); *Juniperus virginiana* (Eastern red cedar); *Quercus montana* (chestnut oak), *Cercis canadensis* (redbud), as well as multiple small dogwoods and redbuds. The slope from Circle Lake Lane to the circular paved path is steep and rocky in this area, and it is supported by vines such as *Euonymus fortunei* (wintercreeper) and *Hedera helix* (English ivy) that would be aggressive and difficult to control were it not for the “challenging” conditions. In consideration of the aggressive run-off from Circle Lake Lane during heavy rains we want to maintain the stability of the ground with such vines. We have added Cherokee sedge along the inner edge of the road and the outer edge of the circular paved path to slow the flow. The further enhancements we propose for this area are: 1) planting a number of low-growing junipers (*Juniperus horizontalis*) above the east bench/retaining wall, and 2) planting sun-preferring native wildflowers above the Cherokee sedge that borders the circular paved path. This latter area will get hot and will have intermittent water during the summer and fall. Where there formerly was as a compost area the soil and water conditions may support spring ephemerals - such as those proposed for the West Woodland. We have planted a trio of deciduous azaleas at the northern end of the East Woodland – these are native or native hybrids.

Fern and Rock Garden

This area has changed over the last year because of: 1) installation of the rock drybed and 2) removal of a large *Celtis occidentalis* (hackberry). This area gets more sun now than before and perhaps retains more heat. In response we propose to use mostly sedums in the lower rock garden, with flowering perennials and burning bushes higher on the rim below Circle Lake Lane. The fern garden has areas of shade and sun, and the types of ferns will be chosen and positioned accordingly. Just behind the north bench/retaining wall we have planted *Danae racemosa* (Poet's laurel) at the outer ends, and plan to add *Oenothera* (sundrops) and *Veronica 'Georgia Blue'* (creeping speedwell) in the middle flat area.

West Woodland

This area hosts a diverse population of trees: *Acer saccharum* (sugar maple); *Juglans nigra* (black walnut); *Ulmus americana* (American elm); *Diospyros virginiana* (American persimmon); *Quercus montana* (chestnut oak); *Plantanus occidentalis* (sycamore); *Juniperus virginiana* (Eastern red cedar), as well as smaller *Aesculus hippocastanum* (buckeye); *Asimina triloba* (pawpaw); dogwoods and redbuds. It also has a grouping of large *Viburnum nudum* (possumhaw viburnum), a small grouping of *Euonymus atropurpureus* (American wahoo), multiple *Rhododendron catawbiense* 'Roseum elegans', and another trio of deciduous azaleas (native or native hybrid). We consider it "fully planted" with trees and shrubs, so the opportunity is to add spring ephemerals selectively in areas that will support them.

Meadow

The Meadow had the concrete pad removed last year and dozens of clusters of *Narcissus* (daffodils) were planted last fall. It presents an opportunity to add medium- and large sun perennials in irregular clusters, and seek to develop a more diverse array of native wildflowers in the field.

Meadow Edge

This is an ecologically diverse area that transitions from the Woodland and Meadow to the much more structured South Entrance and Gathering Place. It has some large trees: *Quercus coccinea* (scarlet oak); *Ulmus americana* (American elm) as well as multiple dogwoods, redbuds, and the cypress described in Gathering Place, above. It hosts a birdbath that is currently sitting atop a stump, and has a substantial rocky area abutting the circular paved path. This entire area tends to get hot and dry during the summer and fall. The proposed changes include changing the plants in the Rock area, adding perennials to the Stump birdbath area, and establish a flow of celandine poppies down the slope in the area between the Rock area and the Stump birdbath. At the nexus of Meadow Edge and South Entrance is a trio of *Philadelphus coronarius* (mock orange) that is just getting established - they provide a transition from unstructured to structured. It may be necessary to remove one of the small dogwoods to reduce crowding at the border with Gathering Place. An attempt can be made to successfully move it to a new home.

Raingarden

The Raingarden is in the bowl enclosed by the circular paved path, and is entirely surrounded by turf grass. The turf area represents a small "play" or "exercise" area, particularly along the east edge where the ground is nearly level.

The Raingarden itself is an asymmetric dumbbell vaguely aligned north to south. The north end is wider/larger than the south end, and also is lower, therefore collecting more rainwater. All plants within the Raingarden are natives and support the wildlife habitat designation of LLPG.

Some of the north end shrubs are not large enough or showy enough to be appreciated from afar. We have moved such shrubs to the perimeter: *Itea virginica* (Virginia sweetspire); *Spirea virginiana* (Virginia spirea); *Clethra alnifolia* (sweet pepperbush), and have planted *Rhododendron viscosum* (swamp azalea) along the perimeter. The sweetspire, pepperbush and swamp azalea also have scented flowers. In addition, these relocations extend the line of the shrubs in the south end to create a sigmoid. The Raingarden is thus “divided” into an east-facing pocket on the north and a west-facing pocket on the south. These newly-defined spaces will be decorated by rearranging/reallocating native perennials already present in the Raingarden, with some repetition.

In the center of the north end, and across the axis of the two *Hamamelis virginiana* (witchhazels) we have added two female and one male pollinator *Ilex verticillata* (red winterberries), and have moved the *Aronia arbutifolia* (red chokeberry) to allow it more space to develop. These are larger shrubs/small trees with large enough flower or berry displays to be appreciated from a distance.

As mentioned in East Entrance, above, we intend to remove and reallocate two of the three *Callicarpa americana* (beautyberries) currently at the far south end of the Raingarden because they have done “too well” and are crowding out other plants. The *Viburnum nudum* (smooth witherod) and *Lindera benzoin* (spicebush) in the south end have been controlled by pruning. We have not moved the *Hydrangea arborescens* (smooth hydrangea) or *Aesculus parviflora* (bottlebrush buckeye) near the central narrowing of the Raingarden, and will need to ensure that they stay “within bounds” going forward. We have removed all of the *Ilex glabra* (inkberries) and *Euonymus americana* (Hearts a bustin) from the Raingarden and have potted them. They were taking space and not adding to the interest of the Raingarden. The Cherokee sedge mentioned above as erosion mitigation was made available for that purpose by reducing the footprint in the Raingarden.

PROPOSED PERENNIALS FOR LLPG

SPRING EPHEMERALS for West Woodland

Native spring ephemerals

Claytonia virginica	Spring beauty
Erythronium americanum	Yellow adder's tongue
Sanguinaria canadensis	Bloodroot
Trillium luteum	Yellow trillium
Trillium grandiflora	White trillium
Dicentra eximia	Wild bleeding heart
Dicentra cucullaria	Dutchman's breeches
Dicentra canadensis	Squirrel corn
Mertensia virginica	Virginia bluebell
Arisaema triphyllum	Jack in the pulpit
Podophyllum peltatum	Mayapple
Asarum canadense	Wild ginger

Non-native "naturalizing" spring ephemerals

Galanthus nivalis	Snowdrop
Crocus chrysanthus	Snow crocus
Hyacinthoides nonscripta	English bluebell
Hyacinthoides hispanica	Spanish bluebell
Anemonoides nemerosa	Wood anemone
Allium ursinum	Wild garlic
Scilla siberica	Siberian squill
Chinodoxa forbesii/luciliae	Glory of the snow
Fritillaria meleagris	Snakeshead fritillary
Narcissus species	Daffodil
Cyclamen hederifolium*(fall)	Hardy cyclamen
Colchicum autumnale*(fall)	Autumn crocus

SUN-PREFERRING NATIVE WILDFLOWERS for East Woodland

Anaphalis margaritacea	Pearl everlasting
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterflyweed
Ionactis linariifolius	Stiff aster
Campanula rotundifolia	Harebell
Coreopsis verticillata	Threadleaf coreopsis
Delphinium tricornis	Dwarf larkspur
Oenothera fruticosa	Sundrops

Penstemon hirsutus	Hairy beardtongue
Ruellia strepens	Smooth wild petunia
Phlox subulata and stolonifera	Creeping phlox
Silene virginica	Fire pink
Stokesia laevis	Stokes' aster

SUN-LOVING PERENNIALS for South Entrance

Rudbeckia lanciniata 'Goldcuelle'	Tall coneflower
Veronica peduncularis 'Georgia Blue'	Creeping speedwell
Coreopsis verticillata	Threadleaf coreopsis
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterflyweed
Echinacea purpurea	Purple coneflower

"BORDER" PERENNIALS for Gathering Place

Pyenanthemum tenuifolium or muticum	Mountain mint
Stylophorum diphyllum	Celandine poppies
Helleborus orientalis	Lenten rose
Ferns	

VINES FOR TRELIS in Gathering Place

Clematis armandii	Evergreen clematis
Gelsemium sempervirens	Carolina jessamine

MID-SIZED SUN PERENNIALS for Meadow

Helianthus decapetalus	Thinleaf sunflower
Oenothera fruticosa	Sundrops
Aster cordifolius	Heart-leafed aster

LARGE SUN PERENNIALS for Meadow

Vernonia noveboracensis	Ironweed
Filipendula rubra	Queen of the prairie
Aruncus dioicus	Goatsbeard

STUMP AREA in Meadow Edge

Platycodon grandiflora
Trillium lancifolium
Sanguinaria canadensis
Heuchera americana
Helleborus orientalis
Brunnera macrophylla
Ferns

Balloonflower
Lanceleaf wakerobin
Bloodroot
American alumroot
Lenten rose
Siberian bugloss/False forget-me-not

ROCK AREA in Meadow Edge

Spigelia marilandica
Silene virginica
Galanthus nivalis
Arisaema triphyllum

Woodland pinkroot/Indian pink
Fire pink
Snowdrops
Jack-in-the-pulpit