

**PROGRESS REPORT
PPSC plans for LLPG
Fall 2021**

What follows is a review of where we are with respect to the planting plans for the various sections of LLPG. The reviews include evaluation of:

- Progress towards execution of the 2020-2021 section plans
- Executed modifications to the 2020-2021 section plans
- Proposed future progress
- Approximate timeline for that work

The order of the reviews will begin with the South Entrance, and go “around the horn” counterclockwise, finishing in the middle (the Raingarden).

South Entrance:

- Amsonia, green and gold, and Japanese anemones were removed. The green and gold was transplanted into multiple areas of the Raingarden. The amsonia and Japanese anemones were potted and made available to other homes.
- The two burning bushes at the east end of the South Entrance were transplanted to the northwest rim above the rock garden. The hearts a bustin' were removed and potted and made available to other homes.
- 'Georgia blue' speedwell (Veronica), showy black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia fulgida) and butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa) were planted, but much of the front apron is unplanted. We need to acquire the sun/heat/drought tolerant plants for planting in spring 2022 (or perhaps fall 2021).
- The rail fence was not planted with vines. After further consideration, Kristin and I suggest that the rail fence might be replaced with a taller structure (at least 4'), and this might “wrap around” the east end of the South Entrance to border the paved entrance and separate it from the Gathering Place. In addition to the PPSC, this will require consensus of the LLPG Committee and the Garden Club Executive Committee. We've (the PPSC) been undecided about the divider for the Gathering Place.

Future ideas:

- *Relocate some of the Iteas and Fothergillas within the South Entrance so they are not arrayed in rows but rather are asymmetrically grouped, with the larger number to the east end (near the entrance paved path) and a smaller grouping towards but not at the west end. Four Iteas can be arced around a cluster of 3 Fothergillas on the east end, with the remaining 3 Iteas behind 2 Fothergillas towards the west end. Abelianas can be interspersed as a summer-flowering shrub.*
- *Boulders may be added for interest, and positioned off-center towards the east end.*
- *A modified sheep panel fence with cut-out pattern has been considered, as has a three-rail split rail fence, which can be planted with flowering vines that may be evergreen. The preferred height of the structure is 4'. It might “wrap around” to the east side of the Gathering Place. If wire fence is chosen it can be “stepped” in sections to adjust for the slope along the paved entrance path.*
- *The type of posts will match with the fencing material, and should look “natural” or at least inconspicuous.*

East Entrance:

- The planting of the *Vinca minor* on the banks has been completed. The most recently planted southernmost section is established, although it will require another year to fill in.
- The variegated sedge along the large stone steps has been removed. On the lower half of the steps *Hypericum* 'Brigadoon' has been planted and has established well. The upper half has been planted with *Rosemary officianalis* 'Hill Hardy' that have been mulched with small river stone.
- *Deutzia gracilis* has been planted along the drybed at the southern edge of the **East Entrance**.
- A pair of beautyberries has been successfully transplanted from the **Raingarden** to the flat top of the rim of the **East Entrance**.
- The shrubs flanking the beautyberries and those above the east bench/retaining wall have not been acquired. These could be added this fall or in the spring.

Future ideas:

- *Add sprigs of Vinca minor in the southeast section of the bank as needed.*
- *Low-growing bulbs planted in the fall along the steps would bring color and texture to the entrance for next spring. Suggestions include grape hyacinths, yellow and/or white tete-a-tete miniature daffodils, crocus*
- *Continue use of Preen every 3-4 months after major weeding until vinca forms it's own suppressing mat.*
- *Native junipers with a low lateral-branching habit are proposed to flank the beautyberries.*

Woodland:

- In addition to the recently planted deciduous azaleas and American wahoos, a donated mountain laurel was planted this spring
- Multiple spring ephemerals were planted, including natives - yellow trillium, wild ginger, bloodroot, twinleaf, wood anemone, phacelia, and non-native spring bulbs – Spanish squills and snowdrops. The previously planted (non-native) daffodils were not disturbed.
- Skullcaps (*Scutellaria*, native perennial) were planted above the west bench
- Grow the shrubs, and particularly the wahoos, azaleas, rhododendrons and mountain laurel, to mature size, and to continue to add more species of spring ephemerals, especially to the West Woodland. The East Woodland planting has lagged because the sun/heat/drought-tolerant plants were not acquired for the 2021 spring planting season. This should be addressed in spring 2022. Orange and red echinaceas have been planted near the paved path north of the east bench.
- There are non-native invasive groundcover plants that should be suppressed with the aim of eradication, especially English ivy and liriopse. The wintercreeper can be retained on the steep rocky areas of the **East Woodland** because it holds the ground and is not obtrusive or difficult to control in that setting. Contrariwise, the wintercreeper is expendable in the **West Woodland**. The *Vinca minor* in the **West Woodland** is also expendable, and it is perhaps problematic in the adjacent **Meadow Edge** and **Rock Garden**, ie a target for eradication in those areas.

Future ideas:

- *Add another native mountain laurel or two near the existing one. A potential planting site has been identified and marked upslope from the existing mountain laurel.*
- *Add 2-3 deciduous azaleas to the East Woodland behind the current 3 deciduous azaleas.*
- *Add ~6 low-growing native species junipers, eg *Juniperus wiltonii*, above the east bench.*

- *Add sun/heat/drought tolerant perennial wildflowers in the East Woodland above the paved path. Seek to acquire plant donations from the Garden Club, and purchase what cannot be acquired. Three *Guara lindheimeri* are pending planting in front of the East Woodland deciduous azaleas.*
- *Continue to add spring ephemerals to the West Woodland, mostly through solicited/donated plants. As a specific example, we look to Ann Graf to contribute Virginia bluebells and Holli Rogers to contribute white trillium. The old compost area in the East Woodland can be similarly enhanced with spring ephemerals.*

Fern and Rock Gardens:

- The collection of ferns has expanded and flourished. Dwarf crested iris share the space.
- The **Rock Garden** has been cleared and planted with hardy ice plant and multiple varieties of sedum, which have thrived.
- Above the **Rock Garden** a pair of burning bushes were transplanted from the **Gathering Place** and are surviving.
- The beebalms that have been planted above the **Rock Garden** have struggled through the summer but appear to have survived to the fall.
- Above the north bench/retaining wall Veronica 'Georgia Blue' and sundrops (*Oenothera fruticosa*) have been planted and have survived, as have the previously planted Poet's laurels (*Danae racemosa*).

Future ideas:

- *Move beebalm to open areas in the Raingarden.*
- *Add more burning bushes to the current two along the rim above the Rock Garden*
- *Add more ferns, possibly including non-native varieties, to the Fern Garden.*
- *Continue use of Preen every 3-4 months after major weeding*

Meadow:

- Native perennials have been spotted into the **Meadow**, including black cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*), goat's beard (*Aruncus dioicus*), ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*), Carolina lupine (*Thermopsis villosa*), and ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*, naturalized but not native). Money Plant (*Lunaria*) seeds have been spread around the area.

Future ideas:

- *Add wildflower varieties, particularly those that are of larger scale and stronger color and texture.*
- *Avoid cutting back the Meadow except in the spring (before the daffodils erupt).*

Meadow Edge:

- The area around the stump birdbath was cleared and planted with native perennials, including gayfeather (*Liatris spicata*), clustered mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum muticum*), alumroot (*Heuchera americana*), celandine poppy (*Stylophorum diphyllum*), 'Little Joe' Joe Pye weed (*Eutrochium*), 'Iron Butterfly' ironweed (*Vernonia lettermannii*), Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum*), columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), ferns, and selected non-natives, ie balloon flower (*Platycodon grandiflora*).
- The rock area within Meadow Edge has not yet been modified subsequent to the effort to expose the rocks.

Future ideas:

- *Continue to expose the rock area, and delay plans to plant the rock area.*

- *Eventually consider small scale plantings such as bloodroot, dwarf bleeding heart, grape hyacinth, dwarf crested iris, and small-leaved groundcover such as wooly thyme for the rock area.*
- *Aggressively weed the area around the stump birdbath, and consider putting down a weed-suppressing mulch around the planted area, perhaps utilizing a permeable landscape fabric under the mulch.*
- *Select a permanent birdbath feature with funds from a memorial contribution. Consider a solar-powered water agitator to control mosquito larvae.*

Gathering Place:

- *Hostas, daffodils and evergreen azalea have been removed*
- *The “floor” has been partially “leveled” with 2 cubic yards of fill dirt.*
- *The little library and white cedar benches have been shifted to the south end of the **Meadow Edge** pending completion of the floor work.*
- *The proposed additions of perennials bordering the floor has not begun, pending completion of the dirt floor.*

Future ideas:

- *Locate proposed seating in a plan*
- *Explore designs for future seating*
- *Smooth and compact the floor.*
- *Cover the floor with at least 2” of wood chip mulch pending decision on a hard surface.*
- *Return the little library to the Gathering Place with its back to the paved entrance path.*
- *As discussed for the South Entrance, a 4’ divider structure may extend down the paved entrance path, and may be planted with flowering vines.*
- *Relocate lenten roses from Harold Duckett to frame the floor.*

Raingarden:

- *Shrubs were moved as per plan. All moved shrubs have survived thusfar.*
- *Perennials were thinned (especially amsonia and solidago) and redistributed (especially round leaved ragwort and woodland phlox)*
- *Some perennials were supplemented (especially Jacob’s ladder and Arisaema dracontium)*
- *Non-natives were removed (especially Ajuga reptans)*
- *Growing the existing shrubs to mature size will reduce the current appearance of “open space” in the north end of the Raingarden.*

Future ideas:

- *Perennials may be added and shifted as we continue to learn what is doing well and is aesthetically pleasing.*
- *Move/plant beebalms from the West Woodland rim to Raingarden open areas, especially in the approximate “center” of the north end.*
- *Control the milkweed - particularly where it “escapes” into the lawn.*
- *Underplant in “shade pools” created by large shrubs/small trees with shade-preferring plants eg ferns.*
- *Improve the soil as noted below*
- *Continue use of Preen every 3-4 months after major weeding*

*For multiple areas in LLPG, including the **South Entrance, Raingarden, Fern Garden** and **Woodland**, a long-term project is soil improvement, most likely to be achieved by:*

- *Allowing leaves to stay where they fall*
- *Supplement natural leaf litter with “imported” (from Garden Club members) chopped leaves in the fall*
- *Top-dress with compost bought in bulk in the spring (essentially all of the **Raingarden** and selected areas in the **Woodland** and other sections)*

*Pine straw is a “nice touch” but may not be required for the **Raingarden** if the other soil improvements are undertaken. It should not be needed on the **East Entrance** vinca banks.*