



## Preparing for Your Consultation

Collaboration is the process by which your creativity is released!! To best understand your priorities, determine your reasons for wanting a new garden:

- ◇ Improve the entry or circulation around the house;
- ◇ Improve "Curb Appeal";
- ◇ Create an inviting space for friends and family;
- ◇ Make the most of underused areas;
- ◇ Create a personal space, reflecting your own interests & pleasures.

## It's all about you (and your family)

What kinds of spaces do you enjoy most? What is your favorite place?

- ◇ Natural (forest or meadow) or manmade (buildings or interiors)?
- ◇ Intimate — enclosed — human scale;
- ◇ Grand — lofty — reaching for the sky;
- ◇ On the water — in the forest — at the beach — on a mountain — at a café.

Do you enjoy movement and sound? Or do you prefer quiet, restful solitude?

- ◇ An active participant?
- ◇ An observer?

What are your

- ◇ Favorite plants?
- ◇ Favorite colors?
- ◇ Favorite season — what is your birthday month?
- ◇ Favorite Garden Element — water, birds, pots, furniture, hedges, lighting, color, whimsy, paths, structures, etc. What are your least favorites?

Where did you grow up? What do you remember most about that landscape?



## Practical considerations

Do you have any personal requirements (mobility, allergies, sensitivities, etc)?  
What kind of space is needed for your hobbies (growing food, lawn games, hot tubbing, entertaining, dancing, cut flowers, reading)?

Who will use the garden and how? (Family members, pets, large or small groups for entertaining.)

- ◇ Walking around in the morning with a warm beverage;
- ◇ Relaxing after work;
- ◇ Playing soccer or croquet;
- ◇ Exploring, playing with friends;
- ◇ Sitting in the sun or shade;
- ◇ Barbequing and entertaining guests.

What (natural) features exist on your property?

- ◇ Existing hardscaping — fence, paths, walls, etc.;
- ◇ Stone on site — hills, slopes;
- ◇ Moving or standing water (springs?);
- ◇ Existing plant material — new or mature.

## Lots to think about!

For our consultation to move along as smoothly possible, I recommend that you spend some time thinking about your garden prior to our first meeting.

You might give some thought about how your new garden will be maintained, whether there are current concerns you'd like addressed (drainage problems, aggressive weeds, ...).



## Focus on details

Who will be maintaining the garden and what kinds of chores do they find enjoyable; which chores are unpleasant? Are you a fussy gardener, demanding perfection, or are you content with the way nature handles things?

What is the most used room in the house? What do you see from that window? What is your best view around the house? How about your worst view? Is it from the street or from the corner of the backyard? What do you see? Walk around and look at your property from the places you never spend any time — Including across the street. Are there any privacy issues?

How do you arrive and enter the house? Is it different than that of guests? Is there enough room to walk around your car while carrying packages without walking on the lawn or in the rose bed?

Where do you store your trash cans, recycling bins — is it convenient? Do you need a compost area? Do you need a storage shed for tools or firewood? Do you need an outdoor workspace or staging area for projects around the house?

Are you planning any future expansions on your house?

- ◇ New doors out to the garden?
- ◇ An addition?
- ◇ A Deck, Patio or Hot Tub?
- ◇ Outdoor kitchen or Fireplace?

## It's all about your site

What is the approximate size of your property? Do you have any grading or drainage issues? Have you disconnected your downspouts? Do you currently have any maintenance issues? (Blackberries, Horsetail, pasture weeds, disease, overgrown, etc) What is your favorite thing about your property? List any visual or functional problems of your property to be minimized or overcome.



## ... And about your lifestyle

Considering your lifestyle, what feeling or mood do you wish to establish?

- ◇ Naturalistic?
- ◇ Formal, Historic?
- ◇ Asian?
- ◇ Modern?
- ◇ Eclectic?

Does this tie in with your house style?

Are you interested in:

- ◇ Water conservation planting (xeriscaping)?
- ◇ Storing rainwater?
- ◇ Attracting wildlife?
- ◇ Edible Landscaping?
- ◇ Green Roofs?
- ◇ Low maintenance?

Do you want an irrigation system? Do you want to include Native Plants?  
Exclusively?

Will you be installing the garden yourself? Will you be seeking help with the  
hardest parts? Are you planning on hiring a Landscape Contractor?

## Has This Helped?

I hope this self-interview has helped you to focus on what you'd like your new garden to be. To make an appointment for your consultation, you can call me at (503) 239-0105 or email [plan-it-earth@comcast.net](mailto:plan-it-earth@comcast.net).