



Way Park Rain Garden



About Rain Gardens

What is a rain garden?

- Shallow depression planted with deep-rooted plants.
- Comprised of native plant species that are good at taking in and storing water.
- Can withstand extreme concentrations of water and nutrients.
- Can be any shape or size.

Components of a rain garden

- Grass Buffer-slows the velocity of runoff.
- Mulch Layer-provides a medium for the biological activities to occur and keeps the soil moist.
- Plants-use the runoff for moisture and nutrient requirement.
- Soil Layer-where plant roots collect moisture and nutrients.
- Ponding area or depression-provides storage needed for the runoff.
- Berm-works like a dam to pond runoff.

What are the advantages of rain gardens?

- Improve stormwater quality
- Reduce runoff volumes and the chance of flooding
- Increase amount of water than is absorbed, thus recharging aquifers
- Provide habitat for wildlife
- Soften water
- Reduce nutrient load in stormwater runoff
- Filters solids out of the water
- Conserve water
- Reduce standing water
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Increase property values

Maintenance

- Water regularly (only immediately after planting and during dry periods).
- Minimize compaction of the planting media.
- Periodic mulching, pruning and thinning.
- Plant replac
- Annual insp



Rationale For Project

- Provide an educational site where Northfield residents can gain an understanding of the importance and value of rain gardens.
- Provide a natural space for recreational activities.
- Serve as a model for future rain gardens.
- Engage the community in the maintenance of the rain garden once it is built.
- Memorialize the hospital's work at the site.

Examples of Rain Gardens In Other Communities

• The Children's Rain Park in Arlington, Virginia.
An excellent example of what the Way Park rain garden project aims to achieve, this park's rain garden allows children to interact directly with the processes that take place in a rain garden and to thus gain an even better understanding and appreciation for the garden as a whole.

• Clemson, South Carolina.
The primary objective of this rain garden was to teach local residents how to build a rain garden in their own yards so as to reduce the problems associated with storm water runoff, namely flooding.

History of Way Park

- 1855 to 1933, the land which is now known as Way Park was part of a beautiful, open pasture.
- Purchased in 1882 by John S. Way, the land was originally farmed and used by Northfield residents for recreational activities such as skating, sledding, and kite-flying.
- In 1933, the Way daughters gifted the land to be a park.
- Later, in 1939, the then new Northfield Hospital was constructed on the south end of Way Park. There it dutifully served the Northfield community until 2003.
- The north end of the park continues to be a space for outdoor exercise and fun, as it has for nearly eighty years.
- Looking toward the future of Way Park, rehabilitation is a top priority. The new design for Way Park will integrate details of the 1930s blueprints (which could not be fulfilled because of the poor economy), as well as a memorial for the hospital, an outdoor amphitheater, and a rain garden.

Partner Organizations

- Friends of Way Park
 - Have been and will be the group tasked with the promotion of the renovation of the park.
- STOGROW
 - Committed to helping maintain a completed rain garden.
 - Willing to teach the Northfield community basic biology and gardening at the garden.
- Leif Knecht
 - Committed to donate some materials at cost to construction project.
- Alternative Learning Center
 - Deliberating as to whether they can commit to sending students down to the garden on a biweekly basis for instruction and garden care.

Future Steps

- Approach Profs. Paul Jackson and John Schade
 - Environmental studies classes could develop curriculum for collaboration between STOGROW and the ALC.
- Continued contact with ALC
 - Attempt to secure relationship between ALC and STOGROW.
- Documentation
 - Seek out a member of either St. Olaf or Carleton to video document construction process for internet dissemination.
- Commemoration
 - Promote the memorial nature of the garden to with respect to the history of Northfield Hospital being at the site.

