SITE DESIGN AND PLANTING PLAN FOR RAMSEY WASHINGTON METRO WATERSHED DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

Little Canada, Minnesota

Diane Hellekson, Landscape architect • Barr Engineering

This 2005 project was in collaboration with Barr engineer Kurt Leuthold, architects Sarah Nettleton and Michael Huber. Protect nearby Gervais Creek and downstream water bodies by capturing all site stormwater and treating additional runoff from the street. My focus was to make the site beautiful and its function vivid, to facilitate district education efforts, and to inspire property owners.

From the front walkway, which crosses over the main rain garden, visitors can easily observe changing moisture and plant conditions; in summer, tall grasses kiss the pavement and retaining wall. From the entrance, a roof scupper spills rainwater onto a circular concrete splash pad; water flows to the rain garden in a stone-filled half-pipe, which demonstrates the stormwater route even in dry weather. At the building's back entrance, a demonstration garden frames the walkway, species planted in orderly bands. A concrete walkway and pavers lead to a gathering area.

Nearly half the 1.8-acre site is planted in native species, with showier "floriferous prairie" dominating the building's entrance and street-facing side. A mow strip is maintained where the property meets the street; mown turf-grass serves as a walkway through the prairie, firebreak against the building, and a framing device or "Cue to Care." This area serves as a transition to a diverse expanse of prairie, whose grasses and wildflowers give way to a wooded slope adjacent Gervais Creek.



The scupper sends roof runoff to a large rain garden



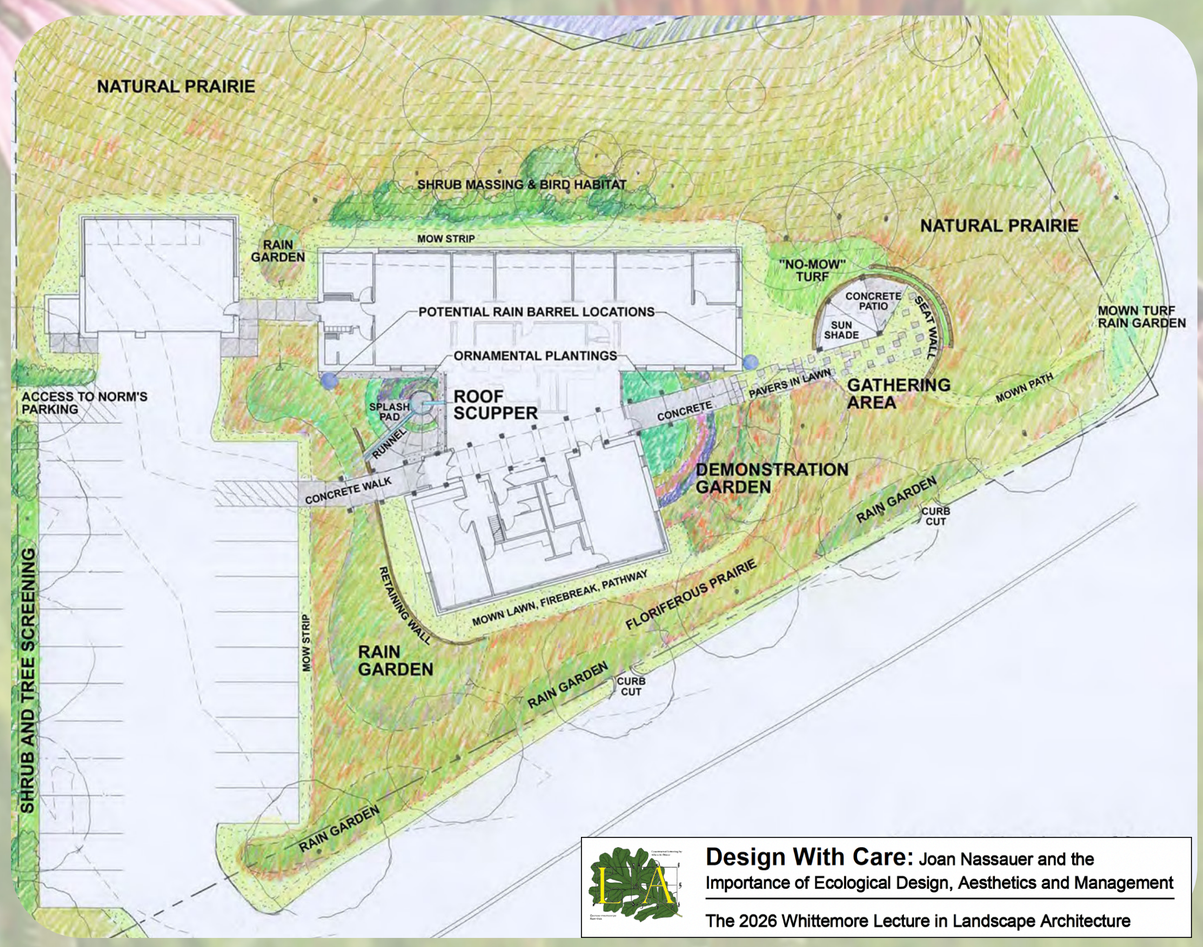
Mature floriferous prairie, viewed from behind the entrance sign



Amidst goldenrod, half pipe routes roof runoff to the rain garden



This geometric hard-scape serves as a gathering space for visitors to read signage





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