

Beautiful Landscapes

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14

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See the forest for the trees

Mark Peterson and Naturally Maintained Ltd create a sustainable landscape design while respecting the integrity of nature through stewardship and conservation.

Clients moving from a woodlot property in the countryside to a big estate lot in a newer residential development approached Mark Peterson and Associates Landscape Architects seeking to recreate the rural atmosphere at their new home. Mark Peterson and Associates, with contractor Naturally Maintained Ltd, worked with the clients to develop an attractive and sustainable landscape.

The clients were interested in privacy and protection from the wind and sun with a landscape that would attract birds, bees and butterflies, limit the need for pesticides, minimize turf areas and include their favourite plant species. There were also technical priorities, such as correcting drainage issues and preserving side yard access. And, of course, aesthetics were important.

Peterson designed a small "forest" in the south-facing back yard to cool the house during summer months. The stand of trees also eliminates a swath of turf and provides an intimate setting.

The tree planting is designed to mimic the natural structure of a forest, with an upper canopy, an understorey, and ground-level vegetation. The understorey consists of a variety of native trees and shrubs, with a silver maple providing the upper canopy. At ground level, all woody material is individually

mulched, and interstitial areas have been seeded with a mixture of fescues and clover to discourage weeds from sprouting up. As well, a dry streambed has been dug through the forest to solve past drainage problems.

This landscape will require some active management in the next few years: trees and shrubs will be thinned out to make room for the strongest individuals, and twigs, branches and leaves will be left on the ground to decompose. The decomposing material will create a natural woodland humus, which will smother the fescue-clover mix and serve as an ideal medium for planting native woodland plants.

Trees were planted in the front yard as well. With a previously exposed northwest aspect, five 12-foot eastern white cedars provide privacy and shelter for the main entrance. The cedars are planted on an undulating berm, which is linked to foundation and driveway plantings using various ornamental grasses, wildflowers and groundcover cotoneaster.

A flight of natural stone steps, accentuated with cobblestone and landscape rockery, was installed on the east side of the house, providing access between the front and back yards. As well, granite boulders indigenous to the Waterloo region were chosen as accent pieces throughout the project, enhancing the sense of place.



Project details

Firm
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Location
Waterloo

Price
\$35,000



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