THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN YOU DESIGN YOUR LANDSCAPE - PART 2of3

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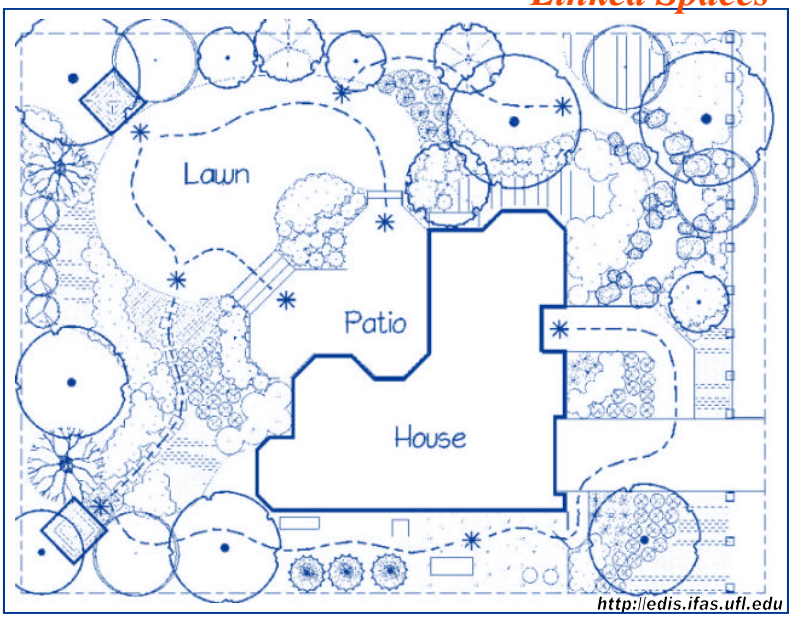
Following last weeks article on landscape design - and with site analysis, landscape use, and theme selection under your belt - I wanted to continue the discussion with creating and linking spaces, plant functions, and structuring plantings. These additional important steps will add dimension, design flow and eye appeal to your landscape while making sense of your outdoor space.

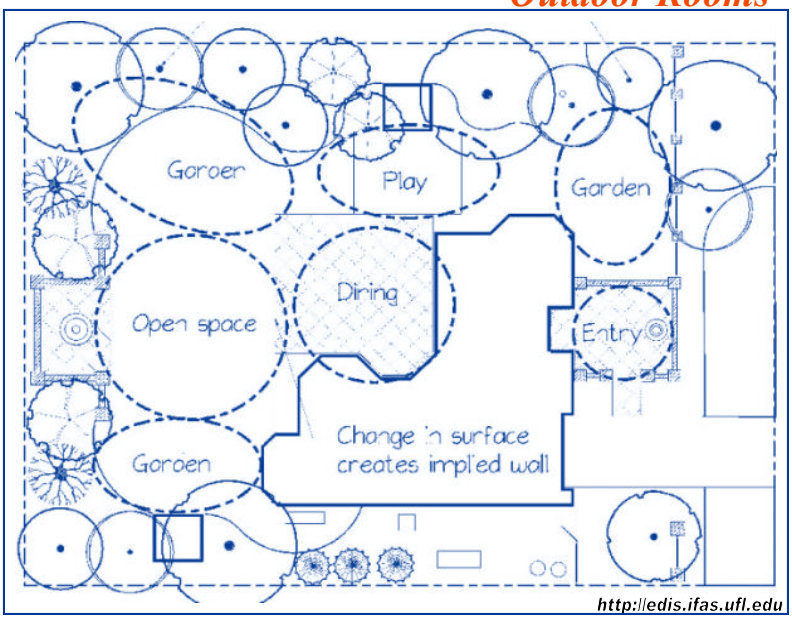
When you create and link spaces in your design, this is more or less making your yard an extension of your home. Somewhat like your home, you will want to split up your landscape into public areas, private areas, and areas best suited to service spaces. Spaces such as the entry area, a patio or deck, a place for your vegetable garden, a dog run, a place for your compost bin or garbage cans must all be taken into consideration. These spaces can actually be thought of as outdoor rooms that are separated with various features such as arbors, planters, trees, paved surfaces and even changes in elevation. Such features help make the various spaces feel room-like as they promote a sense of protection, privacy, and shelter.

Linked Spaces



Hand-in-hand with spaces is how you and your guests circulate from space to space. Linkages may include pathways, steps, and various walkways. Structures like gates and arbors add additional interest and invite visitors to enter your various garden rooms.

Outdoor Rooms



Plant materials make or break your landscape and accordingly what you choose for your design needs to provide aesthetic, structural and utilitarian functions. Plants of course are pleasant to look at. In addition, plants fill the landscape and give organization and definition to spaces. Land-

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scape plants also provide comfort in outdoor spaces by providing shade, as well as reducing the temperature and/or humidity. Plants also buffer noise and can provide food for both people and visiting wildlife.

Plants not only provide beauty and multiple uses, but they also provide dimension and structure to the garden. For example, shrubs can often function as walls in gardens. Trees can provide an overarching ceiling of sorts with their branched canopies. Mass plantings, when layered, helps connect and tie the garden together as a whole. All of this variety of visual planes is pleasing to the eye. Start with larger plants – such as evergreen trees and shrubs – and build your design in layers.

While I have to admit that I am not much of a design person and have more or less a plant "zoo" in my yard, I do realize that designing a landscape takes time, but pays off with a living piece of art. I will also remind you to take advantage of professional landscape designers/architects when needed.

Next week we will finish off this topic with some additional points including the importance of paying attention to detail, time and landscape maturity, and how to be a good steward of your landscape. Again, I want to invite you to look at a new UF/IFAS EDIS publication "Landscape Design: Ten Important Things to Consider" by Gail Hansen from the Center of Landscape Conservation and Ecology at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP375.

Resources:

- *Hansen, G. (2009) Landscape Design: Ten Important Things to Consider. The Center of Landscape Conservation and Ecology, UF/IFAS Extension Service.*

For more information about our Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program, please contact our FYN Horticulture Program Assistant, Allison Turner, at 764.4351 or email Allison.Turner@CharlotteFL.com. Allison can help educate you about the FYN Program so you can create a beautiful, Florida-Friendly landscape that saves you time and money while conserving precious water resources and reducing pollution.

contact a
MASTER GARDENER
on the Plant Lifeline from 1:00pm-4:00pm Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 764.4340 or by email Master.Gardener@charlottefl.com.

You can also visit them at one of our many Plant Clinics around the county: http://charlotte.ifas.ufl.edu/PlantClinics.pdf

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