
Zone 1 “The Cardinal Gardens”

Vision:

“Using the permaculture principles of care of people, planet and resources to create continuity between the past generation and the decades of generations to come.”

Area 1 – Center for Sustainable Community Land The Demonstration Gardens – Cardinal Gardens

Self-guided Interpretive Trail

- This trail would encompass the whole property with markers at points of interest along the trail.
- The trail would allow community residents and public visitors an opportunity to experience the entire property and learn more about the various features of the landscape and projects going on in each area.
- It would provide for an easy walk for outdoor exercise.
- The trail base would evidentially be wood chips or gravel.

Arbor

- The arbor would provide a visual marker for both the community trail entrance and the eastern edge of the CSC property.
- It would be planted in a fruit producing vine, providing shade, food and a windbreak.

Knoll

- The knoll is the highest point of area 1 and would be used as a vantage point for this area.
- This would allow for observation of the demonstration gardens, or Cardinal Gardens, which are laid out in a circular pattern signifying the four directions.

- The observer would also see the distinct changes of plant life between the agricultural fields to the south and the native prairie area.

Compost Site

- This site would allow for demonstration of composting construction and methods.
- The compost operation would be expanded in the space in stages, as materials for construction and composting increase.
- The site would also feature the vermiculture set up, which is a possible point of revenue.

Greenhouse

- The relocation of the greenhouse from the area 3, the orchard, would provide a windbreak, classroom area, conservatory and equipment storage.
- The structure would be bermed on the north side to provide insulation.
- This would allow for education on greenhouse growing techniques, including growing tropical plants.
- This would also be used as restroom facilities, possibly featuring a composting toilet.

Picnic and seating area

- The picnic area would be located in the windbreak provided by the trees and berm from the pond.
- The tables and benches would create places to enjoy the Cardinal Gardens.
- This would also be a staging area for outdoor classes and workshops.

Cardinal Gardens

- This would be the main display area for the various gardening methods to be demonstrated. The possibilities mentioned were

biointensive, biodynamic, Fukuoka methods, square foot gardening.

- This would be arranged in a circle, oriented to mark the four directions and the respective elements.

Windmill cistern

- Located in the center of the Cardinal Gardens, would be watering system created by a windmill standing in a cistern.
- This would be a focal point for the gardens.
- The cistern would be hand crafted by a local artist, bringing creativity and art to the garden.
- The windmill cistern would bring in the possibilities for education on wind power and water movement.

Siphoning system

- A low tech siphoning system would be set up from the pond over to the Cardinal Garden area.
- This would allow for direct watering of the gardens or for filling the windmill cistern.

Chinampas

- This gardening technique of growing in areas of standing water or boggy areas would be showcased in the low southwest corner of area 1. This area stays wet and receives the overflow from the pond.
- Also following design from area 2, more water would be directed to this spot.
- The chinampas would be set up in an organic pattern of curling spirals.
- There would also be some chinampas built out into the pond.
- These gardens would provide a demonstration site for growing food in very wet, boggy areas.

Berry patch

- Along the south edge of area 1 there would be berry producing bushes.
- They would provide food and educational opportunity on berry growing.

Preserved prairie area

- This area would be preserved to show the indigenous ecosystem.
- This would be another educational opportunity, linking past ecological history to present day use of the land.

Permaculture garden area

- This area would show the implementation of permaculture techniques such as plant guilds, ecotones, spirals and others.
- It would also use swales placed on contour for water retention.

Access road

- The existing road bed would be used for access into the demonstration garden area with vehicles and equipment.
- This road would also be used to access the community garden in area 2.

Adjacent field to the south (not CSC property)

- With an agreement from field owner, this field could be used to plant a corn maze.
- This maze would add a seasonal revenue producing event for the demonstration garden area.

Intro to Phases: in keeping with the permaculture principles we kept care of people, care of earth and benevolent distribution of resources in mind.

Phase One: Parameters: minimal overhead in terms of volunteer labor and workshop labor.

- Compost demonstration site w/ potential for income generation;

- AmeriCorps sponsored: Youth Conservation Corps of Illinois to put in trails and woodchip paths.
- Mark out a section of the original prairie for preservation
- MWP Workshop participants prepare land for swales and earthworks
- PDC students design Permaculture garden;
- Continue building database, expanding network;
- Identify Volunteer grantwriter for federal and state funding;
- Continue to build partnerships and collaborations.
- Partner with Midwest Permaculture for tuition-based internship program; source of both revenue and labor.

Phase Two: some cost; someone with expertise; larger volunteer force:

- Develop Cardinals Gardens;
- Mark and off and develop Picnic area;
- Develop Chiapas demo site;
- Build Siphon system take water off pond;
- Continue to remediate soil;
- Develop curriculum for youth programs, gardening and learning about nutrition, hunger issues, and land stewardship;
- Workshops to teach people about safe growing practices, high-yield gardening methods, organic practices, composting, and canning;
- Artist-in Resident Program; professional writers, artisans, musicians etc. donate art work for permanent placement or fundraising purposes.
- Identify "friendly" corporate and individual donors.

Phase Three: Part and Full time paid Staff on board w/ expertise backed up by generating income.

- Greenhouse relocation, reentry, windmill pump
- Start monthly “tours of your mission”
- Value added products
- Online store

Third principle is benevolent distribution of resources:

Suggestions for Fund Development and Revenue Generators:

- 1) Corn Maze-agritourism
- 2) Annual Festival
- 3) Aronia berry products
- 4) Compost, vermiculture, beekeeping, CSAs,
- 5) Farm to school program funds