

Center for Sustainable Communities - Stelle, IL

Permaculture Site Design – Zone 2

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ZONE 2 - VISION:

Zone 2 is at the heart of the Center for Sustainable Community property and central to its permaculture mission through educational programming, economic self-sufficiency, and service to community, from local to global. Zone 2 is a mixed use area currently dominated by the individual community garden plots, the horse barn, tool storage shed, corral, bee / apiary, pond, recreational beach, and significant berm that separates the pond and recreational area from the garden plots, primary use area, and the road.

Zone 2 presents significant opportunity for encouraging the integration of the Stelle community into the long-term success of the Center and vice versa. Besides serving as a walk the talk model of permaculture and sustainability for the community and beyond, it presents itself as a resource site for food production, as well as individual entrepreneurship, and community education initiatives.

In combination with Zones 1 and 3, the Zone 2 plan seeks to illustrate how to maximize shared use of natural assets, built infrastructure, on-site preservation of water resources, food

production, and minor aspects of energy self-sufficiency. Major recommendations for short, medium, and long-term options follow.

Short Term / Immediate Recommendations:

1) Plant Austere, ornamental, and mushroom guild windbreak from bridge abutment to first telephone pole to the east.

1) Plant wineberry windbreak along east side of creek from bridge to NW of rain garden

1) Develop shaded picnic table and bench area under existing silver maple tree at west end of garden plots.

1) Improve existing pathway (with woodchips) to and from community garden plots for multi-use by pedestrians, service/maintenance, and food delivery systems.

1) Develop swale from south side of footbridge east to a rain garden (#1), just west/southwest of pond recreation area with overflow design to pond. Use this swale material to raise and improve trail drainage.

1) Move tool shed to east side of garden plot location for shared use between community gardens and demonstration plots

1) Assess potential and desire for leasing of field west of wind turbine for conversion to CSA production and/or corner market for the Stelle community. Employ a farm manager that benefits long term from economic incentive to reclaim and improve the land while preserving the trail easement for tractor enabled lowering of turbine tower. Business model could also include supplying Stelle corner produce market and Kankakee Farmers Market.

Medium Term Priorities:

2) Remove horse barn and recycle material to chicken coop refurbishing and/or trail delineation. Restore site with clover.

2) Convert corral to an herb Mandela. Use excess fencing materials for other building and trail construction.

2) Develop swale from east to west across entire north side (at bottom of slope), of the pine tree berm along contour around to, and/or just short of intersection with Kelly Creek, with return swale to rain garden (#2), in existing low area due west of garden plots (near existing compost pile).

2) Enhance rain garden #2 with Illinois, regionally adapted rice.

2) Establish rain garden #3 at east end of garden plots and enhance with guild of blue flag iris, and cardinal flower.

2) Extend pathway through Zone 2 and connect to all other Zone plans.

2) Enhance rain garden #1 guild with cattails, feather reed grass, and fountain grass.

2) Site Plan, Design, and Build multi-modal pedestrian and service Bridge to Zone 3 just south of rain garden at west end of garden plots.

2) Develop / build "Permaculture Grown" produce stand at flagpole location for community resident convenience.

2) Engage Stelle K-12 youth and KCC students in production and reward system for education and staffing.

Long Term Recommendations:

3) Build a walk the talk classroom / gathering building on the location of the existing tool shed.

3) Design and build Farmers Market booth for Kankakee

3) One farm manager for both garden plots, and demonstration plots (& eventual greenhouse)

3) Site plan, design, and build edible trellis system north along parallel road to south of wind break / Austree buffer.

3) Backyard gardening entrepreneur business by Stelle kids and/or 9-12 in support of food independence mission

3) Enhance pine guild with lingon berry, blueberry, sweet cicely, daffodils, lovage and lupine

3) Establish hazelnut guild on south facing slope of berm from willows to recreation area, to also include butterfly bush, beauty berry, vetch, wild ginger, and wild strawberry. We seek to not only beautify the area but also attract bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.

