



By Roger Myers

Roger Myers is the President and Founder of American Beauty Landscaping. Established in 1979, ABL is the Valley's industry leader with more than 100 national, state and local awards to its landscape design and build credit.

PLANNED PLANTING...



Last month I shared some design secrets that help to make a successful landscape installation. When a given landscape space is planted “correctly,” the homeowner enjoys and utilizes the space in more interactive and healthy ways. It is human nature to feel attracted to healthy, beautiful plants correctly positioned and

planted for maximum esthetics and enjoyment.

The conscious awareness of the connection between plants and people is the most important factor in any project.

If this all sounds like some landscape designers’ artistic “smoke and mirrors” consider this. When was the last time you booked a hotel room with a view facing an alley or the roof of another building?! (Unless you were traveling on the cheap.)

We request the room with the ocean, park or skyline views that enhance the quality of our experience. Creating your home with a view is a significant challenge with the urban landscape but is well worth the efforts.

A collection of multiple plants within the view of a window or door provides immediate and soothing connections with the natural world. Plants surrounding a constructed pond with a small spillway graciously offer a resting place for thought and solitude.

People are drawn to plants for more than sensual reasons. They might follow the plants’ seasonal change with curiosity. They might just enjoy passing it by.

Although regularly and often improperly used – the “anchoring” technique is very important. It needs to be thought out well in advance of planting. It helps create the “sense of place” to the built environment.

An anchoring plant in combination with others can:

- define the beginning or ending of a space
- create a pivot point around which to walk
- with enclosure it can highlight the entrance and welcome visitors
- create balance and symmetry
- create a focal point where significant interest is directed

Kousa Dogwood, Japanese Maple, Paperbark Maple, Eastern Redbud, and selected flowering crabs are examples of often used “anchor plants”.

Enclosure is art of creating an outdoor living space or room. Hedging is a good example of creating an enclosure. Walks, patios and decks can be enhanced and softened with properly located hedges or a grove of trees providing a cool ceiling of shade.

Other important techniques such as highlighting and planting for definition are topics that will be explored in future articles.

Now is the time to welcome the most exciting season of the year for garden enthusiasts, or lovers, or school kids, or landscape contractors and for young and old alike – it’s time for Spring!