

McWater's Park Permaculture Gardeners

Permaculture Design Workshop
and Charrette

Introduction

An Overview of the Workshop:

Introduction – today:

- definition of permaculture
- general principles
- permaculture as a process
- forest gardening – some examples
(break for a snack)
- what got us started, mission and goals
- our example
- the next phase for our garden

To be followed by

- how to do a site assessment
- how to design a polyculture
- design charette for our gardens at McWaters Park

Full Disclosure

I am not an expert.

I am a gardener with an interest in permaculture.

I have read some books and gone to some workshops.

My experience is with what I have done in my yard and at the park.

I hope that this is useful to us all.

Thanks for being here,

Avery Wood

How to Define Permaculture? There are many definitions!

A combination of the words “Permanent” and
“Agriculture.”

“It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people providing for their food, energy, shelter and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way.” - Bill Mollison

What is permaculture design?

It is a recursive **process** that

- is based on whole system thinking
- is accountable to explicit ethical values
- uses natural systems as inspiration
- remembers that humans are part of nature

A whole design considers systems for production and integration of all aspects of human ecology:

Food

Water

Shelter

Technology

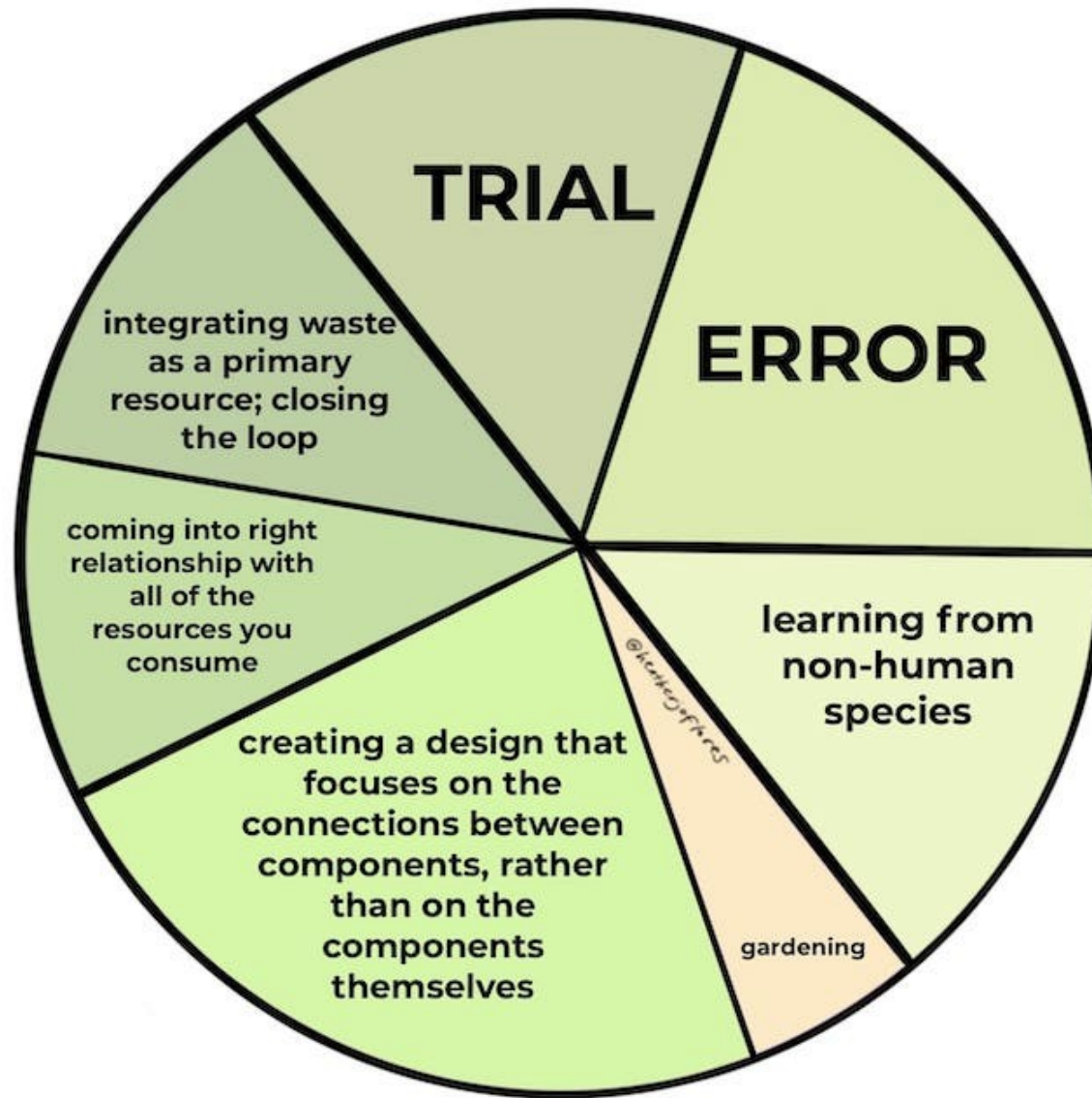
Transport

Waste

Energy

Community

WHAT IS PERMACULTURE DESIGN?



From Heather Jo Flores

Permaculture Principles

**The prime directive of permaculture:
“The only ethical decision is to take
responsibility for our own existence
and that of our children’s.”**

Principle of stability:

“It is not the number of diverse things in a design that leads to stability, it is the number of beneficial connections between these components.”

Law of return:
“Whatever we take, we must
return.”

The yield of a system is, theoretically,
unlimited.

“Yield is not a fixed sum in any design system. It is the measure of the comprehension, understanding, and ability of the designers and managers of that design.”

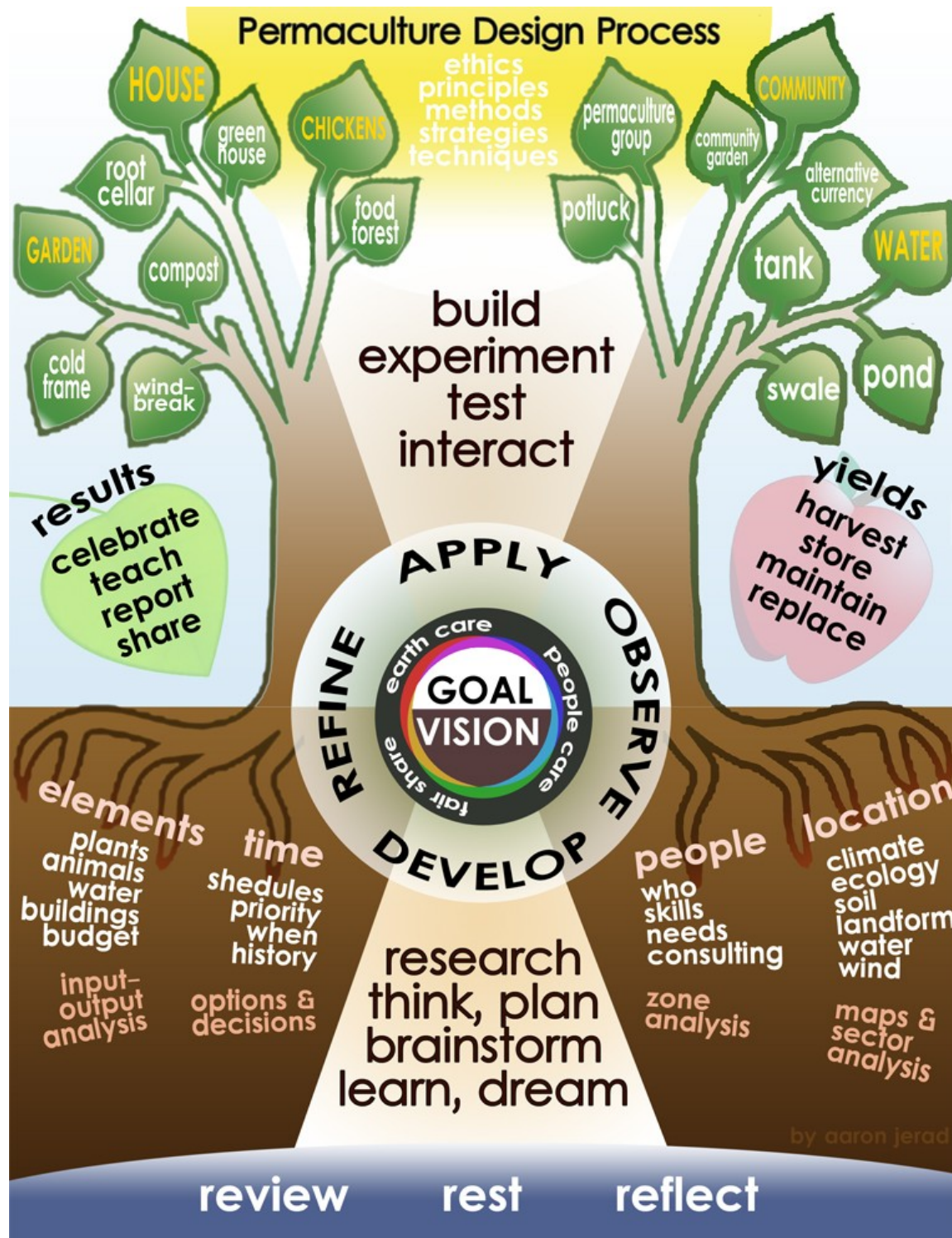
Everything gardens.

“Everything gardens, or has an effect on
its environment.”

Work with nature, rather than against
it:

“Become aware of the natural elements,
forces, pressures, processes, agencies,
and evolutions, so that we assist rather
than impede desired natural
developments.”

The problem is the solution; everything
works both ways.



From Aaron Jerad

Permaculture is a very powerful way of viewing the world:

Similar to yoga, writing, and art, permaculture is a life-path, a daily practice. At first, you might not feel like you're very flexible.

- Heather Jo Flores

Put on your permaculture glasses.

- Mark Krawczyk

Some Examples of Permaculture Design

On three different scales:

- a patch
- a landscape
- a home

The Three Sisters



A Mutually Beneficial Guild Planting

**PUMPKIN/
SQUASH:**
A living mulch
that shades soil,
helps retain
moisture and
inhibits weeds



PUMPKIN/SQUASH



CORN

CORN: Living support
trellis & protective
shady 'umbrella'

CORN: Provides sugars
to feed nitrogen-fixing
bacteria on bean roots

BEANS:
Bacteria
converts
nitrogen in soil
to boost growth



BEANS

Indigenous Management of Useful Plants and Landscapes with Eric Toensmeir

<https://youtu.be/iMV4M0eiLZQ>

- 4:50 min



Paradise Lot

A tour with Geoff Lawton, Australian permaculturist,
Eric Toensmeier and Jonathan Bates, owners and designers
in Holyoke, Mass



[https://youtu.be/
N-A966tojhA](https://youtu.be/N-A966tojhA)

14 min

Break

McWater's Park

Our garden:

It's inspiration, mission, and history

Our current crisis and goal of workshop

This project evolved from concerns about our energy future and our communities food security:

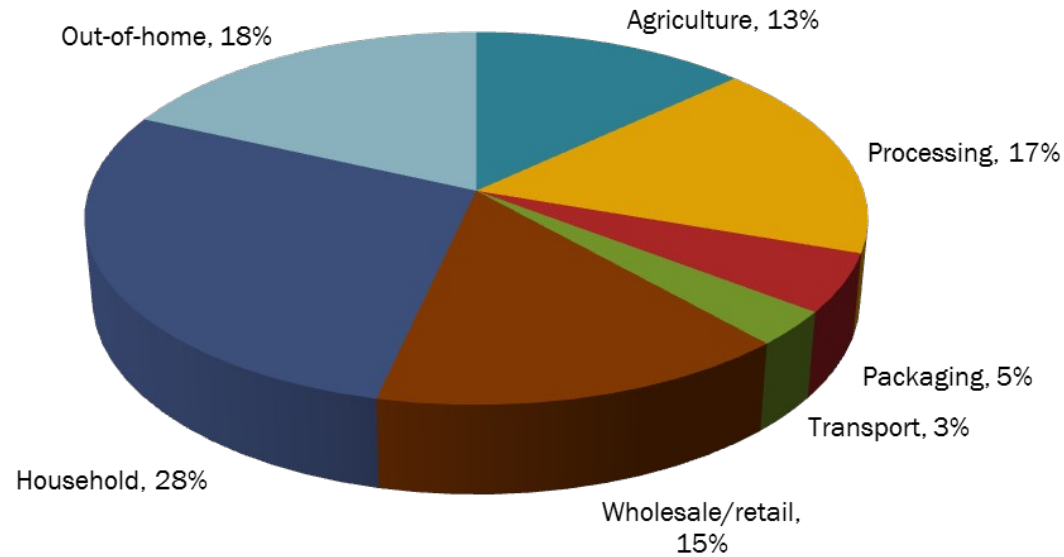
- The energy available in our food on the table is a small fraction of the of energy used to produce that food
- As the cost of oil increases, this becomes less and less tenable.
- Local permaculture gardening is a low energy option for food production.
- It can be implemented anywhere and at any scale so can be stabilizing force in future food security.

Energy input and output in the U.S. food system

Calories per person per day, 2002

Input: 32,000 calories/person/day

Output: 2,700 calories/person/day



12 calories of energy burned...

...for each calorie of food consumed.

The Mission

To design, plant, and maintain
an Edible Forest Garden
that inspires our community
to grow its own food.

Goals:

- To create a permaculture demonstration site
- To provide educational resources
- To produce food for the community
- To support the site's river side ecosystem
- To work with other others using the park

2011 and Today



Before and Today



Before and After



Work Days Old and New



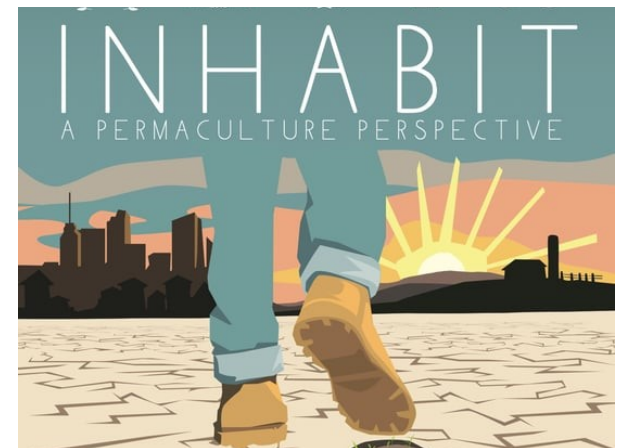
Thanks to all our grant writers
and
The Fund for North Bennington
The Village of North Bennington
Southern Vermont College Philanthropy Project

Reaching Out



Workshops with

- Keith Morris
- Mark Krawczyk
- Eric Toensmeier
- Erik Schellenberg



The Starting of Bounty



Where to from here?

Workshop goal:

To reassess our site, our resources, and our goals

To generate a design and
sustainable plan for the future

The Problem:

Our current design is requiring a level of attention that we can not sustain.

There are several reasons for this:

- invasive species pressure,
- trying to work in a garden far from out homes,
- limited energies of our stalwarts.

A proposal has been made that the a we establish the goal of creating a garden that can be sustained with one group work day a season.

Plan for rest of workshop:

Site assessment

- Review the components of a site assessment
- Review polyculture design

Independent visits to the park

Present site assessment

- Current conditions
- Historical data about what is working and what is not
- Create map
- Adjust mission
- Adjust goals

Design Charette (an intense period of design or planning activity.)

- Review the challenge
- Generate solutions

