

SITE ASSESSMENT

- Climate
- Land form
- Water
- Access and circulation
- Vegetation
- Animal life
- Microclimates
- Buildings and infrastructure
- Zones of use
- Soil – fertility and history
- Aesthetics and experience of place

CLIMATE

Plant hardiness zone

Annual precipitation

Seasonal distribution of precipitation

Growing degree days

Average frost free days

Chilling hours

Extreme weather potential

Climate change

LANDFORM

Slope

Topographic position

Bed rock geology

Superficial geology

Seasonal high water depth

Depth to hard pan, bedrock

Elevation locally

Elevation globally (540')

WATER

Existing sources -
location
quality
dependability
sustainability

Water shed and flow patterns

Potential for pollution

Flooding and ponding

Potential sources

Waterlines septic, well locations

Erosion
existing
potential

ACCESS and CIRCULATION

Activity nodes

- as desired in goals
- as needed to support circulation, work

Circulation

- paths for people
- handicapped access
- paths for carts
- roads for cars, emergency vehicles
- access for earth moving
- sense of safety
- (Consider impact on funding)

Storage areas

- mulch, compost, brush, other additives
- plants - nursery, green house
- tools, carts
- water

Access needed for desired functions as driven by goals

- For example:
- public sitting area
 - private sitting areas
 - signs
 - buildings
 - accommodating visitors
 - accommodating other work or activities that might be occurring in the same area
 - integration with living space and needs – access to firewood, compost pile etc

VEGETATION and WILD LIFE

Existing plants:

wild

planted

native

invasive (present and near by)

Ecosystem architecture (field, lawn, woods, hedge row etc)

Habitat types (food, water, shelter)

Existing animals

domestic

wild

MICRO-CLIMATES

Define various spaces:

- slope

- sun/shade

- cold air drainage

- soil moisture

- wind

BUILDINGS and INFRASTRUCTURE

Buildings

Pavement

Drivable surfaces

Power lines

Spigots

Septic

Well (existing and potential)

Underground pipes

Fences and gates

ZONES of USE

Property lines

Setbacks

Well protection

Use history

Accessibility and intimacy – map of zones that define distribution of personal time and attention

Zone 0 – home/work

Zone 1 – visited daily – on the path of daily activities – intensive daily management possible

Zone 2 – visited frequently – easy to go there – weekly management

Zone 3 – visited occasionally – have to plan time to be there – monthly management

Zone 4 – rarely visited – considerable effort – things requiring only seasonal to yearly attention

Zone 5 – wild and unmanaged

(picture)

SOIL FERTILITY and MANAGEMENT

Soil zones

Soil Types:

Texture

Structure

Consistency

Drainage

Fertility

Management history

Toxins (previous use, lead, salt)

Mulch and organic material

AESTHETICS and EXPERIENCE of PLACE

Out door rooms

Arrival/Entry

View lines and corridors

Visual integration

Public and private

Sense of place (expression and connection)

Existing overall feeling, quality and experience