Contemplative Garden Proposal
Terry O’Day

Concept:
In my quest to pursue creative work that has a positive impact on society, I have found that working with landscape is tremendously rewarding, not only to me, but also to those who experience the physical spaces I’ve helped to create. After many years of practice with arranging structural landscape elements and developing aesthetically pleasing plant communities at the B Street facility and other sites, I am asking for an opportunity to install a small-scale project on campus.

Rationale:
There is a deep body of research on the topic of positive human response to natural settings. On its website devoted to Green Cities and Good Health, the University of Washington cites many examples of research supporting the idea that “Metro nature - including trees, parks, gardens, and natural areas - enhance quality of life in cities and towns.”

In another example, Abraham, Sommerhalder, and Abel cite multiple studies to support their statement that: “Landscapes have the potential to promote mental well-being through attention restoration, stress reduction, and the evocation of positive emotions... and social well-being through social integration, social engagement and participation, and through social support and security.”

Possibly because of their highly formalized structure, Japanese gardens in particular seem to provide health benefits. A preliminary study by two Rutgers researchers suggests, “Japanese gardens may offer tangible healing results for vulnerable populations, including late-stage Alzheimer’s patients.” After brief periods of sitting in a Japanese garden, Alzheimer’s patients experienced reduced stress and enhanced well-being, as measured by a heart-rate test and behavior change.

The above examples provide evidence to support the claim that a thoughtfully designed landscape can provide benefits to the community that lives and works within it. While most of the campus landscape already demonstrates this point, I believe that the proposed project site could be improved so that it is more in keeping with the existing park-like campus environment.

Project Description
The proposed project is to design and build a low-maintenance Japanese-inspired contemplative garden on the south side of the library, adjacent to the east entrance. The design specifies an open screen of native flowering shrubs and trees to provide a backdrop for the central design element, which is envisioned as a quiet sanctuary for reading and reflection in keeping with the site’s proximity to the library. The garden will fit within the normal campus landscape maintenance protocol (annual trimming to the ground for shrubs, light annual pruning for trees). The project will be completed in three phases: Site prep will prepare the site and install the perimeter elements (circular path, screening and bedding plants). The design and Installation phases will be completed through project-based studio and seminar courses offered by the Art Department and as a faculty/student creative project. Facilities will be consulted on an ongoing basis throughout the design and installation phases to ensure alignment with overall landscape goals.

Phase I Site prep – Feb-May 2016
The first phase is already funded through the Elliott fund. Site prep includes removal of plant material, land-shaping to define pathways and planting areas, adding soil amendments and installing the perimeter path and plants. At the completion of the prep phase, the site will be attractive and easy to maintain in the interval between the prep and build phases. In fact, the site could be maintained in the prep phase over many years as a
landscape improvement to what is currently in place. Site prep will be completed by O’Day as creative activity with help from students and facilities as available.

**Phase II Garden Design – Feb-May 2017**
The garden design will be produced through academic courses in the new design track in the art department. ARTST 340 Interdisciplinary Design Studio and ARTST 345 Interdisciplinary Design Seminar are project-based courses intended to give students opportunities to work with clients on real-world design projects such as the one described in the garden proposal. Faculty time has been allocated to teaching these courses and funding is in place to support them. The art department has its own allocation of Elliott funding, some of which will be directed towards supporting the design courses.

**Phase III Installation May 2017-May 2018**
Garden installation will also be supported through the academic program in the art department. ARTST 220 Studio II provides students with opportunities to develop skills through hands-on practice and can include projects such as the one described. Depending on the design, outside contractors may be brought in to complete specialized portions of the installation. Potentially, the implementation phase could also become an interdisciplinary summer faculty/student creative project through the SAH URSCI initiative.

**Funding**
The budget for the garden installation will be determined through interviews with stakeholders and supporters of the project and will be an important constraint during the design process. The project steering group will seek funding for installation from many sources, both internal and external to the campus community. Installation will not begin until the project is fully funded.

**Ongoing**
The design requirements stipulate that the garden maintenance plan be consistent with the overall landscape maintenance protocol - i.e. annual light pruning of trees and shrubs and fall trimming to the ground for herbaceous perennials. Facilities Management will be consulted throughout the design phase to ensure that the maintenance plan fits campus requirements. In addition to general use by the campus population, the garden will be used as a teaching and community gathering space by the Japanese and Art programs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name</th>
<th>Varieties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amelanchier alnifolia</td>
<td>‘Martin’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cercis canadensis texensis</td>
<td>‘Oklahoma’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambucus</td>
<td>‘Black Lace’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptisia Prairieblues™</td>
<td>‘Solar Flare’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baptisia x variicolor Prairieblues™</td>
<td>‘Twilite’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaccinium corymbosum</td>
<td>‘Liberty’ ‘Legacy’ ‘Spartan’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sedum Sunsparkler series</td>
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<tr>
<td>Origanum</td>
<td>‘Kent Beauty’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alyssum compactum</td>
<td>‘Gold Dust’</td>
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</table>
Achillea millefolium
‘Strawberry Seduction’
‘Terracotta’

Caryopteris x clandonensis
‘Inoveris’

Lavandula stoechas
‘Purple Ribbon’

Agastache Foeniculum
‘Blue Fortune’

Coreopsis verticillata
‘Zagreb’

Gaura lindheimeri
‘Whirling Butterflies’

Rudbeckia fulgida sullivantii
‘Little Goldstar’

Echinacea purpurea
‘Wild Berry’

Sedum telphinum
‘Autumn Fire’