



INSTALLATION
Masters



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What a winter so far...but sorry to say, it isn't over yet!!! We know you have been thinking of replacing your windows, but probably have been putting it off till spring or summer. We at Re-Visions Window and Door believe you should start thinking about changing out those drafty windows today. Here are just a few reasons why **now** is the best time to act and give us a call....

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Angie's list.



Association of Condominium,
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March 2014

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Outdoor Living Design Elements

By Kathy Richardson of RYCO Landscaping

Simple outdoor living design elements can be integrated into your garden to elevate it's style and turn it into extraordinary.

Taking an ordinary garden to extraordinary is rooted in the details. Whether you are working with a couple of small planting beds or a large estate, getting your landscape to stand out from the rest can be achieved by incorporating creative design elements. From a visually intriguing garden structure that provides a shady area to unwind to a calming water feature, or even a strategically placed piece of garden art; the options are endless. To help you weed these options, here is a list of five design elements to consider when creating your own unique outdoor space:

Natives, Alternative Color, Water, Garden Structures and Sustainable Products.

Natives

What if you could have beautiful plants, ideally suited for your planting region that require little to no maintenance at all ... well you can and it is called Nativescaping. Native plants evolved to grow in your region's weather conditions, which means that once they are established they don't need watering and require very little maintenance. While many native plants tend to be larger and maybe not as showy as their ornamental cultivars they are tough, long lasting and can be used in all types of gardens. A sprinkling of natives can help your garden stand out from the neighbors and help educate people in how to incorporate these plants into their own landscape.

MARCH MADNESS

Register this month for the
Spring Conference
and save on
Full Conference Access

See page 7 for details

Continued on page 4

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TIP OF THE MONTH

Controlling Home Moisture Problems

Homeowners are often concerned when they notice excessive condensation on windows or water stains, mold, and mildew on walls and ceilings. These symptoms can indicate excessive moisture in the home, or they can be a sign of a poorly insulated wall, air leakage, poorly performing windows, or extremely cold outdoor temperatures.

There are many possible moisture sources in a home. Some important sources are water from a leaky roof, deteriorated flashing, plumbing leaks, or gutters that don't drain properly. Another source is people. An average family of four can add two to three gallons of water per day into the air just through normal activities such as bathing, dishwashing, cooking, and breathing. Other less obvious culprits are unvented exhaust from ranges, ovens, gas fireplaces, clothes dryers and water heaters; plants and green firewood; and hot tubs, fish tanks, and wet laundry.

The first place you may notice moisture problems is on windows, especially if they are older and inefficient units such as single-pane or double-pane windows without a gas fill. Some condensation is normal on the coldest days because windows are often the coldest interior surface of the house. However, persistent and severe window condensation is a warning that moisture could also be condensing on hidden surfaces where it can lead to a variety of problems such as mold and rot in walls. More obvious problems are wet spots or mold patches on inside walls—a clear indication to take action.

Leaky houses may not show signs of moisture in the living space. They may, in fact, appear to be too dry because moist air escapes out of the house through gaps and holes in ceilings or walls. This may result in moisture damage within walls or in attic areas as warm, moist house air leaks into cold cavities.

Many modern homes have an adequate amount of insulation and fairly good windows. However, without adequate ventilation, these homes can be so tight that moisture builds up from internal sources, such as cooking and bathing, and leads to condensation problems. For instance, condensation can occur inside walls and on the underside of the roof sheathing in the attic, problems that a properly designed ventilation system can avoid.

Condensation inside walls is not usually a problem as long as it is not persistent. In the winter, the outer walls are so cold that rot and mold growth is inhibited, even if condensation occurs. In the spring, the wall warms up and moisture evaporates back into the air and drains away. However, persistent wall moisture can occur in poorly ventilated, tightly sealed homes.

Attic moisture is a bigger problem. If there is inadequate air sealing between the house and the attic, warm, moist air can be drawn into the attic. When the moist air reaches the cold undersurface of the roof, the moisture condenses, forming frost or wet spots that can drip back onto the insulation and into the ceiling, forming a stain visible from inside. Even worse, roof sheathing can rapidly rot or delaminate and the shingles themselves can deteriorate.

Dry indoor air can cause problems by creating ice dams. Most ice dams form when heated air from the house escapes into the attic and warms the underside of the roof, causing snow to melt and then refreeze when the water hits the cold overhang. Ice dams can force water back into the attic, where it can soak insulation and damage ceilings. Sealing leaks between the house and the attic is important for preventing both types of problems.

Condensation occurs anytime warm, moist air contacts a surface that is colder than the air's dew point temperature. At dew point, the air is completely saturated; it is holding all the moisture it can hold for that temperature (i.e., the relative humidity is 100 percent). If the temperature of a surface falls below the dew point, the excess moisture will condense as dew or frost. Window condensation is common in the wintertime, as warm, relatively moist air contacts the cold surface of the glass, much like the moisture that forms on a beverage when taken out of the refrigerator.

Thus, moisture problems depend on temperature and relative humidity. The tighter a home is, the more likely it is that humidity generated inside will remain inside and cause problems, unless the home is properly ventilated. But even if moisture levels stay constant, condensation can occur if surfaces get very cold, as they often do on extremely cold nights. Adding moisture to the air will raise indoor humidity levels and make condensation more likely.

Air movement also influences moisture problems. In the winter, the warm air inside the house has a natural tendency to rise. Warm, moist air leaves the house through the attic or the upper story and is replaced by dry, cold air that is pulled in through the lower level. This is called the *stack effect*. The stack effect causes moisture problems to be most pronounced in the upper stories of a house. For example, the windows on the lower level may be clear while the second story windows are frosted over.

Stathie Panayi of Adams Roofing Professionals

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Color

In any garden color is one of the most important design elements. Whether it is an abundance of color in flowering plants or a sea of green it's important to take all of the colors into consideration when designing. The majority of a garden's color theme comes from the plants chosen, but there is also the option of using alternative color items – furniture cushions and garden art. These items can really add another dimension to your garden, especially while your plants aren't blooming or don't have a lot of interest. If you have a large patio, beautiful cushions on the furniture or a colorful birdbath can repeat the bloom colors you have in the surrounding garden. By adding garden art, you compliment the surrounding plants and give a pop of color all year round. These little details can really make a garden your own.

Water

Water features are always an interesting element to add to any landscape. The sense of tranquility they provide within your outdoor space appeals to three of the five senses – sight, sound and touch. Incorporating a water feature into your garden doesn't have to be a hassle; it can be as simple as a small stand-alone fountain placed on a salvaged wrought iron table rescued from your local flea market. Placed near the front entrance of your home, the soothing sounds of trickling water can serve to welcome your guests upon their arrival. Water features can also be the elaborate focal point of your design. From waterfalls and streams to koi ponds and reflecting pools. Whatever the size of your project, water can be utilized to create visual appeal and stimulate the senses.

Structures

Structures worked into a space can make any landscape feel luxurious and special. Gardens throughout the ages have used prominent structures to add form and function to their

designs. Be it the visual appeal of increased height as a climbing vine ascends a trellis, or the architectural beauty of a shade yielding pergola, structures reflect the style of a garden and help tie the entire space together as a complete outdoor room.

Rain barrels can catch water from your downspouts to use to water your garden

Sustainable and eco-friendly products

Sustainable and eco-friendly products are hot, hot, hot! While it is very trendy to be green, there is a great deal of practicality in searching out alternative products that are better for the environment. There are many options to make your yard or garden more eco-friendly. If you are planning on building a patio or walkway consider using permeable pavers. They help replenish the groundwater supply by allowing water to drain through the surface as opposed to running off into your city's sewer systems. Fertilizer and pesticide treatments have introduced various organic options void of the harsh chemicals found in traditional products. Additionally, you can start a compost bin to create your own free garden soil or install a rain barrel on your downspouts to collect free rainwater. These green options often act as a conversation piece with guests or neighbors.

Why not try out a few things to help transform your garden from pretty to extraordinary?

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Legislative Corner

Legislation moves too quickly when the Illinois Legislature is in session. ACTHA updates our website on a weekly basis.

To review legislation of relevance to community associations and a bill's current status, visit www.actha.org and click on "Illinois Laws and Legislation/Current Topic" in the left-hand side box.

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ACTHA's Spring Conference Program

Your choice! Pick one program from each of the time slots offered!

MARCH MADNESS IS HERE!!!

8:30 a.m.—9:30 a.m.

It's All About the Board: What's Your Association's Zen?

- End conflict between boards, managers and owners
- Achieve unity and harmony
- Defuse heated situations
- Identify future board members

All-day track moderator: Tom Skweres of ACM Community Mgmt.,
Presenters: Gabriella Comstock of Keough & Moody and Maureen Gold of Harborside Court C.A.

2) How to Get it Done: The Work Plan

- Associations are businesses needing business plans
- Set short and long term goals
- Set priorities, time tables, expectations and update reserve study
- Consider financial and time resources

All-day track moderator: Kate Susmilch of Winston Management Group

3) Avoiding Pitfalls:

- Fair Housing, FHA compliance, right of first refusal
- Considerations for accommodation, modifications, service animals, owner and tenant screening.
- Legal ramifications

Presenters: Lara Anderson of Fullett Rosenlund Anderson and Dan Haumann of Advocate Property Management

11:30 a.m.— 12:30 a.m.

1) It's All About the Board— The Role of the Board:

- Board members must know duties
- Must read and understand your association documents
- Follow proper chain of command
- Make business-like decisions and show unified front

Presenters: Mike Baum of Baum Property Mgmt and Mike Kreibich of Kovitz Shifrin Nesbit

2) How to Get it Done— Working the Plan

- Learn process of developing a maintenance plan
- Investigate: your construction, local codes, interior and exterior components
- Periodically refer to reserve study
- Begin implementation

Presenters: John Hershey of J. Hershey Architecture and James Tomlin of Optimum Design Construction

3) Selecting a Manager:

- Toughest job a Board has
- Do needs assessment - full service contract or ala carte menu
- Set specifications, request bids, compare proposals
- Pick top matches, interview, negotiate contract, and plan transition

Presenter: Angela Falzone of ASF Enterprises

1:30 p.m.— 2:30 p.m.

1) It's All About the Board— Communication and Transparency

- Identify required communications
- Recognize character and nature of association
- Consider other methods appropriate for your association environment
- May include email, newsletters, website, social events, homeowner forums, and new owner orientation

Presenters: John Cabral of Oak Park Mediation, Tom Engblom of Mutual Bank of Omaha, Attorney Sima Kirsch

2) How to Get it Done— Contracts

- Prepare specifications and Request for Proposal, what to include and how to prepare it
- Reviewing and comparing bids,
- Consideration and approval

Presenters: Marshall Dickler of Dickler Kahn Slowikowski & Zavell and Mike VanDeman of G & D Property Management

3) Elections

- Legal requirements including notice, candidate eligibility, proxies, mail-in voting
- An alternative method whereby secret voting is used but with no proxies
- Ballot tabulation and review

Presenters: Attorney William Lapelle, Amanda Paton of Frost Rutteberg Rothblatt and Jim Stoller of The Building Group

ASK AN ATTORNEY

Moderator: David Buetow of Fuchs & Roselli, Panelists: James Arrigo of Tressler and David Hartwell of Penland & Hartwell

Registration Form

YES!! I want to register for the Conference and Trade Show on Saturday, April 12 at the Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace.

Full Conference Access includes: seminars, continental breakfast, banquet lunch, Trade Show, and materials.

There is no charge to attend the Trade Show. The fee to attend any of the educational programs is: ACTHA Member Rate: \$45 or \$40 if sending 3 or more from the same association; Non-Member rate: \$120 per person **MARCH MADNESS IS HERE! Register during the month of March and all get in for only \$40 per person**

_____ Attending the Trade Show only

_____ Attending the Trade Show, Educational Seminars & Lunch

_____ Amount Enclosed; Make check payable to "ACTHA" and remit to 11 E. Adams, Ste. 1107, Chicago, IL 60603 or register online at www.actha.org: 2014 Spring Conference & Trade Show

Name of Association: _____

of units: _____ Name of Community Manager (if applicable): _____

ATTENDEES (PLEASE PRINT): Name

Address:

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NOTE: Confirmations are not sent except upon request. No refunds are given after April 1 and there will be an additional charge of \$20 per person for anyone registering after April 11 or at the door. All cancellations are subject to a 25% handling fee.



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Question of the Month



Q. I was recently elected to the Board and am already at odds with some of the other board members. As someone who recently was “just an owner,” I am sympathetic to feeling there should be more transparency and communication with owners. The association is about to embark on a major capital improvement project. The manager has not been very forthcoming about the process. And other board members have expressed some concern that they may not be getting as good a service as they had hoped. Is ACTHA able to provide any assistance on how to communicate to owners, avenues for reviewing manager performance and any tips when taking on a major project?

A. We heard you loud and clear and help is on the way. All of the points you mentioned above will be addressed at ACTHA’s Spring Conference on Saturday April 12. We have two all-day programs. One deals with association community living, legal requirements, expectations, transparency and communication. Creating that genial environment should be the goal and objective of any association. The program ACTHA has planned will lead you in that direction.

A second all day program at the Spring Conference discusses what a Board needs to take into consideration when planning—whether short or long-term. A Board wants to make sure it more than meets its fiduciary responsibility by assessing on a regular basis needs, priorities and the financing of same.

And finally we have added in some topics that we frequently are asked about—elections, selecting and assessing professional management and dealing with difficult issues such as FHA and Americans for Disabilities Act compliance.

Of course, ACTHA prides itself on providing other resources such as webinars and articles but nothing takes the place of a one-on-one, face-to-face seminar where you can actively participate in getting questions answered. With that in mind, we hope to see you in April. And don’t forget—register any time in March and you can save money on the full access registration.