2015: Future Projects

This short section offers some ideas for future projects ordered according to practicality and time frame.

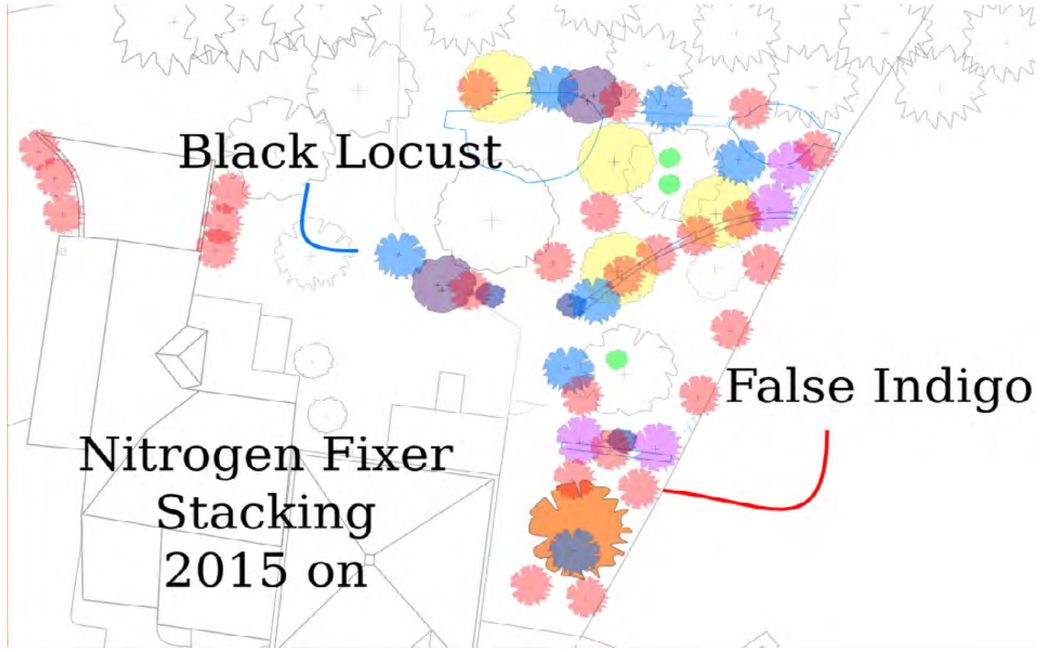
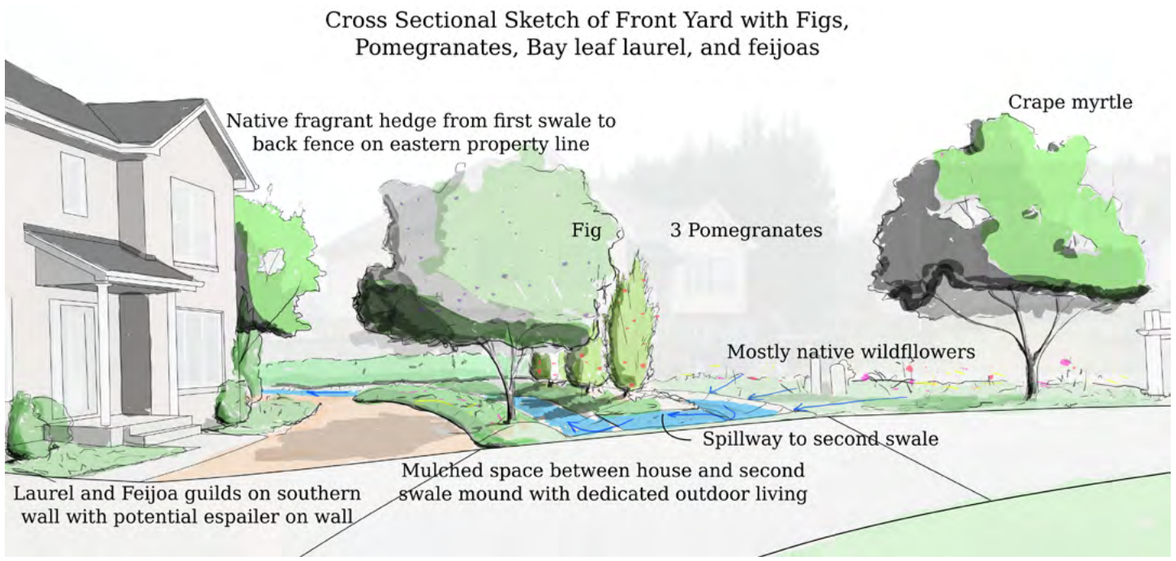


Figure 6-1 Potential siting for Nitrogen Fixer Stacking in the main garden. Difficulty: easy. Time frame: 2015



Drawing 6-1 A rendition of what the front yard could look like about 5 years after planting. Difficulty: Moderate. Time frame: 2016+

Nitrogen Fixer Stacking

Because we have many seeds for false indigo bushes and black locust (*Amorpha fruticosa* and *Robinia pseudoacacia*, respectively), they should be germinated in early spring and set into containers to grow over the course of the year. In the fall, they can be transplanted with little worry into the garden. The idea behind this is so that we can transition away from over reliance upon herbaceous nitrogen fixers (which have mostly not been native) to perennial, woody nitrogen fixing trees and shrubs. These species are well suited to take advantage of the subtropical climate in which we live to diversify the forest garden architecture and fix a lot of nitrogen at the same time. By coppicing them regularly (as they reach a desired height or there is a direct need to cut them back), we will gain a lot of woody material to transition the soil food web away from bacterial orientation and towards a forest soil ecosystem, without having to rely upon the importation of wood chip mulch. Wood chips should continue to be kept on hand as emergency measure to protect soil, as has been the case in the past couple of years.

Front Yard Development

I've included a side view drawing of what the front yard could potentially look like after the plants we purchased in 2014 have been successfully transplanted and are thriving. Transplanting will probably have to be done in the next two years, so funds should be put aside to purchase enough wood chip, compost, and other soil amendments. If it appears that the trees are not strong enough, the mainframe design elements could be implemented with false indigo and black locust taking the place of the edible species. This would also allow the soil to begin transitioning towards a healthy state before putting these more risky species on the line. It will also mean that wildflowers, herbs, and vegetables could be grown in the meantime so that the total number of required to transition from a front lawn to a garden will be acquired over time as well.

Highway Buffer

Once the front yard and back yard are thriving and it seems that their maintenance levels have dropped to a desired amount, thought can be turned to turning the area behind the fence (Zone 4/5) into an evergreen wind break and visual screen. Native trees such as magnolias, combined with perhaps some nut pines, would make a perfect, no maintenance species composition. Together, along with a few other species, they would be able to make use of any water overflowing from the main back yard forest garden as a strong wildlife corridor.

Pines to Production

As soon as the highway buffer is on the cusp of providing a visual screen to the highway, the white pines within the fence could be cut and replaced with any number of dry condition tolerant fruit or nut species. Their wood could be inoculated with edible mushrooms or be sawed into useful pieces for deadwood inside the garden proper. Even a large hugelkultur mound on the berm would not be out of the question.