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SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Beginning with our own small corner of the earth we can make choices that honor our fellow creatures and plants leaving a vibrant balanced earth for the future. Sustainability refers to practices that are non-polluting and resource efficient. Here are a few sustainable practices that can be incorporated into the garden building process:

- Rejuvenate existing plants / move existing plants
- Use some native plants
- Reuse/recycle hardscape materials: bricks, stone, wood
- Permeable surfaces to capture rain water
- Build and maintain soil health with compost, compost teas, organic supplements and mulches. Protect the soil food web.
- Select building materials that can be reused or will biodegrade
- Use local products
- Mulch beds with organic matter: leaves, compost, lawn clippings
- Sheet compost to decommission lawn
- Reduce lawn size and use a reel mower
- Quiet, non polluting hand tools
- Create habitat for wild animals including drinking water
- Plant hedgerows for habitat and biodiversity
- Use trees to modify climate – shade house or protect from wind
- Protect tree root zones during construction
- Put plants in suitable location to ease maintenance
- Edibles for people and animals
- Plant organic vegetable seeds
- Conserve water
- Keep your rainwater by creating storm water management facilities: Bioswales (ditch planted with water tolerant plants that clean runoff water as it percolates into the soil) and rain gardens for disconnected downspouts.
- Store roof rainwater in barrels or giant tanks
- Install a green roof (garden on top of building that uses rainwater and keeps it out of the storm water system. It also moderates building temperature)
- Make and use compost
- Trade plants with friends and neighbors
- No chemicals, nothing toxic - remember the kids, the pets, the planet
- Be realistic about maintenance style and energy
- Make a beautiful garden to sustain the owners
- Make it financially sustainable