Multi Seasonal Entrances for Your Home
Topics Covered

- Site Evaluation
- The Major Players: Evergreen vs. Deciduous
- Formal vs. Informal
- Color, Form, Texture, and Scale
- Right Plant, Right Place
- Design Techniques
  - Pockets
  - Weavers
  - Layering
Site Evaluation: Orientation

- What direction does the house face?
  - North is in shade for most of the year
  - South will have the most sun
  - East will have morning sun followed by shade
  - West will have afternoon sun
Site Evaluation: Soil

- Sand, silt, and clay
- Drainage issues
- Compaction issues
- Soil amendments
Site Evaluation: Existing Plant Material

- Trees
  - Are they worth saving?
  - What shade and root competition will there be?

- Shrubs
  - Can they be renovated?
The Major Players: Evergreens

- Up to 70% should be evergreens
  - Additional color when dormant
  - Backbone and backdrop of the design
  - Multi-seasonal interest from flowers, fruits, and needles or leaves
Winter and spring blooming camellias, underplanted with daffodils and later emerging Hosta August Moon. Pachysandra is the groundcover to the left.
The Major Players: Deciduous

- Deciduous trees and shrubs
  - Comprise 30% of the plantings
  - Flowering component during the growing season
  - Multi-seasonal interest found in the bark, flowers, leaves, and fruit
  - Fall color is important
Gingko on the lawn, river birch on the northeast corner, and a Japanese snowbell on the other corner by the paver driveway.
Japanese snowbell
Formal Vs. Informal: Formal

- Linear planting
- Bed lines are squared off
- Plants are boxed in
- Plants are mirrored on either side of the entrance
- Pruning techniques require more shearing
Formal planting: boxwood lining the walkway and plantings on either side of the door mirrored
Formal vs. Informal: Informal

- Bed lines have curves
- Drifts of plants arranged throughout the planting
- Different plants become the focus at different times of the year
- Lower-maintenance pruning with little or no shearing
Informal design leading to the front door.
Informal design leading up to the back door.
Informal design subcategory: Wild and Woolly

Plants are sometimes given their space and sometimes are allowed to grow into each other.

Bed lines are formal or informal

Plants are sited so they look like they have been there for years even if they are new additions.

Shrubs, trees, perennials, and annuals are used.
Color

Considerations:

- Colors of leaves or needles during the season (12 months vs. 7 months)
- Flower colors, sizes, and season of bloom
- Fall color with deciduous trees and shrubs
- Color and characteristics of the bark (smooth, rough, exfoliating)
Hydrangea quercifolia
Form: Evergreen

Round: Boxwood

Spreading: English Yew
Form: Evergreen

Pyramidal: Centennial Holly

Tall Spreading: Blue Atlas Cedar
Form: Deciduous

Rounded: Spirea

Spreading: Palibin Lilac
Form: Deciduous

Pyramidal: European Hornbeam
Open/Spreading: Princeton American Elm
Texture

- The surface quality of the plant
  - Delicate and fine (threadleaf coreopsis)
  - Coarse and bold (hosta leaves)
  - Anything in between

- Mix textures so that they highlight one another
Please do not plant trees close to your home unless they are smaller cultivars or fastigate (narrow) forms.

The fastigate form works great with blue atlas cedars.

Some trees can be trained and kept compact are crape myrtles, kousa dogwoods, and little gem Southern magnolia.

Take advantage of the dwarf plants on the market: Buddlea chip series, Crapemyrtle infiniti series, and the Hydrangea “little lime” series, for starters.
By practicing scale and balance in the landscape, we can avoid this:
Design Techniques: Pockets

- Plants that stand on their own in landscape as a single specimen or in a grouping
  - Peonies
  - Hosta
  - Echinacea
  - Flowering spring, summer, and fall bulbs
    - (tulips)  (lilies)  (colchicums)
Purple cone flowers in the landscape
Peonies and hostas used as pockets in the landscape.
Design Techniques: Weavers

- Plants that weave their way through other complementary plants to complete their flower cycle
  - Limonium (sea lavender)
  - Gypsophila (babies breath)
  - Platycodon (Balloon flower)
  - Rose campion
  - Verbena bonariensis
Limonium latifolium: Sea Lavender  
Andre viette’s dwarf Gypsophila
Design Technique: Layering

- Plants that form thick mats of floral tapestry when combined
  - All the plants used have to have the same light, water and nutrient requirements.
  - Plants combined a similar growing habit also ensure success
  - Examples, lantana, pentas, vinca, million bell petunias, and lobelia
Winter interest: evergreens, camellias, nandina, and helleborus.
Arnold’s Promise witch-hazel and Heritage Hybrid Helleborus.