

Black Oaks Center EcoCampus

PEMBROKE TOWNSHIP, ILLINOIS

The Final Recommendations for Black Oaks integrate the landscape with the vision for a resilient future articulated by its founders. The plan which will be implemented over a period of ten to fifteen years follows an adaptive management strategy giving Black Oaks flexibility to develop portions of the plan to respond to changes in the economy, climate and most importantly, the needs of their immediate community in Pembroke, and Chicago where Dr. Wright's medical practice is located. This project can serve as a model for other centers that are looking to create community in the midst of change and sustain it with education, medicine, food and connection.

There is also the opportunity to explore a model of ecological restoration where the percentage of medicinal to non-medicinal native plants in the Black Oak Savanna restoration areas would be elevated to a greater proportion than typically found in the wild. The idea behind this restoration strategy is that those maintaining the restored sites would have personal health related motivations to seeing the restoration area thrive. Currently there are few sites and studies that have documented the success of ecosystem restorations. Tying in medicinal plants to the restoration could be a compelling approach to involving people in restoration projects and landscapes. The proposed restoration test plot areas within the plan are next to proposed cultivated and managed areas to facilitate observation and management. Examining and interpreting the data and results would help advance understanding of restoration dynamics in a model with active human participation.

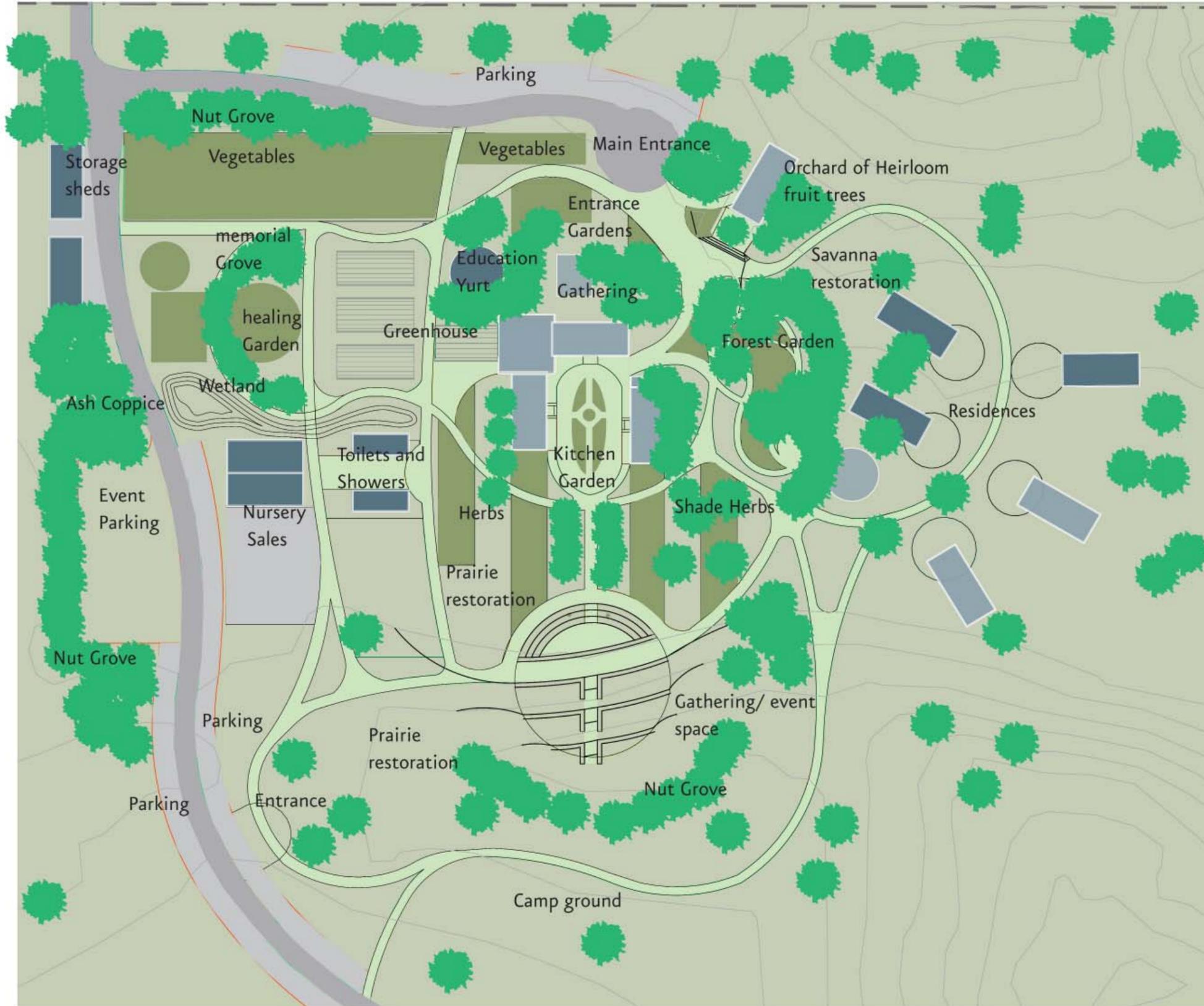


PROPOSED LOGO



PERSPECTIVE OF SOUTH ENTRANCE

Final Plan



An entrance plaza with a sign board orients them to the campus and shows them where to progress for events or exploration on their own. It also shows them what's in production at this point in the season. Pamphlets with maps and descriptions of specialized areas creates interest and educates visitors about the mission of Black Oaks and the resources that make Black Oaks so special.

A Nursery Sales Shed area sells plants grown on the farm as well as seasonal vegetables and medicine. Shares for CSAs can be picked up in this area as well. Having it located near the driveway allows for easy distribution as well as high visibility.

The Wetland cleans the water from the showers – making it safe for ground water infiltration. Soils on site are excessively well drained, and conventional septic leach fields have the potential to perk too quickly. The treatment wetland hosts native wetland plants to create habitat for beneficial insects and animals to control pest populations. Toilets and Showers remain in the same place. Toilets compost waste, and that waste is finished by mixing it with plant materials, in the compost field. The Compost field would help to Black Oaks to achieve sufficiency in soils management and perhaps help to serve to create another product in the future if there were surpluses of compost.

Storage barns at the edge of the property form a wind break to protect garden plants and reduce the effects of wind erosion in the winter. Orchards of **heirloom fruit trees** are massed around the library, the open space of the kitchen garden and as an understory to the west of the nut groves by the green houses. The orchards provide fruit for the campus, as well as wind breaks. Heirloom varieties ensure genetic diversity as well as provide a connection to agrarian roots. Heirloom fruit varieties are also a high value crop that can ensure a longer source of revenue for the farm.

Prairie Restoration is in process throughout the landscape more densely at the edges of the campus and then infiltrating through to the center in various places. Patches of prairie in the center blur the conceptions between "cultivated" and "wild" and help to bring in beneficial insects for integrated pest management. Prairie restoration also presents the opportunity to establish native medicinal species on the property to wildcraft in the future. Many native species such as red root, lobelia and sassafras have potent medicinal qualities. Establishing populations of these plants on site ensures their survival in the wild and establishes a reservoir for herbal medicine diversity.

An Ash Tree Coppice provides a renewable source of wood for heat or stoves, while also providing a wind break. There would be a mix of green and white ash trees to ensure diversity of plantings and to minimize damage from pests like the emerald ash borer and others.

The healing garden represents a cross section of healing herbs brought by visitors from around the world highlighting the universality of healing traditions and the importance of passing on that knowledge to all who visit, work and live at Black Oaks.

The Green House is connected to the "Connector building." By linking it directly to the building, it makes management of seedlings easier in the spring and production and drying of materials in the summer and fall more efficient. The configuration also creates a protected micro climate for hardening off the seedlings in the late spring in the patio area to the south of the greenhouse. Additional Green Houses expand growing capacity.

Nut Groves of pecan, walnut, butternut and hickory form windbreaks around buildings and work to define private and public spaces on the campus. Nut groves also provide food in heavy producing years as well as high value lumber once the trees mature. Interspersed at the edges of this grove are hazelnut bushes.

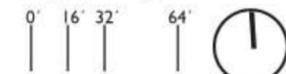
The circular gathering area consists of a series of garden terraces that host herbs dedicated to treating specific conditions. Each terrace would demonstrate plant combinations to help mitigate effects of diabetes, hypertension, stress, asthma and other common public health challenges.

Three Additional Residences would expand the Center's capability to host relevant professionals during conferences or extended teaching seminars.

The Education Yurt is relocated to a more central location near the outdoor kitchen. This centralizes activities and creates more private spaces for residents on the eastern side of the property.

The Herb Gardens to the South of the Kitchen Gardens are interspersed with prairie restoration plants to create a dynamic relationship between cultivated and "wild herbs" to illustrate differences between farming and wild ecosystems. The wild plants would attract beneficial insects to boost plant resilience.

Black Oaks Center for Sustainable Living
 Ecotropy Design LLC | Todd Lynch | 2011
 Map for Planning purposes only



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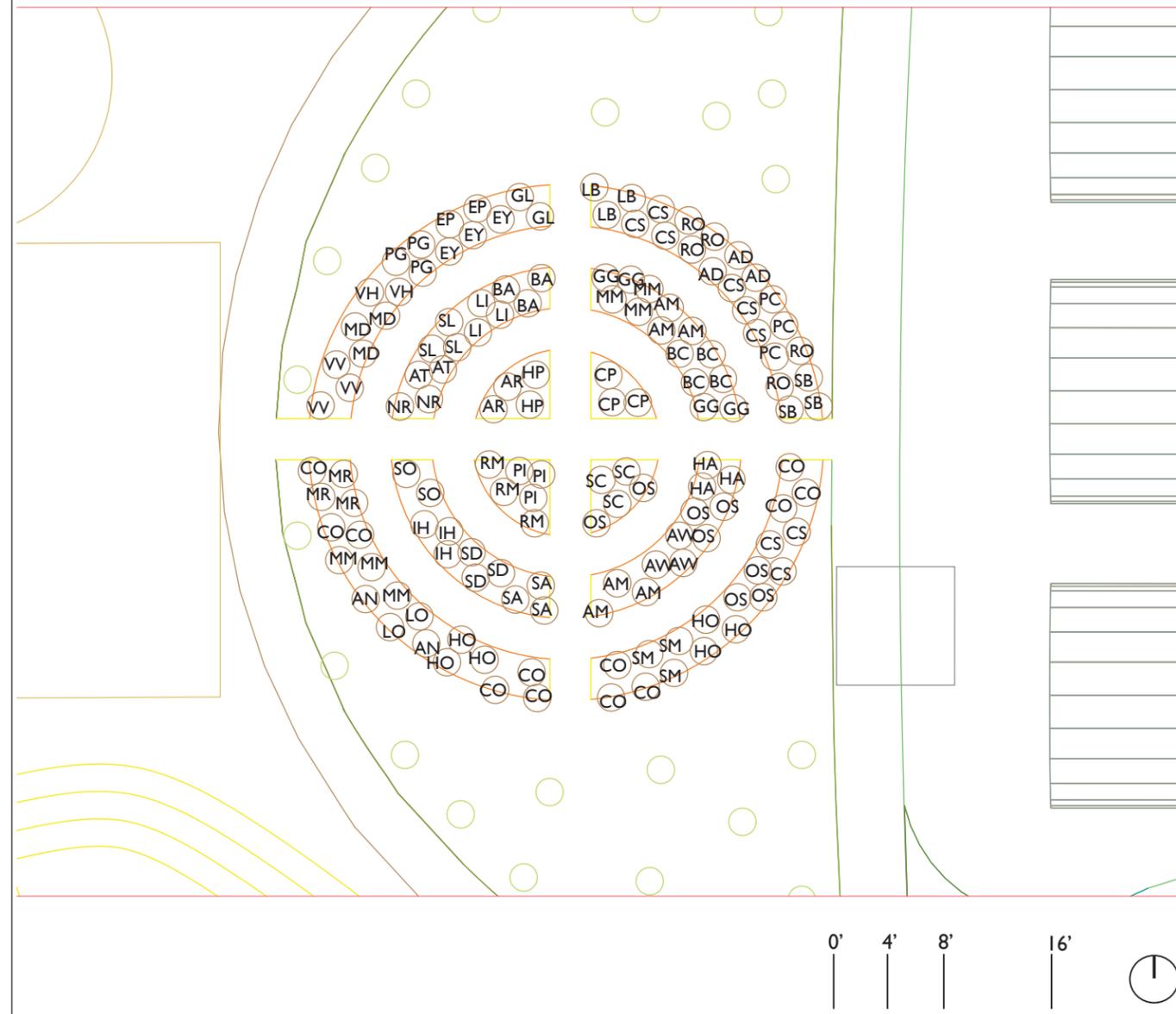
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The world healing garden represents a cross section of healing herbs brought by visitors from around the world highlighting the universality of healing traditions and the importance of passing on that knowledge to all who visit, work and live at Black Oaks. The garden is quartered into Western, Ayurvedic, Traditional Chinese and Native American Herbal Medicine traditions. The entire outer circle of the garden contains herbs that aid digestion, particularly the stomach and liver. The middle circle contains those plants that help respiratory function in particular. The innermost circle contains those plants that help mental and spiritual function. Through this organization, the visitor can see where in the human body the plants can help across the diverse healing traditions. As the plants grow, cuttings and root divisions can be replanted elsewhere on the property or given as starts to other similar learning landscapes.



PERSPECTIVE OF KITCHEN GARDEN

Black Oaks Planting Plan - Herbs of the World Garden



code	latin name	common name	amount
AD	Andrographis	Andrographis	3
AN	Angelica archangelica	Angelica Official	3
AW	Withania somnifera	Ashwaganda	3
AM	Astragalus membranaceus	Astragalus	3
SB	Scutellaria baicalensis	Baical Skullcap	3
PC	Platycodon grandiflorum	Balloon flower	3
PG	Penstemon grandiflorus	Beardtounge	3
MD	Monarda didyma	Bee Balm	3
VH	Verbena hastata	Blue Vervain	2
CO	calendula officianalis	calendula	12
MR	Matricaria recutita	Chamomile	3
CS	Coriandrum sativum	Cilantro	9
CP	Codonopsis pilosula	Codonopsis	3
SL	Silphium laciniatum	Compass Plant	3
VV	Veronicastrum virginicum	Culver's Root	3
SD	Salvia dominica	Dominican Sage	3
IH	Inula helenium	Elecampane	3
BA	Baptisia australis	False Indigo	3
GL	Gentiana lutea	Gentian	2
LB	Lycium barbarum	Gogi Berry	3
HA	Hydrocotyl asiatica	Gotu Kola	3
NR	Nicotiana rustica	Hopi Tobacco	3
HO	Hyssopus officinalis	Hyssop	6
EP	Eupatorium purpureum	Joe Pye Weed	3
SO	Salvia officinalis	Kitchen Sage	3
BC	Belamcanda chinensis	Leopard Flower	4
GG	Glycyrrhiza uralensis	Licorice	5
LI	Lobelia inflata	Lobelia, official	3
LO	Levisticum officinalis	Lovage	2
MM	Althaea officinalis	Marshmallow	6
AR	Arnica chamissonis	Meadow Arnica	2
SM	Silybum marianum	Milk Thistle	3
PI	Passiflora incarnata	Passionflower	3
AT	Asclepias tuberosa	Pleurisy Root	2
EY	Eryngium yuccifolium	Rattlesnake master	3
RO	Rheum officinale	Rhubarb	5
RM	Rosmarinus officinalis	Rosemary	3
SC	Schisandra chinensis	Schisandra	3
SA	Spilanthes acmella	Spilanthes	3
HP	Hypericum perforatum	St. John's Wort	2
OS	Ocimum sanctum	Tulsi	8
AM	Achillea millefolium L. var. litoralis	Yarrow	6

PLANT LIST & PLANTING PLAN FOR WORLD HEALING GARDEN



ASHWAGANDHA



ASTRAGALUS



CODONOPSIS



ECHINACEA



ELECAMPAE



HYSSOP



LAVENDER



PASSION FLOWER



SAGE



SCHIZANDRA



TULSI



PERSPECTIVE OF PROPOSED FOREST GARDEN