Residential Landscape Design
Part 2: The Design Process

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General considerations: Siting on the land

- Character of the property
  - Genius loci
- House style
  - Formal or informal
  - Architectural materials
- Image based on client
  - Style/period/theme

Basic design goal:

- Use design theory with plants and/or hardscape elements to draw eye through landscape
  - Give the house a setting

  AND
  - Apply to planting beds

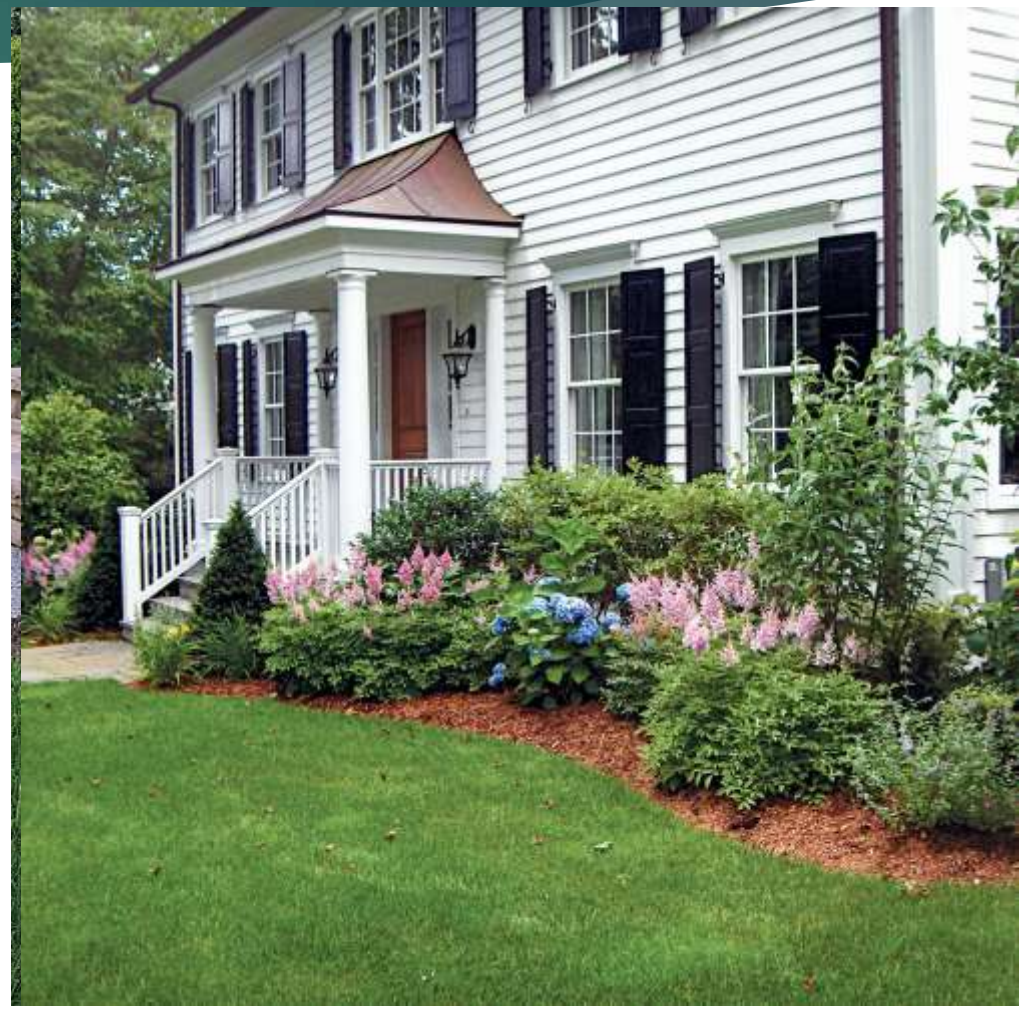
- Have a cohesive visual arrangement of plants = aesthetically pleasing

Season(s) of interest

- Based on client
  - All year
    - Sequence of blooms
  - Holidays or special events
  - Season(s)

Spring season:

- Bulbs and early blooming perennials
- Evergreen plants
  - Some new growth with contrasting colors
- Mix of both
  - Benefit of winter interest too!
  - Don't be fooled by catalogues!



Summer interest

- Annuals
- Perennials
- Flowering shrubs or with colorful foliage
- All of the above

Fall interest

- Hardy annuals
- Late flowering perennials and woody plants
- Fall foliage
- Fruit, seed heads and bark

Winter season

Complementing the house

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Landscape Design

- House and garden should flow together
- Unity achieved through
  - Simplicity
  - Balance
  - Emphasis / variety

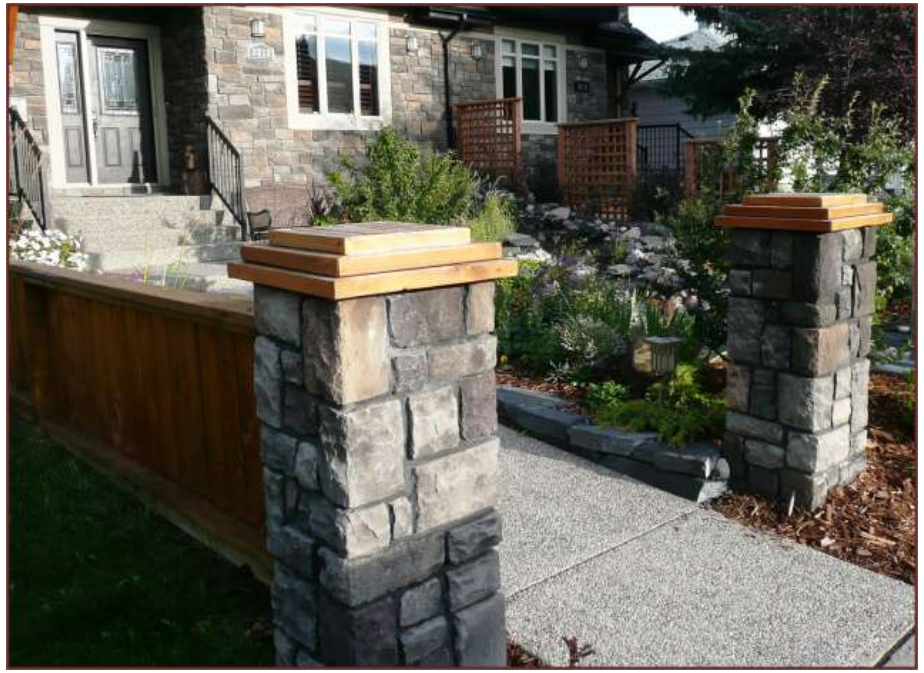
Simplicity

LESS IS MORE?

Simplicity

- Not having too many disparate ideas
  - Limit number of colors – flowers, berries, foliage, bark
  - Limit number of hardscape materials
  - Limit variety of plant types
  - Limit variety of plant forms – rounded, spreading, upright, weeping, fastigate, etc.

Example with building materials:



Form

COMPLEMENTING ARCHITECTURE AND OTHER PLANTS

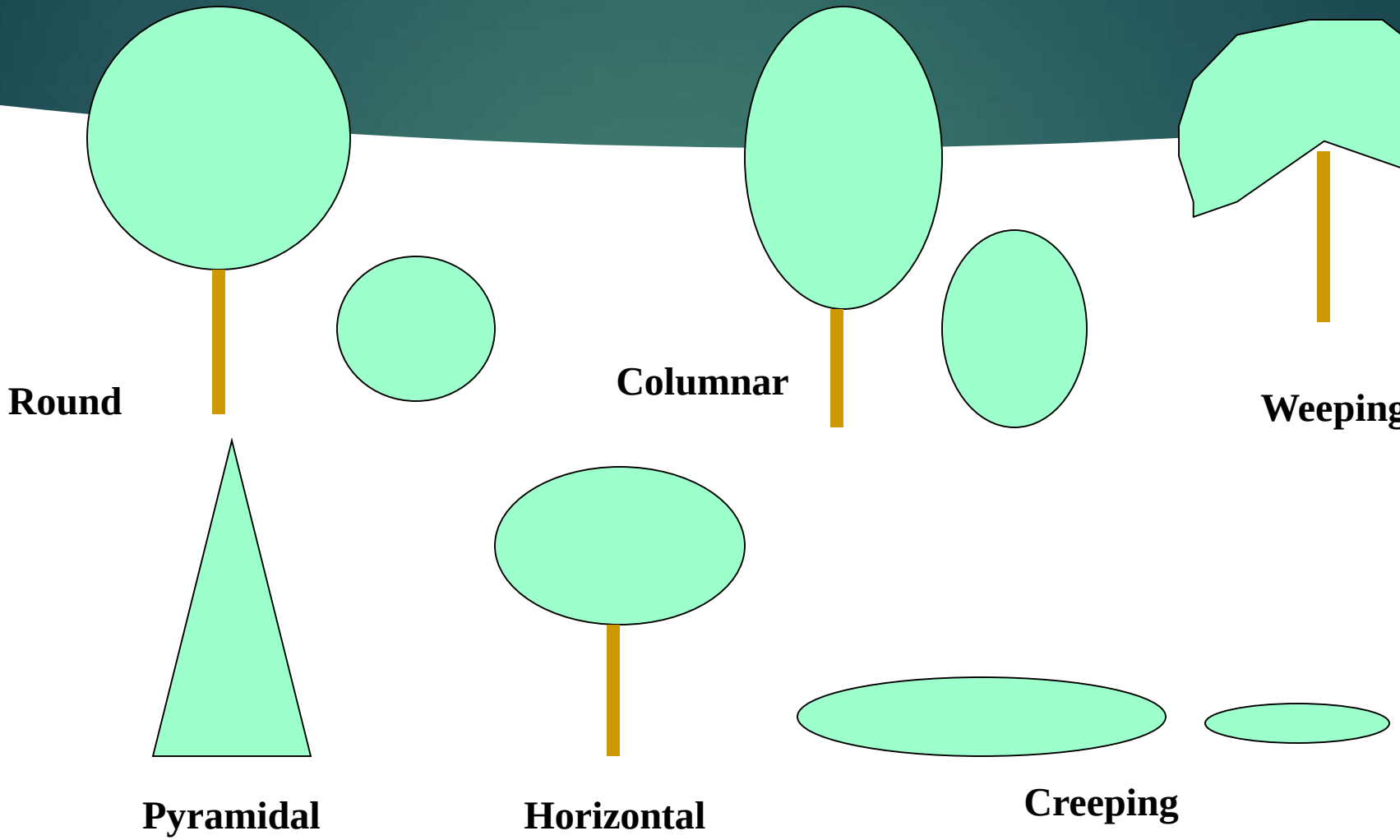
Form

- Use plant forms to work with architectural form and keep similar with those in the planting bed
  - Use similar form plants with house
  - Use plant colors to work with house

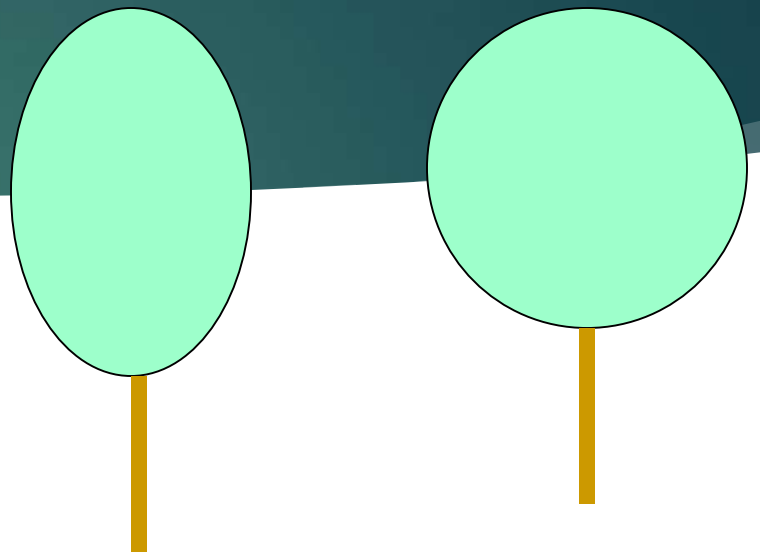
Identify architectural form

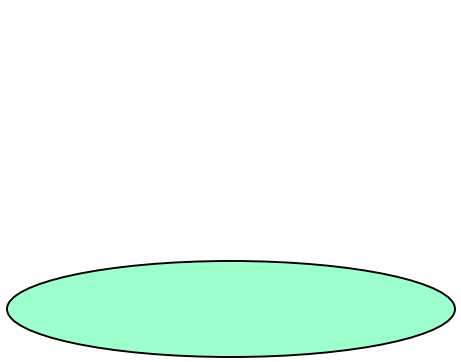
- Complement architectural form:
  - Horizontal house shape – horizontal plant shapes
  - Vertical house details – vertical plant shapes

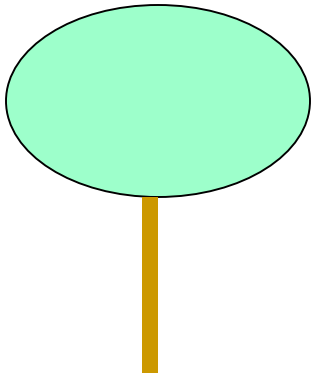
Basic plant forms…

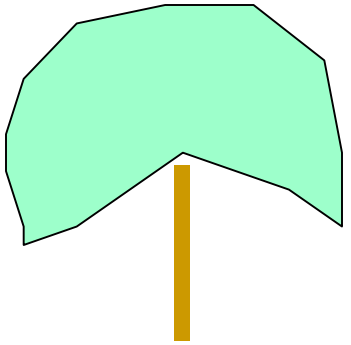


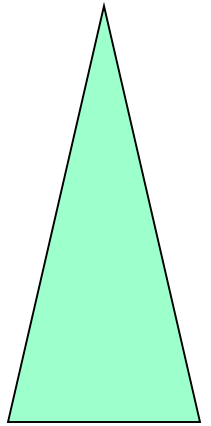
Complementing house form:





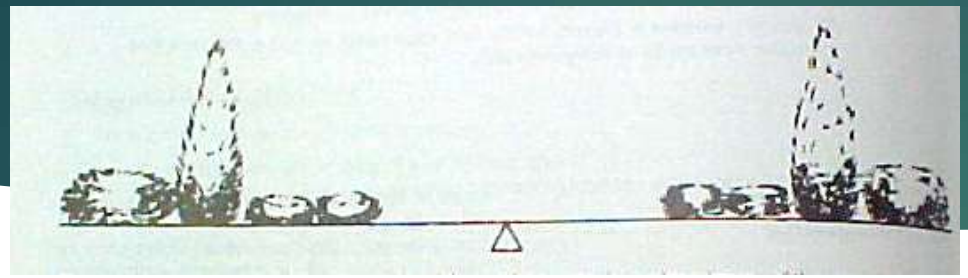






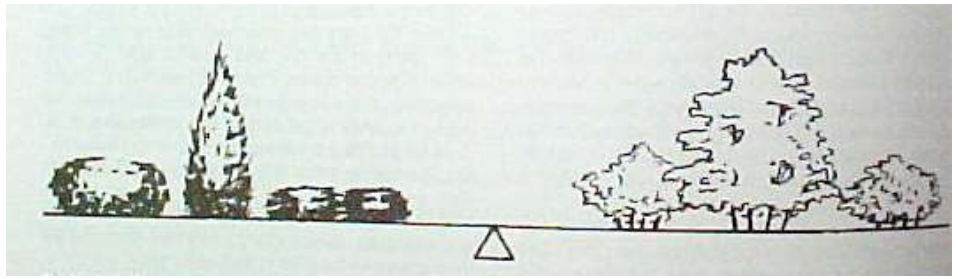
Form

Balance



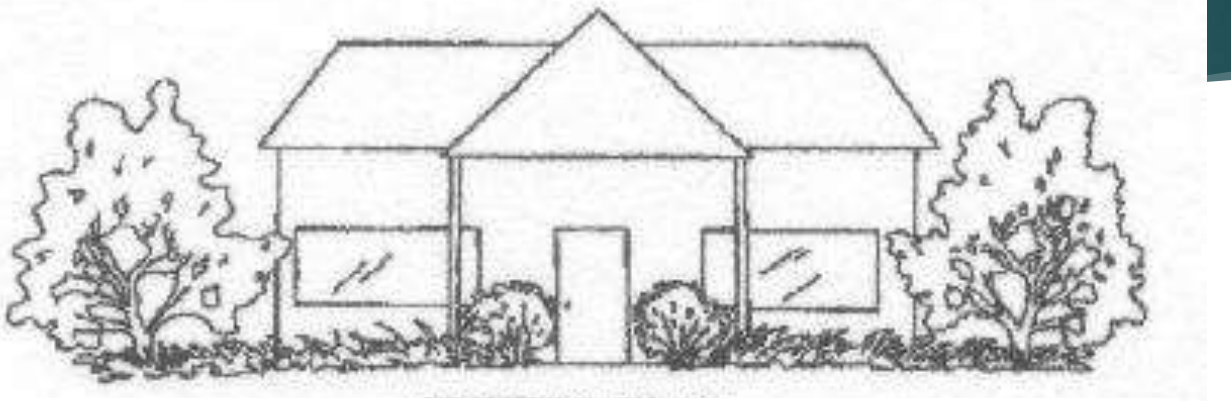
Symmetrical Balance = formality

Asymmetrical Balance = informality

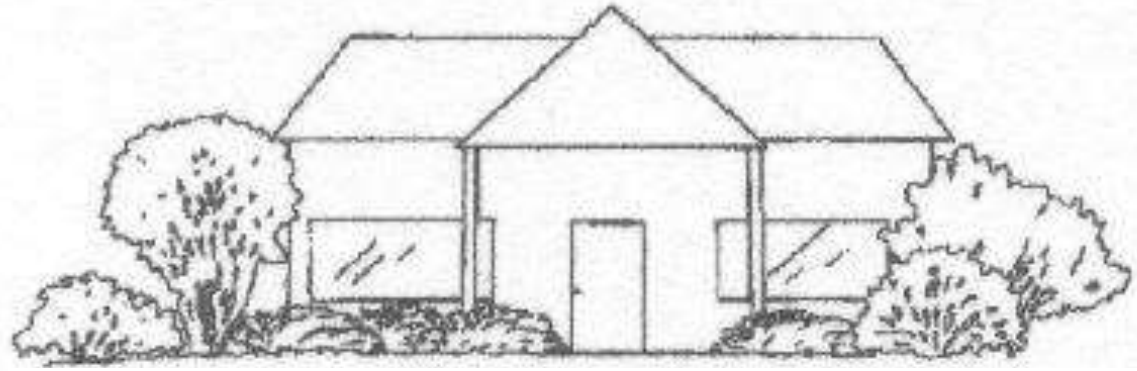


- Balance in the major viewing area
  - Typically applied to the foundation plantings at the front of the house
  - Complement architecture or help in providing balance
  - Consider background view of house as well

Balance with architecture:



Symmetrical = mirror image



Asymmetrical = weighted balance

Balance - Symmetrical

Balance - Asymmetry

Balance

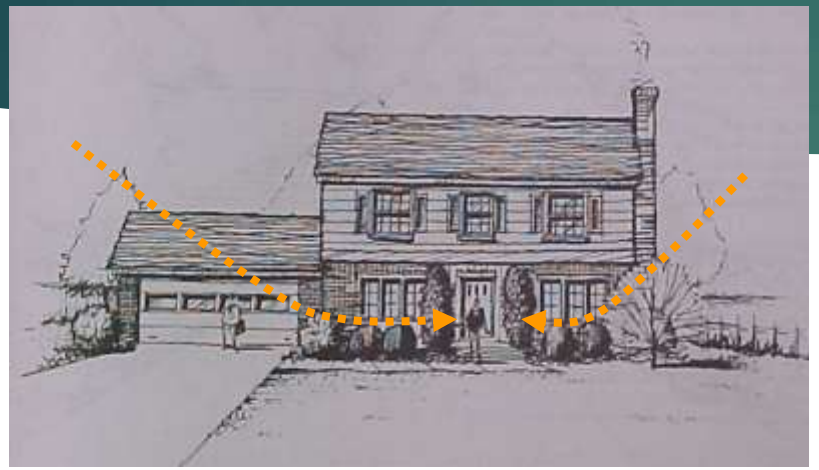
- Asymmetry

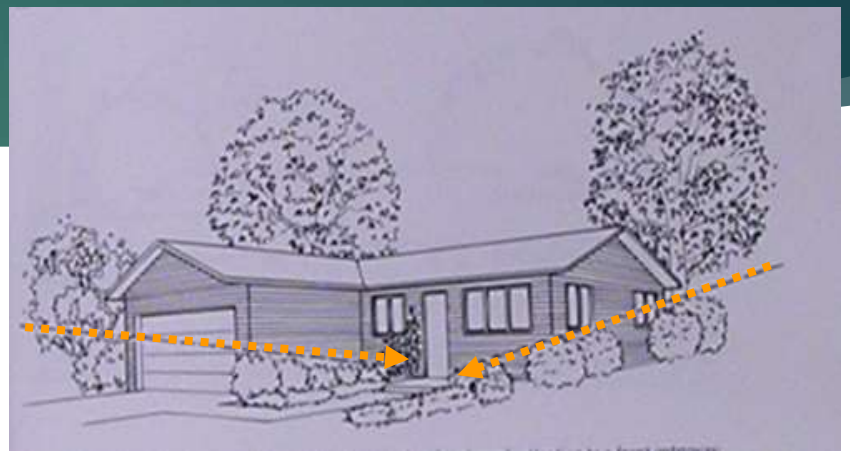
Emphasis

- Emphasis = drawing attention to something

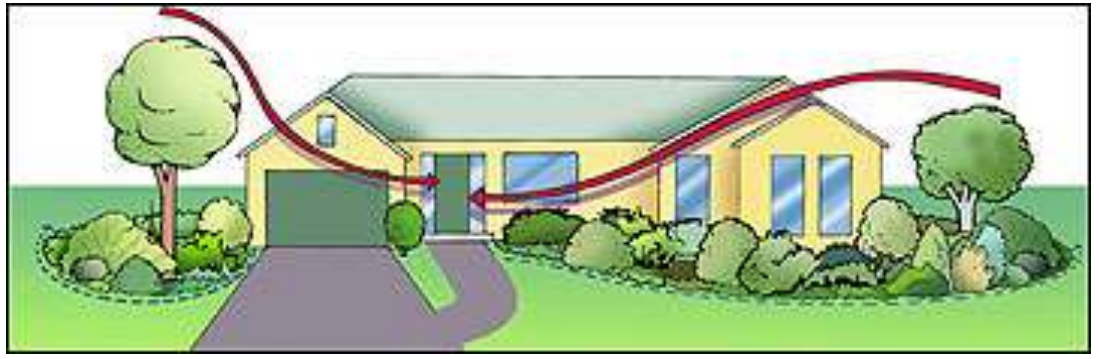
- Requires **variety** to capture interest
  - Significant difference in color, form, texture, etc.
  - Accent plants hold viewers interest longer (may change with season ☺)

Emphasis





- In foundation plantings emphasis is used to draw the eye to focal point, typically the front door, by ***stepping down*** plantings to the front door.



Emphasis to guide

- To draw visual attention, AKA emphasize, a particular location, draws eye through landscape…
  - Use different texture
  - Use different form
  - Use different color
  - Difference needs to be ***significant***

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1416

Other general guidance

RULES OF THUMB

Layering the landscape

- Layer plant material from lower to higher from front to back of bed

Layering

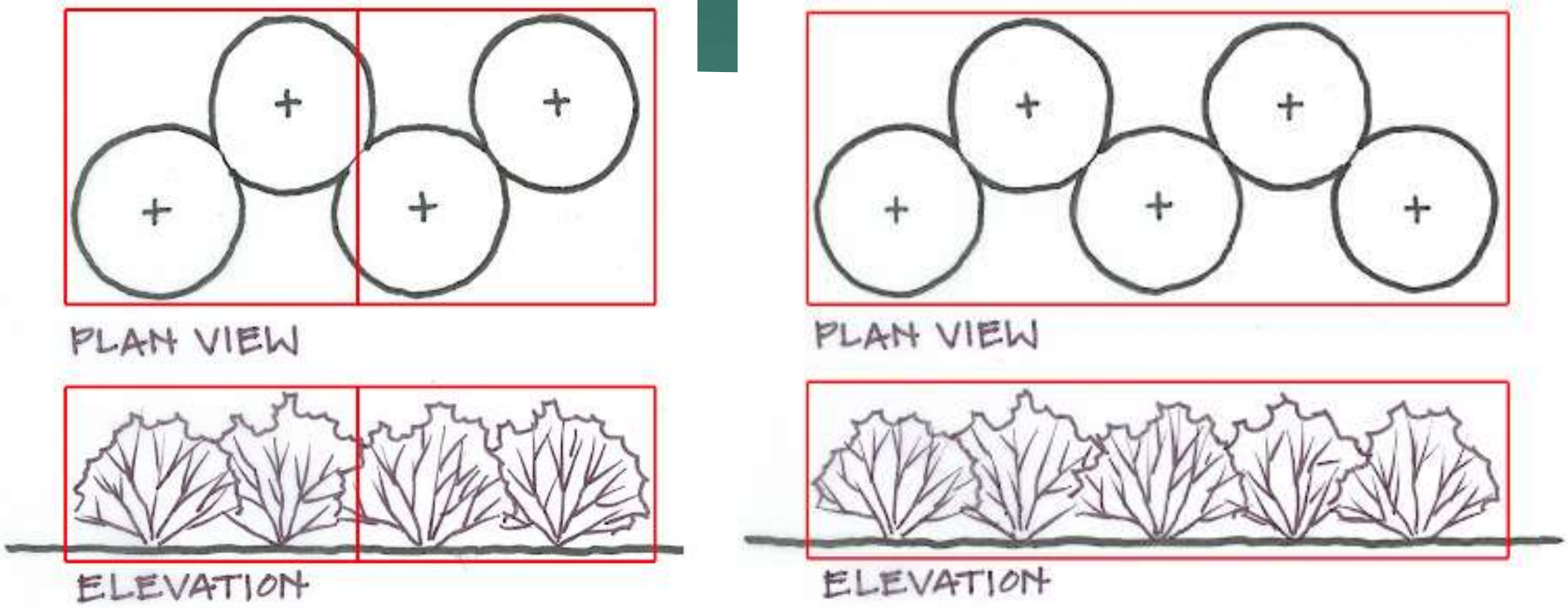
- Visual interest with depth
- More room for a greater **variety** of plants = greater visual interest or seasonal interest
- Ability to play with color and or textural combinations = interest
- Ability to play with forms and heights = interest

Odd numbers rule

- Group plants in odd numbers, i.e. 3, 5, 7, etc.

- For naturalistic appearance
  - Also do not place in straight lines, stagger in triangulated form

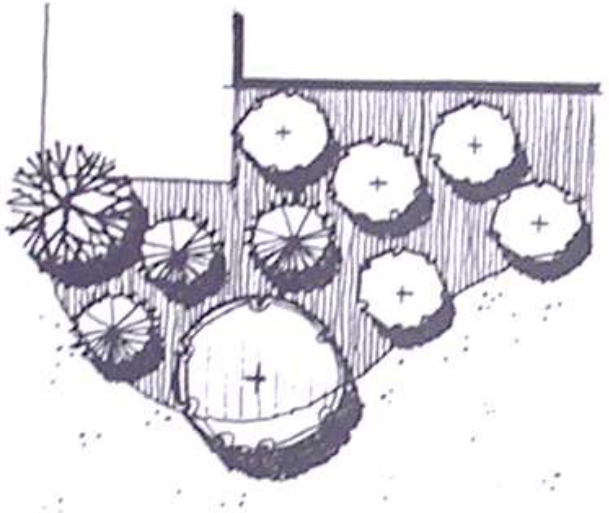
Visual on the rule of odd #'s:



Visual simulation:

Plant in groups for greater visual impact

Plant in groupings in plan view



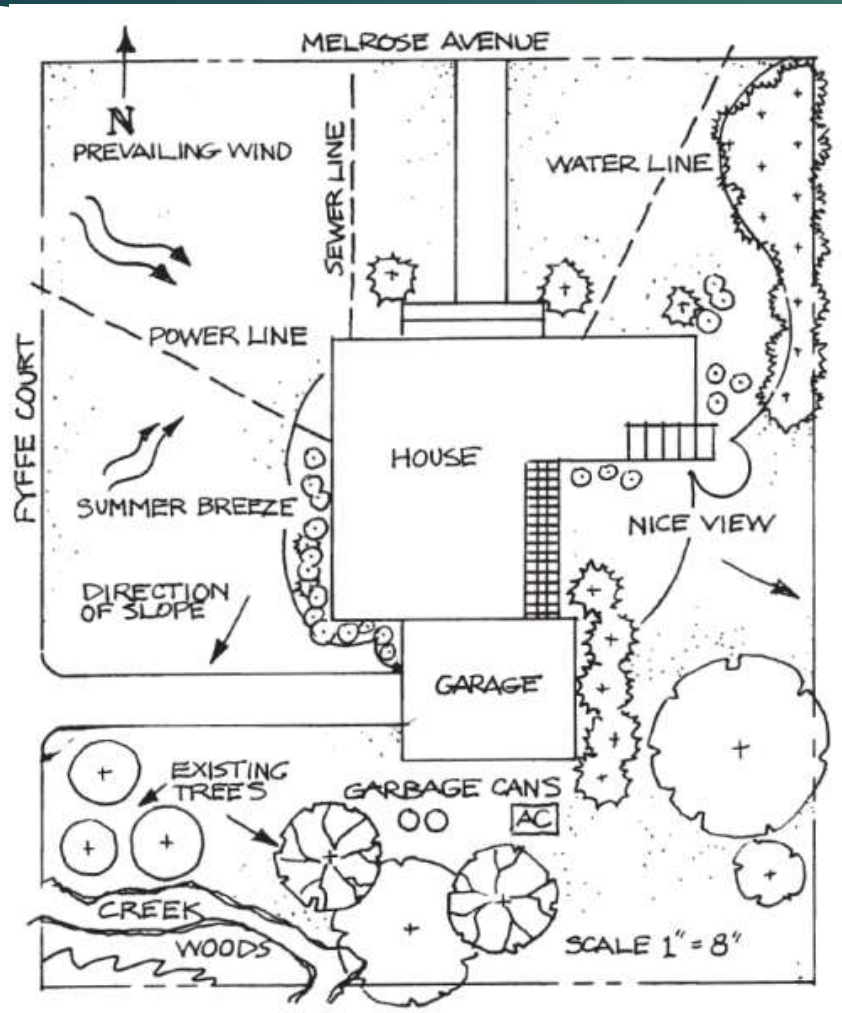
IGURE 8-11 Plant materials should be massed in groups to create order.

The plan

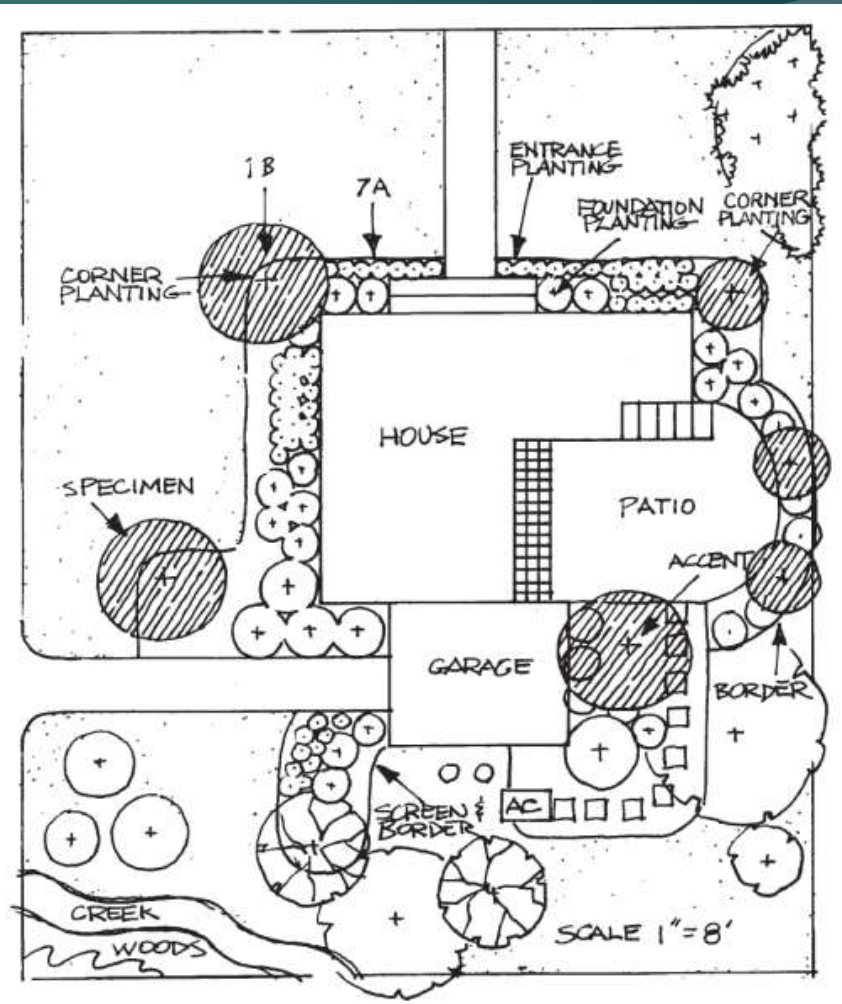
PUTTING THE DESIGN ON PAPER

Creating the plan:

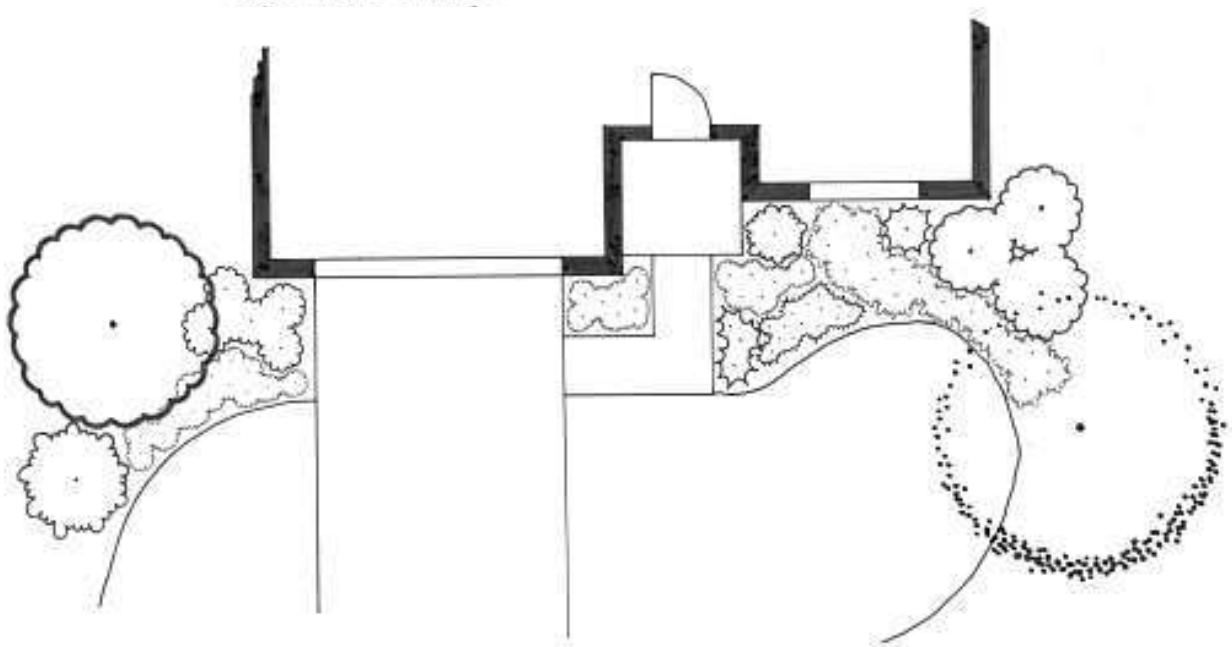
Inventory & analysis



Concept landscape design



The Planting Plan or Concept Plan



- Draw to a scale
- Draw plants to their mature, or at least 2/3's their mature width
- Use simple symbols
- Provide north arrow and legend

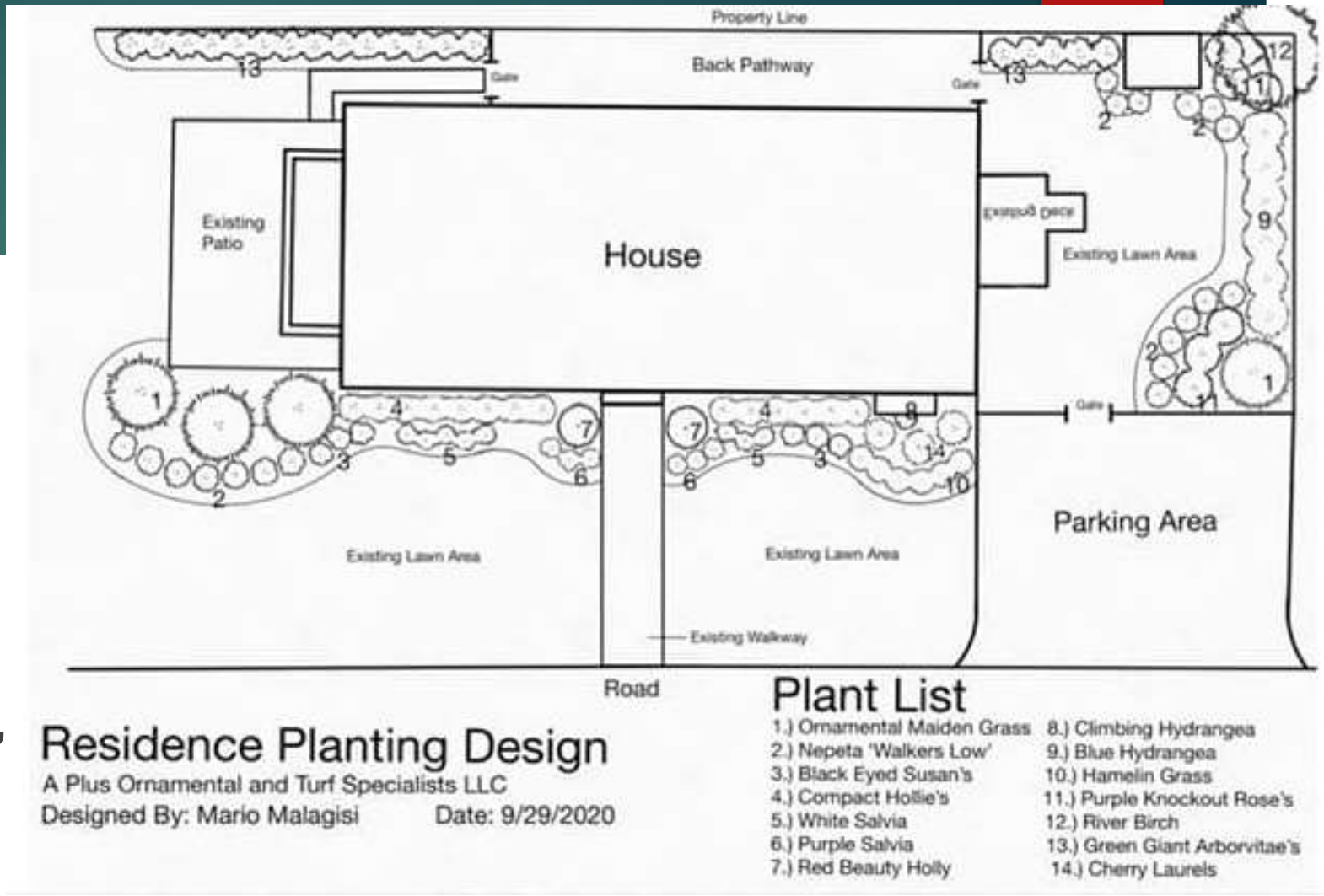
Planting selection goal:

- Combine plants in the same bed with similar cultural requirements
  - Acidic soils = Ericaceous plants
  - Dry soils = Xerophytic plants
  - Shade tolerant / types of shade
    - Dry shade or moist shade
    - Morning sun or afternoon sun?

Plant selection

- Synthesize
  - Environmental conditions
  - Client needs
  - Utilize design principles
  - Provide colors/season(s) of interest

- **“Right plant for the right place”**



End of the formal presentation

ANY QUESTIONS?