

Russell House Garden Assessment

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In assessing the particular nutritional as well as pathological requirements of the Nathaniel Russell House garden, I have determined that a “group” approach to the development of a care plan would be most beneficial. With some exception, the garden contains groupings of similar plant materials which can be treated “en masse.”

The following is a brief description of recommendations for each section of the garden.

Northeast corner from the driveway to the front of the house: This section is in fairly good condition. It needs consistent fertilization and monitoring for pests and insects. The large magnolia has always had a scale issue. Since we have been treating it, it has become much better. It was limbed out. The podocarpus hedge has been trimmed about five inches and we will continue to trim small amounts so that it will look more in scale with the entrance. Irrigation system is in good shape.

Plant materials include an acanthus and many annuals which are healthy and dense. The camellias in pots are healthy and annuals should be added to the base of the containers. Volunteer holly plants need to be removed.

Southeast corner near Price's Alley: Soil tests were good, but that area stays wet. I have had to change nozzles of the sprinklers and cut the water back so that area is allowed to drain. We finished planting the podocarpus and cleaning out unwanted trees and plant materials. It needs consistent fertilization and monitoring for pests and insects.

Plant materials include podocarpus that has been trimmed back five inches and will continue to be trimmed until they are in line with the fence. Beds on either side of the brick path were extended and planted with annuals.

Center of garden north of the brick walkway to the house: We limbed out the magnolia trees. Soil testing was done in this area and it showed salt intrusion. We have been managing the ph with aluminum sulphate and gypsum. Plants have recovered well. It needs consistent fertilization and monitoring for pests and insects.

Camellias, mahonias and other plant materials are healthy. Additional volunteers (yew, palms) need to be removed

Center of garden south of the brick walkway to Price's Alley to include the woodland walk: Soil tests were taken in February. They showed a high ph. This is being treated with aluminum sulphate. It needs consistent fertilization and monitoring for pests and insects. Five new camellias from Magnolia Gardens have been added to this section.

Northwest corner from the kitchen house area to the back of the house near the pergola: Peppermint Peach tree is in decline. I will look for a replacement. Soil testing was done in this area and it showed salt intrusion. During heavy rain fall this area has drainage issues. This is being managed with gypsum. The ligustrums and tea olive are showing improvement with this treatment. Could upgrade irrigation in this area. It needs consistent fertilization and monitoring for pests and insects. The gardenia seems to be suffering from blight and the dead limbs of the peach tree need to be removed.

Southwest corner from the pergola to Price's Alley: This area stays wet with heavy rainfall. Soil tests show a slightly low ph. Plants are healthy, vigorous, and show good blooms. Will continue fertilization. Adding two Spireas is recommended.

The fatsia leaves need to be removed and volunteer plant materials (palmettos) and weeds such as Virginia creeper need to be removed.

Lawn: Soil tests results show proper nutrients available and good ph. Will continue treatments as needed for pests and fungus fertilize as needed.

The following items are recommended.

Add a blue hydrangea in the shade across from Judy's office.

Remove holly volunteers in this bed (across from Judy's office).

Expose and extend bricks by bed under the bay.

Add two mahonias by the bay.

Remove liriope runners with other plant materials

Add variegated hostas by walkway by the yew hedge as well as callas and caladiums.

Remove volunteer yew.

Shape up all camellias in fall.

Remove fatsia under camellia and replant elsewhere.

Remove cherry laurel.

Cut back nandina near Price's Alley.

Trim holly ferns.

Add native azaleas along woodland walk.

Add more hydrangeas, acanthus plants and spireas throughout.