



# Landscape Design Workbook

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## **Introduction to Landscape Design**

This course will guide you through the process so that you can design your own garden. This can be your own property or a property of a friend. It can even be an imaginary property. However, it is important for you to work through the homework assignments in order to get the full value out of this course. You can only do that if you design a garden of your own.

This workbook was created to support my Landscape Design Course.

The instructor for the course is Robert Pavlis, a long time gardener, a master gardener, lecturer, author and owner of a private 6 acre botanical garden.

## **Role of Professionals**

You can do the whole process of creating a great garden, from design to implementation, or you can employ other experts along the way. Hopefully the following will help clarify some terms.

Landscape architect – has a degree in landscape architecture, is certified and specializes in working through the design process to create a garden plan.

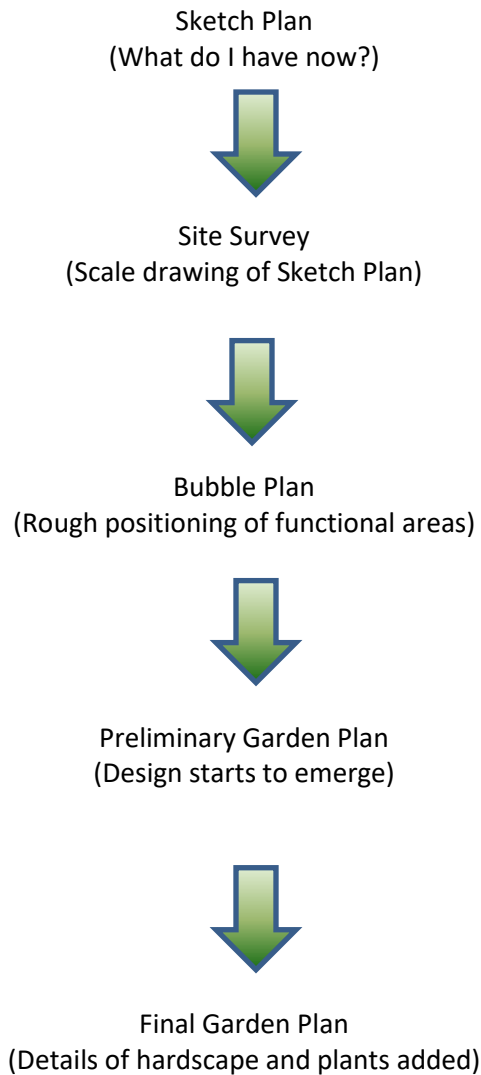
Landscape designer – has less formal education than the landscape architect, but carries out a similar function. They can be a certified landscape designer.

Garden designer – designs gardens and is generally more focused on plants.

Landscape contractor – implements the garden plan.

## Design Process

The design process is a series of steps that starts with understanding the current garden. Each step builds on this knowledge and slowly develops a more detailed plan, until the Final Garden Plan shows all of the details of the finished garden.



## Sample Garden











## Things to Include in the Sketch Plan and Site Survey

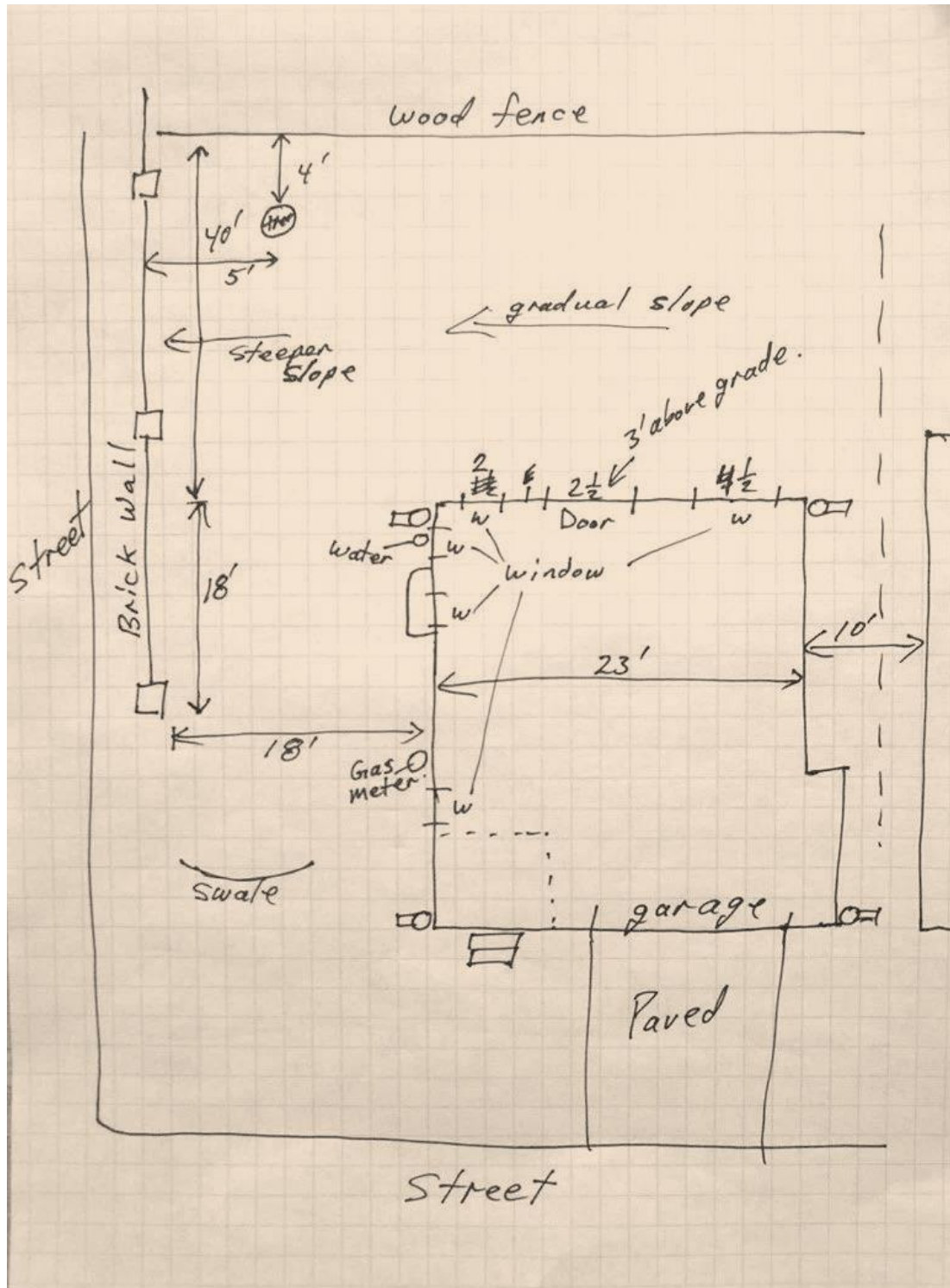
- House
- Fences
- Electrical outlets
- Water sources
- Doors and windows, including basement windows
- Steps leading from house outside
- Air conditioners
- Existing hardscape (walkways, decks, patios)
- Trees – location, current health and age
- Flower beds
- Shrubs that will be kept
- Swales or drainage ditches
- Shed
- Any permanent structure (arbors, pergolas)
- Gates
- Gas outlet for barbecue
- Sidewalk
- Neighbours trees if they impact the garden
- Existing problems
- Anything that will be kept for the new garden
- Down spouts
- Electric meter
- Gas meter
- Wet areas
- Septic system & well head
- Driveway
- Irrigation system
- Main water shut for the city
- Basement window wells

### Include notes on the following

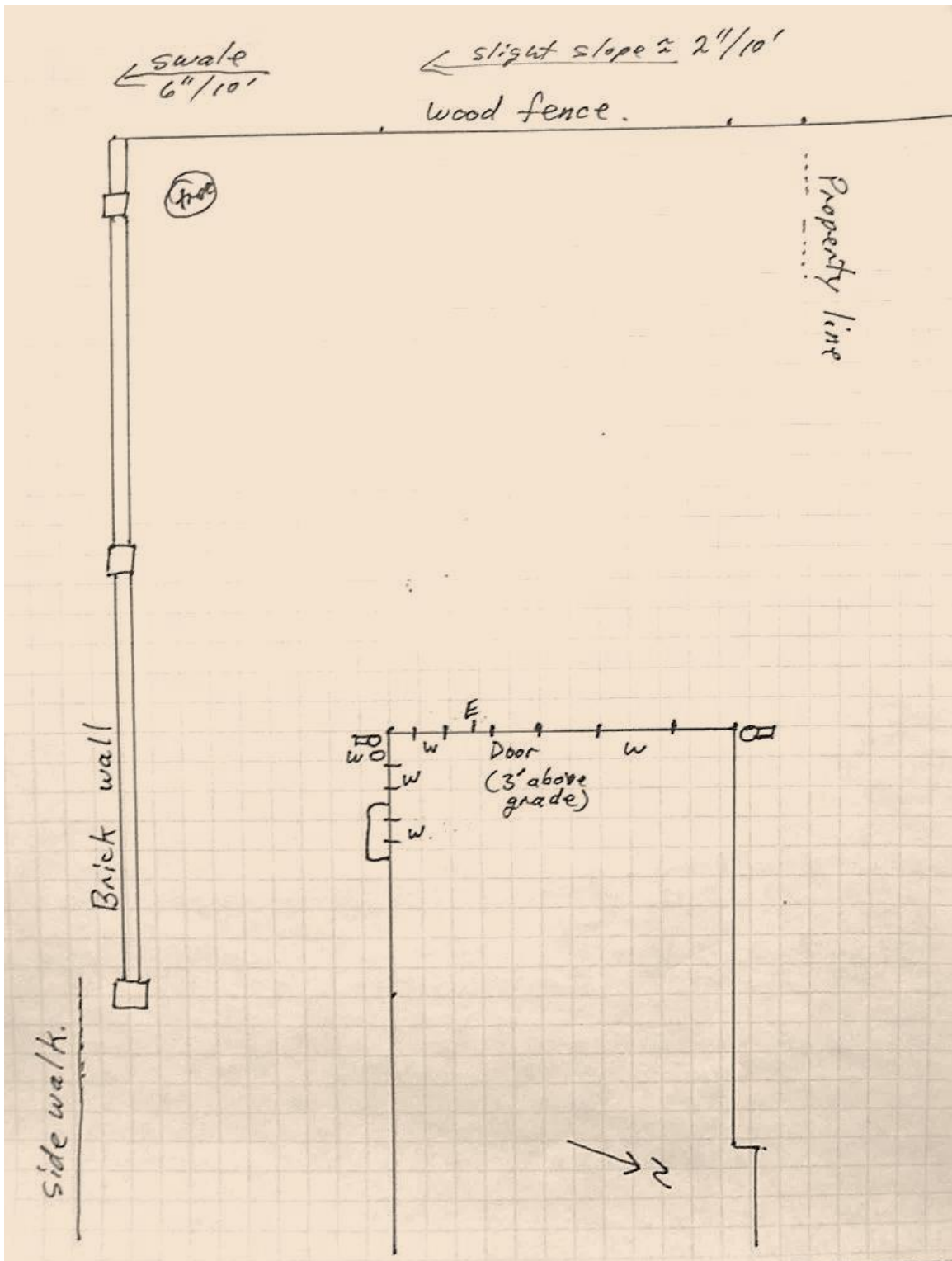
- Quality of soil
- Views from back yard, and from main windows
- Neighbour issues



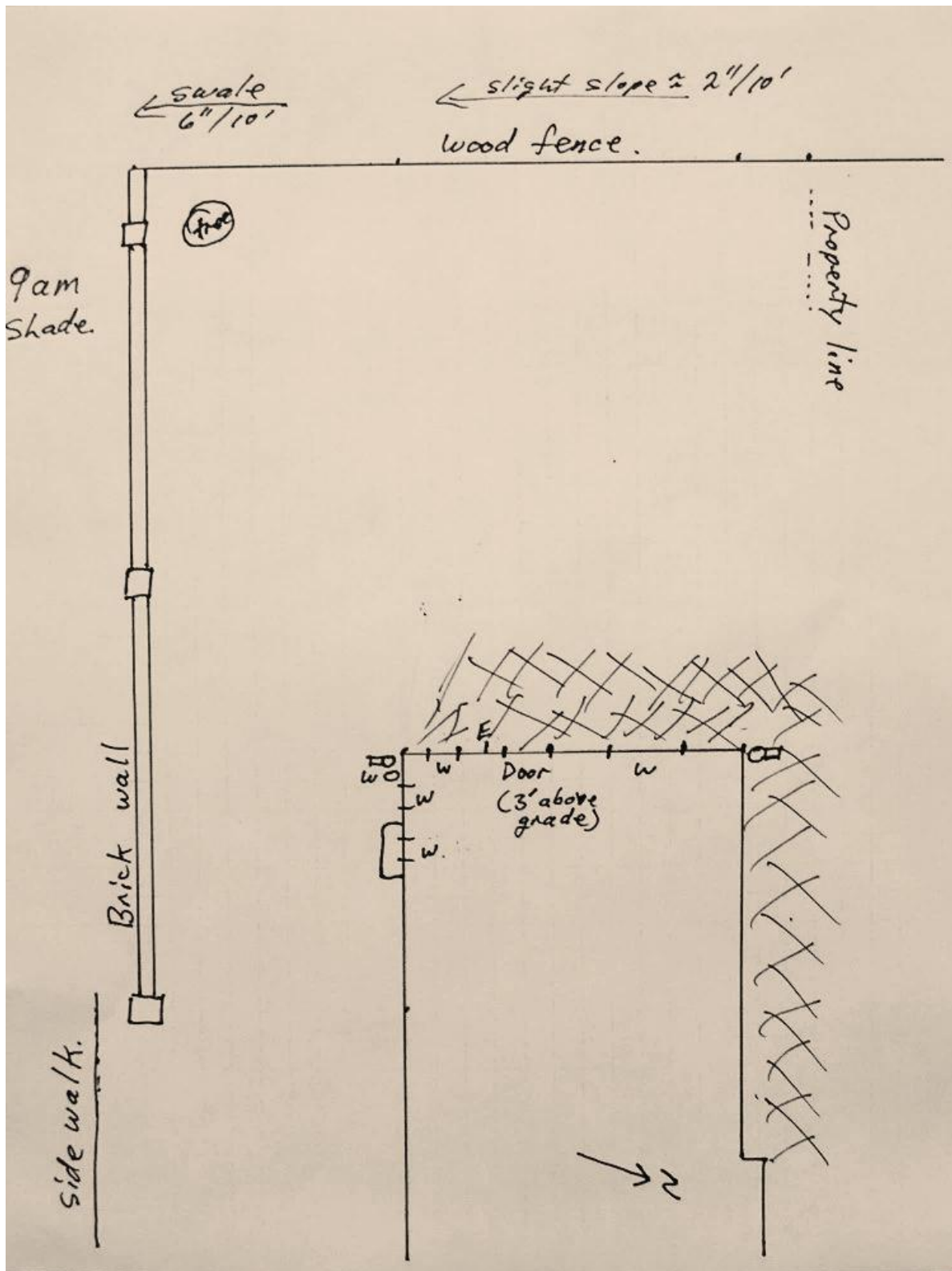
## Sketch Plan



## Site Survey

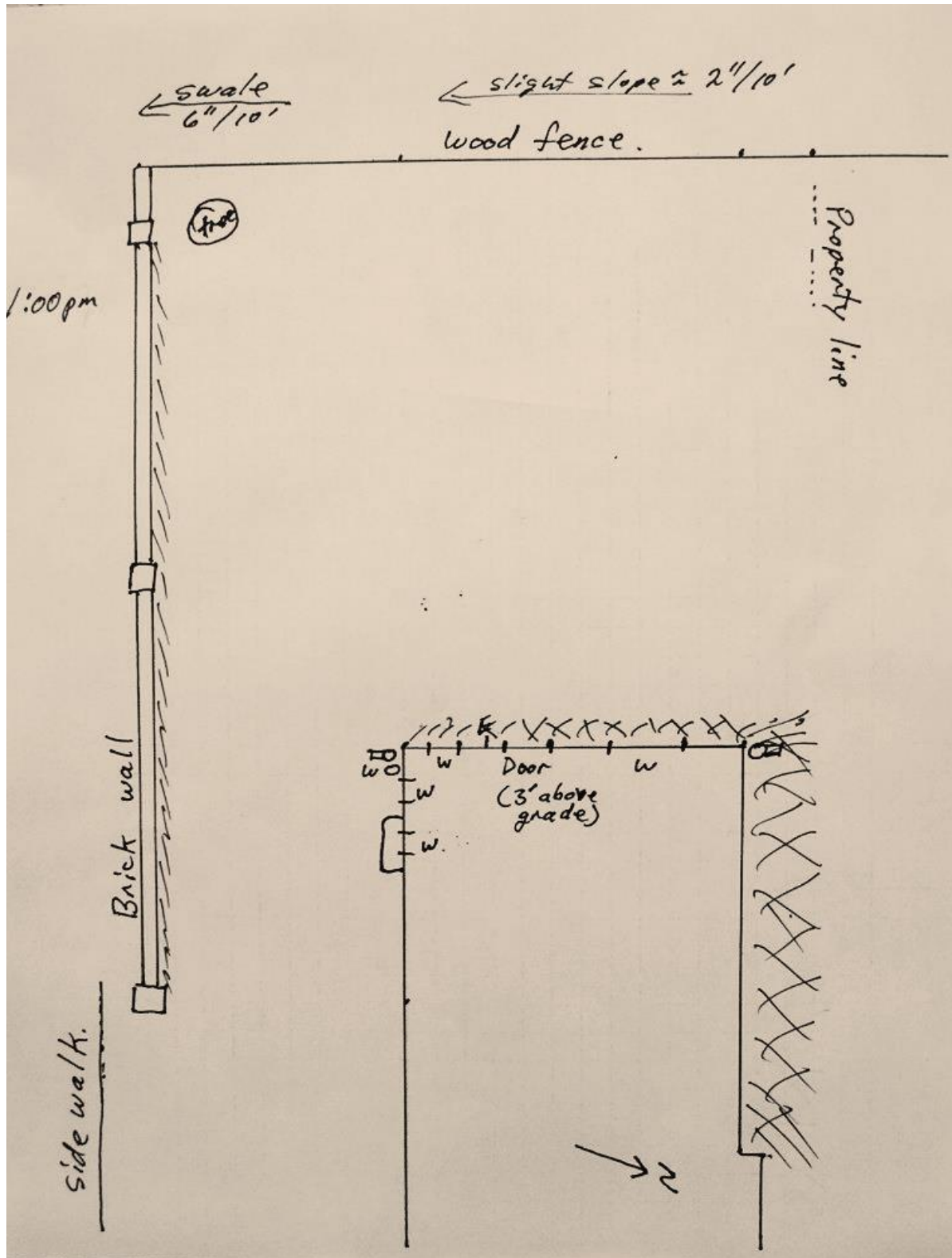


## Shade at 9:00 a.m.

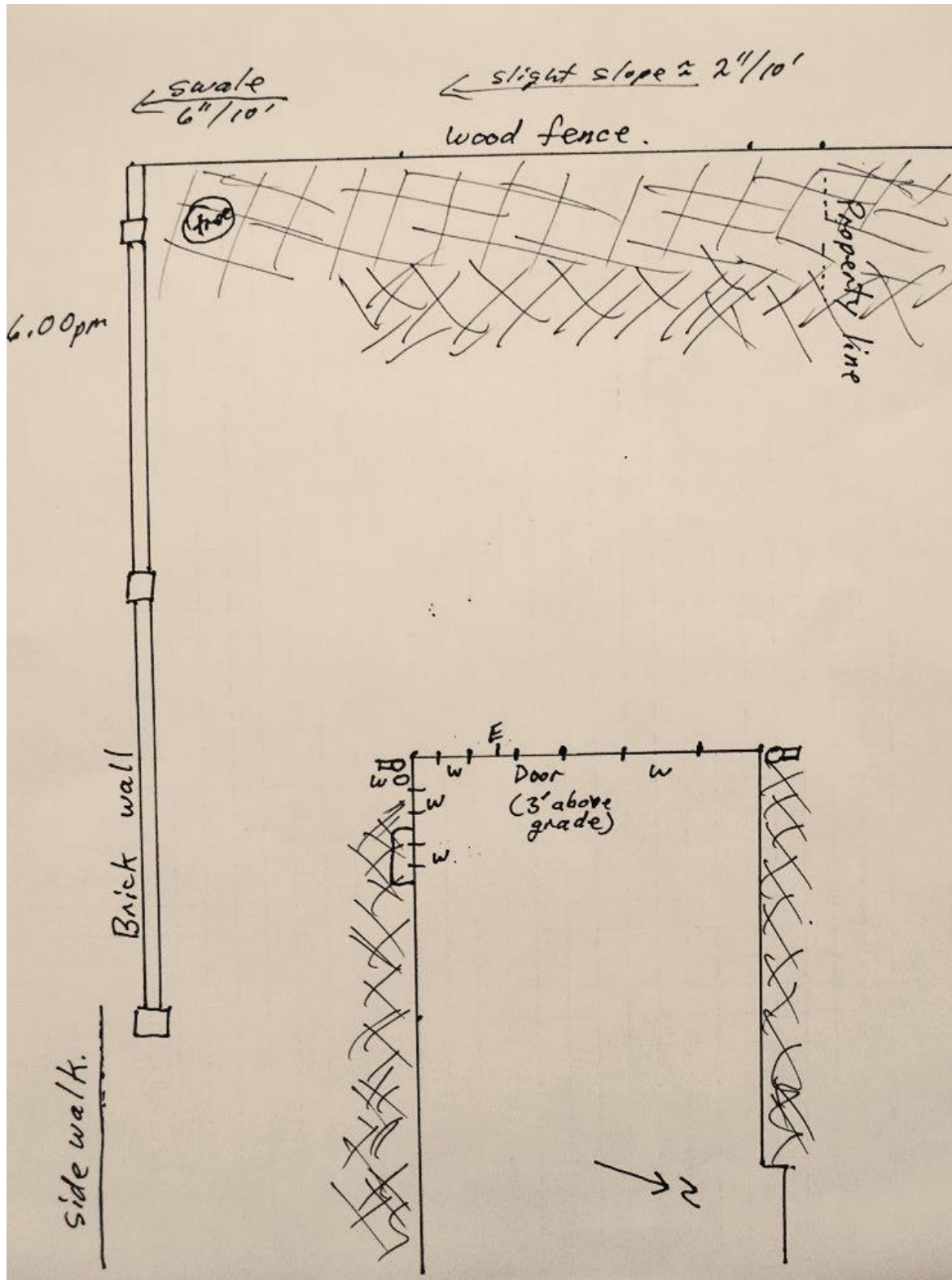




## Shade at 1:00 p.m.



## Shade at 6:00 p.m.



## Questionnaire to Help Determine Needs

Answer the following questions and use the answers to develop a list of needs. What do you need in the garden? Think about how the garden will be used. Picture yourself walking around the garden, having dinner and working in the garden. Your activities in the garden determine your needs.

1. Where will the garden hoses be stored?
2. Do you barbecue? Where? Do you need a gas hookup?
3. Who will use the garden? Do you need a special area for kids? Pets?
4. Which door do you use to exit the house?
5. How do you get from the garden to other parts of the property? e.g. garage, shed
6. Will you compost?
7. Where do you store garden tools, lawnmower?
8. Do you need an electrical outlet for power tools? Where should it be located?
9. Where are the down spouts?
10. Do you want a patio? How big? How many people will use it at one time?
11. Will you grow vegetables? Do you want fruit trees?
12. What do you want to do in the garden? How will you use the space?
13. What built structures do you want to add to the garden? Arbors, pergolas, decks, sheds?
14. How will your requirements change over the next 5 years? 10 years?
15. Are there disabilities that need to be accommodated?
16. Do you want lighting in the garden?
17. Do you have or want to add automated irrigation?
18. Do you need a shed?
19. What is your budget?
20. Are you a gardener? How much time, per week, will you have for maintaining the garden?
21. Where will the garbage bins go?
22. How many spaces do you need for cars?

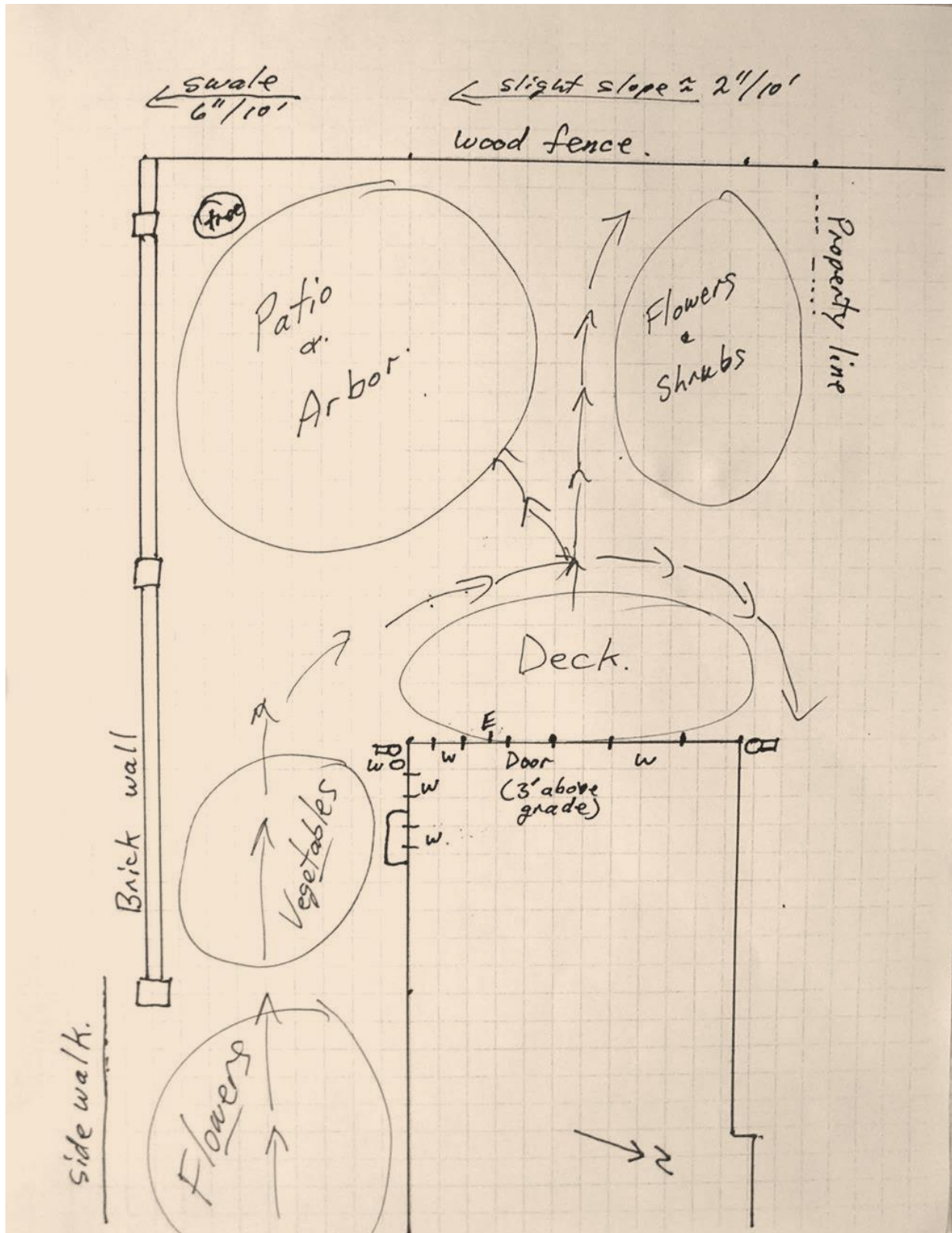


## Questionnaire to Help Determine Wants and Style

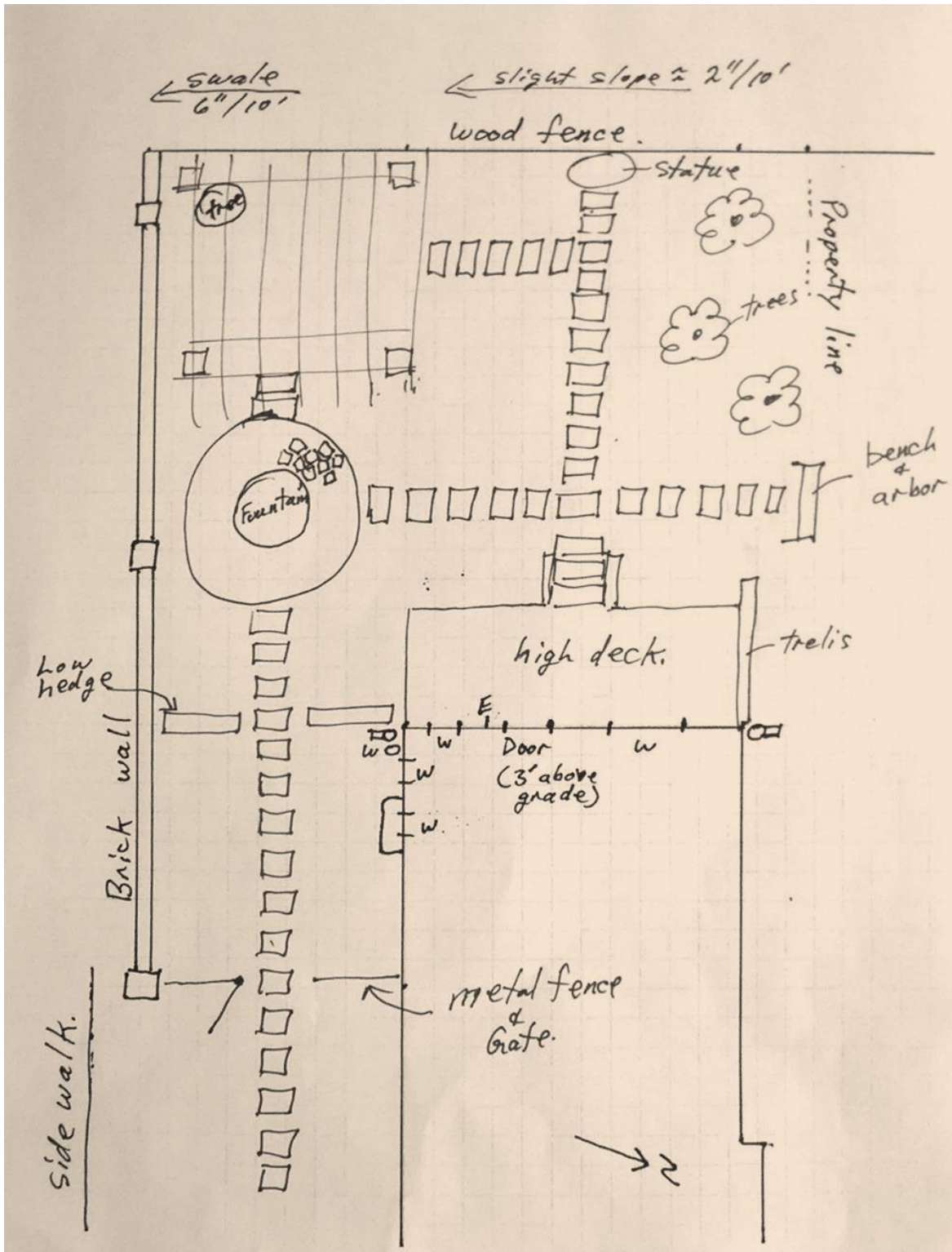
Answer the following questions and use the answers to develop a list of wants. What do you want in the garden? What style of garden do you want?

1. Do you like gardening? How much? Should the garden be mostly low maintenance, or are you a plant-a-holic and love working with plants?
2. Do you want lawns? How much?
3. Do you want a water feature? What kind? (pond, water fall, large or small)
4. Do you want trees? Where, how many? What kind? Evergreen or deciduous?
5. Do you like formal or informal styles? What about very informal native plant styles?
6. Why do you want a garden? Do you really want a garden to grow plants or do you want a good looking yard?
7. How important are the plants?
8. Do you want to hide the neighbours?
9. Do you like shade gardens or sunny gardens?
10. Do you like bright colors or muted colors?
11. Do you like a particular gardening style?
12. What do you want to see when you look out your window?

## Bubble Plan

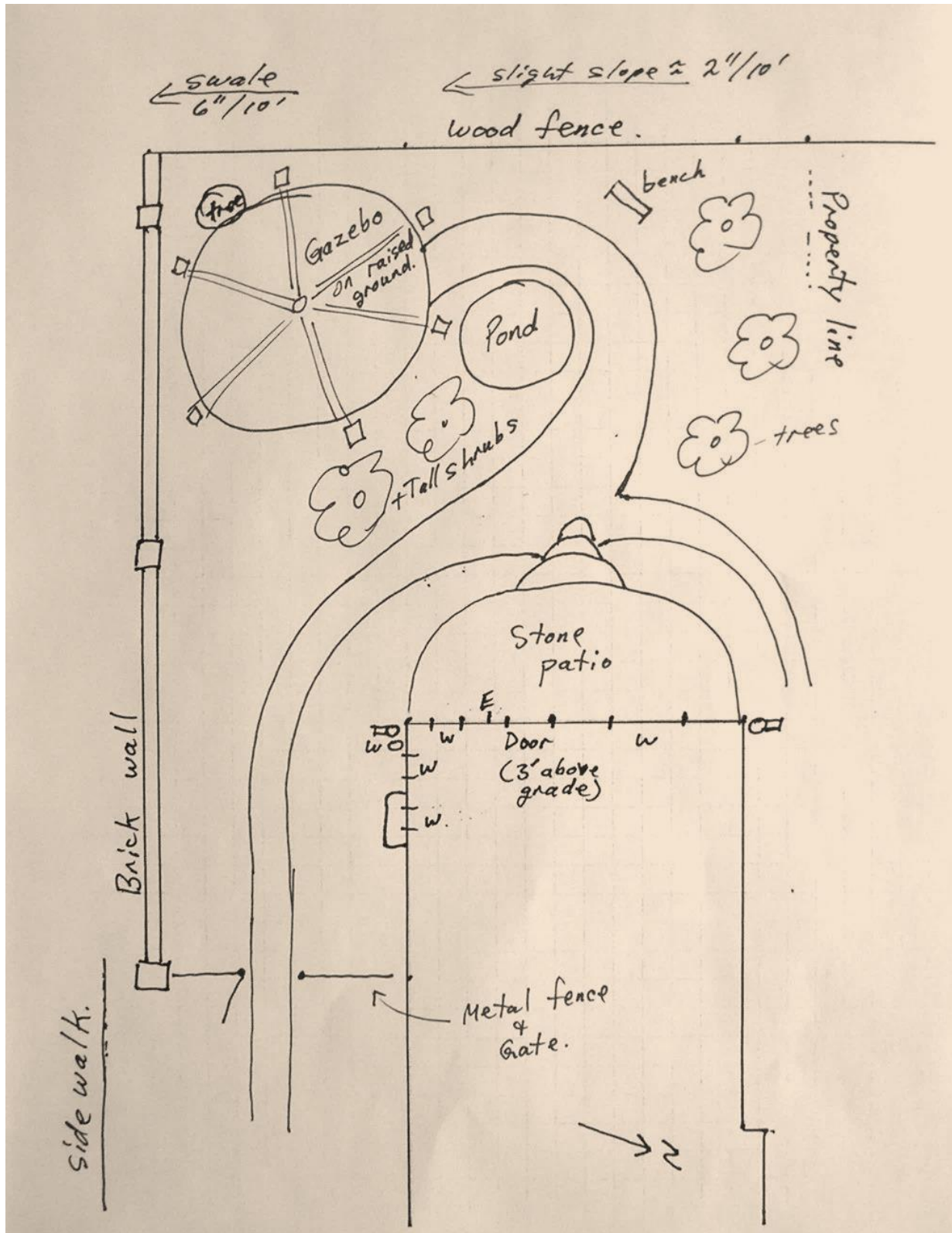


## Preliminary Garden Plan - Option 1





## Preliminary Garden Plan - Option 2



# Key Design Decisions

## Drainage

- Where will the water run when it rains?
- Are there wet spots that need to be corrected?
- What happens to the water from down spouts?

## Utilities

- Where will all the electrical, water and gas outlets be placed?
- Do new ones need to be added for water features, outdoor lighting?

## Focal point

- Where will key focal points be placed?
- What kind of focal points will you use? Mounted on walls or free standing?

## Garden lighting

- How extensive will it be? Where will it be located?
- Will it use 120 volts or low voltage?

## Rooms

- Will there be separate rooms in the garden?
- How will you move from one room to the next?

## Water Use

- Where will water be needed and how will it get there?
- What design decisions will be made to reduce water use?

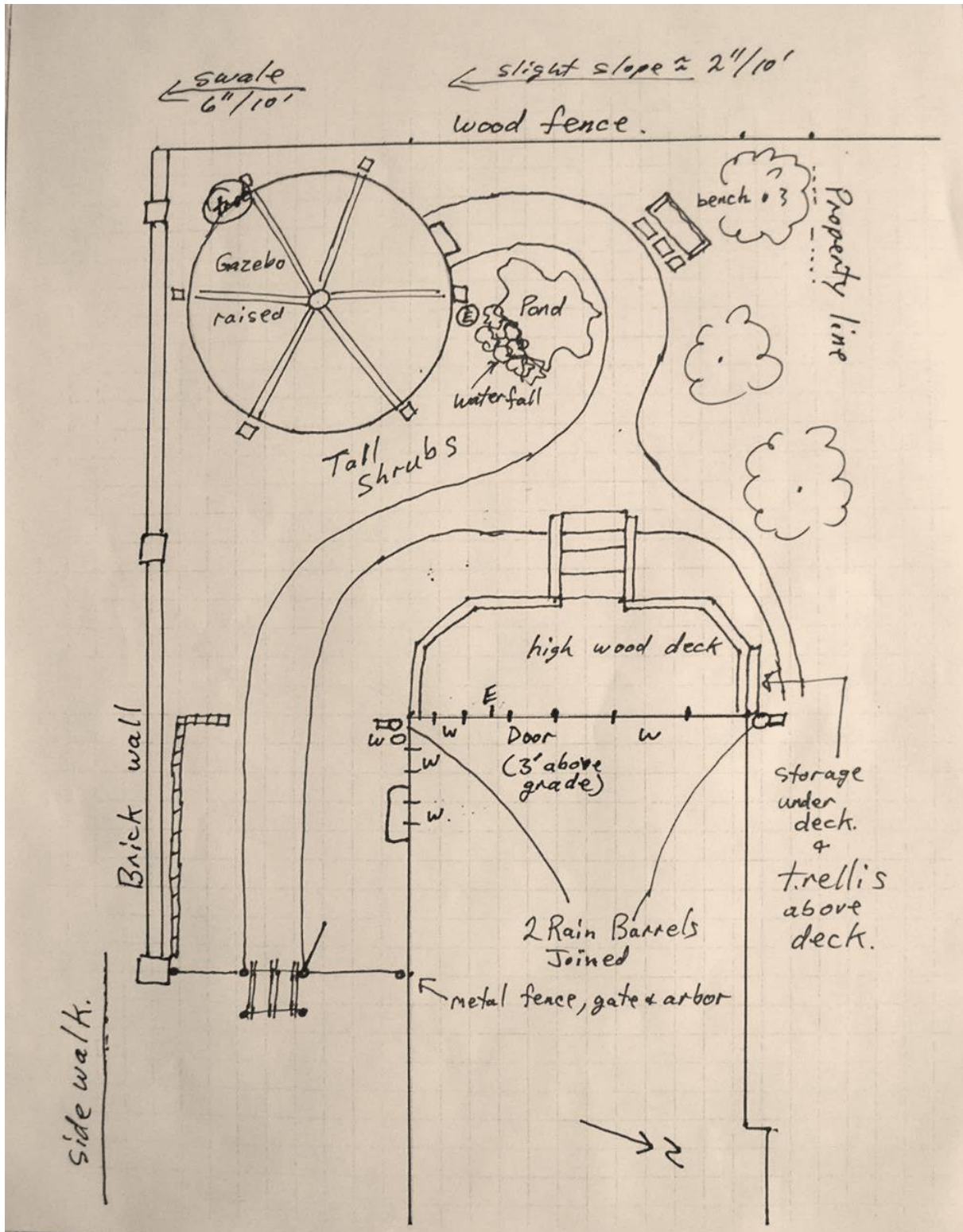
## Features

- What special features will be incorporated into the garden?
- Where will they be placed?

## Views

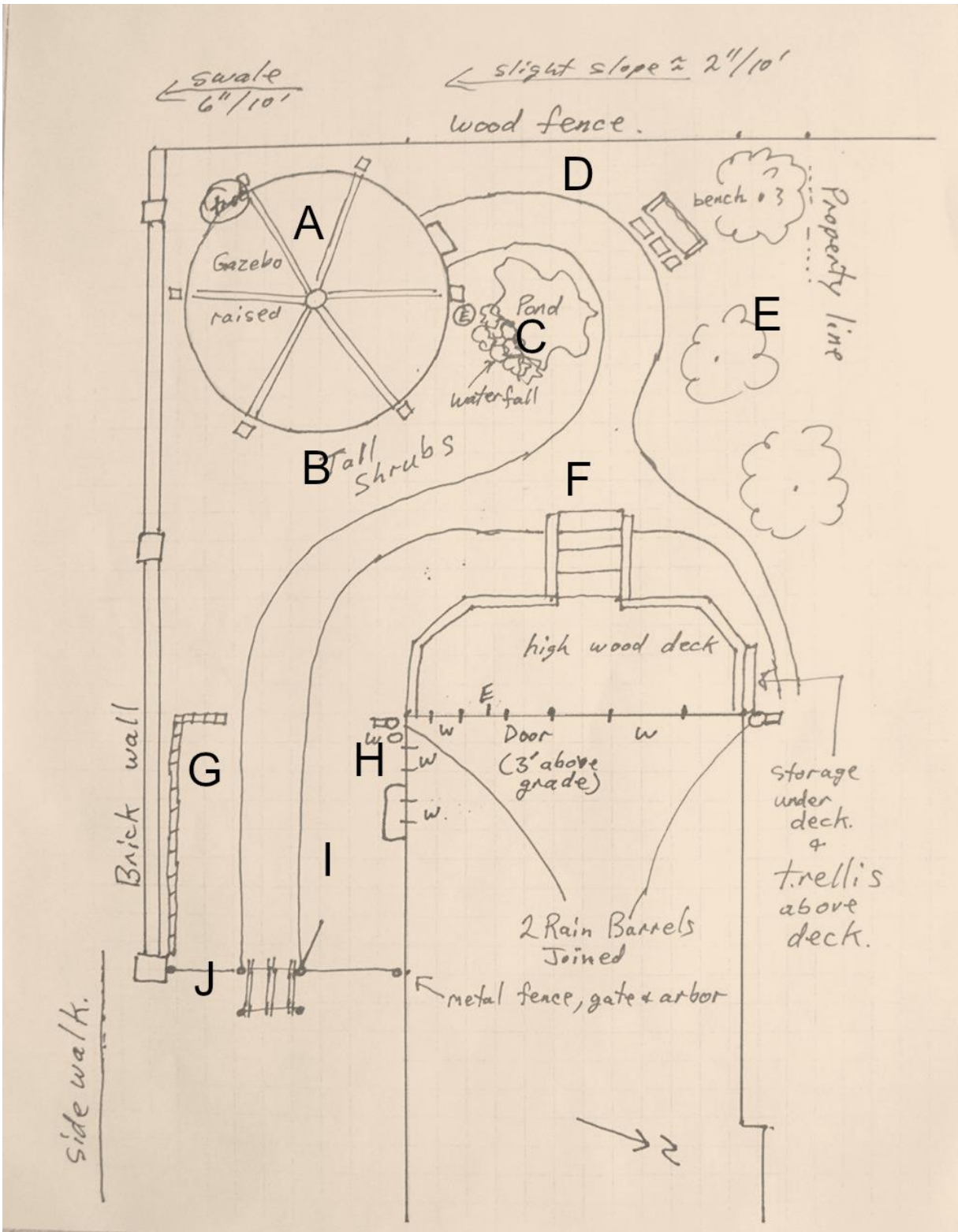
- What are the key views from the garden?
- What are the key views from the house?

## Final Garden Plan





## Final Garden Plan Notes



## Notes for the Final Garden Plan

Notes apply to the above drawing.

A) The gazebo can be made using a variety of designs and it won't change the basic garden design very much. It is more important to match personal tastes. My vision is to create a round platform using man made stone, edged in brick – very similar to the following picture. The posts will hold up a roof that is built more like an arbor than a solid roof. This will provide some shading, but also let in some light. It will also make the structure feel larger. The posts and roof will be made from wood and stained to match the deck on the house.

The floor will be raised up 1 step in height to make the structure more prominent. Gardens will surround the floor, and vines or clematis can be grown up the posts. A grape can be grown up and over the structure to provide more shade and extra interest. A tall shrub can be planted in the back corner to soften the corner, and eliminate the connection between the wood fence and stone wall – which is not very appealing right now.

A round table and chairs will be added for eating and lounging. The tree that is already in this location will be removed.

A 120 volt electrical line will be run to the gazebo (marked with a small E in a circle). This will be used to provide lighting for the gazebo, area B and provide power for a waterfall pump.

B) This area will contain tall shrubs. The goal is to separate the gazebo from the house and the deck. From the house the gazebo will be seen as a distant, mysterious, destination. A place for visitors to explore. Once at the gazebo, you will be away from the house, and the neighbours – it will be a private location.

Shrubs should be selected so that a variety of different leaf types and flower colours result in a mixed planting that keeps interest all year.

Up lighting will be provided for the shrubs on the house side. This will provide a nice view at night from the house.

C) Section C will be a natural looking small pond and waterfall. The back of the waterfall will be hidden by the shrubs in B.

The waterfall will provide a muffling sound for people in both the gazebo and people on the deck of the house. The pond will only be partially visible from the deck providing another interesting reason to leave the deck and wonder in the garden.

D) The fence at D is a large flat uninteresting area. Two different things can be done with it. It would be a good spot for lower plants and a statue. It would also be a good spot for higher shrubs.

The benefit of using higher shrubs is that it will make the back of the property feel as if it is farther away than it really is. This is the better option.

E) Section E will be converted into a shade garden with 3 trees. The two outside trees will be 20 foot trees – something like river birch would be good – which have deeper root systems. The center tree can be a smaller tree like a redbud.

The larger trees are posited so that as much of the neighbours back deck is hidden when sitting in the gazebo.

F) The walkway will be made from crushed ¾ inch irregular stone, edged with brick. Matching the brick used in the gazebo – similar to the picture below. The bricks can match the ones used in the wall, harmonizing all of the brickwork together. The main path should be wider – 4 foot, and it can narrow as it goes around the north side of the house.

G) There is a swale along the brick wall which needs to be maintained. That is not a problem for the planting of perennials and shrubs, but it does not work so well in a vegetable garden. A simple raised wall, using bricks, is to be built along the brick wall. This will allow the vegetable garden to be level.

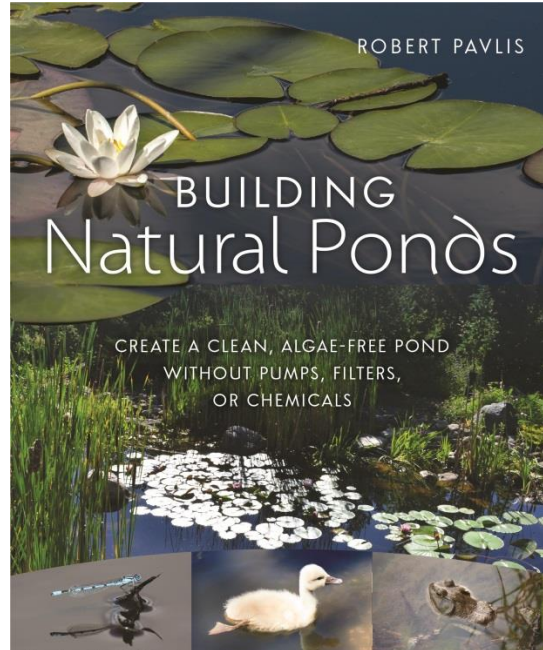
H) Water is important to the garden. The only tap at the back of the house will be used as the main water source. This will be convenient since it is right next to the vegetable garden. A tee will be added, and a second hose will go along the house, under the deck and come out at the north side of the house. A second hose here will make it easy to water that side of the back yard. This can be done with a simple garden hose, laying on the ground under the deck.

The two downspouts will be fitted with rain barrels, and connected together, under the deck. The rain for both barrels can then be easily used in the vegetable garden. Once connected, the two barrels will empty together as if they were one barrel. Additional barrels can be added under the deck.

I) Section I is the vegetable garden.

J) A gate is needed to close off the back yard, and to hide the vegetable garden which is usually not the best looking garden. From the front of the house, the gazebo will be a nice view towards the back and it would be worth preserving this destination view.

A metal fence and gate will help preserve the view, and allow maximum light for the vegetable garden. A metal arbor can be added to make the gate more interesting.



*Building Natural Ponds* is the first step-by-step guide to designing and building natural ponds that use no pumps, filters, chemicals, or electricity and mimic native ponds in both aesthetics and functionality. Highly illustrated with how-to drawings and photographs.

**For more information and ordering details, visit:**

**[www.BuildingNaturalPonds.com](http://www.BuildingNaturalPonds.com)**



# Resources

## Facebook Groups

Good general gardening science-based information that is hard to find at other online sites. I hang out here every day and continue to learn new things.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/GardenFundamentals/>

The best Facebook Group for learning about natural ponds.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/buildingnaturalponds/>

## YouTube Channels

Robert Pavlis also produces a YouTube channel called Garden Fundamentals, where you will find videos produced by him. Use the following link or just search for Garden Fundamentals.

<http://www.youtube.com/Gardenfundamentals1>

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## Connect with the Author

Due to my busy schedule, I do not answer gardening questions directly by email. However, I do spend a lot of time on various Facebook Groups. If you find me there, please feel free to ask questions.

A much better way for you to reach me is through my own gardening Facebook Group called Garden Fundamentals. It is a place where new gardeners, garden experts and scientists hang out to have science-based discussions. Please join the group.

Questions about Landscape Design are best left in the platform hosting the course. This allows other students to also contribute to the answers.



I will also respond to comments on my blogs and YouTube channel, provided the comments relate to the blog post or video.

<http://www.gardenmyths.com/>

<http://www.gardenfundamentals.com/>

<http://www.youtube.com/Gardenfundamentals1>