



Green Infrastructure & Stormwater Management CASE STUDY

Harbor Springs Homeowners Association

Location: Aurora, IL

Client: Harbor Springs Homeowners Association

Design Firm(s): Pizzo & Associates

Landscape architect/Project contact: Andy Stahr, ASLA

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ASLA Chapter: Illinois



Photo: Pizzo & Associates

Project Specifications

Project Description: The project at Harbor Springs in Aurora, IL, consisted of designing and installing a prairie and a wetland buffer, as well as restoring existing wetlands. Converting land back to its natural state in an urban setting helped put the homeowner's association residents back in touch with nature. To reestablish a healthy ecosystem 12,000 native plants and thirty-five pounds of native seed per acre were installed, while non-native species were removed by hand, herbicide or fire. By restoring the wetland to a more natural state, using native species and removing non-native species, the function of the land increased for wildlife and humans, as

did species diversity and water quality. The wetland plants, along with minor grading, helped abate an erosion problem along the pond shoreline.

Project Type:

Single family residential

A retrofit of an existing property

Design features: Bioretention facility, rain garden, and bioswale.

This project was designed to meet the following specific requirements or mandates: Not applicable

Impervious area managed: 1 acre to 5 acres

Amount of existing green space/open space conserved or preserved for managing stormwater on site: 1 acre to 5 acres

Cost & Jobs Analysis

Estimated Cost of Stormwater Project: \$10,000-\$50,000 (Public funding: None)

Was a green vs. grey cost analysis performed? No

Cost impact of conserving green/open space to the overall costs of the site

design/development project: Maintenance costs dramatically decreased overtime compared to traditional landscaping methods. Once wetland shorelines were regraded and restored with native vegetation erosion complications were eliminated from the site.

Cost impact of conserving green/open space for stormwater management over traditional site design/site development approaches (grey infrastructure)? Significantly reduced costs (10% or greater savings).

Number of jobs created: Not available

Job hours devoted to project: Not available

Planning and Design: Not available

Construction: Not available

Annual Maintenance: Not available

Performance Measures

Stormwater reduction performance analysis:

Wetland restoration captures all on site stormwater along with run-off from neighboring sites where it is collected, filtered, and stored by native shoreline species root systems.

Community & economic benefits that have resulted from the project: While many residents were excited about the addition of flowers and wildlife and the decrease in the goose population, there were many concerns that needed to be addressed. Specifically, some people were concerned about the need for controlled fires, as this was not something they had encountered before, and many expected the area to be immediately filled with flowers. Through meetings with the homeowners association and guided field walks for any interested residents, we were able to inform the public of the benefits of a natural and healthy ecosystem. These natural areas have brought homeowners together through volunteer stewardship events, children are playing outside more, and property values have sustained with current fluctuating real estate prices.

Project Recognition

2005 EPA & Chicago Wilderness Award; 2007 ILCA Silver Award, 2011 ILCA Gold Decade Award

Additional Information

To increase the native wildlife habitat an Osprey nesting structure was installed along with forty birdhouses including Wood Duck boxes, Mallard nesting boxes and Tree Swallow houses. Five interpretive signs were also installed to inform and educate the community about their restored natural area.



Photo: Pizzo & Associates