

## **Gardens of Stone: Expressions of our local environment**

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### **Natural stone hardscapes & their inspiration**

- Used with native plants are links to our natural world; they perfectly complement one another
- Used with native plants create an identifying aesthetic that is regionally-based – A required piece of our surrounding landscape; plants alone would not work
- Are personally relevant - Our cultural history is mapped in the paths, fortifications, benches, and walls people fashioned from stone
- Represent longevity & durability (If built correctly) – Stone is the best of all landscape architectural materials as it can get better with time

### **Hardscape features: Types of natural stone (Including altered natural stone & prefabricated units)**

*Natural stone* – Wisconsin is home to a wide variety of stone types

- Sedimentary rock (Limestone)
- Sedimentary rock (Sandstone)
- Igneous rock (Granite)
- Igneous rock (Fieldstone)
- Metamorphic rock

*Altered natural stone* - Snapped, rock-faced, gauged stone prepared for a variety of landscape uses

*Prefabricated units* – Manufactured clay and concrete paver units that vary in size & color

- Are clean edged, border or rugs of patterned stone
- Mixing paving materials is another option to consider
- Incorporating a border course of clay pavers, for example, can add definition and elegance to a simple stone or gravel patio

*Recycled materials* – Concrete, timbers, pavers, etc.

### **Functional uses for stone**

- Circulation – Pathways to control vehicular & pedestrian movement through the landscape
  - Stepping stones (tight-fitting or set in turf or plantings)
  - Crushed gravel
  - Regular or irregular flagstone paths
- Edging/definition
- Retaining & freestanding walls
  - Limestone walls
  - Mixed stone walls
  - Boulder walls w/ concrete
- Grade changes (Steps & stairs)
- Groundcover material
- Check dams
- Mimic and recreate formations, relationships and processes found in nature – Modeled after mountains, rivers, waterfalls, lakes shores, cliffs, ravines, etc
- Gathering/social areas – Landscape features for congregated human activity
  - Crushed gravel
  - Regular or irregular flagstone/stepping stones
  - Paver/brick units & mixed material

## Gathering/social areas – Questions to ask when designing these spaces

1. Function use
2. Type of pavement materials
3. Textural decision – Finer makes a space feel bigger, coarser is smaller
4. Color – Lighter is reflective and therefore cooler
5. Surfacing – Hard, uneven, wider spacing (tripping), smooth (slipping) can be negative
6. Setting the stone – Formal or informal, patterned or irregular
  - a. Borders, stringers & inlays

## Aesthetic uses for stone (Stonescaping)

- Spatial definition
- Focal point or accenting
- Framing
- Textural contrast
- Create depth
- Regional context – Fitting in with your neighborhood ☺
- Rhythm, unity & diversity
- Sculptural & wayfinding
  - Inuksuit (“ee-nook-sweet”) - Structures of balanced rock

## Emotional uses for stone

- Evoke feelings of dignity, longevity, serenity, authority, tension, etc (create a mood)
- Calming sensation - A dry garden is not entered, but viewed; truly it is a garden of the mind

## Planning your landscape

- Assess your needs – Recreational, utility & plantings
- Master planning & layout

## Determining your garden stone

- Let a garden’s location determine the type (Bioregional context)
- Function – Match the stone to the use
- Cost – Initial investment may be higher, but because it lasts so long it’s really a bargain
- Site constraints & opportunities – Accessibility, soil conditions, legal restrictions, relative malleability of site (I.e. wells, water table, old foundations, buried treasure, etc)
- Style – Formal, semi-formal or informal layout, geometric or random/curvilinear,
- Mortared or dry-laid
- Local or imported
- Natural, prefabricated or combination
- Architectural connection – Stone materials should complement or contrast existing structures
  - Repeat stone types used for house, garage or other architectural features
  - Contrast stone types in horizontal and vertical planes
- Emotional – Are you trying to create an impression or mood?
- Environmental
  - Buy local - Reduce manufacturing, transportation & embodied energy costs
  - Divert materials from landfill
  - Improve infiltration
  - Store & filter runoff