

A word about raingardens from Trustee Olson:

Raingardens are better suited to some situations than others. I'm not a proponent of that solution in every case, but in the Ferndale Woods subdivision, I've come to recognize the high degree of suitability of the raingarden solution.

Ferndale Woods is a big water collection basin. It collects water from 3 sides and when rain is intense, the water flow is really substantial. The Village spent nearly a million dollars to solve the problem of flooding in that area, and the key to that solution lies with pipes that drain away lots of water in a hurry. If the pipes clog up, the investment is useless and the area will flood.

The raingarden prevents the pipes from clogging up. Here is the exit pipe at the end of the raingarden.



There is no grate over the entrance to the pipe. Nothing obstructs the inflow of water. If there were a grate, the flow would be reduced a lot, and grates can get plugged up by small debris. So the pipe opening is unobstructed. This makes it possible for larger debris to enter the pipe. If that happens, the pipe can clog up way inside the system, making the outflow path impassable and rendering all the money spent a big waste. Until a blocked pipe can be unblocked, it may as well not be there at all.

When water enters the basin area, through half a dozen entry points under circle drive, it is channeled through the raingarden. That solution has proven itself to be able to handle anything Mother Nature has thrown at it so far. The native vegetation, or brush or weeds or whatever you want to call the plant matter that makes up the raingarden, stops branches and trash from reaching the opening of the exit pipe. There is minimal standing water, and the water is not there for long, but if the pipe gets blocked, there would be a lot of standing water, possibly for a lengthy period of time.



Here is the view looking SouthWest, with the exit pipe in the foreground. All that plant matter filters out large debris very effectively. That is how the raingarden really earns its keep, and upkeep.



This may not be beautiful to everyone. It is more attractive at some times of the year than others, and it will be more attractive with new kinds of plants and more upkeep, but it is a functioning part of the drainage system without which the rest of the system would not work reliably over time.