

New in Homes

Front garden gets formal touch



Elaine Carey

Lessons in Landscaping

This front-yard garden in Bloor West Village needed a makeover to match it with the lovingly restored home.

Although it's a good size, it's at an intersection in a busy residential neighbourhood where privacy was an issue. Three hydro poles, street signs, parking and speed limit warnings were an unattractive visual distraction.

The challenge was to create both a formal front entrance to the house and a private, intimate seating area in the shade below the existing maple tree, said landscape architect Christine Gracey of D. A. Gracey & Associates.

She created a formal front entrance by using various types of stone. Owen Sound saw-cut flagstone was bordered by green Pennsylvania flagstone to tie into the colour scheme of the painted house timbers. Manitoulin stone steps made for an impressive set of risers.

The planting area along the walkway was bordered with a boxwood hedge enclosing a selection of hybrid tea roses. A large cast-iron urn, updated seasonally, creates a stunning centrepiece.

A path of the Owen Sound flagstone leads down the west side of the house to the backyard, while on the east the path is oversized random flagstone — which creates a casual atmosphere leading to a private,



The front garden of this Bloor West Village home is all formality with a saw-cut Owen Sound flagstone walkway bordered by a boxwood hedge enclosing a selection of hybrid tea roses.

shaded seating nook.

The plantings in this area were also more natural, mixing coniferous and deciduous shrubs for year-round privacy and screening with perennials for seasonal colour and texture.

Gracey installed a quick growing hedge of alpine current along the property line to block the view of the road and increase privacy. Virginia creeper

vines now cover the hydro poles and make them less of an eyesore. A Himalayan birch planted on the front lawn provides additional depth and privacy to the yard.

Phase two of the project, installing a tree house with a stage for the owners' little drama queen, has now been completed.

The thrilled homeowners now use the area far more and re-

ceive numerous compliments from their neighbours.

The garden has won a Landscape Ontario award and a silver medal in the West Toronto Garden Awards.

Source: D. A. Gracey and Associates Ltd., 905-761-9490, www.dagracey.com.

If you have an interesting landscape project, email ecarey@thestar.ca.



The home's backyard has a more casual atmosphere, with oversized flagstone paths and more natural, perennial plantings.