

hiring a garden designer

things to consider



by **Betty Hanselman**
Partner
Hanselman Landscape & Gardens



This Lancaster County woodland garden has been thriving and meeting the needs of its owners for more than 10 years, thanks to the craftsmanship and care of our design/build/maintain team.

Developing a garden can be a fun and rewarding process. Many people seek a professional to help them turn their garden dreams into reality. In this way, costly mistakes are avoided and the learning curve is shortened. Most importantly, since plants take time to grow to a pleasing maturity, starting right can save years of frustration.

We find that clients most enjoy the garden-building process when they are fully engaged as partners, so it's important to

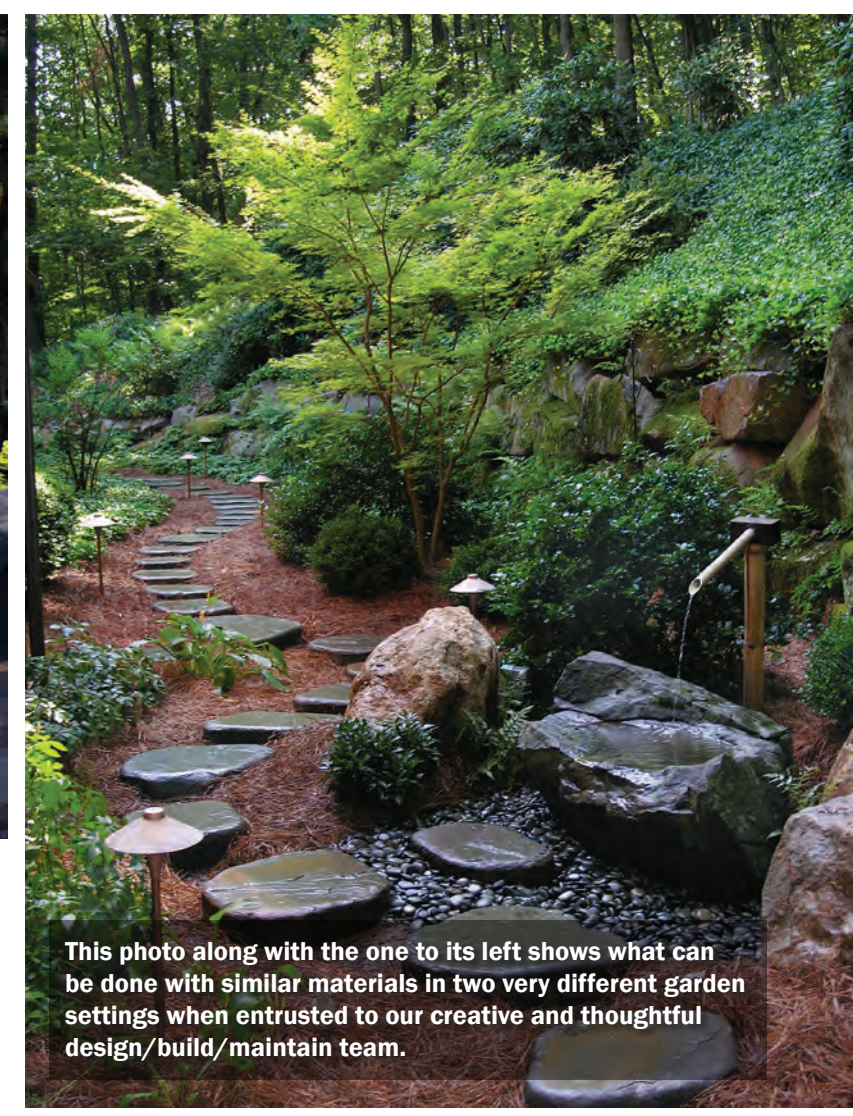
find a designer you trust and with whom you are comfortable. A careful, thoughtful search can lead to a mutually beneficial partnership and a wonderful, enduring relationship.

Develop your garden vision

Find a source of inspiration, think about your goals, and be ready to communicate them. At this point, it is more important to understand your hopes and motivations than to worry about the details or logistics.



You should also begin to develop a budget, so that you can have a realistic conversation about costs with your designer. Realize that a garden landscape is not a one-time expense, but rather an ongoing and rewarding investment. An experienced designer understands the importance of regular garden maintenance, and can



This photo along with the one to its left shows what can be done with similar materials in two very different garden settings when entrusted to our creative and thoughtful design/build/maintain team.



We designed and reshaped this Lancaster County farm pond edge to provide easy access for lawn mowing and water play.



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discuss ongoing costs for the garden they propose. To stretch budgets, most people choose to develop their garden in phases.

Decide between “design-build” and “design-only” methods

“Design-build” firms integrate design, construction, and maintenance services. “Design-only” means an individual or company provides consultation and design, while the installation is done by another firm.

Consider the integrity and ability of the landscape designer, as well as the experience and skill of the installation company. A risk with “design-build” is that the designer might lower expectations in the design stage in order to “win the bid” and ensure feasibility when the time comes to build. A risk with “design-only” is that practicality might be a problem when the design is implemented by another contractor. This can lead to fingers pointing both ways, with alternate parties blaming failures on “poor design” or “poor installation.”

Our firm typically works in a “design-build” capacity. Because our team stands behind the entire process, we can ensure a high level of quality for our clients.

Interview the prospective design partner

Stellar references are the hallmark of a trusted designer. In addition, ask to see examples of projects completed in the past. If you have time, in-person visits are best, but you can learn from a series of photos as well. Look specifically for gardens that have matured over the years. Are the plants maturing beautifully, showing good selection and careful tending? What is the condition of the hardscape surfaces, such as pavers, stones, and bricks?

Consider it a red flag if you are only shown examples of newly-installed gardens or referred to only recent clients.

Evaluate the designer’s perspective

An experienced garden designer should be able to competently “listen” to the site.



Whether your vision for your garden is classic or contemporary and modern, care and craftsmanship help make each vision a delight to experience.



This post-transformation photo shows what can be done with a flat, open (i.e. public) corner yard when matched with a creative designer and a skillful installation team.

Following a family vacation in Costa Rica, our clients returned inspired by a waterfall they had visited together. They requested a similar experience in their back yard and we were delighted to oblige.



In other words, a good designer will thoughtfully and skillfully consider several parameters: the natural state and boundaries of the site, the norms of the surrounding community, the aesthetics of your home's design, your preferences and dreams, and your budget.

Look to your designer to answer the following questions in a way that makes sense to you:

- How will this landscape design look from inside the house (through a window vs. from the street)?
- Will your garden be viewed as you "walk-through" or as a "picture" from one setting?
- Will the structures and spaces be the right size and type for your needs?

- How will rainwater move through the garden and keep your home dry?
- What will this garden look like in 10 years or more? Will it keep its value and beauty?
- How will the landscape appear in each season?
- What are the costs involved and how can they be managed over time?

The answers to these questions should provide helpful insight as you determine the suitability of the designer to your proposed project.

We wish you joy in your garden-creation adventure!



Long-term relationships and successful gardens fit naturally; everything we do is rooted in that awareness. Earning your lasting confidence is our first priority. You are cordially invited to explore how we might begin to cultivate such a relationship. At Hanselman Landscape & Gardens, we are dedicated to bringing the joy of natural beauty into our clients' daily experience. Since 1985, it has been our privilege to design, build and nurture a wide variety of gardens in both private and corporate settings in central and southeastern Pennsylvania. Our staff includes craftsmen skilled in maintenance, installation, nursery care, design and management. Several of us have lived overseas, broadening our approaches to garden living. We all share a profound appreciation for the beauty of nature and are committed to crafting high-quality garden spaces. Our mission... to build value for clients, employees and company. Our vision... to improve our world through bringing natural beauty into the daily lives of our clients by devoting ourselves to excellence in garden stewardship.

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