



Top: Reshaping the lot to channel water. Below: Two weeks after seeding.



The new front entrance with permeable pavers.

Everything's swale

Mary Griffin and Ray Dietzman decided to incorporate sustainable landscaping when they built a house on a heavily wooded lot in St. Paul. They hired Daniel Peterson, president of HabAdapt Landscape Design of Minneapolis, to create a landscaping plan to reduce yard maintenance and to save and reuse rainwater.

They had several trees removed near the street to make room for the house. Peterson planted many others around the lot to compensate. He terraced what became the front yard and added the winding channel (also known as a swale) and the rain garden in the sloping back yard to hold up to eight inches of rainwater.

That water creates an underground irrigation source for deep-rooted vegetation and trees.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HABADAPT LANDSCAPE DESIGN

New trees were planted to compensate for any that were removed.

Peterson strategically planted trees that will grow to different heights just as they would in a forest. He also planted ground-cover that will migrate to different areas of the yard depending

on how much sunlight it needs. The leaves that fall from the trees will fertilize the groundcover, just as it does in a forest – no raking required. That was a big factor for Griffin.

"A lot of the sustainability comes from the fact that I like being in the yard, but I'm going to get older here," Griffin said. "At some point, I'm not going to be out there doing yard work."