EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS
OCTOBER, 2015

CHINA GARDEN SITE LOOKING WEST FROM HILLTOP

CHINA GARDEN SITE LOOKING SOUTHEAST
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The National China Garden at the U.S. National Arboretum is expected to be the finest example of a classical Chinese garden in the United States. The China Garden is based on an original design developed by a team of designers from China and is located in an idyllic setting just two miles from the Capitol of the United States. The garden incorporates the best features of several well-known gardens in the famous Chinese garden cities Yangzhou and Suzhou. The garden will be built on a 12-acre, undeveloped parcel and will feature a harmonious balance of man-made structures, plants, water and rock formations. All the above ground structures in the National China Garden will be designed and constructed by the Chinese designers and craftsmen, using traditional Chinese architectural precepts. In addition, the U.S. team will design and construct a Support Service Building which will be staffed with administrative and maintenance personnel.

THE GARDENS AND CHINESE PHILOSOPHIES
Confucian and Taoist philosophy both emphasize the need for human beings to live in harmony with nature. This principle, the "Unity of Heaven and Humanity," gave rise to the traditional Chinese respect for Nature and the desire to recreate Nature in art. Under the influence of this philosophy, Chinese gardens organically combine architecture, landscape and arts, using Nature to recreate Nature within a limited space. Integrating natural beauty and exquisite human craft, classical Chinese gardens are the man-made embodiment of the "Unity of Heaven and Humanity." Many of the builders and owners of those gardens were former officials who had renounced political ambitions in government for a life of art and study, or wealthy merchants fleeing the noisy and chaotic lives of the cities.

GARDEN TYPES
The National China Garden will feature three types of prevalent classical Chinese gardens. The first type is private residential gardens. This type of garden was usually formed in the backyards of people of higher social status such as high officials, wealthy merchants or prominent scholars. These gardens are not necessarily grand in scale but the variety of ways to handle the architecture, garden spaces, paths, views, rocks, ponds and plants will make the visitors' experience extremely rich. The second type is a garden close to major water bodies. This type is originated from royal gardens as the emperors and queens could afford to build extensive terraces and corridors, besides pavilions, on the edge of the lakes. Such gardens typically feature magnificent views over the water and beyond. The third type is a garden in woods. These gardens usually feature a single structure that is partially hidden behind the trees but also partially visible from afar. This partial visibility allures visitors to explore. Structures in such gardens are typically sited on hills. They reward visitors with commanding views.

Namely, the National China Garden will have "Ge Garden" and "Mountain House of Sliced Stones" as the first type of garden, "Garden on Lake" as the second type and "Urban Forest" as the third type. These three types of gardens start from a public path in the arboretum, smoothly roll into the inner part of the site and eventually end up on the wooded hill side.
The National China Garden is located on 12 acres of gently sloping meadow and pine forest at the United States National Arboretum (USNA). The project includes four major garden components: two walled residential style gardens, a lake garden, and a managed urban forest garden. The complex is set 100 feet from Holly Springs Road to allow the enclosing walls to be carefully blended into the existing Arboretum setting.

The Gardening throughout the project are conceived and named by the Chinese Design team, each representing the senses and experiences of immersion into the world of this very special environment.

The sequence of entering the gardens will be from two arrival points. The main entrance begins with an elegant series of stone steps, starting the transition from the realm of the Arboretum into the world of the Classical Chinese garden. A landing at the top of the steps features a stone sculpture framed by the first opening between the walls. The second access point is to the north, where a small parking area for visitors requiring ramp access will proceed along a gently graded path, designed as a sinuous maple tree walkway also leading to the main entry point.

The Ge Garden: is a four-season garden including the Embracing Mountain Building which will be used as a cultural center. The landscape includes extensive rockeries, small meandering water bodies and extensive plantings typical of elegant classical Chinese residential gardens. All the pavilions will be furnished with examples of classical Chinese decorative arts and provide an intimate glimpse into the highly cultured atmosphere of residential compounds in Ming and Qing Dynasty China.

The Mountain House of Sliced Stones: is a smaller, more modest garden which includes the Nannu Hall, representing the lifestyle of a Chinese scholar and the manner in which guests might have been received in his home. The pond, rockeries, and plantings are more modest and naturalistic in feeling than those of the Ge Garden.

The Garden on Lake: occupies the largest area of the site. The lake, with its cascade and rocky edges, includes in its center the Tai-Chi lake, a planting of flowering lilies and water lilies forming a yin/yang circular pattern. Located on the northern edge of the lake, the Cultural Corridor leads visitors to the Peony Garden, designed to be a signature garden devoted to the iconic Chinese peonies, including both tree peony and herbaceous peony cultivars. The outer side of the corridor is partially enclosed by stone tablets that are engraved with ancient Chinese poems written in various types of calligraphy. At the south side of the lake, the Floating Fragrance Hall provides a sloping view of the entire garden and surrounding area. Koi fish will inhabit the lake during all seasons, and lake edges, depths, and water quality will be designed to accommodate them.

The Urban Forest: is a wooded hillside garden, gently sloping up from the lake with commanding views of the entire garden complex. The Five Pavilion Terrace and the White Pagoda, both based on similar structures in China, are set among existing trees supplemented with new plantings. These two pavilions allow visitors to experience the gardens with open views down slope to the lake.

Plantings

Plant materials will be installed at sizes as mature as possible to create a full representation of the quality of the classical Chinese garden. Plantings will be obtained in part from USNA collections and pre-growing, as well as through donations from other U.S. arboreta, and commercial sources. A plant list, provided by the Chinese team, and analyzed for availability by the US design team, follows.

Chinese scholars used rocks as art in their homes. Large and porous garden rocks are often considered to be among the most valuable in a classical Chinese garden. These ageless objects symbolize the dwellings of Taoist immortals.

Water is considered to be the central component of a classical Chinese garden, serving as a balance for the other elements found in the garden. The best sites for classical Chinese gardens are on the edges of lakes with views of the mountains. The arrangement of structures divides a classical Chinese garden into smaller sections with one or more scenic views. The buildings are designed to accent the garden with windows and doorways that frame scenic views in their courtyards and beyond. Certain plants are favored for classical Chinese gardens because of their association with overcoming the limitations of ordinary life. The pine, cypress, plum and bamboo are favorites because of their ability to grow in harsh weather conditions and rough terrain.

Garden design is considered to be an art form in China, but one will also find other art forms like calligraphy, painting, poetry, dance, flower arranging and viewing stones in a classical Chinese garden.

FIVE KEY ELEMENTS IN A CLASSICAL CHINESE GARDEN

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<th>Rocks</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Views</th>
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<th>Artwork</th>
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TOUCHING-CLOUD PAVILION ELEVATION

EMBRACING-MOUNTAIN BUILDING PLAN

TOUCHING-CLOUD PAVILION PLAN
BOAT HALL ELEVATION

ROCKERIES ELEVATION

FLOATING-FRAGRANCE HALL ELEVATION

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