

Saint Joseph Parish Grounds – Fort Atkinson, WI

“Where Faith and Knowledge Meet”

This faith community has been serving the people of Fort Atkinson for more than 120 years. St. Joseph's is special not only because it is a new, integrated 10-acre campus and physical plant includes the church, meeting facilities, pre-K through grade 8 school and related indoor and outdoor facilities that includes several special focus gardens, playfield, elementary Playscape, etc. The parish community philosophy is built around the teachings of Christ to “Love God and love each other.” of Stewardship in which we recognize that everything we are and have is a gift from God. In gratitude to Him, we return a portion of those gifts by putting them in His service.

The open space occupies about three acres and includes several dedicated garden areas, numerous foundation plantings, playfield and skirt areas, islands in the parking lot area with turf and tree plantings, tree and shrub plantings in perimeter areas as well as a rain garden to enhance on-site water infiltration as well as serve as an outdoor natural science lab area for students. There are open areas reserved for future use as garden or floral display areas for educational uses.

Currently there are a number of established perennial gardens as well as floral and shrub plantings around most of the foundation areas, major entrances and other focal or ‘difficult-to-maintain’ areas. The main sign on the corner of Endl and Hackbarth streets, Flagpole garden, Main entrance gardens chapel Memorial Garden area, and several smaller focal floral gardens all encompass a general informal theme with a goal of a variety of perennials for floral and foliage display throughout the growing seasons. All of the major floral and garden areas utilize wood chip or similar non-rock mulches.

The large “Gathering Space” and related indoor areas also provide opportunities for display of potted plants and also encompass ‘seasonal and liturgical’ themes throughout the year. The general facilities maintenance crew are all volunteer, save two paid staff who tend the daily maintenance and janitorial tasks around the facilities and mowing of turf areas.

Additional volunteer help is needed to maintain the current various garden areas as well as provide suggestions for perennial additions or removal of perennial varieties. The current beds were all established five years ago when the new facilities were completed. A number of these beds and varieties are in need of division or rejuvenation.

Due to the usual non-profit funding and volunteer limitations, available budget for maintenance and replacement of plants, mulches, fertilizers etc. are extremely limited.

General List of Gardens and Plantings areas on and around the grounds:

Main Entrance – Right and Left semi-formal plantings of shrubs, small trees and perennials mix that provides variety of color throughout the seasons. Also an area that has open spaces for limited number of flowering annuals. [Recent retirement of person who has been providing care and maintenance of these areas, opens this area for several volunteers to maintain and re-fresh the plantings in this area as

well as the Chapel garden and two 'tear-drop' areas around the outdoor light poles and adjacent sidewalks to the parking and handi-cap drive-up semi-circle.]

Flag Pole Garden – Kidney bean shape area

Chapel Garden/Memorial Garden Area

Foundation Plantings –

Southside of Church Body area – currently shrubs and lilies

Day Chapel Garden area – Lilacs

Side Entrance area – long sidewalk on either side –foundation plantings to left and transition plantings between walkway and Memorial Garden Area

Parish office Entry area

Foundation Planting from Office entry around south-east corner of office area to the main entrance garden to the left of the Main entrance. This also includes an area that is used for the outdoor nativity display.

Foundation planting – Parish Hall/School Lunch Room

Foundation Planting – Kitchen area and includes a dedicated outdoor seating area and Mary Statue

School Office area foundation planting

School Entrance Left and Right plantings

Side-walk/Foundation planting north of school entrance and class rooms 5-8

North-East school corner planting

Foundation planting north of classrooms, entrance, hallway and gym emergency entrances

"Hosta Hill" erosion control planting

Two sections – South and North – earth retaining walls – vegetative growth as well as maintenance of shrubs and trees above wall to the parking or vacant area west of wall segments.

Southwest area –

Area between school and Church – foundation planting of hostas on north of church and potential display and educational use planting area for pre-K 1&2 area

Memorial planting

Hillside to south property 'right-of-way' tree line. [This area needs a lot of brushing and tree trimming]

North property line – alternate tree and lilacs need regular monitoring and maintenance pruning.

Playfield – maintenance – fertilization and irrigation as well as turf rejuvenation as school play activities leaves bare spots.

Endl Blvd – Drainage ditch areas – North end, cat tail area and playfield transition area – rock erosion control area has day-lily planting that needs to be nursed to take over grasses and weeds between margin of playfield and Cat tail area. Potential rock garden areas on either end of the various culverts under the parking lot and driveway areas. Lacking establishment of rock garden, these areas need to be hand weeded!

Rock Garden area between Endl Entrance/Exit. Rain garden and daylily plantings need to be weeded as expanded to eventually encompass this area.

Trees and Shrubs around the south-east entrance area as well as the Main Welcome Sign and flower border area. [Initial plantings of columnar juniper, blue rug juniper, status, false spirea all need to be weeded, thinned and re-juvenated.

Parking Island areas – spring—snowplow damage needs to be repaired, several trees with auto and snow plow damage should be replaced and last replacement trees need maintenance trimming. These islands and trees all need new mulch and fertilizer in 2012.

That's a quick and general overview of the campus and various garden areas. Detail line drawings from the original architect plans are available as well as working drawings of a number of scenarios developed during building and initial plantings phases are also available. Major changes will need to be approved by one or more of the building maintenance and finance committees, however, maintenance changes and updates are needed as plants reach maturity, become diseased or damaged.

An additional 40-50 page of notes, plants lists and related notes exist, however, other than tree or shrub doner plaques other perennial plants are generally only ID on paper. Current lack of volunteers and volunteer hours make it impossible and impractical to develop and maintain plant variety tags or tagging system.

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Dennis B, JCMGV