

OAKTON COMMUNITY LIBRARY

10304 Lynnhaven Place
Oakton VA 22124



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Opened in September 2007, the Oakton Community Library is certified with a Silver Rating under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program, sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council. The 17,304 SF facility serves as a community gathering place and provides programs and materials for all ages. It houses a circulating collection of approximately 85,000 items, 12 computer work stations, and a free wireless network, provides views of the changing seasons and local wildlife, and features natural lighting from oversized windows and a raised clerestory. In 2008 this location was certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a Backyard Habitat. Outdoor seating was purchased by The Friends of Oakton Library and extends the library space into the outdoors.

The American Public Works Association selected the building as its Project of the Year in 2008 for the VA/MD/DC region. PSA Dewberry (architecture and interior design), E.E. Reed Construction (contractor) and the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services team received the Award of Excellence for the Best Building for an Institutional Facility under \$20 million from the National Association of Industrial Properties in 2007 for their combined work on this project.

The Oakton Library rain garden and planting beds host a variety of blooms throughout the Spring, Summer, and Fall. The plants are well-established and maintenance is now relatively straightforward. A selection of native plants provides food and habitat for insects and birds throughout the seasons. The rain garden is one of the most successful in the Fairfax County system.

DESIGN

Sustainable Design Features:

- Use of sustainable materials with high recycled content, low-emitting materials, regional materials, and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified wood.
- Green stormwater features, including a rain garden (bioretention basin); and permeable pavers.
- Daylight harvesting and lighting control system with occupancy sensors.
- Vegetated open space using primarily native and drought-resistant plants.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- 2007 – Landscape strip with trees is installed.
- 2008 – Five Hills Garden Club installs and maintains several planting beds on the property. Several years later, responsibility for the beds is transferred to Friends of Oakton Library.
- 2014 - The landscape strip is retrofitted with an infiltration trench/underground storage chambers and permeable pavers and planted. However, by early 2015, the plantings are largely failing.
- 2015 - The rain garden plantings are replaced with a more successful planting plan. The Friends of Oakton Library help install the rain garden plants in 2015.

MAINTENANCE

- The majority of the site is maintained by the Facilities Management Division (FMD).
- Green stormwater infrastructure areas are maintained by the Maintenance and Stormwater Management Division (MSMD).
- Planting beds outside of the rain garden are maintained by The Friends of Oakton Library, including the bed in front of the library and two beds outside of the large picture windows.

OBSERVATIONS

- It is likely that the 2014 rain garden planting failed, in large part, due to construction delays, which caused a very late Fall planting. The plants probably had little time to establish healthy root systems before the Winter. A few of the plants we see now were planted in 2014.
- The use of high-quality plant material and a good planting strategy contributed significantly to the success of the Spring 2015 planting.
- Plants are now fairly well-established in the rain garden and planting beds. Plant selection for the rain garden was intended to maintain year-round seasonal interest, as well as endure the harsh environment of an urban rain garden. Planting beds around the building include several plant tags, so that people can learn plant names.
- Management of the wooded area to the rear (south) of the library may be necessary in the future, to ensure the health of the desired plants.