

## Good landscaping adds comfort

(NC)—If summer conjures an image of restful hours spent swinging on a hammock between two shady trees but the only vegetation growing on your property is a few tufts of grass, you may be considering a landscaping project this spring.

Landscaping is not only soothing to the eye. It is an investment in your home.

If you plan landscaping wisely, you can keep your home cooler in the summer, cut winter heating costs, cut down on dirt and mud that get tracked into house and grow fresh vegetables for less than you would pay at the supermarket.

By controlling the amount of sun

shining through the windows you may be able to eliminate the need for an air conditioner.

Deciduous trees and shrubs offer shade in the summer. In winter, this type of plant loses its leaves, letting sun light and heat into the house. Coniferous trees may be best for the north sides of the house.

Maples and other trees with full crowns are best for summer shading because they are high, do not block eye-level views, and let through low-level breezes.

Avoid planting poplars or willows close to house. Their heavy roots can grow right into the foundation, causing

it and the exterior walls to crack. Avoid planting trees that seed a lot, because the seedlings will sprout all over your garden.

Evergreens should not be planted close to the southern exposure because their density prevents summer breezes from passing into the yard and their cone-shaped heads do not provide such shade.

Generally, there are five things to include in your landscaping project. Keep in mind that the fruits of your labour will not show overnight. The development of a property takes time, usually three or four years.

**Shape of the ground:** Take ad-

vantage of natural features on your lot such as rock outcroppings, trees, and uneven grades.

**Surroundings:** You may have a well-wooded area or a stunning view near your house. Plan your landscaping so it will not interfere with these features.

**Climate:** Canadians like to make the most of the few short months of summer. If you are planning a patio or porch, place it in a sunny spot, sheltered from the wind. Vegetable and flower

gardens will thrive if planted in a southern exposure.

**The view:** The views from the windows, size of the house and the location of its doors will affect the way you plan your landscaping. The smaller the lot, the more important planning becomes, because every bit of space counts.

**Family:** If you have children or pets, your garden will probably be used mostly for them to play in. Keep this in mind when planting flower beds or a vegetable garden.

## Elderly baby boomers

(NC)—Canada's first baby boomers celebrated their fortieth birthday in 1987. By 2031 their entire generation, one quarter of the whole population, will be well into its golden years:

It is expected that elderly baby boomers will enjoy greater financial security and health than the generations before them. They will also have more education, will have had greater political power during their lives, and will loudly demand adequate housing.

The "greying of Canada" represents a challenge to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which is examining future housing markets and exploring new options for this diverse group.

Institutional care will always be needed for some elderly people, but the majority want to continue to live independently. Governments also want to help the elderly to remain self-sufficient and subsidy-free for as long as possible.

Garden suites, which provide the security and convenience of familiar people and communities, may be one answer to the needs of some of tomorrow's older Canadian.

Garden suites are small self-contained houses placed on the same lot as the home of close relatives—usually married children. They offer the elderly occupant family security without jeopardizing either independence and privacy.

The units are portable and easily constructed with minimum disruption of the lot. Most have one bedroom, a

living room, kitchen, bathroom, and storage and laundry facilities.

There are potential markets for garden suites in both urban and rural areas. However, not all city lots can accommodate a unit.

Luckily, garden suites are versatile. Designs can be varied to meet the needs and preferences of the occupant and host family, to suit house lots of different shapes and sizes and to blend in with neighboring housing.

The units are easily installed, and can often be lifted fully intact by a crane on to the lot. If this is not possible, they can be manufactured in panels, and constructed on the site.

Right now, few municipalities permit the installation of garden suites on the lots of existing dwellings. If they are to become a feature of the housing landscape, methods of regulation will have to be developed and adopted by municipal governments.

Over the last few months, there have been demonstrations of garden suites in 25 locations across Canada. These were co-sponsored by CMHC, provincial housing agencies, and the manufactured housing industry, and have provided Canadians with the chance to see what a garden suite is and whether they would consider using one themselves.

Feedback from users, municipal planners and neighbors will be used in CMHC research to find out whether garden suites are a viable housing option for the future.

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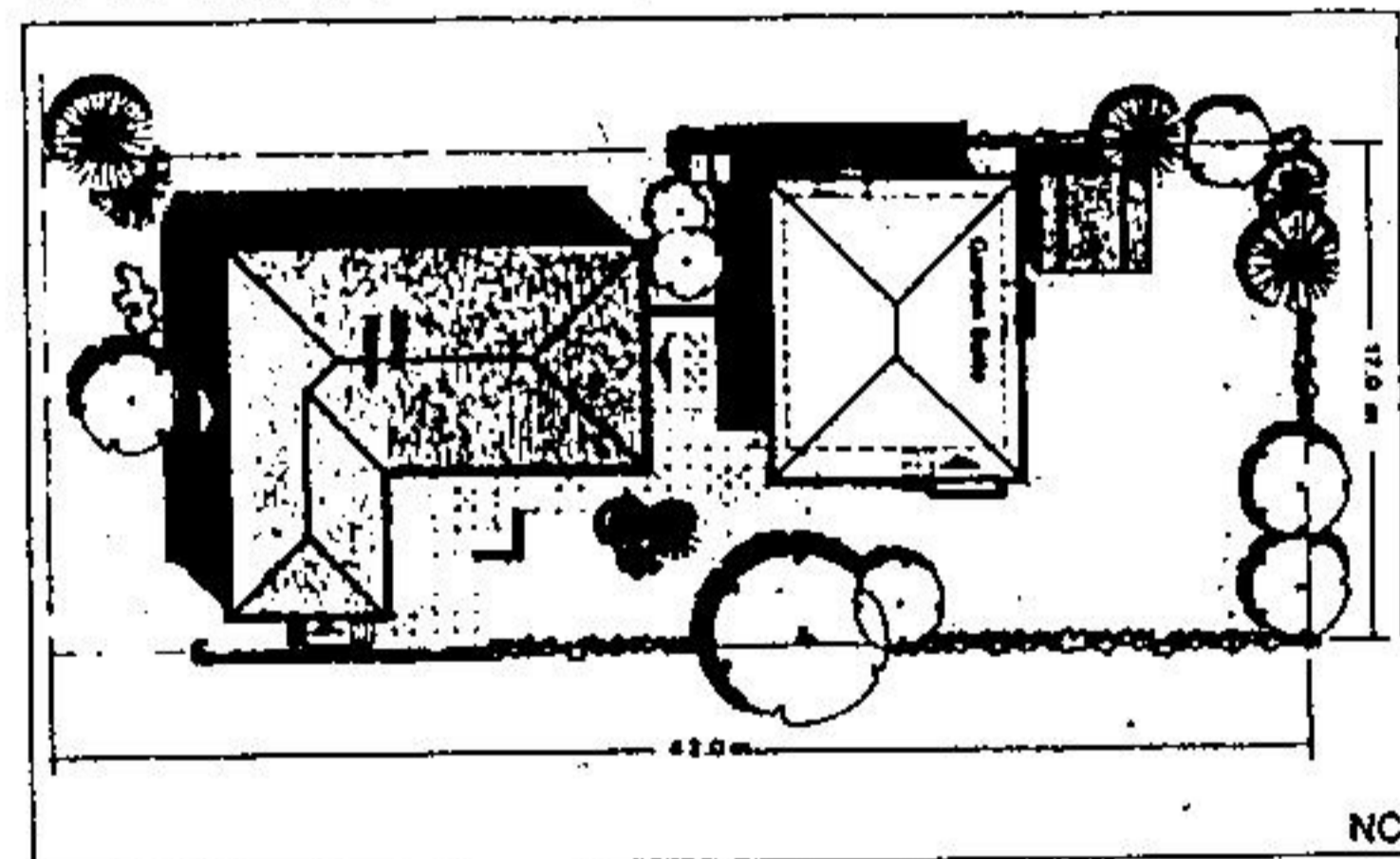
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