

Plain to Plentiful

Transforming a Franklin garden into a relaxing retreat. Photography by MATAK photography
By **Giuseppa Nadrowski**



DREAMY

Waterfalls, limestone paths, and a gorgeous combination of flowers and plants, along with a large koi pond, splendid retreat at this home. Landscape architect Amy Schimmel Bessolo's goal was to develop several us breathtaking spaces. Goals met, and then some!

For Amy Schimmel Bessolo, a landscape architect at Pontiac's Goldner Walsh Garden and Home, Franklin (and a stop on Franklin's 2021 spring garden walk) began simply, with a vision of "elal useable spaces."

The end result, however, is far from that. Bessolo and her team at Goldner Walsh, along with Derek Spur and Brick Paving, transformed a one-plus-acre lot into a breathtaking retreat complete with a stunning a perennials, limestone paths, a wooden observation deck, and a multilevel stream that rolls down the pro

The project, which began in 2014 when the homeowners wanted to elevate their minimally landscaped l and years, and was completed in 2021. "They had a pergola and a sitting space when I started, but it w with plenty of room to sprawl out," Bessolo recalls. A decision to clear the land of scrub growth gave the create the relaxing escape the homeowners longed for.

Among their requests was to add a koi pond. Bessolo recommended that it be designed and installed by added a beautiful dawn redwood specimen tree, along with multiple river birch trees whose appreciation ideal choice for the area.

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"The homeowner is a big tree guy and he loved coming to the nursery and picking out unique specimens went in was hand-selected by him and me from the nursery. He wanted it to look old and established; he landscape."

To accomplish that goal, dogwood, serviceberry, paperbark maple, forest pansy redbud, several varieties and unique specimens such as a red obelisk beech tree and a weeping Norway spruce were added to the of unique specimens within the landscape, it really feels natural,” Bessolo says.

The addition of two limestone staircases on each side of the home gives the homeowners multiple access. Recently, a wooden observation deck was installed by Spurlock to provide yet another opportunity for the finished design really immerses you and makes you feel completely surrounded by the landscape,” Bessolo says. “It’s enough to have a table for two and it’s a great space to enjoy a cup of coffee or glass of wine.”



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The observation deck, which is positioned at the center of the yard's slope, is an ideal space for viewing ;

that are part of the stream. Installed by Spurlock, the stream looks as if it were a natural part of the landscape, with water and multiple stone bridges. Bessolo made it “all melt into the landscape,” thanks to the perennial grasses that hug the borders of the stream and pond, but to wind throughout the dreamlike property and its stunning

The landscaper says selecting the right materials proved to be one of her biggest challenges, as each item was chosen to withstand the local deer population. Today, the gardens bloom with more than 25 different perennial varieties including bluebells, ferns, brunnera, pulmonaria, iris, and Japanese forest grass.



FOLLOW THE PATH

Landscape architect Amy Schimmel Bessolo calls the verdant gardens and their variety of eye candy “an oasis from the outside world.”

“A lot of times when you add on to a project, it looks like you added on. But that’s not the case with this and I think that’s because the same team worked on it the whole time,” Bessolo says, referring to the creation of the garden. “This was a team effort by both of our companies and the homeowners.

“It really came together; it’s an oasis from the outside world.”

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