

Backyard Magic is Real for a Minneapolis Couple



Client Overview

Ellen Ryan and Eric Hanson said when they moved into their cozy Minneapolis home a year ago, their backyard was a pile of dirt. Looking at the sunnier side of the situation, they determined it was an empty slate, waiting to be transformed into an outdoor living space for themselves and pollinators. "I wanted a magical backyard," Ellen says with a smile. "And I got it."

Challenge

Walking through dirt to get to the garage was enough of a challenge, but Ellen and Eric meet a new one. They discovered that a reflection pond was once a backyard feature, and it had been filled in with dirt, so water naturally gathered in that area. There were also a lot of rocks on the property that would have to be dug out, along with the old cement steps that led to the alley.

Solution

"We walked through our yard with Russ (Minnehaha Falls Landscaping owner) to identify the few plants and trees we had," says Eric. "Then, we created a plan for keeping what we could, and adding what we needed."

The water flow challenge was met without a problem, and Hosta, Bleeding Hearts, and fern were moved to different locations. A bee lawn and forest garden were installed with shrubs and plants, and three trees were planted for added shade and privacy as they grow, including birch, redbud, and dogwood. The MFL crew laid a paver patio and a whimsical walkway to the garage, and they removed the old cement steps and built new ones with Chilton stone. Eric says, "They're a work of art."

Results

"It's fantastic," says Ellen. "We purchased some comfortable furniture for our beautiful patio where we enjoy coffee in the morning, and cocktails and grilling in the evening." Bees, butterflies, and birds are feasting in the yard, and colorful plants are popping up as surprise guests. Ellen says she's looking forward to adding some potted plants, and lights for the perfect finish to her magical backyard space.

"I wanted a magical backyard, and I got it."

- Ellen Ryan

