Scale of Permanence checklist

Adapted from P.A. Yeomans by Dave Jacke

Climate

- plant hardiness zone
- predicted future climate change status
- annual precipitation
    - seasonal distribution
- latitude
- wind directions
    - prevailing, seasonal variations, storm wind directions
- growing degree days (important for ripening nuts)
- average frost-free dates
- chilling hours (important for fruit tree dormancy)
- extreme weather potential: drought, flood, hurricane, tornado, fire
- heating/cooling degree days

Landform

- slope (steepness, rise/run in percent)
- topographic position (i.e., mid-slope, hill crest, valley floor, etc.)
- bedrock geology: permeability, depth, nutrient content, acidity
- surficial geology: type of parent material, permeability, depth, stoniness, nutrient content, acidity, suitability for various uses, etc.
- estimated seasonal high water table depth
- estimated depth to bedrock, hardpan or impermeable layers of soil
- elevation
- landslide potential

Water

- existing sources of supply: location, quantity, quality, dependability, sustainability, network layout and features (spigots, pipes, filters, etc.)
- watershed boundaries and flow patterns: concentration and dispersion areas, including roof runoff patterns, gutters and down spouts
- potential pollution sources: road runoff, chemical runoff from neighbors, etc.
- flooding, ponding and puddling areas
- possible sources of supply: location, quantity, quality, dependability, sustainability, cost to develop
- location of all on-site and nearby off-site culverts, wells, water lines, sewage lines, septic systems, old wells, etc.
- erosion: existing and potential areas

Access/Circulation

- activity nodes, storage areas
- pedestrian, cart and vehicle access points, current and potential patterns
- materials flows: mulch, compost, produce, firewood, laundry, etc.

Vegetation and Wildlife

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- existing plant species: locations, sizes, quantities, patterns, uses, poisonous, invasiveness, weediness, what they indicate about site conditions, etc.
- ecosystem architecture: layers and their density, patterning and diversity, resultant habitat conditions, light/shade, character, quality
- habitat types, food/water/shelter availability

Microclimate

- define various microclimate spaces
- slope aspects (direction slopes face relative to sun)
- sun/shade patterns
- cold air drainage and frost pockets
- soil moisture patterns
- precipitation patterns
- local wind patterns

Buildings and Infrastructure

- building size, shape, locations doors and windows, exist. and possible functions
- permanent pavement and snow piles from plowing it
- power lines (above and below ground) and electric outlets
- outdoor water faucet, septic system, well locations
- location of underground pipes: water and sewer line, footing drain, floor drain and down spout drain lines, tile drains, culverts, other
- fences and gateways

Zones of Use

- property lines, easements, rights-of-way
- existing zones of land and water use
- well protection zones, environmental and other legal limits (e.g. wetlands regulations, zoning regulations, building setbacks)
- current uses by neighbors and passersby
- use history and impacts on land, current or future uses

Soil Fertility and Management

- soil types: texture, structure, consistence, profile, drainage
- topsoil fertility: pH, % OM, N, P, K, Ca
- soil toxins: lead, mercury, cadmium, asbestos, etc..
- management history
- soil testing: where to get it done, how to do it

Aesthetics/Experience of Place

- outdoor rooms, walls: define spaces (walls, ceilings, floors), qualities, feelings, functions, features
- arrival and entry experience: sequencing, spaces, eye movements, feelings