

Rain Garden

This “hole in the ground” takes water from the roof of the building and contains it until it can soak into the soil. Instead of running directly into a storm drain and then directly into the Jones Falls, unfiltered, the water now percolates through the soil. The plants clean the water by breaking down the petrochemicals and taking up organic wastes left by birds. By the time the water gets to the Jones Falls, weeks later, it is clean and able to have a positive impact on the Bay.



The rain garden before planting



Parents and students helped plant the rain garden

ACCE Vegetable Garden

This summer, students and two leaders from Baltimore City Youth Works created this large vegetable garden that you see in the back. The goal was to grow organic food that could be sold and donated locally. This vegetable garden will also serve as a classroom during the regular school year and a focus for nutrition education for the students.



FUTURE PLANS

Now, ACCE has a new opportunity to partner with Agritopia. This will expand the program with new fields and a new hoop house, allowing for year round growing of vegetables and produce for the neighborhood, water harvesting, and internships in sustainable urban agriculture.

PARKING

In planning for the multiple uses of the space behind the school, ACCE remains committed to keeping free parking spaces for neighbors to help ease the crowded parking conditions in the area.

A Word About the Soil

Led by a team from Blue Water Baltimore, ACCE was able to remove $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre of asphalt from the back of the school in the summer of 2011. This created a huge open area with lots of potential for creating outdoor learning spaces. However, the soil was not in good enough shape to either absorb water or support plants. It was tilled and amended and planted with an annual grass for the fall and winter of 2011, then re-tilled and re-seeded with a perennial grass mixture as a permanent cover. A hedge has been added at the parking lot edge to decrease runoff. However, the soil is still recovering from its compaction. There is little macrobiotic presence (earthworms, wood lice, etc.) and the ground has a clay "lens" several inches down. The plants selected for the rain garden, the grass mixture, and the trees and perennials planted around the space were chosen because their tendency to send down deep roots will help loosen the soil and improve its ability to prevent runoff, filter water and support life. This will take a couple of years to work properly, so please be patient while we watch the soil recover to a healthy state!



ACCE GREENING PROJECTS

Native Plant and Pollinator Gardens in the Front of the School



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