

Under Construction: The NIH Library Green Terrace



The NIH Library Goes Green

By the spring of 2009, the 6100 square foot cement patio area adjacent to the NIH Library in Building 10 will be transformed into a verdant, eco-friendly, green, garden terrace. The NIH Library Green Terrace will be an extension of the newly redesigned NIH Library facility and will serve as an outdoor garden oasis for NIH staff and visitors. The Green Terrace environment will provide a natural, relaxing setting for individuals and groups to retreat, read, reflect and rejuvenate. A new entrance from the physical library to the Green Terrace will be installed to allow library patrons easy access both environments.

Construction Phases

Phase 1

- Remove umbrellas and benches
- Remove concrete pavers
- Apply root barrier and seal roof
- Install irrigation system
- Add engineered soil
- Cut and install pavers

Phase 2

- Solar panel installation
- Build entrance to Library
- Install shade structures
- Install seating and tables
- Plant vegetation
- Install water feature



Artists rendering of proposed renovations at maturity

Green Roof and Plantings

The NIH Library Green Terrace will showcase several garden areas which will be rooted in engineered soil. Some of the garden areas will be drought tolerant, while others are designed for more traditional perennial gardens including an annual zone that features several types of tropical plants currently being researched at NIH for their medicinal values. The walls surrounding the Green Terrace will be softened with several species of vines cascading down from roof areas above or twining up on mounted trellises. The combination of garden surfaces and covered walls will help reduce the extreme temperatures in the summer. Green Terrace visitors may enjoy the eating nooks and bench seating under the shade canopies and along the garden walls.

Solar Energy

Several sustainable features beyond the vegetated roof surfaces are also incorporated into the Green Terrace design. Solar panels supplement the project's energy use powering the terrace lighting and irrigation pumps. The solar panels will be mounted on the roof just south of the terrace.



Proposed cistern

Storm water Management

Rain will be stored on site in a large cistern and recycled to irrigate the gardens and reduce the flow to and from the municipal water supply and storm systems. This feature, in combination with the vegetated roof areas, offers important reductions in storm water runoff from the NIH campus, ultimately supporting water quality improvement and conservation goals for the broader Chesapeake Bay watershed.

For more information please visit the NIH Library website at <http://nihlibrary.nih.gov/GoingGreen>