

# PROJECT PORTFOLIO

A SCRAPBOOK OF DESIGN/BUILD OVERHAULS

*Urban oasis*

## THE MISSION

### Create a private yet inviting garden for a brownstone residence

The client wanted total privacy from all sides and above to screen the surrounding four-story building. The challenge, notes Greener by Design President Richard Heller, was “how to accomplish this while preserving light in the urban valleys of New York City.” A secondary challenge was bringing in 10 yds. of sand and planting medium, 10 tons of stone, two trees and hundreds of plants, among other materials and tools, all through a labyrinth of residential hallways.

The space was conceived as “a textural modern garden with clean lines and uncomplicated elements, while still feeling warm and inviting,” he says.

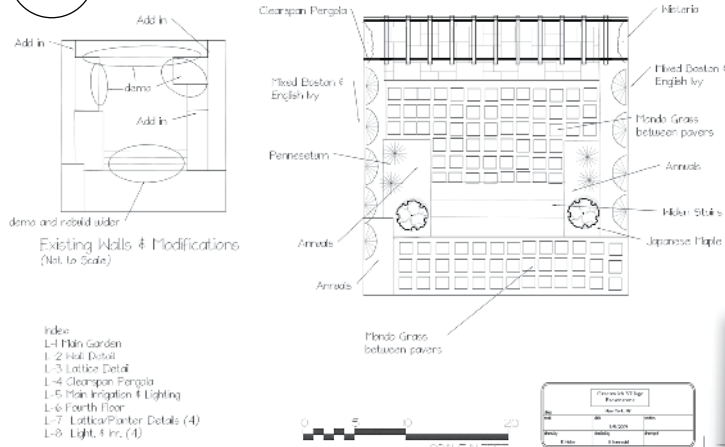
Heller created a raised patio planting area, used varying gray and silver tones, and incorporated a variety of geometric and textural elements. For example, the wisteria connected lattice to the pergola, while Mondo grass brought plantings into the paved areas.

An upstairs patio was designed as a more private, separate space; by using similar textures and materials, Heller says, it “became an extension of the lower garden.” Budget restrictions prevented replacing the existing concrete pavers, so the team stained the tiles instead.

“The final effect is a marriage of serenity and drama,” Heller concludes. “The owner was pleased with the private, modern look of his garden.”



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PHOTOS COURTESY: 1, 4, 5 - JEFF HUTTON; 2, 3 - GREENER BY DESIGN; 6 - BRUCE BUCK

## THE WORK

**1 | An engineering feat.** The Greener by Design team constructed a free-standing, 25-ft. clear span pergola for privacy from above. The long crosspiece had to be carried through the home in pieces, assembled to look seamless, and reinforced with steel so it wouldn't bow or break.

**2 | The plan.** This installation successfully met the client's principal concern, which was to add privacy from surrounding properties and provide a serene, yet dramatic sanctuary in a noisy, densely populated urban neighborhood.

**3 | Good bones.** This "before" image, taken from the fifth-floor roof, shows that the garden had multi-level interest and pleasing proportions in a 25x25-ft. — but neither exactly square nor symmetrical — space.

**4 | Look Ma, no clutter.** A discreet hinged panel in the bottom right corner of the wood trellis provides an elegant solution for hiding irrigation and lighting controls.

**5 | Geometric effect.** Mondo grass planted between permeable paver squares transitions from the steps to the seating area. Long, clean lines of the pergola cast shadows that echo the blue stone below.

**6 | Garden, variety.** The small upstairs patio became an extension of the lower garden. A tall planter with Pennisetum (fountain grass) and a stand of bamboo complement the owner's South African statues, while a small pond with a statue centerpiece quietly burbles in the rear left corner.

*Offering residential and commercial services, including Greenroofs, New Rochelle, NY-based Greener by Design has more than 30 years of experience in serving the New York City market. Its all-organic, sustainable approach to the residential market in particular is noise-free, family-friendly and upholds the values of its clients and its team. This particular project garnered a 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Environmental Improvement Grand Award from the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET). For more information, visit [GreenerDesigns.com](http://GreenerDesigns.com).*

