

My Landscape: Pollinator Garden Means Business

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In Bethesda, MD, Lincoln Property Company expanded its habitat efforts for bees and other pollinators at one of its suburban office parks.

Lincoln chose the Rock Springs Business Park for its first pollinator garden, which complements beehives on the site. The company's team, including VP of property management, Stuart Pechner (left), worked with Ruppert Landscape to bring this vision to fruition.

Following is an overview of the project, and the process that contributed to this installation.

Pollinators, such as birds, bats, bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects, play a crucial role in flowering plant reproduction and in the production of most fruits and vegetables. Pollinator numbers have suffered in recent decades due to mites, pesticides, pathogens, land development, and habitat fragmentation. Thirteen years ago, one week in June was designated by the U.S. Senate as National Pollinator Week. This was a step toward addressing the issue of declining pollinator populations. In 2020, National Pollinator Week was June 22-28.

Recently, Ruppert Landscape, based in Laytonsville, MD, partnered with Lincoln Property Company to install a sustainable pollinator garden to

surround newly installed beehives at Lincoln's Rock Springs Business Park in Bethesda, MD.

As part of its tenant engagement program, Lincoln partnered with Alvéole to create a sustainable property initiative for tenants to enjoy. Alveole works with businesses and schools in urban environments to install beehives, maintain the bees throughout the season, conduct workshops with employees and students, and harvest the honey. They had been installing beehives primarily on rooftops in the Washington, DC area and were looking to move into the outskirts of DC. The Rock Springs property was a good fit due to the abundance of green space.

The original plan was to install the hives on the rooftop as had been done with previous installations. However, Lincoln wanted to provide better visibility to not only highlight commitment to sustainability but to generate more visibility around the challenges facing pollinators. They opted to make the installation a focal point of the Rock Springs landscape and use the honey produced as tenant gifts.

Adrian Durham, the Ruppert area manager overseeing the site's landscape maintenance, said he first learned about the project during a site walkthrough with Lincoln property manager, Netsai Matowe, and vice president of property management, Stuart Pechner. "The pollinator garden was intended to serve a few purposes: to provide nectar for the bees; to act as a physical barrier to prevent humans from coming into contact with the hives, which are encircled by the planting; and to enhance the visual appeal of the area."

Durham consulted with fellow Ruppert area manager Cate Deane to select an appropriate plant palette for the project. Said Deane, "I tried to select as many hardy native perennials as possible to ensure that the bees would have plants to support them for years to come."

With client approval, they chose an array of pollinator-friendly plant material, including Coreopsis Citrine (Tickseed), Monarda Sugar Buzz (Dwarf Bee Balm), Buddleia (Dwarf Butterfly Bush), Sedum (Stonecrop Neon), and Lobelia Cardinalis (Red Cardinal Flower). These were chosen for a several reasons, including their bright colors and nectar production to attract pollinators, and their staggered blooming cycles to provide continuous interest throughout spring, summer, and fall. The mix of colors, foliage, and growth height gives the appeal of a naturalized area. The garden was installed May 22 to give the plant material time to grow in before the hives were installed June 16.

"Lincoln is very proud to be a part of this initiative. The Honeybee Garden presentation provides a wonderful addition to the property for the tenants and visitors to enjoy. We look forward to implementing this at more of the properties we manage throughout the region," said Lincoln's Pechner.

Learn more about Lincoln Property Company [here](#). Click [here](#) for more about Ruppert Landscape.

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