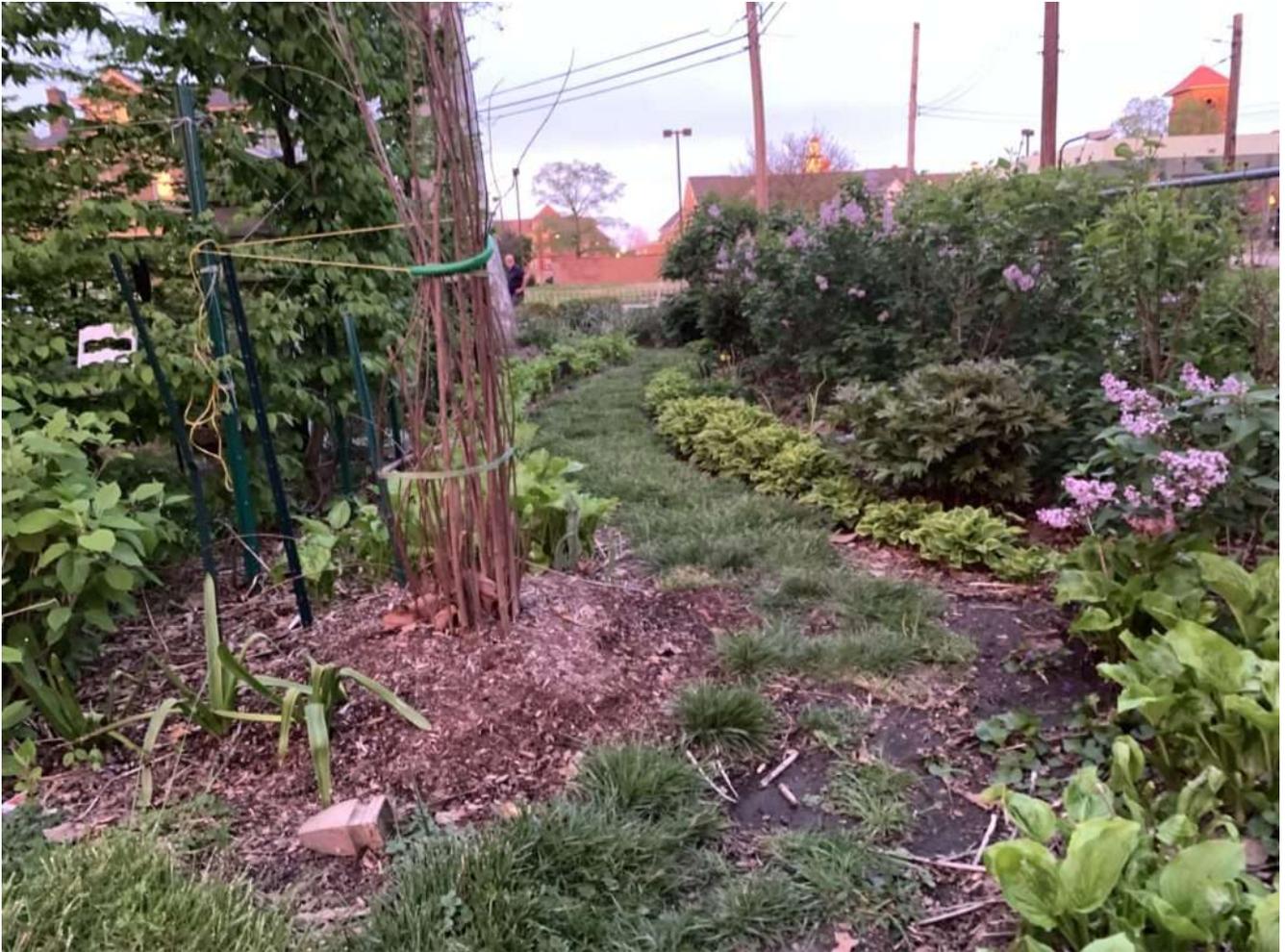


The Pollinator Landing Strip

[The Pollinator Landing Strip](#)



The Beneficial Pollinator “Landing Strip”

When you first visit Mezzacello you may miss the garden area that Rick calls the wilderness or the pollinator landing strip. Like all good ecosystems it serves more than one purpose. Originally it was designated as a “friendship” wilderness.

The “Friendship Garden”

It was the home to all the plants that have been “gifted” to us but was outside scope of Rick’s garden rooms, and not edible so not in my potager garden. Ironically, these were

mostly flowering specimens. Rick likes to also call it the “Friendship Garden”.

The secondary use was a “secret garden” for kids and guests to wander around. This year we realized that the “wilderness path” has another purpose; It’s a perfect pollinator garden, and an east-west access with terrific southern exposure for pollinators and birds alike.

Learning Where and What Our Pollinator Friends Need

Mezzacello has always been a learning lab. First for myself and later for central Ohio schools and communities. Our mission from day one has to been to grow, maintain, sustain and explain.

I learn something new almost every day. I wish I could say that I had planned this elegant solution for an urban garden all along; I cannot say that.

The wilderness garden and the knowledge tied to it emerged organically. I wasn’t even aware it was what it had become until two years ago [I had hired a drone pilot to shoot footage of Mezzacello from above.](#)

He was the one that pointed out that that slinky little 71cm x 15m (28” x 14.75’) path is being accessed by insects coming and going. and the traffic volume is high. This fact is not always obvious from the ground but is completely obvious from the air.

“It is especially obvious when you look at it through an ultraviolet filter. It’s like an airport strip. In fact,” he said, “I would call it your little Port Columbus.”

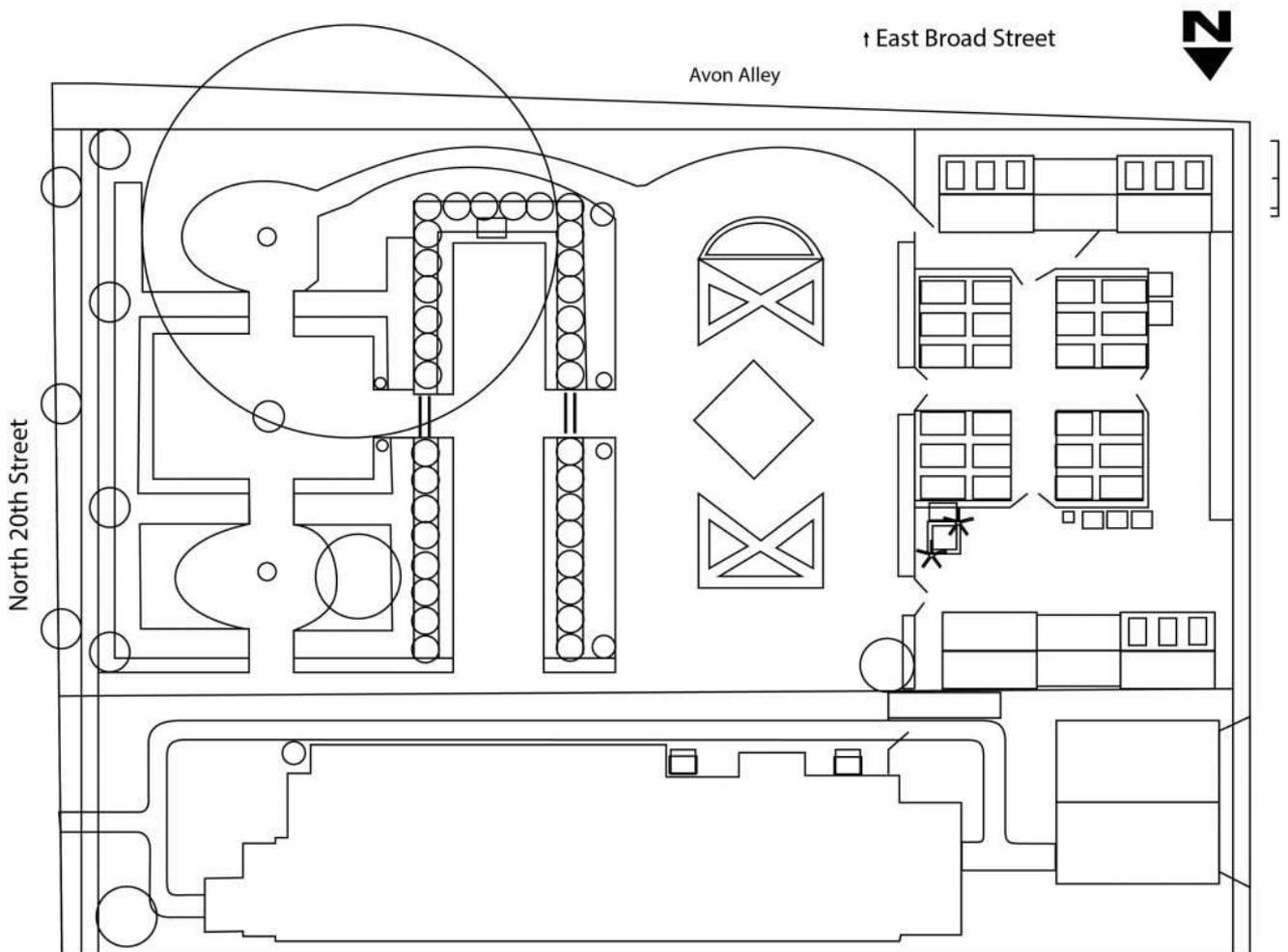
Keyvan Winterwood

The Little Port Columbus

The drone pilot said, “It is especially obvious when you look at it through an ultraviolet filter. It’s like an airport strip. In fact,” he said, “I would call it your little [Port Columbus](#).”

I love this metaphor. When the insects come from the east, they fly along the lilacs, bee balm, irises, peonies, rudbeckia and hosta before they end up at the pond for water, the potager garden for more nectar, or the fruit trees beyond that.

Everything gets pollinated and everyone wins. I love the fact that by just shifting our perspective we see the world in a completely new way.



[The plan view of Mezzacello](#). You can see the Pollinator Landing Strip at the top left.

Be Ready to Shift Your Expectations

This shift in our perspective has been invaluable. Now that we know how life is accessing the gardens, we can make the visit kinder, better, more productive for all involved. The larger ecosystem gets a source of food, water, security, and life.

In addition to the pollinators, we get birds, insects, worms, and peace. It fills my heart with gladness to see that my oasis is a useful oasis for the life around me as well. That is what a garden really is, right?

An oasis where life can attract life. I am proud our airstrip is a popular destination point for pollinators. I wish there were more.