

Assignment: Buurttuin Biodivers

Commissioners: Michiel in 't Zandt & Jenny Tanaka

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Location: Albardastraat, Nijmegen (6535 VJ)

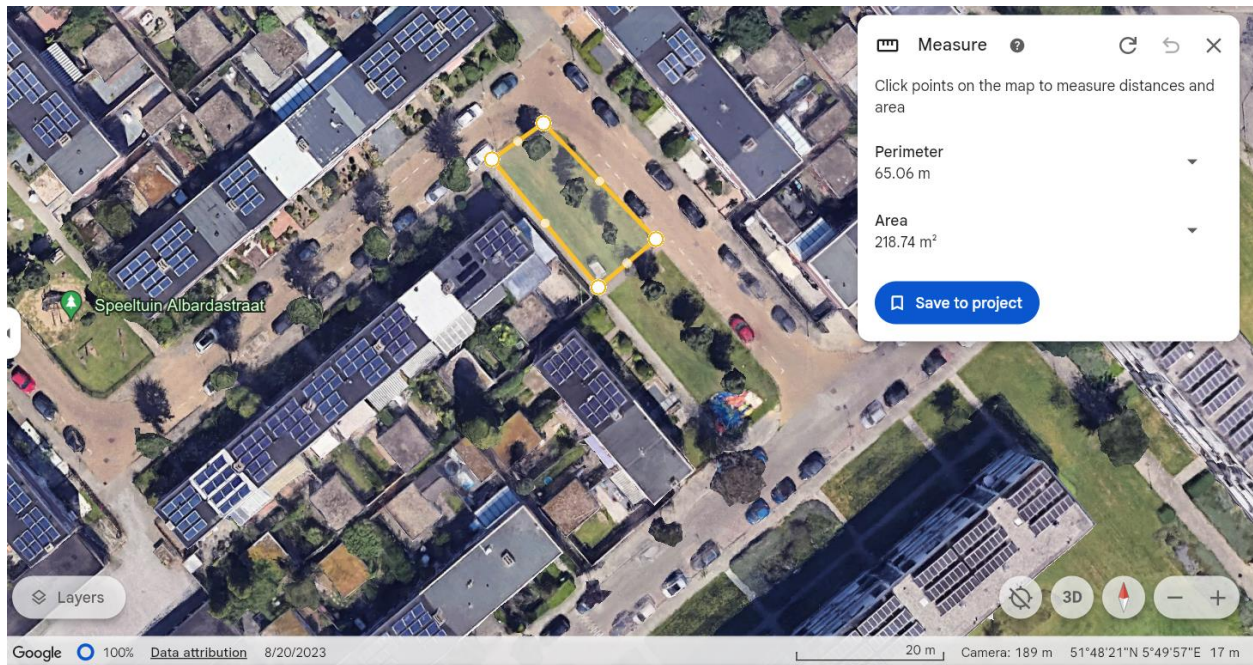


Figure 1. Location and details of the current plot for the assignment "Buurttuin Biodivers". The current plot has a size of roughly 220 square meters and there are three maple trees in the plot.

Background on the assignment

On the 6th of March this year we submitted an idea to the municipality of Nijmegen to improve the (bio)diversity of the grass field in the Albardastraat (Figure 1). You can see the plan here (in Dutch): <https://nijmegen.mijnwijkplan.nl/project/beplanting-grasveld-egelvriendelijke-omgeving-maken>

The idea is part of the so called neighborhood plan (in Dutch: Wijkplan) in which the municipality of Nijmegen has allocated a budget for neighborhood initiatives.

There is a potential for further expansion of the plan to the plot below (slightly bigger) and the plot next to the "Speeltuinen Albardastraat" on the other end of the street. However, this is not included in the current plan and the current budget of the municipality. We first have to show that it works for this plot.

At the end of this project we want to present the plan with you to the municipality.

Specification and requirements

After talking with Jenny who initiated the idea we came up with the following specifications for the Buurttuin Biodivers:

-Place a bee/insect hotel and 2 hedgehog houses (not under the middle tree?). Ensure sufficient leaves and twigs on the ground under bushes. Maybe advice for management to leave litter around?

Provide housing for insects (which is scarce around) and hedgehogs (it is challenging for them in a paved environment). We have a neighbor who would like to build these. Good to have an idea where to put them and where to think of when building these.

Linked to the hedgehogs, hedge-friendly plants: Rhododendron (purple), hydrangeas (purple and pink), butterfly bush (purple and pink). *Ensure non-toxic plants. What can you say about this idea? Is it possible and can it be integrated with selecting several native plants?

-We would like a vandal-proof bench (around the middle tree). Can that be integrated with the plan in a (semi-)natural way?

-For the vegetation, we would like to see back several native plants. Plants that bloom in different seasons (as broad as possible) so there is always food for insects when needed, and because it looks nice(r) year-round. An idea on the plants: Other plants that will attract insects: Lavender, forsythia, bird-friendly berry bushes? Or are there better (more) native alternatives?

Also important to think which plants go well together close to each other.

An important link: maintenance. We will have to maintain the plot ourselves. So, it should be doable (but part of the community garden is also that there is some work to do together).

-The soil will limit what will grow on there. Atlas leefomgeving provides some information, it is a sandy soil.

-Create a small picking garden with as many native flowers as possible (flowers to attract insects, nice flowers to pick a few). Herbs such as rosemary and mint can be nice, but might not be easy to harvest (but that is also not the primary goal). The goal is to create a nice habitat for man and nature.

-How to plant? Our thought: Spread planting like a "wave" across the lawn. The field must remain airy/open, and it should still be visible in the evening who might be 'hanging out' on the field. Also, several people will find it important to see their car parked in front of their house. It should remain a safe place, relatively open. It is, however, also nice to have some higher and lower points in the vegetation (for it to not look like a plantation). See what you think.

-Try to involve children from the neighborhood in planting and maintenance. That should be feasible for the system. Any tips are welcome.

-A budget plan/sketch would help to bring to the municipality when presenting the plan