SUMMARY

There has been increasing use of landscaping in and around buildings in Singapore. Most newly completed building developments would see inclusion of certain amount of soft landscape. With this growing trend, there is a fundamental addition to the portfolio of property management.

Landscaping in Singapore was not carried out intensively until the 1970s. A change in the preference of residential lifestyle, i.e. condominium living, saw the intensive use of landscaping around buildings. In recent years, there is a trend to bring plants as close to the occupants and users of buildings as possible. In response to this, vertical landscaping is used to adorn high-rise buildings with plants through balconies, verandas and open plazas above ground.

There are three basic ways that plants are used in landscaping buildings:

a) potted plants,
b) planting around buildings, and
c) planting in and on buildings.

Amongst the three ways, the latter two have a greater impact on the role of property management.

A property manager will need to look into the various aspects of landscaping in a building. In this respect, considerations should be given from the inception of the building design through to the construction and the subsequent maintenance of landscaping.

The writer proposed that the property manager adopts a total management approach when cogitating the landscaping of a building. There are three attributes to be considered in this approach:

a) establishment of landscaping policy,
b) consideration for components of the internal environment, and
c) consideration for external environmental factors.

There exist a network of inter-relationship among the attributes which the property manager must fully realise to produce efficient results.
It is also proposed that a property manager should have the following skills and knowledge to assist him in his role of landscaping management:

a) landscape design,
b) development in property management, planning law and regulations,
c) contract preparation and management,
d) financial and cost implications and
e) public relations.

Building developments are the biggest culprit in the destruction of natural habitats. Much of the natural areas have already been destroyed in Singapore. To contain this destruction, the writer proposed alternative strategies to ensure better interaction between the natural and the built environment. These strategies are as follows:

a) subordinating building design,
b) minimum maintenance to increase biodiversity,
c) echoes of Chinese gardens,
d) introducing heterogeneous habitats, and
e) educating the public.

As this country progresses to the "Next Lap" plans on striving towards a tropical city of excellence have been drawn. These plans include intensive as well as extensive "greening" of the country for living and leisure with nature. The modern property manager must be able to rise up to the new challenges which have been planned.