

# *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF DESIGN CHARRETTE*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2016  
FACILITATED BY JESSE TURNER OF LIFT[ED]



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## **PARTICIPANTS**

Jesse Turner, Director, LIFT[ED], Facilitator

Jon Churn, Head of School

Annamarie Edwards

Brice Shearburn

Cheryl Raymond

Deb Godshall

Kay Smitherman

Mike Fitch

Ellen Kuppinger

Melissa Chin

Alan Whicker

Kristen Holder

Mark Holmes

Terri Burke

Sally Meehan

Sarah Pitcher

Ryan Beaver

Cass Key

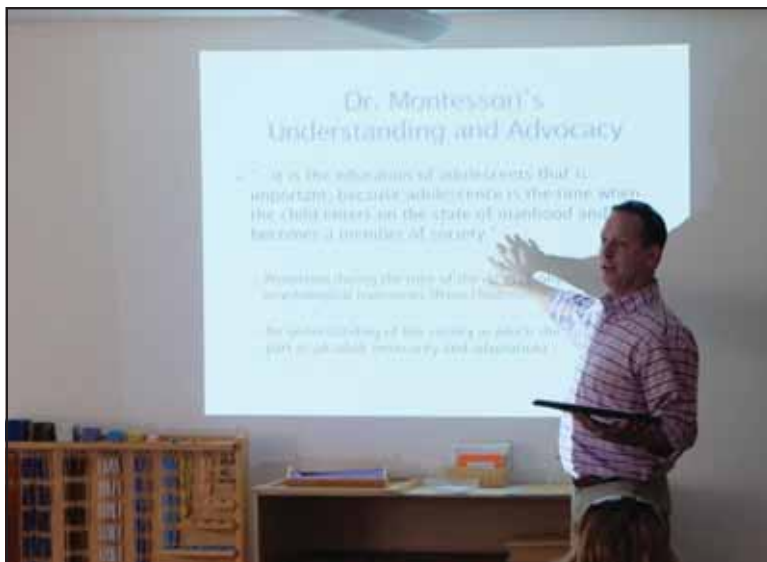
## INTRODUCTION

The intention of the design charrette was to create a focused brainstorm group to assess and discuss the environment/site needs and to determine how to use the site to further the programmatic goals of the Montessori adolescent program. The focus of the charrette was primarily the site itself; the landscape, garden & farm aspects, and traffic pattern. Further work will be needed to determine more exact needs for the interior of the building.

Jon Churn, head of school at TMS, opened the design charrette with introductions around the room and a discussion of the programmatic needs of a Montessori-based middle school.

Including but not limited to:

- A facility apart from the elementary school (both physically and symbolically, as the students grow from children into adults)
- The opportunity for demanding physical work (garden, livestock)
- A deep connection with nature
- A facility that encourages community and small group work (small classrooms, community room, outdoor space—picnic tables, a big front porch)
- A safe space—literally, safe from traffic, for example. And figuratively—a shelter from the greater world where adolescents feel comfortable taking risks, failing, and learning



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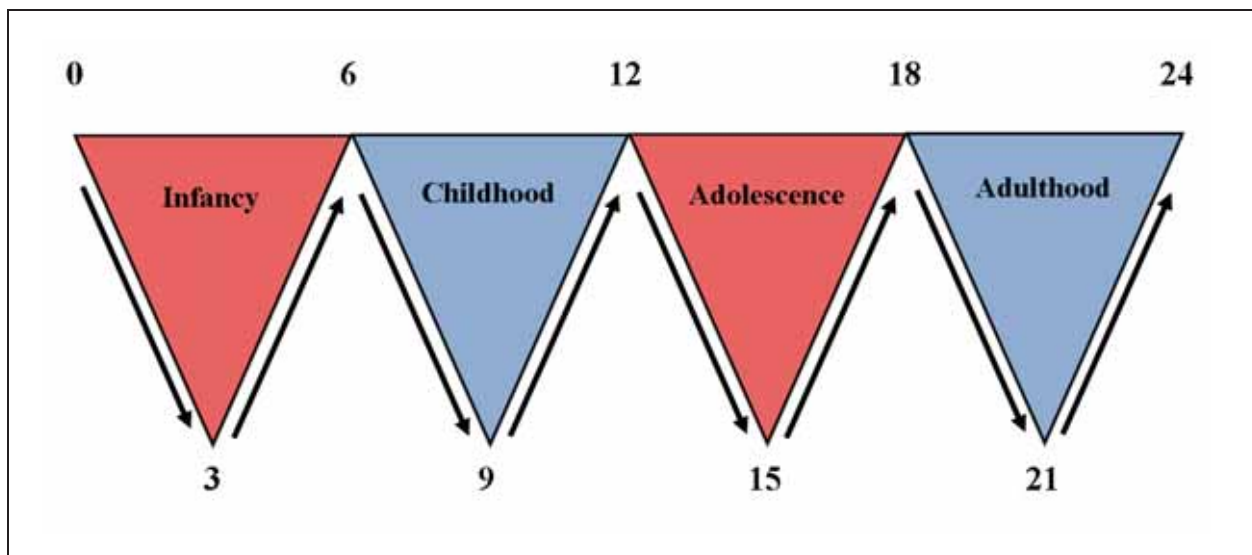
It was the task of the small groups to translate these programmatic needs into tangible features of the proposed site. Outdoor classroom space, for example, or an improved traffic flow to maximize safety and efficiency.

## MONTESSORI PHILOSOPHY FOR ADOLESCENT PROGRAMS

Jon also addressed Dr. Montessori's prescriptions for the physical and emotional health of the adolescent.

He touched on, of course, the planes of development, in order to draw our attention to increased needs for guidance at this age. Adolescence is comparable to toddlerhood in that these young people are breaking down everything they've known about themselves and rebuilding into a functioning member of adult society.

More than one participant of the charrette made the connection that the new facility will act as a cocoon, to nurture and protect our young people as they take on this enormous growth cycle.



Jon also touched briefly on a handful of more specific prescriptions for adolescents—that they are ready for a complete separation from their childhood; that they need meaningful, vigorous mental and physical work; that they need the opportunity to try on many different masks and answer the questions:

*Who am I? What role will I play in society? How will I contribute to this world?*

# SITE DESCRIPTION



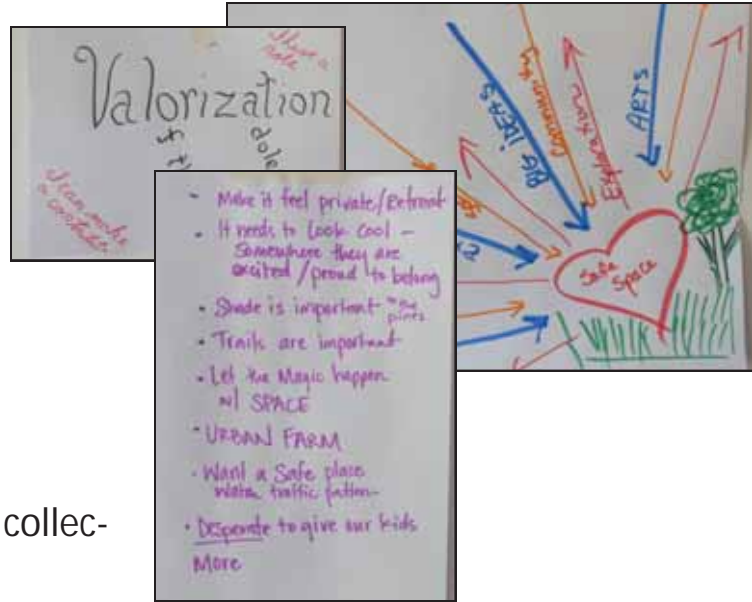
Figure 2. Illustration of Buffers, Set-backs, v. Buildable Land

Figure 1. Overview of Proposed Property

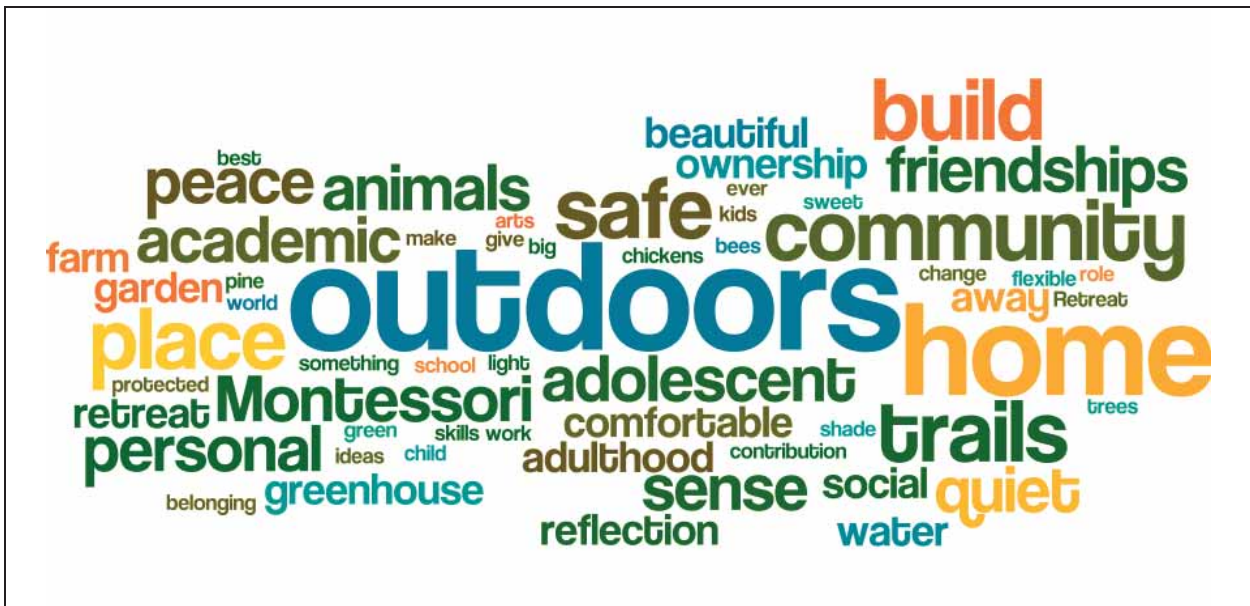


## VISION

Following Jon's presentation, individuals brainstormed and put to paper their vision for the adolescent program and facility.



From these individual ideas, a collective vision emerged:



## VISION STATEMENT:

It is the goal of the committee to build a safe, beautiful facility that supports the challenging work of the Montessori adolescent. A secluded environment with an emphasis on agrarian work (raising animals, producing food) and the outdoors, the facility should support the rigorous academic work done by the adolescent, but also—and perhaps more importantly—the facility should support the enormous physical and emotional changes that the adolescent is experiencing by enhancing community.

## ACTIVITIES

After establishing a sense of the collective vision for the new program, the charrette was turned over to small group work.

We started with a comprehensive list of activities that we foresaw occurring within the new program—to get us thinking about which particular feature would serve and further these activities.

## VERB LIST

A later review of this work revealed activities within a handful of categories:



*Academics:* Writing, Researching, Computing, Reading, Studying, Learning, Documenting, Contemplation/Reflection, Inquiring, Thinking, Dreaming, Observing, Experimenting

*Arts:* Sewing, Making, Singing, Performing, Acting, Dancing, Making Music, Crafting

*Outdoors + Land:* Burning (fire), Digging, Exploring, Walking, Hiking, Caring for Animals, Gathering, Producing, Raising, Growing, Feeding, Planting, Bee-Keeping, Hammering, Building, Splitting (wood), Climbing, Bird watching, Running, Sportsing, Farming, Breeding,

*Microeconomies:* Marketing, selling

*Community:* Cooking, Eating, Collaborating, Stretching, Playing, Exercising, Talking, Hosting, Resting, Debating, Discussing, Laughing, Nurturing, Community Building, Serving, Loving, Cleaning, Helping

*Vehicular + Pedestrian Flow:* Driving, Parking



## SETTINGS

With a more specific understanding of what the facility needs were, small group work moved from brainstorming into specific site ideas and prescriptions.

Among the many great suggestions were:

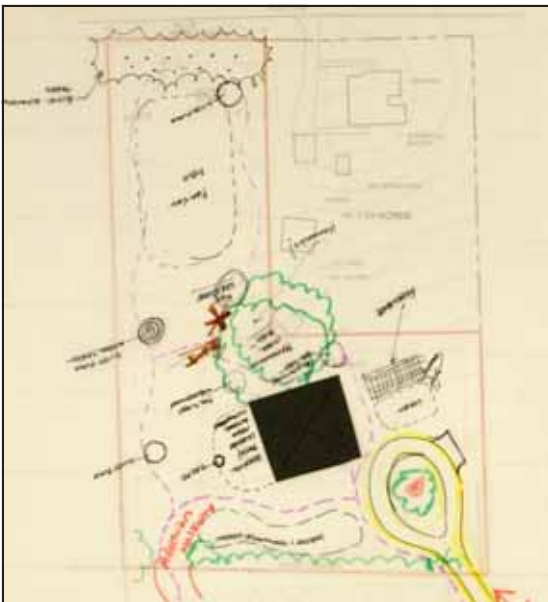
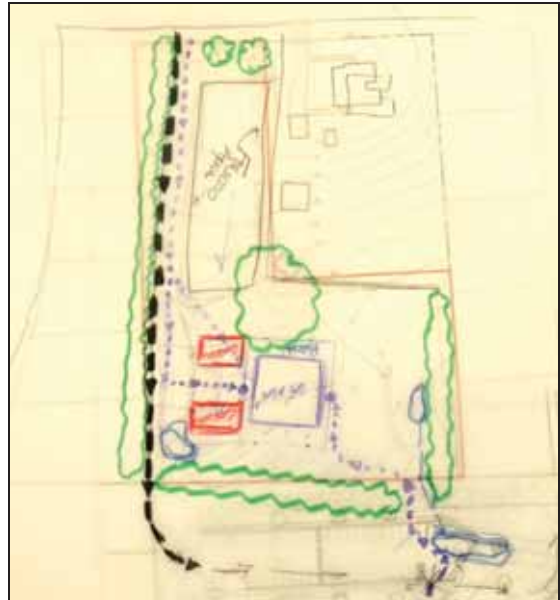
- Chicken Coop
- Water Feature (wetland to support science curriculum)
- Big wrap around porch for outdoor classroom and community space
- Garden
- Beehive
- Improved traffic Pattern
- Barn
- Fruit trees to support beauty and microeconomy (fruit into jam, sold at market)
- Outdoor classroom, Picnic Space
- Goat Pasture
- Trees and other landscaping to provide beauty, shade, climbing, shelter, and privacy,
- Hammock
- Roadside market stand
- Path to main campus/elementary



## SCHEMATIC PLANS

Below are the schematic plans that each small group created, incorporating ideas from their activities list.

With each additional discussion at the charrette, it became apparent exactly how integral the outdoors will be to a successful adolescent program.



# WORKING TIMELINE

