

To the Planning Department:

Thanks for sending the concerns so we can try to address them. Hopefully I can answer them to your satisfaction.

1. According to our Use on Review Permit we are currently licensed for 56 children at one time in the main building and 14 children at 1 time in the detached building. Our proposal is to increase the detached building by 30 students (for a total of 44 elementary students maximum) which will bring our total numbers between the two buildings to 100. We are **NOT** proposing any changes in the status of numbers allowed in the main building **ONLY** in the detached building. The main building operates as a preschool/kindergarten program-children ages 3-6. We have a student teacher ratio of no more than 13 to 1. The children in this program attend class for 3 hours each day **ONLY**. The detached building houses and will continue to house elementary students **ONLY**. We have a student teacher ratio in the elementary classroom of no more than 16 to 1. As our numbers increase or decrease, based on our student to teacher ratio, our staff increases or decreases. So, yes, as our numbers increase our staff will increase. We currently have 3 full time teachers and 2 assistants-one head teacher for each preschool classroom plus an assistant and 1 full time elementary teacher. Children's House is a state accredited school so we must meet the criteria set down by the Department of Education and Cultural affairs in regards to teacher certification and educational standards.
2. Children's House Montessori is a state accredited school. We do not provide child care services at our school. At the initial application for Use on Review we met the state requirements for the definition of a preschool. I believe that criteria stated children must be over the ages of 2 1/2 years and attending the program for less than 5 hours each day. In our preschool/kindergarten program the children must be 3 years of age and our classes run for 3 hours each day. Our elementary program is for children ages 6-11 or first through 5th grade and the hours of that program are 8:00 am-3:00 pm. Elementary students must attend school a minimum of 5 1/2 hours each day according to the State Department of Education and Cultural Affairs. The square footage of our outdoor space, as stated in the August 11, 1995 letter from Marcia Elkins (paragraph 5), is 57,500 square feet minus 3,280 square feet for buildings. The entire playground area is fenced.
3. There are fire hydrants on the north end of the lot directly across the street on the corner of Lime Creek Road and West Omaha Street. The current site plan does not include fire hydrants. We do not know the requirements for emergency access vehicles. The parking lot configuration remains the same as approved in the original Use on Review permit. Adding children will not change the parking lot configuration.
4. Yes, sewer lines will be extended to the addition in order to meet bathroom requirements for building codes. Water lines currently exist in that building.
5. We have mailed (Saturday, February 22nd) the interior floor plan with the bathrooms/office drawn in. The floorplan is specifically designed to be wide open so the children flow freely throughout the building. There are not classrooms in the traditional

sense. In other words, in the main building, 3, 4 & 5 year old children move about the entire space with the entire space used for motor development, academic development and social development. If visiting the school would clarify this concept (a Montessori environment is entirely different from a traditional preschool environment) please feel free to stop by the school.

6. We are working with a licensed engineer. The preliminary site plan was developed by a licensed engineer.

**RECEIVED**

March 7, 2003

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Rapid City Planning Department  
 300 Sixth Street  
 Rapid City, SD 57701

**Rapid City  
 Planning Department**

Response to issues raised by Terry Patterson in regards to the Use on Review Permit for Children's House Montessori School, 3520 West Main Street, Rapid City, SD 57702.

- Mr. Patterson is concerned about congestion during peak travel times for the surrounding neighborhood. Children's House specifically staggers the start times of the classes to avoid excessive traffic at any one time. Also, our start/stop times do not coincide with most typical work schedules. Our start/stop times are as follows:
 

○ Elementary Class Begins	8:00	Class Ends	3:00
○ Preschool Class Begins	8:15	Class Ends	11:15
○ Preschool Class Begins	8:30	Class Ends	11:30
○ Preschool Class Begins	12:15	Class Ends	3:15
- Mr. Patterson states during our special events, vehicles are parked everywhere including on the north side of West Main Street, on the side streets and in front of his driveway. First of all, we hold only 1 all school event at the school in September. Our only other all school function, the school picnic, is held at Canyon Lake Park. Our other "family" function, an art show in May, is staggered according to class times to more easily accommodate families. Parking is permitted on the north side of West Main Street beginning at the west end of our property as is parking on the side streets.
- In regards to the excessive noise and all kinds of people from outside the neighborhood, I find it difficult to believe that several of our parents are regularly "missing" the driveway and having to redirect their traffic pattern down 36<sup>th</sup> Street to Hall Street to Soo San to try another attempt at entering Children's House.
- West Main Street is a main arterial road. The south side of West Main Street is two-lanes. Cars turning east out of Children's House driveway have two lanes to pull into. I have never witnessed a car blocking the westbound traffic while waiting to pull into an eastbound lane. The people leaving Children's House are traveling with young children in the car. I doubt they would risk the safety of their child by irresponsibly pulling out in front of another vehicle.

Our parent handbook encourages families to carpool whenever possible to help alleviate excess congestion on the street and in the parking lot. Our staggered start times are very effective in moving traffic efficiently throughout the day. Children's House has been part of this neighborhood for almost eight years. During those years we have worked hard to resolve the traffic concerns presented at our original Use on Review hearing. To my knowledge, since that initial hearing, there has not been a complaint filed with the city in regards to traffic issues or inconsiderate drivers.

I understand the concerns raised by Mr. Patterson but I do not believe they clearly reflect the actual situation in regards to traffic patterns generated by the families of Children's House.

Janell Jewett  
 Director