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FROM IRLS HOPPER

### **Overview:**

In my experience, many people underestimate children. They underestimate what insight and creativity they are capable of, even as toddlers, and they underestimate their passion for learning about things in their everyday lives, such as their community and their natural environment. Even more so, people underestimate children from small and rural communities. I raised a Maine Maritime Academy engineer and a Harvard Law School and Oxford University lawyer in this community, and over the years, I have taught so many amazing children in this town. I know what these children are capable of and I believe they should not be sold short.

The Children's Voice Preschool and Daycare will be a community where children, their families, teachers and staff of the Preschool are respected for their individuality. It is a place where teachers as well as children will be supported and nurtured. The family and Preschool will be viewed as partners in the education process for our students. In an atmosphere of warmth and mutual respect, teachers will introduce our students to their first school experiences and help them become productive members of a community of learners. CVP recognizes that play is the work of young children. It will strive to address children's different learning styles by engaging in project work that is grounded in topics of interest to children as well as teaching basic skills, and by maintaining a balance between teacher direction and freedom of choice for the child. CVP's ultimate goal is for its students to leave Preschool as self-confident individuals, deeply connected to their community and filled with curiosity and a love of learning.

The Children's Voice Preschool and Daycare will be located in the ground level of the Johnson Pratt house. We will live in the home, primarily on the second level. The daycare and preschool will operate 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, year round excluding Preschool that will run September to June. Summer programs will run June through August. The preschool will be closed all holidays according to the public school calendar. The day care will be closed all major holidays. We will provide a developmentally appropriate program for children and toddlers to age 5. The activities will be designed to teach life skills, sciences, art, social studies, music, reading, handwriting, gardening and ecology.

### **The House:**

Our intent is to leave the period woodwork and facade in tact as well as the paint colors on the exterior of the house. In fact, the house requires some repair to restore it to its original condition (painting, shutter and columns are degrading and widow's walk has been removed). This repair work will be included with the modifications required to comply with state fire code and daycare licensing. Currently, we have an engineering firm working with us to modify the property to meet all appropriate ordinances, while preserving its unique historical and architectural features. The architectural work is currently out for bid for modifications to the interior.

A summary of modifications to the house and property include:

1. Entrance and exit from Waldo Avenue to minimize neighborhood traffic impact.

2. Addition of a playground, shade trees and fencing. Fencing visible from the street will be period, whilst playground fencing will be child appropriate and the border fence will be respectful to neighbors.

3. Parking and ADA access/egress, storm drainage and engineered landscape. The preliminary study indicates we can improve the neighborhood drainage, and will absolutely not make it worse.

4. Child bathrooms, heating system modifications on 1st floor to comply with licensing.

5. Fixed fire detection and fire fighting systems to meet fire code.

6. Various minor daycare licensing requirement modifications.

### **About Us:**

The Hooper family has been part of the mid-coast Maine community since well before the Johnson-Pratt house was built. We certainly understand and appreciate the historical significance and cultural value of the home, and plan to protect it. Many of the historical homes in Maine communities are degrading due to expense of maintenance, heating and tax burdens. We believe a small, sustainable business can support the home as well as benefit the children of the community. Please help us make this a positive part of the community.

Iris Hooper, Dennis Hooper, Jennifer Hooper Selendy, Philippe Selendy and Benjamin Hooper