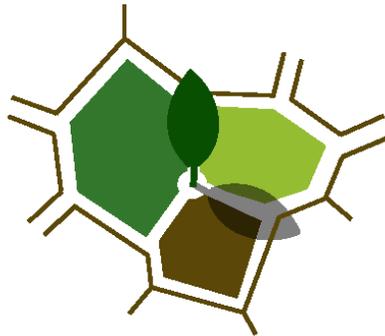


GRADUATE DESIGN PROJECT  
REPORT

*An Ecovillage Design Course  
Manifests Itself*



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## OVERVIEW

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On July 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2003, an Ecovillage Design Course (EDC) was conducted in the bioregion of Cascadia by the newly founded Village Design Institute (VDI). While perhaps not exactly history making, this course was, nevertheless, precedent setting – for the following reasons:

- 1) All the other EDCs that I am aware of have taken place at established ecovillages-in-process, so that the actual ecovillage design work (if there was any) had already been accomplished. These Courses often present sub-projects within the greater ecovillage for their design scenarios, which means that the students miss the opportunity and challenge of apprehending the settlement-as-a-whole. The VDI Course was held on a relatively undeveloped though long inhabited piece of property *desiring to grow into* an ecovillage; thus, the primary component of this course was a Design Studio for laying the preliminary ecological and site design work for the project *as a whole*. This meant that the course participants were actively co-involved in a *real* Ecovillage Design scenario, and so the design ideas they formulated may very well be included in any future eventual development.
- 2) All the other EDCs that I am aware of have been conducted by prominent leaders in the field. The VDI Course was successfully presented by two relatively obscure and upcoming aspirants with lots of accumulated education – including some valuable international exposure – but without any prior project credentials. This demonstrated that teaching others about ecovillage designing does not necessarily need to be done exclusively by experienced experts (although that is a bonus) but can be accomplished by exceptional individuals with genuine intent, a strong community base, and firm comprehension of fundamental principles.
- 3) Previously, if a person wanted to experience an EDC, they would need to travel halfway across the country or halfway around the globe. The VDI Course was very much a *regional* event: the vast majority of course participants – students, presenters, and staff – came from within a sixty-mile radius of the site. This feature of the Course aligned with sustainable community values asseverating a broad-based, grassroots, decentralized strategy for ecovillage proliferation. Using the VDI model – that is, setting up the Design Course on-site right there where a project is just getting underway – it is quite conceivable to imagine EDCs being conducted almost anywhere in the world, tapping into localized interest, utilizing localized

resources and talent, meeting localized needs, and educating for and promoting localized sustainable human settlement models.

The VDI Ecovillage Design Course was also, simultaneously, the Graduate Design Project (GDP) for my M.A. in Whole Systems Design at Antioch University Seattle. As such, there was an established framework of procedures and purposeful steps to adhere to that are followed by *all* Whole Systems Design degree candidates who are ready to implement their GDP. For example, the GDP was preceded by a Design Development phase, where initial experimentation with the Design Process was practiced and learned from; a lengthy and thoughtful Context Paper was written articulating an outline and background understanding for the proposed GDP, including a listing of Design Criteria for a generic model; a ‘client’ needed to be identified, and a client-designer relationship needed to be nurtured, resulting in the expression of specific client needs; based on these needs, a Project Proposal was written stating and defining Project Goals.

I must say, having this detailed framework as an academic exercise sure helped guide the initial organization of the Project; yet, at some point the Project seemed to assume a life of its own and became *self-organizing*. The specific parameters of the Project were continually evolving, right up to the very last minute. For a while, everything was in flux – so much so that at one point it looked like the Project was completely dissolving; another time I wasn’t even sure exactly who my clients were. I knew I wanted to design and present an Ecovillage Design Course – I had been assiduously preparing myself for that occurrence during the previous nine years of schooling – yet the actual EDC that came out was very different from the one I originally proposed: that’s why I assert on the title page that an Ecovillage Design Course manifested *itself*. This self-organizing principle is a subtle technique of whole systems designing and it proved to be my greatest lesson in the aftermath of this GDP.

And so, a precedent setting EDC *did* manifest itself, and I, as a neophyte, was able to successfully implement my GDP, preparing the way for graduation. This Report will chronicle prominent features and events related to the Project: how it was initiated, defining parameters, what the client wanted, what I proposed as a solution, how it actually unfolded, the various processes and strategies utilized, the whole systems designing aspects, etc.; and then a final evaluation.

The Report is presented as a story because that’s how I experienced the adventure – it was very much a big story of my life! In order to capture the essence of the lessons derived from implementing the Design Project, it is necessary to review the entire Design Process as a chronology unfolding and evolving over time rather than as a specific, discrete, isolated event. Indeed, the effects of the Design Project are *still* unfolding and evolving. Within this format, I have sub-organized the story into thematic overtones – sections – so that all the required elements that made this a formal academic graduate

exercise, adhering to a formal program methodology, can be reviewed and evaluated individually. By organizing this Graduate Design Project Report in this way, I have made the essence of the lessons accessible to a wider audience: from my Faculty Advisor at Antioch, to my Degree Design Committee, to future potential students, to interested alumni...all the way to the Global Ecovillage Network!

It is my sincere wish that whosoever may read this Report, or whatever part of it, may find some tidbit of information that can be of assistance in the designing of their own Project(s).

## PRELUDE: THE CLIENTS MANIFEST THEMSELVES

In the Winter of 2002, I was contacted by Sylvia Hales, manager of Pragtri Farm, one of the properties of the Evergreen Land Trust in the bioregion of Cascadia. Sylvia had seen an article I wrote for *Communities* magazine describing my self-designed education focused on Ecovillage Design. She was planning to return to school and was very interested in the approach I outlined in my article, for her aspirations also were aligned within the vision of an Ecovillage Design. We met a few times and had a chance to discuss such wide-ranging topics as sustainable communities and ecovillages, her specific intentions for her education and how I might be able to facilitate these, issues and opportunities at Pragtri Farm and the Evergreen Land Trust, our personal perspectives on planetary evolution, etc. Sylvia and I enjoyed an immediate rapport that has endured and grown until this day. Since at that time I was fully immersed in writing the Context Paper for my GDP, I made an initial inquiry about the prospects of using Pragtri as a venue.

My original preference was to implement my GDP at Fairhaven College, WWU. This made perfect organic sense to me since, at an earlier phase of the Degree Process, I had a chance to design and present a 3-credit Ecovillage Design Course there. That class was received so well by the students that I envisioned a much-improved and enhanced follow-up production as the GDP. And so, in the initial drafts of my Context Paper, I articulated in some detail a 12- to 15-credit block, organized into four distinguishable classes covering what I perceived to be the primary overarching themes of Ecovillage Design. I formally submitted this proposal to the College in preparation for my GDP.

For whatever reason – budget restraints, the course selection process, internal politics, or perhaps destiny – I never received a response from the College – this despite the fact that the Dean had told me that a class like mine should be offered on an ongoing basis – and that it should be paid! After several quarters had passed, and with my degree seemingly hanging in limbo, I resolved to resort to Plan B: I re-approached Sylvia with the idea of using Pragtri Farm as the venue, and she was warmly receptive. Although arising from some initial disappointment, this proved to be a highly propitious turn of events.

By that time, now into the fifth draft of a continually revising Context Paper, I had completely removed myself from attachment to designing, specifically, a college course. Instead, at the prompting of my Faculty Advisor at Antioch, I outlined a generic proposal for a much more multi-dimensional type of educational experience – one that I called “Fundamentals of Village Design.” In a comprehensive 82-page paper, I included a

section labeled “Design Criteria.” I listed fourteen criteria for the proposed GDP, and described them as existing within an eventual “Program.” The criteria were (presented here in condensed form):

- 1) The Program will be necessarily grounded in Permaculture; Permaculture is the foundation.
- 2) The Program will be a detailed exploration of the fundamental premise: “In order to be sustainable, human systems must be modeled upon natural systems.”
- 3) The Program will be designed to be an elaboration and refinement upon Ecovillage Design courses sponsored by the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), courses I attended as a participant.
- 4) The preliminary stages of the Program will be devoted to articulating and providing a firm epistemological base from which to begin the actual conceptualizing and designing of ecological villages.
- 5) It will be advantageous to examine prior settlement patterns that were effective in their times – that is, those that were able to successfully combine advanced, refined culture with long-term ecological viability.
- 6) The Program must be physically located at or have access to a place where real ecological design work can be administered and practiced, so that theory and practical application can be integrated into a holistic learning experience.
- 7) The practical design component of the coursework will be presented as constitutionally *process-oriented*, meaning that *how* the design is arrived at will be given a higher evaluational priority than the actual tangible design work accomplished.
- 8) The ecological design strategy that will be employed will be the famously efficacious “transparency overlay” technique developed and refined by Ian McHarg in his seminal *Design With Nature* (1969).
- 9) An important aspect of the design work will concentrate on infrastructure and the practice of “soft engineering” [At the behest of Degree Committee member Max Lindegger].
- 10) The participants themselves will be organized as a coherent community, in so far as that is possible, simulating the community design team that would come together to initiate their own (eco)village project.
- 11) The Program will be designed to be a “transformative learning experience,” meaning that, if successful, experiencing the Program will induce a fundamental perception or paradigm shift in the participant.
- 12) Even though the proposed GDP is a very personal affair – the culmination of my M.A. degree in Whole Systems Design – it is very important that the presentation be a *collaborative* effort.

- 13) The Program will assume a pedagogical climate where the focus will be not so much on relaying information *per se*, but on emphasizing the manner or method by which the information or knowledge can be derived – that is, the cognitive posture of inquiry whereby each participant can re-create or-re-present the essence of the Program in some future space-time scenario of their own opportunity.
- 14) As a final design criterion, in order to be personally meaningful, the Program must be motivated by and framed within ultimate spiritual goals – that is, as contributing to salubrious planetary evolution.

This set of criteria provided the framework for the Graduate Design Project, as it was proposed. They were the outline for the generic model. It will be demonstrated that I successfully accomplished and integrated – even exceeded – these criteria in the actual Implementation Phase. It is important to note that as *generic* criteria, they became adaptable to a wide variety of situations and circumstances.

By the Winter of 2003, at a Degree Design Committee teleconferencing meeting, I fully committed to implementing the GDP at Pragtri Farm; thus they – and by association the Evergreen Land Trust – became my ‘clients.’ And so, without my looking for them, with no prior foreknowledge, and contrary to my original plans, some clients came and found me – that is, the clients manifested *themselves*.

## THE PROJECT PARAMETERS MANIFEST THEMSELVES

By a remarkable stroke of synchronous good fortune, the season that I formally declared my clients also saw the initiation of a series of “Visioning Meetings” sponsored by the residents of Pragtri. On one Sunday each month – through March, April, May, and June – the residents invited a select group of interested persons and guest speakers to engage in an organized and deliberate visioning process for the future development of the Farm. I attended each of these meetings and usually stayed over to conduct preliminary site analysis and preparation. At the final meeting, I facilitated a brainstorming session designed to elicit a free-flow imagining of all the elements and activities the residents would like to see in their future ideal ‘ecovillage’ (See Appendix 5).

I cannot over-emphasize how vitally important this phase was to the successful implementation of my GDP. By participating in the visioning process, I was able to form amicable, personable, *mutually-invested* relationships with the residents, as well as with other interested parties. By making extended stays, I was able to begin forming a personal relationship with the site, with the land and the spirit of the place (sometimes called *genius loci*). With ongoing familiarity, I was able to begin mentally mapping and organizing the physical layout and flow patterns for the coming EDC. By the culmination of these meetings, both the residents and I were enthusiastically engaged, and the energy for the imminent event was ascending.

It was decided that Pragtri Farm would eventually accommodate up to 25 new residents, organized into a core of six families domiciling six homes, with various cabins, cottages, and outlying buildings for singles and interns, and including a Community Center. To me this seemed ideal: 25 being a manageable, fractalized, organic subsystem of a full village. (Let’s get it right at this scale and then amalgamate from there!) This, then, became the real-life purpose for the EDC: to lay the preliminary ecological and site design work for this planned expansion. From the outset, this made this version of an EDC so much more tangible and palpable, so much more satisfying, than a simulated scenario at University.

The residents also wanted to see Pragtri evolve into a sustainable community educational model (as is often the goal of a Design Course), so the brainstorming included a wide variety of elements and functions not normally found in simple (e.g. cohousing) community arrangements. These elements and functions were subsequently sub-organized into associated systems: agricultural and horticultural systems; sustainable

forestry and agroforestry systems; integrated animal systems; energy, utilities, and appropriate technology systems; economic and cottage industry systems; waste remediation systems; water and aquaculture systems; educational and community outreach systems; and social systems, including health and human services. The EDC would be an exercise in attempting to integrate all these human sub-systems into the pre-existing ecological, hydrological, geological, geomorphic, biophysical, socio-economic, and bioregional supra-systems, while adapting them to the stated residential requirements – thus producing a viable Whole Systems Design that could rightly be called a full-featured “Ecovillage.”

## ACTIVELY ORGANIZING FOR THE EDC

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Throughout the visioning season, I also was, of course, actively engaged in preparatory administrative work for the EDC, my GDP. There was a multitude of tasks to attend to: flyers needed to be designed and distributed; contact and mailing lists needed to be developed (including the art of accessing e-list servings); letterhead needed to be created, and personal introductory letters to key influential people needed to be composed and sent out; a website needed to be established, designed, and filled, including all the various sub-writings for that; curriculum needed to be developed, and proposed guest presenters contacted; student info packets, including their numerous forms and pages, needed to be designed and printed; a core team needed to be congealed so that tasks could be delegated, etc., etc. Throughout the Spring of 2003, I was very busy attending to all the details of organizing and promoting the manifestation of an EDC, my GDP.

Stepping back a bit to provide even more context: in December of 2002, I went through the legal motions of incorporating an educational non-profit – Village Design Institute – to serve as the vehicle for presenting my GDP, and to prepare for future, post-grad, professional developments. I thought that this was important so that the Design Course would be emanating from and the product of an institutional collective entity – with the attendant appearance of credibility, global connectivity, and an established mission – rather than from just me as a well-meaning though novice individual. And so, by the Spring of 2003, I was actively engaged in the real work of getting the non-profit up and running, seemingly raising up a school from scratch; and this was, simultaneously, an aspect of my accredited coursework. This was a very exciting period, and this demonstrates the immeasurable benefits of an innovative, progressive, application-oriented university like Antioch.

After a while, and somewhat to my surprise, I actually started getting responses to my energetic promoting! E-mails came in from many parts of the country – and even some from overseas – inquiring about the course or about VDI more generally. For example, one woman contacted me from Vienna saying she was very interested in attending – and she eventually did come as a participant! (Oh, the mysterious magic of e-list servings). Some of the inquiries came from permaculture teachers wanting to know more about the curriculum or the particular approach I was using. Each of the e-mails required a thoughtful response, prompting me to further define and refine my purposes. Soon, e-mail responses on their own were not enough to create the personally

meaningful connections I was seeking, and so the much more effective and time-economical communicative medium of conversation on the phone needed to be employed. The vast majority of the influential individuals I contacted asking for assistance or feedback were very receptive, helpful, and encouraging. All at once, I found myself busily engaged as a networker networking with the global sustainable community; VDI was emerging and becoming known! Similarly, I was emerging from the relative obscurity of academic immersion into the light of prepared professional purpose.

At this point in the Report, an initial evaluation can be interjected: I originally thought that my audience was going to be college students looking for something interesting to do on summer vacation – something useful, productive, and extra-special that couldn't be found at the universities. And so, at substantial expense of time and money, I researched and located key contact people at universities, mostly up and down the West Coast, and sent out bulk mailing packets to them. As it turned out, *not a single person* from this intended audience responded. Instead, I got most of my inquiries from the e-lists, and most of these were from professionals or post-grads, people who viewed the coming EDC as potentially contributing to their careers or meaningfully supplementing their already-established knowledge resource base. That was a revelation; for it placed “Ecovillage Design” in a higher instrumental category than I anticipated – and this was very good news, for it means the greater ecovillage vision is being accepted by those with influence and by those able to contribute. Throughout this adventure, I experienced a rising curve of professionalism – both in me and in my growing audience.

A valid reason for why the college students didn't respond, *en masse*, is that I didn't get the mailings out until well into Spring quarter, perhaps after the students had already made other plans; but there is a more important lesson here: A fundamental principle of Permaculture says to start all activities in Zone 1, right outside your front door. I neglected this axiom by putting so much effort into trying to attract people from afar. In retrospect, I should have started by saturating my own neighborhood first and then moving out from there, in concentric circles. As it turned out, the vast majority of students who *did* come originated either in Seattle or Bellingham, the population centers closest to the site. Many of these were friends or acquaintances, some being the professionals or post-grads just mentioned. Only a few were connected with universities. A common bond, a common thread between them all, was the heartfelt desire to have more community in their lives. Next time I will conduct my promotion accordingly.

An important aspect of the preparatory work was the congealing of a Core Team. This was one expression of Criterion 12 – that the GDP be a collaborative effort. I selectively chose five other people to be on this Team so that I could arrive at the magic number of six: the hexagon, the atomic number of Carbon, the so-called building block

of Life.<sup>1</sup> The Core Team convened on a couple of weekends to go through the process of curriculum development, and this was a very productive and fruitful exercise. We came up with an inchoate proto-design of a 10-day immersion course, and took great care to sub-organize each of the ten days – segregated into five educational sessions each – so that they and their contents would logically and thematically flow into one another (See Course Schedule in the Student Info Packet, Appendix 3). All the information and activities in the first part of the Course were designed to lead up to and culminate in the all-important, capstone Design Studio. The Core Team also went down to Pragtri one weekend for a site analysis, and participated in the brainstorming session.

I believe it's very important in this line of work to develop and nurture a Core Team, among other reasons, to diffuse individual control and to encourage the Group Design Process; yet, in the overall evaluation of *this* Project, their input was minimal. I would like to think that next time I could organize this potential more effectively.

Superseding and overarching the Core Team was the contribution of one outstanding individual in particular, listed on the webpage as Associate Faculty for VDI – Mr. Tyrone Lafay. I had known Tyrone since my B.A. days at Fairhaven and he always displayed a genuine, committed interest and enthusiasm in the themes of Permaculture and Ecovillage Design. He's the kind of guy who's always ready to volunteer time and energy for valuable community projects (as am I), and he proved to be a tremendous asset during the preparation and implementation of the EDC. Ty made himself especially valuable – and indeed, qualified as the only person in this immediate region to serve as Associate Faculty – by attending a year-long residential course in Permaculture and Ecovillage Design, hosted by Robina McCurdy at Planet Organic, Golden Bay, New Zealand. As part of that course, he went on for a stay in 'Permaculture Central' – the East Coast of Australia – learning from such PC luminaries as David Holmgren, Robyn Francis, and Max Lindegger. Ty certainly came back with a neat bag of tricks – including up-to-date PC techniques, exercises and games – but more importantly, his newfound international perspective and extended residential experience enabled him to competently conceptualize with me the full scope of the EDC then unfolding. Objectively speaking, the preparation for and implementation of this EDC was much more of a partnership than a team effort. I started the whole momentum rolling, and then Ty's input gradually ascended as the EDC came closer, until by course time we were working side-by-side.

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<sup>1</sup> I elaborated upon this theme in a paper: "A Strategy for Ecovillage Development."

## THE SELF-ORGANIZING PROCESS BEGINS

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As the appointed time for the EDC drew near, some unexpected and unsettling developments arose. With only a couple weeks to go, an entire cluster of serious prospective students contacted me saying they would be unable to attend the Course. The overriding reason, they explained, was time constraint. These people were keenly interested in coming to our Ecovillage Design extravaganza but apparently their schedules and commitments were already quite full, and trying to squeeze in a 10-day block became insurmountable for them. The summer season in Cascadia is hyper-activated and accentuated by the long, cool, wet grayness of our extended Winter. When the Sun finally appears, Cascadians are on the move!

Some of those dropping out asked if they could come and participate for just a few days. I was declining these requests because we had put so much thought into the full 10-day curriculum: the Course was designed to be an *immersion* experience. As it was planned, there would be an Opening Ceremony and a Closing Ceremony. Design Teams would be formed on the very first day and each of these teams would become as a coherent sub-community within the larger community. We planned to have each Design Team go out after lunch, every day, to practice site interpretation and analysis, so that each would have recurring chances to interact and relate together as a unit, to build rapport and camaraderie, before entering the Design Studio to begin the formal Group Design Process. I always thought that was a weakness of the PDCs and EDCs I attended – that the Design Teams would be rather haphazardly assembled at the last minute, and were expected to work out the difficult and intricate subtleties of group process without prior preparation. This often made the design phase of these courses a little clumsy.

Learning from that lesson, we were going to provide our teams with plenty of opportunities to practice the group process work *throughout* the Course, *while* leading up to the highly interactive Design Studio. For example, on the very first day, we arranged to bring in a guest presenter to discuss “Nonviolent Communication,” sometimes called “Compassionate Communication.”<sup>2</sup> Then, midway through the Course, a professor from Antioch was slotted to give a presentation she called “Groups Working in Action Together,” a presentation she designed specifically to adapt to our format. Finally, on the morning the Design Studio was to begin, another presenter was to cover

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<sup>2</sup> These are techniques for effective communication developed by Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D., and the Center for Nonviolent Communication.

the essentials of “Conflict Resolution.” We were hoping by giving the students all these interpersonal communication tools and skills beforehand that we would be optimizing the productivity and quality of the Design Studio.

With such a course design – all the participants coming together for an Opening Ceremony; Design Teams practicing and interacting as sub-communities throughout the Course, forming cohesive wholes; everyone gradually getting to know the site together before entering the Design Studio; then everybody coming back together again for a Closing Ceremony – how could we possibly have individuals coming and going throughout the event for only a few days at a time?

Additionally, the course curriculum was designed to be a coherent whole in and of itself. During our curriculum development, we divided the Course into two Phases: Phase 1 – days one thru six – we called Epistemology Building (Criterion 4). In this Phase, there would be a logical and sequential presentation of useful information, beginning with the larger picture first, and then gradually focusing in on more and more detail and specifics as the Phase unfolded. Phase 1 was intended to provide just enough working knowledge and understanding so that the students could competently enter Phase 2 – days seven thru ten – the featured Design Studio. The entire flow of Phase 1 was consciously channeled and directed toward the emergence of Phase 2, so that the epistemology was not random bits of information but rather was concentrated on the fundamental principles and concepts we thought needed to be addressed to effectively begin ecovillage designing in *this* scenario on *this* particular site. That was a lesson from the EDC I presented at Fairhaven College – that it is very important to introduce and reiterate, over and over again, fundamental principles before engaging in the actual site design work.

With that kind of curriculum format – the deliberate, sequential building of a selected epistemology designed to enable competent, well-informed, site specific design work – how could we possibly have people appearing for only a few days, or coming in midway through the proceedings? We thought it was imperative that the students experience the entire flow from beginning to end: **that** was the EDC for which we actively designed and organized.

There is a key principle in Whole Systems Design that can be stated thus: all natural living systems *self-organize*. With this principle in mind, the Whole Systems Designer will concentrate diligently and with great care on creating the appropriate *context* but then at some point will stand back to see what actually emerges from within that context. From this perspective, the design ultimately manifests *itself*. After observing what comes forth, the designer can then go back and tweak a few inputs, make a few adjustments here and there, and gradually modify the original proto-design until the desired goal is achieved (and the client is satisfied). Well, with just a couple weeks to go until the EDC was to begin, and with a depleting prospective student list, it was

absolutely necessary for me to step back a bit and see what actually wanted to emerge from within the context I had created. I had been pouring out and directing focused energy for a couple months straight (Yang); now I needed to be receptive (Yin) and honestly evaluate what was coming back to me.

There was some real interest, that's for sure – Ecovillage Design will go far – but there was a definite snag with the intended time scheduling. With only a few people still committed – not enough for an interesting and engaging event – and with the whole Project seemingly ready to unravel, I finally let go of my attachment to the original course format. We had proactively designed, by my account, an outstanding 10-day Immersion Course; but that's not what was *self*-organizing. That 10-day version still exists (on some plane): it's recorded, and I hope we'll get a chance to do it someday, but the feedback I was getting from prospective students was clearly pointing to something more like a 3-day weekend *workshop*. My ultimate purpose was to provide my clients with an Ecovillage Design for their proposed expansion. Whether this designing was initiated by a 10-day course or a 3-day workshop was apparently not that critical.<sup>3</sup> And so, after some consultation, Tyrone and I decided to do a complete re-organization around this new truncated format.

Something quite remarkable shifted with that decision to re-organize. Up till then, I had regarded and spoken of the people who would be attending the experience I was designing as 'the students' – seemingly as an anonymous and faceless crowd who would come, experience, and then go. But with the re-organization, I felt like I needed to reach out personally to each and every individual who had shown some interest. They were my customers, after all (in contrast to my clients I would later learn). I called everyone and listened closely to their needs and concerns. I felt it important to nurture a unique and caring relationship with each and every person. No longer was there a faceless crowd of 'students' but rather a fascinating assortment of extremely interesting individuals, from a variety of backgrounds, who believed that what I was proposing to present was worthwhile, was worth their time and energy. Isn't that an incredible honor? I wanted to reciprocate: having stared into the blank face of complete project dissolution, I was now reborn into the humility of genuine appreciation and gratitude for what already existed.

“The group members need the leader for guidance and facilitation. The leader needs people to work with, people to serve. If both do not recognize the mutual need to

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<sup>3</sup> At VDI, we place great emphasis and faith in the Group Design Process. By initiating the design work with an EDC, we are enlisting the contribution of many minds, with a variety of talents, producing several proto-designs. At a later time, VDI could then come back and create a high quality, comprehensive, *composite* design synthesizing all the best ideas from the proto-designs, and adding some of our own, discriminating according to our own level of experience. I believe this to be a more effective methodology for approaching a scenario as complex as an Ecovillage Design, rather than coming in as an individual consultant-designer attempting to grasp all the complexities by myself. Besides, an EDC would infuse the place with a whole lot of fun and positive energy.

love and respect one another, each misses the point.”<sup>4</sup> Once I took this attitude to heart, and re-remembered that teaching is ultimately *service*, and then began communicating from that position, my fortune turned around dramatically.

With this refreshing new attitude, most of the stress I’d been carrying – worrying about successfully organizing a major production – vanished. This stress was caused by my insistence on having events conform to my pre-established mental organization. Once I let go and happily accepted just what was there – letting the EDC manifest *itself* – I found all sorts of richness and complexity waiting to be worked with and re-designed.

Based on the favorable feedback I’d been receiving, Tyrone and I began designing what we called a 3-day weekend Ecovillage Design *Charrette*.<sup>5</sup> That’s what the people wanted; that’s what they could accommodate in their busy summer schedules; so that’s what they got. How exciting! – to have the opportunity to holographically sub-organize a full 10-day immersion Course into a 3-day Workshop.<sup>6</sup> This proved to be a real test – and a worthy Graduate Design Project – for demonstrating my proficiency at Whole Systems Designing. What were the absolute essentials of a multi-dimensional, whole – mind, body, spirit – educational experience in the Fundamentals of Village Design? Of all the activities and subject areas we had imagined, what were the most vital for successfully conducting a “transformative learning experience” (Criterion 11) for a group of fascinating individuals drawn by the title “Ecovillage Design,” while at the same time providing a useful product for my clients? In many ways, the condensed version proved to be a greater design challenge than the more complete version, just because everything needed to be so precise, pertinent, and multi-purposeful (stacking functions).

Several of the people I listened to were disappointed over the shortening of the Course: they were really looking forward to the 10-day immersion experience. Since I was no longer trying to adapt events to my plans but rather was adapting my plans to events, I accommodated these extended-stayers but compromised with their smaller numbers. As it was confirmed: We would have a 3-day Ecovillage Design Charrette with two optional days beforehand for those who wanted to review fundamental principles – thus five days total. My task then became trying to fit all the new pieces together, as they were presenting themselves, into a coherent whole that could be considered a valuable educational experience *as well as* a productive exercise for my client’s design wishes. This challenge was made all the more vivid because it was happening spontaneously – arising in the present moment – organizing itself as it went along. After all the energy I had put out to get the EDC rolling, at some point it began assuming a life of its own – *the very*

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<sup>4</sup> *The TAO of Leadership*, by John Heider, in Ch. 27.

<sup>5</sup> The ‘charrette’ format comes from a French school of architecture. It denotes a concentrated and highly intensive design scenario.

<sup>6</sup> It could very well be argued that we were holographically sub-organizing an entire 4-year degree into a weekend workshop.

*mark of a genuine living system.* At that point my purpose suddenly seemed to simplify into a mellow lull: all I needed to do was to wake up early, pay attention, and engage in the moment what needed to be engaged in just then.

With hardly any effort on my part, the course roster soon swelled to 12: now that was enough for an interesting and energizing experience. By that time, the beginning of the Course was so close at hand that my attention focused primarily on the details of logistics – identifying all the multifarious steps necessary for setting up a valid school in a goat barn 40 miles away! I was completely absorbed in the momentum by then; I had no choice but to graciously accept what was unfolding – there would be an EDC after all!

I must say, Tyrone's input was highly instrumental at this stage. Since I don't own an automobile, he did all the driving back and forth, taking us down to the site to drop off a load and begin setting up, taking me around town to run errands at the last minute. As if to convincingly highlight the self-organizing process, in these last few days before the Course was to begin, as we were busily engaged in the final preparations, more people contacted me 'from out of the blue' wanting to participate. The course roster then began hovering around 16 – an ideal number: four Design Teams of four designers each: four elements and four directions. (Ironically, the EDC at Fairhaven also attracted exactly 16 students.) At the crucial decision point, I actually had to turn a couple people away to maintain that sweet sixteen.

When mythologizing, I like to think that all this work is in service for and benefiting the healing of the Mother Goddess Gaia. She's got the higher, broader, deeper perspective, so she knows better than we do what needs to be done. She will be there to guide and support us if we will only be open enough to listen and pay attention, and let go of any ego control.

## AN EDC MANIFESTS ITSELF

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The new chosen day before the commencement of the EDC – 15 July 2003 – finally arrived, just as the days are turning into one another even now. Ty and I loaded up the van with all the supplies that hadn't been taken down previously – including \$1100 worth of food – and left home for the last time, praying that nothing was forgotten.

Now, I had the chance to survey the site for several months, and. I would like to think, had become somewhat attuned to the energy of the place. This energy had been building for months – all through the visioning process – and was now nearing climax. 'Energy' became a real issue in this Design Project.

I found out earlier that, within the Evergreen Land Trust, Pragtri is considered to be their 'problem property.' For some reason, unfortunate disagreements tended to arise between the residents and the Trust, going back many years – and indeed, as the EDC drew near, a disruption did occur. (At this time, there seemed to be a marked distinction between my clients as 'Pragtri residents' and my clients as 'Evergreen Land Trust.) One of the more recent residents I spoke with said he was involved with a "psychic clearing," a sort of purification entanglement with the place. Another former resident reported finding a so-called "energy vortex." Taking note of all this information as being significant and potentially disruptive for the EDC, I conducted a little cleansing ritual of my own, and planted seeds of firm wholesome intention.

Then, quite serendipitously, while at a "Sacred Space" workshop at the end of June, I met a man who claimed to be an accomplished 'dowser,' an energy worker of the land. When I inquired about the possible ill effects of the so-called energy vortex, he offered to do a 'map dowsing' of Pragtri as an exercise for the workshop. I had come to admire the man and respected his bearing and demeanor, especially his intensely spiritual focus, so I agreed to go along with this procedure. As he twirled his pendulum around the map I had drawn, he discovered a "negative water line" but no vortex. (In fact he dismissed the term 'vortex' as being meaningless common parlance.) He then switched modes, went a little deeper, and said he also found two "human entities," supposed disembodied forms hanging about the place. (Could this be the source of the disruption?) At my affirmation, he then proceeded to 'zap' those entities out of there, sending them, he explained, to the deities he worked with for resolution.

This energy work is all very new to me, and I don't claim to vouch for its efficacy one way or another. I'm only reporting these events here, as they transpired, because I

consider them to be influential to the implementation of this Design Project. It's curious to note, however, that while the dowser was doing his psychic 'zapping,' at that same very moment, the residents of Pragtri subsequently confirmed an intense lightning storm hovering over the Farm. (?) Somehow, this clearing elicited in me an assured feeling of satisfaction that the EDC would unfold smoothly, without incident. I would like to learn more about dowsing, geomancy, and energy work more generally, including body energy work.

By the time Tyrone and I arrived on the afternoon of July 15<sup>th</sup>, the place was calm and quiet – even serene: it was a hot and still summer afternoon. Since the first class-session was to begin early the next morning, Ty and I got right to work unloading the van. It was then, while carrying boxes of produce into the Farm's industrial size kitchen, that I bumped into our first student – Barbara Ford Widhalm. Barbara was the woman who first e-mailed me from Vienna, with many intervening e-mails in between, and now here she was standing right before me! Somehow she looked differently than I imagined.

As it turned out, Barbara's family was from Vienna but she had long ago relocated to New Mexico. She had recently been notified of acceptance to teach a 500-level class at the University of New Mexico and believed that my EDC would provide her with potentially valuable insights and material for the presentation of her own class. She had sent me her resume, and had impressive credentials, so it was all the more remarkable to have her there. This may seem like excessive sentimentalizing to seasoned workshop leaders but it was a profound moment for me. There was a relationship there of a very novel and special kind – she was at once a colleague, a peer, a student, *and* a teacher of mine – and an instant friend. To think that she flew up all the way from New Mexico and was very willing to give me money-energy to participate in my EDC forced a kind of expansion in me – I had to grow inside right then and there to accommodate this new kind of relationship. Perhaps Providence will provide me with chances to offer future workshops or design courses, and thus chances for future student-teacher relationships, but quite probably none will ever be characterized by so much grateful innocent brightness as I felt standing there before Barbara Ford Widhalm.

Anyway, there was still much to do: after the food was unloaded and stashed away, we took the van down to the goat barn to unload the rest of the supplies and finish setting up the classroom, and Barbara came along, chatting the whole way. After we had sufficiently organized the learning space, I went back up to the kitchen to fix us some dinner.

In another one of those synchronous good fortunes that reminds one of being on the right track, one of the Pragtri residents was having a birthday party that night! This meant that there were guests to mingle with – some of whom had been to visioning meetings – and a banquet of food, including grilled salmon and fresh salads from the Pragtri garden. What a great way to begin the EDC! That same festive mood

reverberated throughout the Farm for the duration of the Course. As the party wore on, more of the extended-stay students arrived, and they were greeted with a warm and cheerful welcome. This was one of those elements – “party on the first night to ‘break the ice’” – that was not in the original course design but proved to be highly advantageous to the successful implementation of this Design Project. That party was one of those occurrences, I would like to think, that was an indication of the greater self-organizing process.

Throughout the promotion stage, I had placed great emphasis on describing our EDC as a whole – mind, body, spirit – educational experience. I had been moved by recent life experiences to appreciate and hypothesize full sensory somatic awareness as the pre-requisite or key to good ecological design, and I wanted to practice that approach in our Course. From that perspective, good design arises not so much from deliberate mental rationalizing as it does from holistic apprehension – the whole body perception of and interaction with the life-force or living essence of a place. In order to encourage these perspectives, and to get people into their bodies, the daily schedule was to begin with meditation at 6 am followed by yoga or some other form of body movement from 7 am to 8 am.

Since I devised the schedule, it was my responsibility to implement it; so I awoke that first morning – and every morning thereafter – at quarter-to-six, roused myself out of bed, picked up the gong and then strolled down through the orchard that was home to the ‘tent village,’ ringing the gong rhythmically as I went. As people began stirring, I made my way down to the field that was pre-designated as the meditation and ritual spot. This was the field in which Kim and Aaron, two of the residents, got married, so it was primed with that special kind of high-intention energy. In that field at the break of dawn, we could sit facing East while the Sun would gradually rise over the foothills before us. As I settled into my meditation, I could hear behind me the footsteps of others coming in to get settled.

After meditation, Steve Davis, one of the students and owner of a Yoga Studio in Seattle, led us through one of his routines. That’s always been my vision of an ideal day – to start off with meditation and yoga before breakfast – and here we were at the Design Course living that ideal. (Design Courses are like that: they can be holographic representations of the ideal living situations we want to bring forth.) After yoga, I went up to the kitchen to lay out breakfast. I strategically put on lively chant music by the Indian saint Ammachi to set the mood, and played that same music for each breakfast session thereafter, thus setting up a recognizable pattern. When I hear that music now, I am gently transported back to that time-space. I must admit, those breakfast sessions were some of the highest, most jovial times of the day. The combination of the meditation and yoga beforehand, the spiritual music, the good wholesome food, the early morning sun lighting up the atrium that was our dining room – not to mention the

well-meaning intent of all the people in attendance, thinking and talking about better ways to live – created an atmosphere of nothing less than divine purpose (Criterion 14).

## COURSE CONTENT: PHASE I

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That subliminal undercurrent of the self-organizing process continued right on through the actual classroom periods. Ty and I had sketched an initial outline – framed within the original daily schedule of four educational sessions each for Phase I, followed by a more free flowing evening session – but the actual content for each of those sessions was still very much in question on the opening day of the EDC. We were surely improvising but that's not to say we were unprepared – we had *more* than enough material; the challenge was introducing **that** which was most essential into our condensed format. We would be strategically filling eight educational sessions on the first two days, followed by three days of Design Studio, with a total of four evening sessions. Complicating matters somewhat, we also had to fit in a reduced roster of five guest presenters. I knew it was going to be tight, and on opening day I wished I hadn't invited so many guest presenters. I also knew that this event would pass by very quickly.

On the very first session of the very first day of VDI's very first EDC, we all assembled in the goat barn classroom and went through the necessary formalities of introduction – introducing ourselves, VDI, Ecovillage Design as a discipline, the greater ecovillage 'movement,' Pragtri Farm and the Evergreen Land Trust – and of course, the students introduced themselves. This is always a fun time at a Design Course, when everyone gets a chance to hear a little bit about the motivations and background of the people they've fortuitously gathered with. At that time, there were just six students, and they already enjoyed a rapport of jocund familiarity, having met each other at the party the night before.

For the second session, I presented a slide-show featuring the world's premier ecovillage models. The slide-show then went on to explore the apparent fascination with the theme of the 'village,' and the full implications of an authentic Village Design. That was a good introduction I thought, a good overview.

For the two afternoon sessions, I turned the floor over to my trusted Associate Faculty – Tyrone Lafay. He did two permaculture presentations he learned in Australia, including a card game to become acquainted with fundamental principles. We were presenting Ecovillage Design as an advanced form of Permaculture Design; Permaculture is the foundation (Criterion 1).

I wasn't able to witness these presentations because I had to leave that afternoon to drive to the Seattle airport to pick up our only intended celebrity for the event – Mr. Phil Hawes, chief architect of Biosphere II. I had previously attended an Ecological Design

School that Phil set up at a villa near La Rochelle, France back in 1998, and became very impressed with his comprehensive grasp of a full design scenario. Much of my vision for our Design Studio came from participating in that Design Studio we set up on site there in France.<sup>7</sup>

I paid to fly Phil up from Arizona and gave him some travel expenses, not so much to come as a guest presenter but to be there as a respected resource. He proved to be a very valuable asset indeed, in a variety of ways, and helped lend the Course an air of professional credibility. More importantly, he seemed to have a whole lot of *fun*, and fit right in, showing up for the meditation and yoga in the morning and then appearing at the musical fire pit at night to sing a song. Phil will always be welcome at a VDI Design Course.

By the time we got back from the airport, dinner was almost finished (so much traffic!). After dinner, I set up a VCR and pulled out our video collection but most of us ended up in the sauna instead.

On Day 2, I used the first session to present my favorite slide-show: a comparison of *sustainable* settlement patterns, likened to biological structures – living systems – with *unsustainable* settlement patterns, likened to machines – mechanical systems. The full implications of this slide-show are often difficult to accept for people living in the square grid of cities, yet it always sparks some lively discussion. Inevitably, the long-term viability of civilization itself is brought into question.

For the second session, Phil came in and drew from his vast reservoir a selection of slides featuring traditional village motifs, highlighting vernacular design strategies that were (and are) very effective for promoting the sustainability of the village. This was like a world tour.

For the third session, after lunch, I thought there had been enough sitting down time the past couple days, so I improvised an activity: we formed some coat hangers into dowsing rods and went out in the Sun to see if we could verify the locations of the so-called “energy vortex” and the “negative water line.” I thought this verification was important for the client’s own awareness and well-being as well as for the upcoming design scenario. There were mixed reactions to this exercise, some people feeling more comfortable with dowsing than others; but, significantly, we *did* find both the water line and an area of heightened energetic activity in the vicinity of the reported vortex. We duly made note of these influences on our maps.

Session 4 saw the appearance of Sun Ray Kelly – our regional maestro of natural building – showing some slide images of his handiwork. Sun Ray had an extended presence at Pragtri, going back many months. He was partnering with Sylvia so he was

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<sup>7</sup> The other significant influence for the Design Studio came from recently experiencing a very useful Sustainable Village Design Course at the Farm’s Ecovillage Training Center, Spring 2003, facilitated by Greg Ramsey of Village Habitat Design. Both these talented men – Greg and Phil – were trained as architects.

often there, going along with whatever was happening at the time. He was a friend and part of the community; that he happened to be also a world-renowned natural builder was just adornment. That's what I mean by emphasizing that this was a *regional* event, very much a community-based event. I didn't really think of Sun Ray as a guest presenter; he was just part of the place. Since he brought his slides we fit him into the schedule.

That ended Phase I of the EDC – Epistemology Building. For what it was worth, the students got two days of images and patterns, concepts and theories, information and knowledge, to influence their decisions in Phase II –the Design Studio. They were by no means fully prepared for a comprehensive design scenario but they had enough to get started. Fundamental principles are the key: over and over again, until it seeps into the subconscious, reiterate fundamental principles.

As dinner time arrived on that second day, a whole swarm of new students appeared at the Farm – our population doubled within a couple hours! These were the people who could only come for a 3-day weekend Design Charrette. Soon the place was abuzz with all the new activity and new connections being made, everybody smiling and enjoying themselves, the newcomers appearing to be happy to be out of the city and into our verdant design venue. The old students seemed eager to connect with the new students and vice versa – there was an energetic exchange of perspectives, opinions, and enthusiasm. The atrium that was our dining room was so full that evening that some folks had to sit at tables outside.

For the evening session, a friend named Cori – one of the original Core Team – was scheduled to give a presentation she called “Inner Landscape/Outer Landscape,” a sort of psycho-spiritual, communicating with Nature exercise. She was even planning to bring an anatomy chart, making reference to acupuncture points on the body and then correlating them with energy points on the landscape. This was just the type of material that I had been promoting as VDI's unique approach – whole body awareness as a prerequisite for integrated ecological design – so I willingly turned the time over to her.

As it turned out, her presentation lacked substance. The majority of her discussion was quoting examples from the book *Biomimicry* by Janine Benyus. Then she had us walk down to a field and stand there in a circle holding hands while we were supposedly opening up communication with Nature. For me it was a bit uncomfortable: not only was it almost completely dark, with mosquitos swarming all over us, but it felt all a little forced, contrived. Have you ever had that feeling? – awkwardly standing in silence in a circle, just looking around, as if something is supposed to be happening but really just wanting to go off and do something else? Well that's how I felt. I felt it so much more intensely because for half of the students this was their very first session of the Course, their opening impression of a VDI presentation.

Cori's still young and she's got a ways to go before she's qualified to be Associate Faculty. Next time I will be much more discriminating and will be sure to energize those critical introduction periods myself.

Next day was to begin our Design Studio...

## COURSE CONTENT: PHASE II

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In an Introduction Letter in the Student Info Packet, I stated that our upcoming EDC would be distinctive by placing a much greater emphasis on the Design Studio phase. This was making a comparison with prior EDCs and PDCs I had attended where the actual time allotted to design work was minimal. Taking a cue from design teachers such as Phil Hawes and Greg Ramsey, I wanted to offer the students an *extended* Design Studio, allowing greater scope for the formation and synthesis of ideas. This Design Studio was to be the heart of our EDC, and everything else was intended to be preparation leading up to this phase. Of course, that was the plan for the original 10-day version; as it turned out, for most of the participants a 3-day Design Studio *was* the entire Course.

Three days was not a lot of time to produce quality design proposals, something that could be useful for the clients, so it was necessary to jump right into the design sequence. Three more of the students arrived that morning of Day 3 (Day 1 of the Charrette), bringing our total to 15, so now we could begin feeling and acting as a whole. Right after breakfast, we assembled in the meditation field to conduct an Opening Ceremony. I called in a friend who is studied in these matters – Kelly Keane – to facilitate. After a round of introductions by first me and then all the new people, Kelly lit some candles on the altar at the center of our circle and then proceeded to call in the four directions.<sup>8</sup> Not quite solemn but nevertheless sincere, she offered some blessings for our experience and then led us in a couple singing circle dances. I believe it is very important to conduct some kind of Opening Ceremony like this, at any kind of conscious gathering, just to set a firm wholesome intention. The Ceremony becomes a sort of psychological transition zone, a threshold between the ordinary life ‘back there’ and the ideal living situation that is here at the gathering.

After the Opening Ceremony, we all assembled back into the goat barn classroom to begin our experience – and the goat barn was looking pretty filled up by that point. In order to set the pace, the first thing I did was to write an agenda on the white board listing the steps we would be taking in our Design Process, and the list looked like this:

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<sup>8</sup> This Report would not be complete without introducing the ‘Pixies’ – the four little girls, ages 7-12, who live at Pragtri. They were present in varying degrees throughout the Course, usually off playing somewhere but every once in a while popping into the goat barn to check things out. That playful innocent child presence was warmly welcomed. For the Opening Ceremony, Kelly had each one of the Pixies dressed up to represent one of the four elements. The day before, I commissioned them to construct an altar in the center of the field, and they did a fabulous job.

- 1) Visioning/Brainstorming (this had already been accomplished)
- 2) Set the Intention (our Opening Ceremony)
- 3) Programming (clarifying what the client wants)
- 4) Settlement Design Techniques (an overview)
- 5) Site Tour
- 6) Site Analysis (using the base map and permaculture sector techniques)
- 7) Bubble Diagram (conceptual and thematic zones)
- 8) Site Plan (using overlays and cutouts)
- 9) Isometric of Site Plan
- 10) Plan of an Individual Building
- 11) Isometric of Building
- 12) Selected Elevation

This was an ambitious list, especially for novice designers, but at least everyone could see at a glance the full potential scope of our Design Studio; and items could be checked off as they were achieved, gauging our progress as we went along.

Since the first two items on the list had already been accomplished, we moved on to the Programming. Sylvia took a chair at the front of the group so we could conduct a 'client interview' – standard procedure even at PDCs. She then proceeded to enunciate the prospects for Pragtri Farm, which were the results of the visioning process held during the Spring. These were our project parameters. Since she had already become well-versed in the various legal aspects of zoning, clustering, sub-plat subdivisions, etc. she was able to present a very realistic case with very realistic challenges. It became apparent that this was a real-life design scenario, not a fantasy, and I think all the students appreciated that. As interviewers, they asked many pertinent questions, and I encouraged them to take detailed notes. The combination of these notes plus the list of items from the brainstorming session then provided these student-designers with a comprehensive picture of what exactly they were designing for.

During the next session, Ty provided an overview of Settlement Design Techniques, another presentation he had picked up 'down under.' We thought it was important to add this information; but in retrospect it may have been better reserved for Phase I. As it was, the energy had been building that morning into an active design sequence, and an informational presentation seemed to mollify or digress somewhat that ascension of purpose.

At lunchtime on that first day of Design Studio, our sixteenth student finally arrived. This person flew his own plane up from the south of Washington into the local airport. He was a friend of Steve Davis, so Steve went to pick him up. I tried to keep him a secret so as not to cause a stir, but somehow the word got out – it was Krist Novoselic, the bass player from the enormously successful grunge band Nirvana. They sure had

some influence in the Seattle area. Krist was really interested in finding out what an EDC is all about, and he turned out to be a whole lot of fun.

After lunch, we all gathered for the all-important and eagerly awaited Site Tour. I gave each participant an 8.5 x 11 aerial photo map to guide their way, requesting that they record their various perceptions and observations on the map as they went along. This was my chance to encourage the ‘whole body awareness’ that was a stated emphasis of the VDI design approach. We began the tour in the road, at the very entrance to the property, and then circumnavigated the 20 acres from there. Aaron, the resident farmer, guided us on this tour, and I tried to encourage a brisk pace.

As is usually the case, this segment took longer than I expected, so we ended up back at the goat barn with what seemed to be precious little time left for all the subsequent steps of the design process planned for that day. Since the holistic apprehension of the Farm was still fresh, I moved right into the Site Analysis mapping.<sup>9</sup> First we had to organize into Design Teams, then each Team got one of the base maps. They then proceeded, as a group, to draw on a tracing paper overlay their Site Analyses, concentrating especially on energy flows – wind, sun, water, views, information, animal migrations, etc. – while making note of prominent features. Interestingly, the water line and the energy vortex made it on these maps.

That exercise didn’t take as long as I thought it would, so we had a chance to display a couple of the maps up front while the respective Design Teams rationalized their choices and fielded questions from the audience. This was a good opportunity for me to ask strategic questions designed to influence and guide the eventual outcome, and I made sure Phil and Ty got a chance to offer their own perceptions. It really started to feel like a Design Studio after that group thinking session.

I felt like I was accelerating the process but I wanted to get as much done as possible before dinner, so I pushed the Teams into drawing their Bubble Diagram overlays. This is a very effective technique used by Landscape Architects to conceptually sub-organize a property into thematic zones. Once the zones are established, all the elements and subsystems from the Programming and Brainstorming sessions can then be situated into particularly appropriate zones. This is not quite the same as permaculture zoning but it is complementary.

Sometime during that exercise, another one of those unplanned quirks appeared that seems to highlight the mysterious efficacy of the self-organizing process. At some point, Krist Novoselic brought a case of white wine into the goat barn. Before I knew it, each of the Design Teams had a bottle of wine sitting on their drawing boards – and then the design ideas *really* started flowing! I too went along with this flow, though passed up the wine. All in all, I thought we had had a very productive day, so it was marvelous

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<sup>9</sup> Ty and I had gone down to the County Planners office weeks before to create a base map. We decided on an aerial photo of the site, approximately 2 feet by 3 feet, at a scale of 1 inch = 50 feet.

that everybody could unwind and goof off a bit. That night there was a big party around the fire pit. Krist stayed up late playing guitar and singing songs. The wine was all gone the next morning.

Day 4 of the EDC, Day 2 of the Design Charrette, was a Saturday. I woke up a little groggier than usual but still got down to ring the call-for-meditation gong before six. We started off the educational presentations with our final guest presenter – a civil engineer named Chris Webb.<sup>10</sup> Max thought it was very important to have an engineering perspective in any version of an Ecovillage Design Course, so we made that space available. Mr. Webb has made a niche for himself in our region by pioneering ‘alternative’ engineering techniques – such as permeable driveway surfaces and constructed wetlands for water remediation, etc. It’s encouraging to know that Mr. Webb’s business keeps growing, meaning that ‘alternative’ techniques are becoming more and more acceptable to the mainstream. (Or else the mainstream is becoming more ‘alternative.’ Max himself insists on keeping Ecovillage Design pointed to the mainstream.)

Besides providing useful information that could be applied directly to our design scenario, it was advantageous to bring in Chris because he conducted himself as a professional with a professional power-point presentation. This appealed, no doubt, to the professionals in our student audience, some of whom were desirous of making connections to expand their networks. I, of course, was very conscious of the time, and after a couple hours had passed, I began making closing gestures from the back of the room. It was important to get out as much information as possible but it also was necessary to keep each segment of the Course in relative proportion to the whole.

I must admit, I was very anxious to get on with the design work: this was the very purpose, after all, of this Design Charrette. After Chris left, I got up in front of the room and reviewed the Design Process. I then described again the purpose of the Site Design within the larger scheme of things, and offered some suggestions for getting started. I also displayed some of the maps I had drawn to give some examples of how to visually display information, and Ty had some high quality maps to share from his New Zealand days. It was all rather rushed, I thought, but it still took us right up to lunchtime.

By that afternoon, the tempo seemed to shift of its own accord: The rest of the Course was pretty well devoted to working on these Site Design maps; we didn’t get much further than that, although one Team did finish in time to begin some floor plans, and a beautiful drawing of the proposed Community Center came out of that work. By and large, the rest of the sessions were passed rather leisurely as each of the groups worked out their ideas together, then began transposing these ideas onto their maps,

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<sup>10</sup> There actually was one more guest presenter planned, an alternative energy expert, but fortunately he called and canceled. It would definitely have been disruptive to the Design Studio to try and squeeze him in.

finally refining the maps with color, texture, and detail in preparation for the final presentations.

During this period, we had CDs playing background music, with tea and snacks available to encourage a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere. Ty and I, and sometimes Phil, would randomly rotate among the teams, sitting down for a while to answer or ask questions, to offer suggestions, or otherwise to just observe. The drawing tables were designed to be mobile, so intermittently one of the Teams would relocate outside somewhere to gain a fresh perspective of the place. From time to time, a Team member would get up to take a break, strolling over to our library to research insights, or to engage in conversation with another interlocutor. Before long, books and notes were strewn about the goat barn. By then, I had stopped being the pace setter. Wanting to be receptive to the mood of the group, I let events unfold as they will; everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves and the work was moving along smoothly. Somewhere, Phil said with a pat on the back, "You're doing a great job." This statement was ultra-meaningful coming from a mentor I had learned from and studied with in France. At some point, I remember Tyrone saying, "Everyone's blissed out."

That evening, both Phil and Sun Ray gave slide-shows. I missed these, however, because I suddenly had the need to be quiet, solo, and still. I wandered off and found a place to sit amongst the trees, attempting to integrate all that had happened the past several days (the past several months?). There was another musical session around the fire pit that night, though much more subdued than the previous night. Looking around the circle at the glowing faces, I had that cozy feeling of being surrounded by loving friends. For some reason, it felt like we were all living an alternate reality; the very best of each of us was coming out. Walking back to the goat barn before retiring, I witnessed a couple students staying up late to work on their drawings. Life felt good.

The final day of the EDC, my GDP, began like all the rest: meditation, body movement (this time led by an Antioch graduate with a black belt in karate – John Ruby), a delicious breakfast accompanied by background spiritual music, and happy, friendly conversation. We really started to feel like a community by that time, as if we could go on living with each other like this forever.

Back at the goat barn for Session 1, I felt the need to once again reassert the pace. Representatives from the Evergreen Land Trust – some of the appointed clients – were going to be arriving by 4 pm to receive the presentations, so I wanted to be sure we made the best impression possible. I once again reviewed the Design Process and provided reasons for the steps we were taking. Most of the Site Designs were starting to become presentable, but details were still missing to give them that professional touch – things like a legend, a scale, the solar arc, the north arrow, etc. Ty and I spent the

morning visiting with the Teams, attending to these details. Since lunch was from 1-2, there wouldn't be a whole lot of time in the afternoon to do the finishing touches.

Right on schedule, about ten minutes to four, the Evergreen Land Trust started appearing in the goat barn. By presentation time, I counted a total of seven of them, plus five other guests not associated with the Trust, including Antioch alumnus John Schinnerer. If I said that the goat barn was pretty well filled up before, by this time it had reached maximum occupancy: some people had to stand. I was so happy to see such a positive response to our invitations; it just makes it that much more exciting for the students to be presenting to an interested full house. Two of the Teams were still drawing as the first Team got up to display their maps and describe the work with which they had been engaged over the past few days.

Like the Ecovillage Design Course at that time, this Report is drawing to a close. Suffice it to say that the presentations went smoothly and everybody seemed to be satisfied with the outcome of the Course. After the presentations, I made sure to gather all the course participants for a Closing Ceremony (Kelly Keane had returned to facilitate). At that final circle, there were a couple of teary eyes. We had all come together for a high-minded, open-hearted purpose and soon we would all be departing. Collectively, we had created an idealized 'alternate reality' for a space of time and soon we would all be returning to the sometimes-disconcerting reality 'out there.' I used the opportunity to describe my viewpoints concerning this whole Ecovillage Design vision – how I see it as part of the next step in planetary evolution. I also expressed my complete jubilation with the Course and my endearing appreciation for all the participants. I reminded them that we had just caught a glimpse, and encouraged them to continue to explore their particular passions, whatever they are, in this expansively multi-dimensional endeavor. In turn, each of the participants also had a chance to express their feelings and points of view. It was a warm and tender series of moments. We ended with a final song led by Kelly, a big group hug, and then a resounding collective OM.

All the guests had been invited to stay for dinner, so I was very conscious of getting to the kitchen to extend formalities. The walk back to the kitchen was very much like a procession – the whole group seemed to move at once as one whole body. Sylvia and I were arm in arm, still singing that final song, something about community. Someone suggested showing appreciation for Linda, our hard-working chef, so we showed up in the kitchen chanting her name, then gave *her* a big group hug as *her* tears began to roll. It was magic.

We were all so interested in being with each other that I'm afraid the guests didn't get much attention. The Closing Ceremony took so long that some of the guests had already eaten and left. That's OK: it's all part of the self-organizing process. It was important for the EDC participants to solidify their connections and make future plans

with one another. Gradually, however, the Sun did set, the darkness did advance, and one by one the participants got in their automobiles, said a final goodbye, and departed.

A few, however, stayed over for another musical fire pit!

## AFTERMATH

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On that first morning after the EDC, I had the incredible feeling that something extraordinary had just transpired. I went down to the goat barn and sat there for hours, reliving the intensity, as a stream of images – smiling faces and snippets of conversation and events – passed before my mind’s eye. To my surprise, that delightfully entertaining stream continued to flow spontaneously for a week or more.

I eventually pulled myself out of my reverie long enough to begin the task at hand: deconstructing our little grassroots school. Placing all the materials back into boxes was a highly emotional event – the whole place was still alive with vibration. Each book, each pencil, each teacup held a memory. By noon of the next day, after some rejuvenation time at the local creek, we were ready to load up the van and depart ourselves. I actually would’ve liked to stay a little longer, even to write this whole Report in that goat barn, but without an automobile I’ve got to go when the ride goes.

And so, we did eventually settle back into ordinary reality but something definitely had shifted: we all created a lot of positive energy at the event and for a while afterward I felt like I was floating in a bubble of that positive energy. Part of the shift resulted from the recognition that we had pulled off a fairly significant feat – we had successfully managed the manifestation of an Ecovillage Design Course – so we were operating on a new level of personal achievement. In my life, this meant that my Master’s degree work was coming to a close, with whatever transition that implies. But there was also a more general type of transformation, a heightened sense of being-ness, something to do with playing an active role in planetary healing.

During that first week back, several of the participants felt moved to send out group e-mails to everyone on the Contact List, and these messages expressed sentiments similar to what I’ve described above: They were transformed somehow (Criterion 14); they really missed everyone; their life was full of new options; they were touched by the sense of community they experienced; they wanted to live at the Design Course forever; etc. Sylvia reported that she could still hear laughter in the atrium that was our dining room, and that Pragtri Farm was resonating with a renewed sense of vitality. I waited a week or so, for the New Moon in Leo, before sending out my own group e-mail describing my perceptions. As the primary organizer, I thought I would attempt to make a final, thoughtful closing.

But from the perspective I have now, it's quite clear that the end of that event was really just a beginning. On the circuit of gatherings that is the Summer Season in Cascadia, many of the participants had a chance for a reunion at the Garlic Festival – conveniently located right down the road from Pragtri Farm. Then, just a couple weekends ago, many of us had a chance to reunite at the Northwest Herbal Faire. At that local community event, Ty played the role of Volunteer Coordinator and I worked in the outdoor staff kitchen. After the Faire was over, a bunch of us who had been at the EDC gathered at Sun Ray's magical little hamlet, where Bhagavan Das showed up for a kirtan. Everywhere we went, the EDC participants were a bonded sub-community. I hear that many of the participants from the Seattle area have been using Steve's yoga center as a place for re-connection. One of the students has already expressed the desire to move in at Pragtri; another will be using his surveying skills to do some detailed topography mapping of the place; and yes, almost fittingly, a fairly serious romance has blossomed between two of the Course participants. As well as an informational educational event, that EDC was a medium for generating a whole lot of community.

And that's not all: some professional prospects have arisen in the aftermath of the EDC. One of the participants, Ben Berkman, is the land manager for a 350-acre project in the mountains of Eastern Washington – Tierra Learning Center. Apparently, they're planning to combine a residential quarter with an educational sector and public zone. Ben says he's lined up a roster of professionals and says he wants VDI to come in and take them through our holistic Design Process. Also, one of the participants owns a half-acre in Seattle. He's asked Ty and myself to come down in late September to give a weekend Urban Permaculture workshop. Additionally, Phil's got a project just materializing in Arizona and he's already suggested the possibility of VDI doing a Design Course down there.

The end of the EDC, my GDP, was very much the beginning of a new phase of activity: for me this will concentrate on post-grad work. As soon as this Report is finished and sent out, I'll be completing the application for a Ph.D. program in Santa Barbara.

But what about my clients? Wasn't the GDP all about working with clients? Well yes, that too is in process. Ty, Sylvia and I have already critically evaluated the Site Plans drawn at the Course. Sometime during the Autumn, we will be creating a composite map, taking all the best ideas from the students and adding some of our own. This refined, professional Site Plan will then be presented to decision-makers at Evergreen Land Trust. It's really up to them what they do after that; I will have fulfilled my contract as a designer. Somehow, I can imagine future EDCs at the rest of the Land Trust properties; though, at the moment, there has been no official response from the Trust.

In summary, I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that VDI's first Ecovillage Design Course was a phenomenal success. The positive energy we created at the event has already been reverberating throughout our region and has influenced certain parts of

the U.S. With the distribution of the Report, Australia, Denmark, and Scotland will be touched. Isn't it all about the energy? That's what the quantum physicist and the serious student of meditation would say: there is no material basis to reality: it's *all* energy.

I feel the responsibility now to respectfully nurture and guide the good, wholesome, positive energy that's been generated, to see it grow and reproduce itself, perhaps transmuting someday into a world-class ecovillage right here in Cascadia.

I want to extend my most genuine appreciation and gratitude to all the people who had some part to play, in some form or fashion, in the manifestation of VDI's first Ecovillage Design Course. This list of contributor's is amazingly long, including all the people who will be reading this Report. I am truly blessed to have so many awesome, talented, well-meaning and high-mind collaborators and co-conspirators in my life, a congenial coterie who witnessed in the Spring and Summer of 2003 an Ecovillage Design Course manifesting itself.

## EVALUATIONS

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I've already included partial and preliminary evaluations throughout this Report. In this section, I will formally evaluate the Graduate Design Project for my M.A. in Whole Systems Design at Antioch University Seattle, making reference to the Degree Process as a generic model for professional Design Process.

In the original Project Proposal, written 11 November 2002 (See Appendix 1), I summarized my intentions for the GDP as follows: "The newly established Village Design Institute will present an organized educational experience with the title "Fundamentals of Village Design" at Pragtri Farm." At that point, that's all there was to it. This Proposal was realized, with some minor modifications.

A month after the Proposal was written, the Village Design Institute was indeed formally incorporated as an educational non-profit in the State of Washington. I strategically made this move, first, so that the upcoming educational experience would be presented by an *organization*, with an *organizational* agenda, rather than just by me as an aspiring individual; and second, because this incorporation was a firm statement that the implementation of my GDP would be a transition – a rite of passage – from studenthood to livelihood. All this did transpire (and is currently transpiring).

In the previously mentioned Context Paper, written as an outline for a generic model of a proposed kind of multi-dimensional educational experience, I included a lengthy discussion about my reasons for choosing the title "Fundamentals of Village Design" over the more commonly used title "Ecovillage Design." My rationale was based on the observation that the word 'ecovillage' has come to be employed for a wide variety of settlement types, thus diffusing its potential to be a meaningful standard – especially in an academic, ekistic interpretation of Settlement Geography. Since over my years of schooling I have developed a definition of 'ecovillage' as: "the sustainable 'unit' of human settlement in a theoretical ekistics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century," I wanted to practice forwarding and substantiating this perspective in the educational experience I was designing. My thesis was (and still is) that true sustainability begins with organization at *village* scale, with all that implies.

As I began preparing for the implementation of the GDP, I realized that "Fundamentals of Village Design" would tend to appeal to a more select, studied audience. In order to attract a greater number of prospective participants, I compromised my ideal by advertising the upcoming educational experience with the more aesthetically

and sentimentally appealing title “Ecovillage Design.”<sup>11</sup> As it turned out, after the students were assembled, I did get an opportunity to forward my thesis in the Epistemology Building of Phase I. I explained that the design scenario at Pragtri was not exactly *eco-village* scale, nor even *eco-hamlet* scale, but rather more accurately *eco-enclave* scale. Would anybody have responded to a call for an Eco-Enclave Design Course?

In the original Project Proposal, I identified the client as the Evergreen Land Trust. Throughout the visioning process of the Spring, however, I was working directly with the residents of Pragtri Farm; thus I considered them to be my true clients. The Evergreen Land Trust, though legal holder of the property, remained always in the background. At some point well into the organization of the GDP, a disagreement arose between the residents of Pragtri and the Evergreen Land Trust. The Trust asked the residents to redefine and re-sign their lease agreements in preparation for, we suspected, having a case for asking them to leave. It was then that I found out, with some dismay, that there were members of the Board of the Trust who believed it best to sell Pragtri Farm. I was even told by one member of this Board that a strong, positive showing by the EDC might be influential in a decision to keep the property.

In response to this destabilization and intensification, as the implementation of the proposed GDP was nearing, I wrote a letter to an influential member of the Board describing our actions as being motivated by the Pragtri residents wanting to act independently *in support of* the interests of the Trust. Who then were my clients? I’m still not exactly sure; though Sylvia is the only interested party to have given me recompense. As if to complicate matters even further, I wondered if the prospective *students* might be my clients. After some consultation with my Advisor at Antioch, terms were clarified: the students were my *customers*; the *client* was that entity for whom the design work was being employed. Next time I will seek much greater clarity in defining a specific client.

That pretty well describes my evaluation of the implementation of my GDP in reference to the original Project Proposal.

The actual Project Contract, written 15 March 2003 (See Appendix 2), was much more detailed and specific. In that Contract, I formally proposed to present an “Ecovillage Design Course” at Pragtri Farm. (Yet the Contract was also addressed to the Evergreen Land Trust! It’s much better to have only one specified client). The main body of the Contract was a Project Description outlining the fourteen Design Criteria I articulated in the Context Paper (and included in condensed form an opening section of this Report). This was followed by a Proposed Curriculum, which did subsequently materialize in the scheduling the Core Group designed for the original 10-day version of the Course. The rest of the Contract included sub-sections labeled: Project Organization, Project Team, Project Timetable, Guest Presenters, Cost Estimates, and Liability. I

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<sup>11</sup> It is still my intention to write a book with the title “Fundamentals of Village Design.”

considered this to be a respectable and professional looking Contract Proposal, though I never received any feedback to it, and nothing was ever signed.

As a final evaluation of these Degree Process steps: It was very useful to have this detailed organization at the outset, but, as amply demonstrated in the body of this Report, the whole Project tended to *self-organize* from there, so much of the initially proposed structuring needed to be modified. As a student of Whole Systems Design preparing to enter professional practice, I will surely adhere to the methodology as taught in the School but my own experience has shown me that these are only guidelines, and each individual Project will have its own peculiarities and exceptions.

Above all, the overarching lesson arising from this experience is a cogent reminder that natural living systems *self-organize*. The best a designer can do is to diligently and with great care create an appropriate *context*, and then stand back to observe what actually manifests from within that context. This requires improvising at times, and always utmost attention to feedback-while-in-process. The context I created was a generic model for a multi-dimensional educational experience that I named “Fundamentals of Village Design.” The actual educational experience that did emerge from within that context, however, assumed a life of its own, and was very much a product of the behavior and characteristics of independent specifics such as client(s), site (place), customers, time of year, resources available, my own level of experience, positional location in the evolutionary sequencing of biological life on Earth, etc.

Now that this evaluation of the Degree Process is complete, from a student’s perspective, I can turn my attention to evaluating the actual implementation of the Ecovillage Design Course, from a designer’s perspective. This may be a whole lot more interesting and animating. The overall tone of the Aftermath section was very positive; and indeed, judging from the feedback, the Course was a big success; yet, looking a little deeper, a little closer, there is room for obvious improvement.

Take, for example, the budgeting aspect. I was very fortunate to have had significant financial aid checks deposited in both April and July. Without these subsidies, the EDC would not have taken place at all – period. I used the money for such wide ranging necessities as: new office equipment and office supplies; a brand new slide projector; the copious copying and bulk mail-out costs; the purchasing of a website and then paying someone to do the page layouts; the money went for phone and travel expenses, including a trip to the Farm’s Ecovillage Training Center in June for a Sustainable Village Design Course; for numerous art and drafting supplies for the Design Studio; for purchasing maps from the County Planner’s office; etc., etc. Just as importantly, the financial aid was used to cover my living expenses so I could devote all my attention to the preparation, promotion, organization, and implementation of the

EDC, my GDP. All this was especially time- and resource-consuming because this was the first run, and both the school and the non-profit were being raised up from scratch.

After all the various preliminary expenses had already been paid for, I ended up spending about another \$1200 just to host the Design Course. This sum was calculated after all the student tuitions had been collected and all the staff and guest presenters had been paid, and included, among other things, that \$1100 bulk food order. I started out asking \$500 for the original 10-day version, and most of my consultants thought this was reasonable. Then, when the event was reduced to a 3-day Design Charrette (+2), I called all the prospective students announcing that there would be a \$100 - 150 sliding scale. At that point, my overriding priority was gaining the experience of conducting a Design Course, not necessarily making a profit. A friend of mine, an experienced PC teacher, offered his condolences because he said I lost money; but from my perspective I didn't *lose* any money at all – rather I willingly *invested* some money to produce an inspiring, fulfilling educational event. I was very fortunate to have had access to this money so that I could pay to gain my experience. Of course, I will be expected to pay this money back someday (with interest) but how else could the EDC have happened? From that perspective, procuring and applying the financial aid money was an investment in my future.

In order to be 'sustainable,' however, future Design Courses will need to generate a profit. I think if I charged from \$150-200 next time (and didn't give away so many work-trades and scholarships), I could break even, with a little extra left over for a Seed Fund; and thereafter, with some more experience and hopefully a reputation, I could begin charging enough to support myself for the time and effort. This strategy will be made all the more realizable because each successive presentation will be built upon the foundation of all previous ones, requiring less time, effort, resources, and preparation as they proceed. The real benefit of the VDI model is that a potential EDC could be held almost anywhere, going to where the interest is. Of course, Ecovillage Design Courses will be just one of the money-making activities of the Village Design Institute, as it grows.

I must say, the food at our EDC was really outstanding. The proposed menu for the 10-day Course was so deliciously appetizing that I posted it on the website as enticement. We had two superb, professional chefs cooking for us: Colin did a work-trade – making lunch and dinner for the first two days in exchange for attending the Course; while Linda was in the kitchen the next three days, paid as staff. Mealtimes were always so enjoyable and uplifting that I really came to appreciate the morale-building effects of fine cuisine. Next time, though, I would like to strike more of a balance between gourmet menus and cost-effective budgeting. At the same time, without complaint, for this inaugurating event it felt great to be able to host a culinary feasting for all involved, including the Pixies. Will VDI develop a reputation for exceptional meals at their events? Is this reflective of the values of Sustainable Village Design?

As far as the unfolding of the pedagogical aspects of the Course, there were some useful valuable lessons there as well. For example, at that stage of the Design Studio when the Site Plan work was just getting underway, I went off for a period to regroup myself. I realize now that this stage is the most vitally important time to be present with the students, going from Team to Team, ensuring they get off to a good start, reviewing with them individually process and technique before they begin their drawing. There is an old Taoist saying that goes something like this: “How can you possibly have a successful conclusion if you don’t get off to a good start?” Next time, I want to be there personally facilitating each Team at that critical moment of conception.

I also believe I could have given more detailed, explicit, and pointed directions *throughout* the Design Studio. Particularly, I could have reiterated over and over again design strategies, design questioning, and design sequencing – for example, scanning the larger picture first then gradually zooming in on detail, or working with rough sketches first before making final graphic decisions, or working with simulated cutouts, etc. This would have helped the design students accomplish their map work more effectively, producing better results for the final presentations. I had clear images of how the process should unfold and what the final product should look like but I didn’t do as well as I could have relaying that imagery to the class. Still, the whole event was a big rush, and I did the best I could from my neophyte position.

Another area where I could have done better is in my communication with my Associate Faculty. I sensed more than once that Ty was wanting to have regular check-in dialogues, whereas, once the Course was rolling and seemed to be running smoothly, I was more apt to have faith in the self-organizing process. There was so much already happening that I was feeling reluctant to schedule in more attention times. This may very well be a reflection of our respective teaching styles but it also highlights the one encompassing self-critique of my performance – the overwhelming need for more clear, direct, effective, and deliberate communication all around. When conducting an Ecovillage Design Course or the like, garrulous *over*-communication may be a desirable attribute.

One last comment about the self-organization process of holistic *designing*: Without a clear, solid, well-thought-out and well-articulated conceptual framework beforehand, it will just turn into chaos. Self-organization doesn’t mean anarchy; it means allowing room for the design to manifest of its own accord within the context that’s already been created, thus giving it a life of its own. Planning is something different: planners attempt to conform reality to a rigid, preconceived framework, even if that preconception should prove dysfunctional over time.

At the very end of the EDC, right after the Closing Ceremony, we distributed “Workshop Evaluation and Feedback” forms. I wish to close this Report now by citing selected

responses and remarks from the participants. This may provide more objective evaluations than mine have been, though the tone will be found to be quite similar. Unfortunately, not everyone that attended turned in a form, so our survey is incomplete.

What did you find most valuable? What were the strengths of the Workshop?

- The friendships (or familyships), the basis of community – *Ellen*
- The contact I've made w/professionals. The focused, unselfish & open individuals involved. The real application and presentation to the Land Trust – *Ben*
- The Whole Systems Design! [from an Antioch WSD alum] Strong in leadership, diversity of ideas & backgrounds – *John*
- The sense of community and support that was created by the group dynamics was really inspiring for me. How the workshop was set up...created an atmosphere that allowed the growing community to flourish – *Cara*
- Whole person learning approach: body/mind/spirit; team teaching; flexibility and adaptability; picking paradise for a course location; barn as classroom – *Barbara*
- Somehow you made the work seem like play...more than once I felt like a kid w/my friends

What did you find least valuable? What were the weaknesses of the workshop?

- Direction/goals (micro) were not always clear – *Andy*
- For me, more guidance for the design charrette and mapping process would have been helpful. I found myself having a hard time switching from classroom mode to small group mode. I could have used the small group time more effectively with more specific guidance on the steps, type of design questions we need to ask ourselves, etc. – *Barbara*
- [T]here wasn't enough time to develop ideas and designs – *Cara*
- Should be longer or built into smaller components – *Brian*
- Lack of diversity is BIG. Why isn't PC/Design attracting people of color? – *Ben*

Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve our program?

- More explanation of design techniques – *Peter*
- I'd like to see an advanced course with only professionals – *Ben*
- Maybe, instead of a theory block and a charrette block, it would be better to integrate the two from the beginning: to start the design process and working in groups on day one, for shorter sessions at a time – *Barbara*

- Maybe, bringing out everybody's skills and specific assets (through group building exercises) at the beginning of the course would make it possible to utilize them better, and make each other more aware of each other's backgrounds – *Barbara*
- Needs more time for the wealth of speakers – *Michael*
- Include a more developed course outline in handouts at front end of course – even in materials you send out before course – *Andy*

Were you happy with the food supplied?

- Fabulous, ate too much – *Steve*
- Moderately: a little light on the protein, I tend to eat heavier – *Ben*
- Yes, Yes, Yes, Yummy. Thanx Linda – *Brian*
- Absolutely fabulous – *Barbara*
- Oh my God – THIS was my favorite part – *Andy*

Feedback for Presenters [in the interest of space, I will limit this to two]:

Chris Mare:

- Biggest heart and amazing organizational skills – *Steve*
- Good style Socrates; I like the way you teach: “no ideas are bad.” Focused questioning! – *Peter*
- Good organizing keeping things on track – *Brian*
- You went far and above the average M.A. project (I know) – *John*
- You were always giving support and encouragement to us. I really appreciate that – *Cara*
- Very inclusive and sensitive to groups' needs. Stimulated discussion through thought provoking slides and questions – *Barbara*
- Open, helping – *Michael*
- No more 6 am bell – *Andy*

Tyrone Lafay:

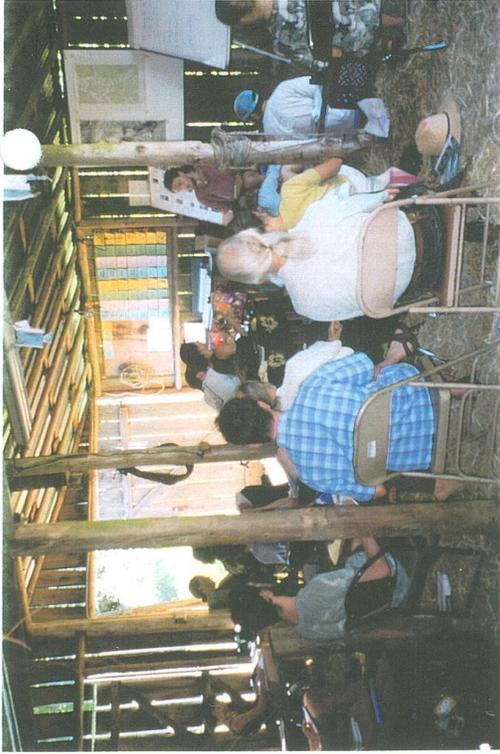
- Studied – *Michael*
- You gave some very valuable input when we were in small groups – I'd have liked more of it – *Andy*
- Very useful, hands-on practical tips on design considerations – *Barbara*
- You are a very talented asset for us all – *John*
- Good guidance – *Brian*

- Very professional, exactly what PC needs! He will go far. Takes it very seriously – *Ben*
- A wealth of knowledge for the asking – *Steve*

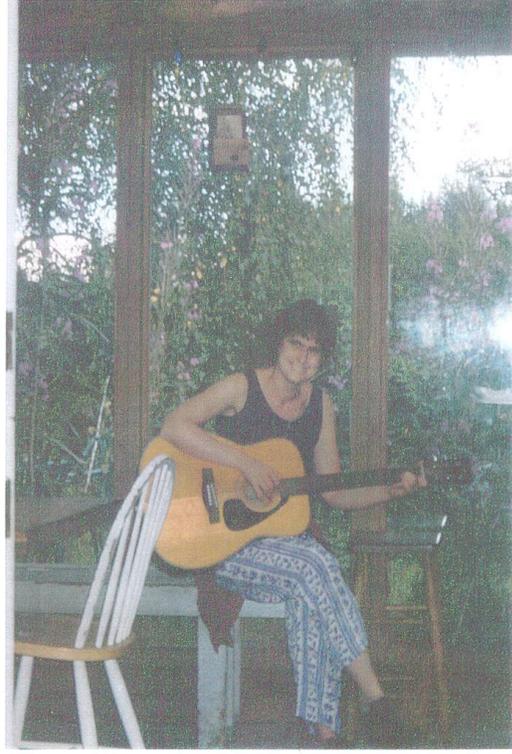
What was your overall impression of the workshop?

- Positive, informative, inspiring, community-minded – *Ellen*
- 1) Life-changing, 2) Awesome, 3) Super contact opportunity for Ecovillage Design...I'm blessed to have been a part of this amazing course! – *Steve*
- Very positive! It was important to understand that this exercise was just a taste. I kinda want it all...2 months might be good – *Peter*
- It was short and rushed. I know it was intended to be longer. But we were effective anyhow. I wished the residents had worked with us. Well-organized and smooth. Chris was a great facilitator – *Ben*
- Showing me that I am on a path of something important to make ecodesign a way of life, that it is happening in a big way – *Brian*
- Together, we have all expanded the crenellated pond in our autopoietic co-evolution – *John*
- Great! Whether I was helping Linda in the kitchen, working with my design team or playing music at the fire, I loved every minute of it!...I feel truly blessed to have been a part of this seed. I look forward to more workshops and experiences in the future – *Cara*
- The workshop was transformational for me. It engrained in me the need for attracting community in my life, connection with nature, connection with like-minded creatures, life-long learning...I'm taking several concrete steps to make changes in my life as a result of the workshop – *Barbara*
- I feel so nourished. I want to stay here forever – *Michael*
- Well-organized and executed workshop! I am really impressed with what you've done with your education – *Andy*

# PHOTO COLLAGE



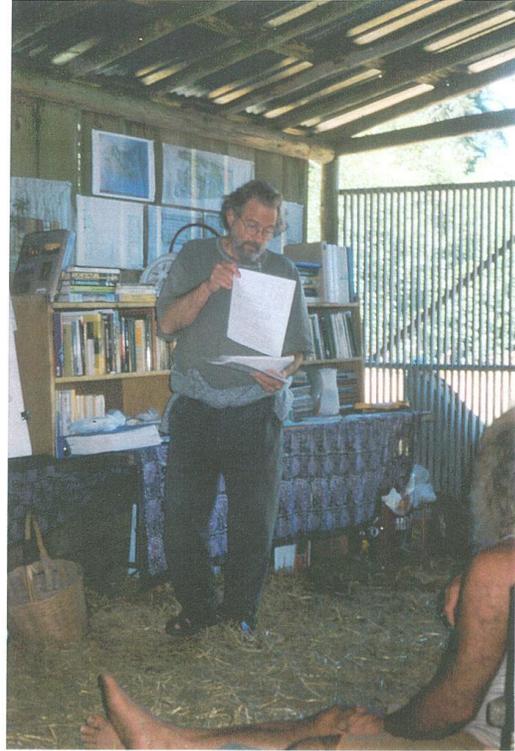
Tyrone gives his presentation of Settlement Design Techniques.



Barbara Ford Wilhelm serenades us on the opening night before the party.



Sylvia conducts the Client Interview. The Design Sequence is in the background.



Phil Hayes always provides ample demonstration.



The outside dining was lively.



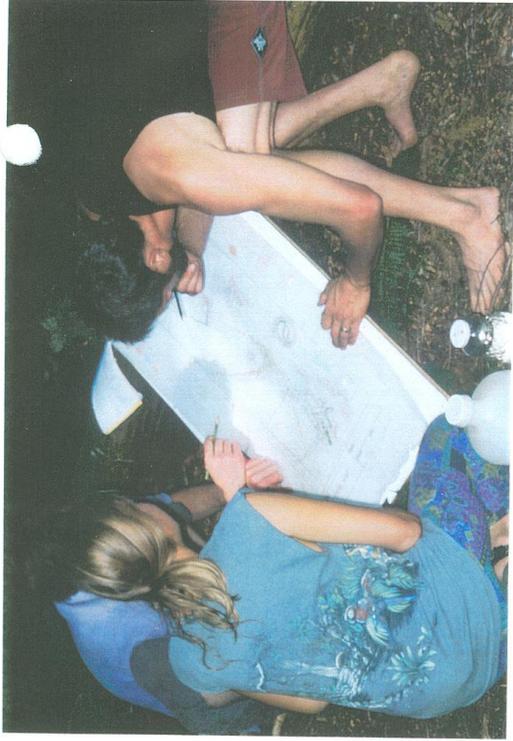
Breakfast in the atrium that was our dining room.



Students taking notes in our grassroots goat barn classroom.



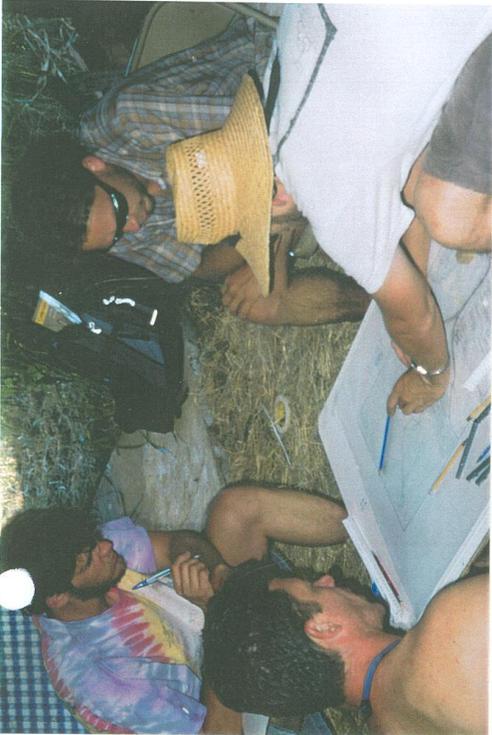
Sun Rau Kelly gives his consultation.



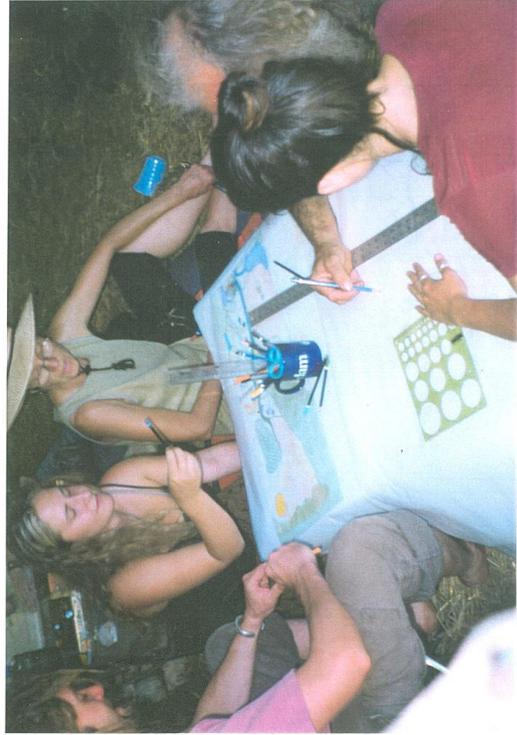
The Water Team took their drawing boards into the woods for a while.



The Earth Team grounded their drawing board on a stump in the shade.



The Fire Team was very energetic indeed.



The Air Team spent a lot of time communicating.



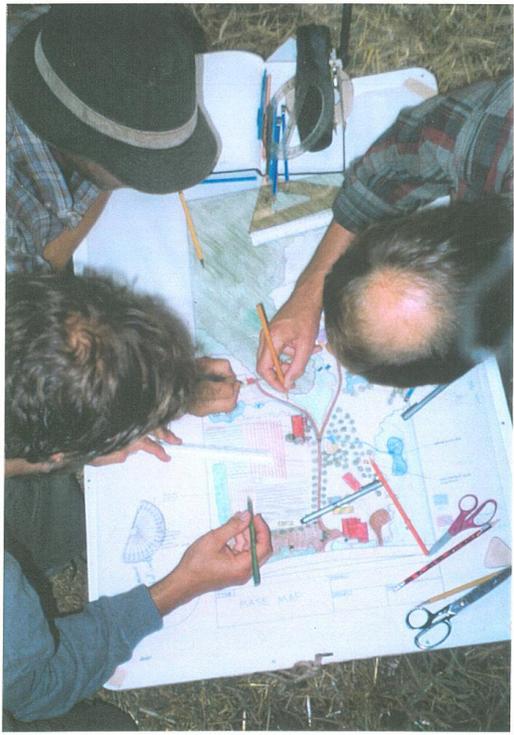
Drawing the Bubble Diagrams.



Even the pixies took their turn at the drawing boards.



Detailing, refining map work.



A collaborative design effort.



The Fire Team gives the first (and longest) presentation.



Sylvia, from the Air Team, shows some detailed work for a floor plan.



Steve and Ellen represent the Water Team.



The goat barn classroom was packed full for the presentations to the Evergreen Land Trust



Site Plan - Water Team



Site Plan - Earth Team



Site Plan - Fire Team



Site Plan - Air Team



The author describes the sequence to the Design Process.



The author introduces the presentations to the Evergreen Land Trust.

# APPENDIX 1 – DESIGN PROJECT PROPOSAL

Design Project Proposal

Whole Systems Design

E. Christopher Mare

11 November 2002

It is time now to begin preparing for the final phase of my Whole Systems Design degree process. This final phase will center around the design, organization, and implementation of a Graduate Design Project (GDP). Successful completion of my GDP will demonstrate acquired proficiency at applying WSD principles to a real-life problem, and from my perspective will be considered an offering to the world at large and a 'rite of passage' between studenthood and livelihood.

Having once misinterpreted the designated purposes of the discrete stages of the degree process, I prematurely submitted a detailed, eighty-one page 'design project proposal' during an earlier stage in this work. That project proposal was a direct outgrowth of the "Ecovillage Design" class I presented during the Design Development phase. In that proposal, I outlined the ramification of the 3-credit Ecovillage Design class into a 12- to 15-credit block synthesizing four distinct sub-themes into a more-inclusive whole. Each of these four separate sub-themes was designed to be a course of its own, and included the titles "Growing Community," "Sustainable Settlements: An Ekistic Approach," "Advanced Human Ecology: Ecological Design," and, of course, "Ecovillage Design." All combined, these four courses were designed to provide a comprehensive, multitudinal introduction to the overarching subject "Fundamentals of Village Design."

Conceptualizing and articulating the inter-referenced informational contents of that initial proposal was a worthy exercise in Whole Systems Design and a valuable learning experience for me. After objectively evaluating the intentions, now in hindsight, it appears that I may have been more motivated by a desire for practicing future professional work for myself than by the task of neatly wrapping up the degree at hand; and that's perfectly OK. I believe this GDP can serve such a purpose: marking the transition, the rite of passage, between graduate school work and life's work, but its status as a transition must be clearly and explicitly recognized and acknowledged in the design of the project. It was a momentous opportunity – and a bit of luck – to have that precursory class approved and listed in the Fairhaven College course catalog. However, by making my next step in the process the sudden expansion of that course into a 12- to 15-credit block, I had a wonderful time practicing 'theoretical ekistics' but showed a marked lack of sensitivity to institutional university dynamics and politics, and created a situation whereby the successful implementation of my proposed GDP would prove to be very difficult, if not downright unrealistic. Like I said, it was a valuable learning experience, on many levels.

I have heard through the grapevine that I may indeed be given another opportunity to teach a class at Fairhaven College, but, should it come, that presentation will probably not be the implementation of my GDP, nor will it likely encompass a 12- to 15-credit block. As Nature continues to self-organize, I accept these developments as they come, as this degree process continues to unfold of its own accord. Since there will surely be constraints at the institutional university level to presenting the holistic range of material that I want to share and convey, in this more officially timed and sanctioned

version of a 'design project proposal' I am going to completely omit Fairhaven College as the targeted client and instead approach this culmination to my degree in a far more independent and personally responsible manner. It may turn out that at some future point the 12- to 15-credit block I theorized will experience some form of manifestation but that is not my concern at this time.

This entirely new and revised 'design project proposal' is a direct outgrowth of the 14-point Design Criteria I outlined in my final Context Paper (draft 5). This new proposal is once again a clear, active, fitting reflection of an Individualized WSD degree devoted to Ecovillage Design, and once again introduces the more-inclusive, more-comprehensive title "Fundamentals of Village Design." This new proposal embodies and reflects all the valuable learning I have integrated during my graduate degree process, on so many levels, up to the present time, but also makes a bold, challenging, and unfamiliar step forward into uncharted territory. After reading this proposal, the initial intention to teach at the undergraduate level in a University will seem rather dry and elementary by comparison.

This new proposal is an holistically organized expression of all the multi-dimensional elements I have come to consider as integral to an organized educational presentation with the title "Fundamentals of Village Design." This is not to say this is the definitive or officially sanctioned list of elements; for they are purely subjectively derived from my own personal experience, interpretation, and learning. The elements are all contained in the 14-point Design Criteria outlined in my Context Paper (draft 5), and I believe I have discussed them conceptually enough there to begin a formal design

process. The boldness of this new proposal comes not so much from *content* as from *context* – the manner in which the GDP will be implemented.

And so, I propose to make the presentation of “Fundamentals of Village Design,” not as an *individual* – a homely graduate student searching for a place to implement a final project -- but as an *organization*, with an *organizational* agenda. That’s right, in preparation for and as a component of this project, I propose setting up an educational non-profit whose first act of organization-hood will be the presentation of an organized educational experience with the title ‘Fundamentals of Village Design,’ which, coincidentally, will also happen to be a formal GDP at Antioch University. In this way, I can synergetically achieve my objective of making this project a rite of passage from studenthood to livelihood, while maintaining consistency and alignment with WSD principles and program requirements.

For years now, I’ve been playing with the idea that the most promising, opportunistic, and effective way to begin the process of setting up an actual ecovillage would be first to establish an educational non-profit as a vehicle for achieving these ends, as a legal entity capable of receiving grants and donations and doing business. I have been ongoingly conceptualizing in some detail the process-thinking underlying and guiding this vision,<sup>1</sup> and it seems to me that this is a propitious time for setting this vision in motion. The actual mechanics for implementing this stage of the project are instrumental and fairly straightforward. I have already selected the minimally-required three-person board of directors and have already chosen a name – “Village Design

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<sup>1</sup> This could be and perhaps will be another whole separate paper. As the final project for my self-designed B.A. degree, I articulated a vision for setting up an “Ecovillage Design School.”

Institute” (what else?!). I have also chosen an auspicious date for submitting the incorporation papers – 9 December 2002.

A specified client for this new proposal has also been selected, or rather has selected itself – The Evergreen Land Trust. This entity is a long-established non-profit holding several properties in Western Washington: The River Farm, Walker Creek, Prag Tree Farm, and a couple of houses in the Seattle area. I believe they are also actively seeking to expand their holdings. Earlier this year, one of the managers of the Prag Tree Farm property contacted me, inspired by an article I wrote for *Communities* magazine describing my self-designed ecovillage education. At that time, this manager explained that Prag Tree Farm was planning to expand their living situation into full ecovillage status, and asked me if I would be interested in participating in the design work. That request was like a gift dropped onto my lap, and now that I am writing this official ‘design project proposal,’ responding to the request seems to be a wholly appropriate application of my 14-point Design Criteria, and a suitable context for implementing my GDP.

So, to summarize, the newly established Village Design Institute will present an organized educational experience with the title “Fundamentals of Village Design” at Prag Tree Farm. This is the essence of my GDP proposal.

## APPENDIX 2 – DESIGN PROJECT CONTRACT

To: Pragtri Farm and Evergreen Land Trust  
From: E. Christopher Mare, President: Village Design Institute  
Subj: Proposal for Presentation of “Ecovillage Design Course”  
Date: 15 March 2003

### 1. Project Overview:

1.1 Introduction – I am poised to complete my Whole Systems Design Master’s degree at Antioch University Seattle. The culmination of this degree will be the conceptualization, design, and implementation of a final Graduate Design Project (GDP). I have extensively outlined my ideas for this GDP in a procedural “Context Paper” (see enclosed), in which I have proposed presenting an ‘organized educational experience’ with the title “Fundamentals of Village Design.”

1.2 The Vehicle – This Project is, in many ways, the transition from academic life to professional life. Accordingly, I have chosen to adopt a professional title by incorporating as a nonprofit with the name “Village Design Institute” (VDI). VDI’s Statement of Purpose, as filed in the Articles of Incorporation, reads:

“The “Village Design Institute” is an educational nonprofit corporation organized for the purpose of creating, ordering, and disseminating a multi- and inter-disciplinary knowledge resource base intended for promoting and encouraging the design of sustainable human settlements for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A fundamental working premise of VDI is that designing truly sustainable human settlements is most effectively accomplished at *village-scale*, with all that implies. As a nonprofit corporation, VDI is intended to serve as the legal entity under which a “Village Design” school will be organized.”

1.3 Collaboration – After numerous discussions with Sylvia Hale, manager of Pragtri Farm, over topics such as sustainability, education, ecovillages, etc. – and our own personal ambitions and visions – the idea presented itself that Pragtri Farm would be a suitable, if not ideal, location for the implementation of my GDP. This proposal, then, is the formalized presentation of that seed idea, addressed now to all concerned.

### 2. Project Description:

2.1 Outline – Listed in the Context Paper under the heading “Design Criteria” are the following general considerations for an ‘organized educational experience’ with the title “Fundamentals of Village Design:”

A) The Project will be grounded in Permaculture – Permaculture is the foundation. “Ecovillage Design” will be presented as an advanced form of “Permaculture Design,” so students with a prior background will be preferred.

B) The Project will be a detailed exploration of the fundamental premise: “in order to be sustainable, human systems must be modeled upon natural systems.” This premise will be further expanded by stating: “in order to be

sustainable *human settlements* must be modeled upon natural *living systems*.

- C) The Project will be designed to align with the principles, values, and goals espoused by the “Village Design” and “Ecovillage Design” courses sponsored or endorsed by the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN). Max Lindegger – GEN Secretariat, principal designer of Crystal Waters Permaculture Village, and founder of Crystal Waters College – is serving as an outside field advisor for this Project.
- D) The preliminary stages of the Project will be devoted to articulating and providing a firm epistemological base from which to begin the actual process of competently conceptualizing and designing ecological villages.
- E) It will be advantageous to examine prior settlement patterns that were effective in their times as well as to explore the upsurge of contemporary design alternatives, including: ‘ecovillages,’ ‘ecocities,’ ‘ecohamlets,’ ‘ecoaldeas,’ ‘cohousing,’ ‘land trusts,’ ‘intentional communities’ and ‘the illusion of independence on 5-acres,’ etc.
- F) The Project will be physically located at a place where real ecological design work can be administered and practiced, so that theory and practical application can be balanced and integrated into a holistic learning experience.
- G) The design component of the Project will be presented as constitutionally *process-oriented*, meaning that *how* the designs are arrived at will be given a higher evaluational priority than the actual tangible design work accomplished; we will be emphasizing a *Group Design Process*.
- H) The actual ecological design strategy that will be employed will be the famously efficacious “transparency overlay” technique developed and refined by Ian McHarg in his seminal *Design With Nature*.
- I) The participants themselves will be organized as a coherent community, in so far as that is possible, simulating the community design team that would come together to initiate their own (eco)village project.
- J) The Project will be designed to be a “transforming learning experience,” meaning that, if successful, experiencing the Project will induce a fundamental perception or paradigm shift in the participants. In order to facilitate this perception shift, the program will be presented as a whole – mind, body, spirit – educational experience.
- K) It is very important that the presentation of the Project be a *collaborative* effort, enlisting the participation of many of the bright and knowledgeable minds in the community as guest presenters.
- L) The pedagogical climate will focus not so much on relaying or transmitting information or knowledge *per se*, but on emphasizing the manner or method by which the information or knowledge can be derived – i.e., the cognitive posture of inquiry by which each participant can recreate or represent the essence of the presentation in some future space-time scenario of their own opportunity.
- M) As a final design criterion, in order to be personally meaningful, the Project must be motivated by and framed within ultimate spiritual goals --

i.e., the larger planetary evolutionary context. The nature of the course participants will determine how implicit or explicit this theme can be expressed.

2.2 Outline as Applied to Pragtri – Pragtri Farm is not large enough to contain a full ‘village-scale’ settlement; therefore, the course work will be presented as an exercise in *ecohamlet* design, a fractalized version of a full-scale ecovillage. At ‘ecohamlet-scale,’ accommodations can be designed for up to 50 hypothetical or potential residents, including elements such as: homes, outbuildings, studios, storages, a community center with all that it may contain, cottage industry, orchards-gardens-edible landscaping, water catchment and storage systems, renewable energy systems, utilities, the integration of animals, roads and parking, trails and fences, etc., etc. – and most importantly – the holistic/systemic interrelationships among all these elements (Whole Systems Design).

2.3 Proposed Curriculum – The course work for this Project will be divided into two phases: I) Exploration and integration of fundamental principles, and II) Design Studio. Phase I, as described earlier, is intended to provide a firm epistemological base from which to begin capably conceiving and designing truly sustainable human settlements. Subject areas will include<sup>1</sup>:

- A) Permaculture: including review of zone and sector site analysis, stacking functions, ethics, multiple uses for each element, each element has many functions, reading the landscape, thinking ‘over the fence,’ etc.
- B) Ekistics: the multi-disciplinary science of human settlements, drawing upon the relevant insights to be gained from an holistic interpretation of such diverse disciplines as Biology, Ecology, Human Ecology, Deep Ecology, Human Geography, Economics, Cultural Anthropology, Psychology, Urban Planning, and Systems Thinking, and especially how each of these disciplines may be applied to the designing of sustainable human settlements for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- C) Principles and methodologies of Ecological Design and Whole Systems Design.
- D) Patterns in Nature and *A Pattern Language*.
- E) Feng Shui, Geomancy, and Sacred Geometry.
- F) Living Systems Theory.
- G) Community Economics.
- H) Appropriate Technology.
- I) “Ecological Footprint.”

After this information has been presented, Phase II – Design Studio – will commence. Students will gather, measure, and record data, information, and characteristics from the site and then translate their findings, along with their associated design ideas, onto a collection of maps, drawings, sketches, and

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<sup>1</sup> At this stage in the process, this list is neither final nor necessarily complete; it is, however, indicative. The VDI team is still in the process of curriculum development.

transparencies. McHarg's "transparency overlay" technique will be the primary tool of interpretation. Open-ended creativity and a relaxed, receptive atmosphere will be encouraged while at the same time maintaining adherence to sound design principles. At the end of the course, students will present their design ideas to decision-makers of Pragtri Farm and the Evergreen Land Trust.

3. Project Organization:

3.1 Project Team – Besides myself, Tyrone LaFay – just back from an exemplary year attending Permaculture and Ecovillage Design courses in New Zealand and Australia – will be faculty at VDI. We are still hoping to enlist a third, feminine faculty member.

3.2 Project Timetable – We are planning to begin the Ecovillage Design course (this seems to be the best title considering the venue and the likely student body) on Wednesday, 9 July 2003. That afternoon will be spent registering and accommodating students, and then by evening moving onto an opening ceremony. The course work will start in earnest Thursday morning, the 10<sup>th</sup>. Phase I will last for six days, up until the evening of Tuesday, the 15<sup>th</sup>. Phase II will then begin on the morning of Wednesday, the 16<sup>th</sup> and will last until Saturday evening, the 19<sup>th</sup>, at which time students will present their designs; and then we'll have a closing ceremony. The course will be designed to fully engage and fill ten days worth of work with a day on each side for transitioning. A daily schedule has yet to be organized.

3.3 Guest Presenters – We have yet to solicit or secure commitment from any of the guest presenters, although the plan is to have one guest during each of the six days of Phase I, during the time in which course material associated with their area of expertise is being presented concurrently.

4. Cost Estimates:

4.1 An initial budget has been charted and is available upon request. VDI assumes all responsibility for costs associated with this Project and will manage all collection of tuitions and distribution of fees. A 'seed fund' will be donated to Pragtri Farm for future events there.

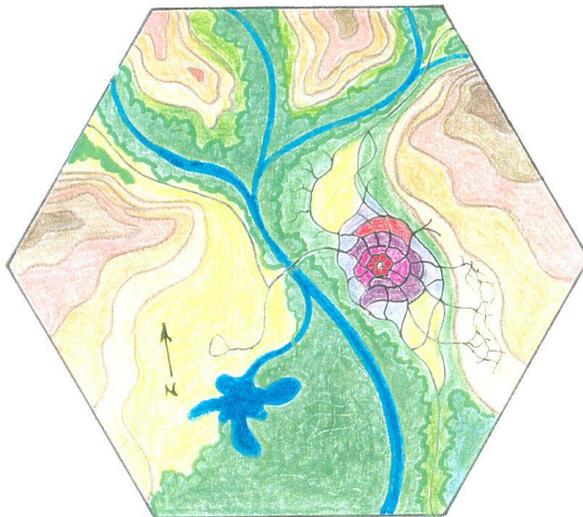
5. Liability:

5.1 VDI assumes responsibility for liability in the unforeseen case of injury up to the limits specified in the Articles of Incorporation. VDI assumes no responsibility for negligence by any other party. Students will be asked to sign a waiver at the time of registration explicitly releasing VDI and the Evergreen Land Trust from damages ensuing from any circumstances other than willful misconduct or neglect.

## APPENDIX 3 – STUDENT INFO PACKET

The Village Design Institute presents:

### Ecovillage Design



*A 10-day Immersion Course in the prospects of  
Sustainable Community Design*

*July 9 – 20, 2003 at Pragati Farm,  
near Arlington, Washington*

From: E. Christopher Mare  
To: Ecovillage Design Course Participants  
Subject: Introduction Letter

Greetings! And welcome to the Village Design Institute's presentation of "Ecovillage Design," a multi-dimensional, process-oriented, organically-patterned, holistically-conceived, whole – mind, body, spirit – immersion learning experience in the fundamentals of Sustainable Community Design. We are warmly and genuinely thankful for your interest and participation.

Attention to the emerging concept of the 'ecovillage' is gathering in momentum throughout the world. As 'sustainability' is growing into a household word, and as people everywhere are beginning to realize that business cannot be carried on as usual, that the ever-expanding global system is running into the very real resource limitations of a materially finite Earth, then alternative visions to this model are becoming more and more desirable, attractive, tenable, even credible: In Australia, for example, the ecovillage vision is starting to enter the 'mainstream.' It is no exaggeration to say that the ecovillage is a comprehensive solution to the cultural, economic, social, environmental, and spiritual challenges facing humanity at this dawning of a new millennium.

But what exactly **is** an ecovillage? What's the difference between an ecovillage and a traditional village? Is 'ecovillage' synonymous with 'sustainable community'? And most importantly, just how do we go about designing these new kinds of settlements, bringing the vision to physical practicality? These are the types of questions and challenges we'll be facing in the upcoming Design Course. Some of the conclusions may be surprising.

We, the faculty at VDI, have been around to experience the best that the world has to offer in Permaculture and Ecovillage Design education, taking residential courses in the world's premier ecovillage models, learning from the world's finest and most respected designers. In this upcoming VDI version, we'll be taking all we have learned from our education and experiences, and adapting it to our own unique perspectives and purposes. The course you are about to enter will be distinctive in the following ways:

- 1) We're placing a greater emphasis on the Design Studio phase. Design Teams will have the chance to interact as sub-communities right from the outset, and will be exposed to Non-Violent Communication and Consensus Decision-Making *before* entering into the intensive Group Design Process. The Design Studio will last for four days, allowing greater scope for the formation and synthesis of ideas.

- 2) The design work will be taking place on an actual project-in-process. The Pragtri community wants to expand to accommodate 25 new residents, including six new homes and their associated Grandma cottages and out-buildings, a community center, plus the integration of the greywater, renewable energy, food, and economic systems to support this expansion – a complete Sustainable Community Model! Design proposals arising from this course, then, will be actually influencing the decision-making process at a fundamental stage.
- 3) We will be introducing, in an exploratory way, the reawakening of cellular organic knowing and the perspective of embodied Nature proactively witnessing her own evolution as pre-requisites to good ecological design. We will be practicing exercises and techniques designed to stimulate full sensory body awareness. We believe this is the key to masterfully perceiving and evaluating the landscape, both inner and outer.
- 4) This entire Project is an exercise in Whole Systems Designing: from conception to implementation to completion, from the scheduling to the daily rhythm; it is instilled in the curriculum and reflected in the course material; why, it's even being expressed here in this introductory letter. In the holographic universe, each part contains the essence of the whole...

And so, come to Pragtri Farm with an open mind and heart. VDI is developing an innovative model for Ecovillage Design education: We won't simply be showing examples of design work that's already been done – that's too easy! Instead, we want to guide course participants through the very organic living design *process* by which they can create their *own* sustainable community model.

There's already a couple of kind families living at Pragtri. They're preparing now to grow into a larger, fuller community – with all the opportunities that will afford. The Ecovillage Design Course is going to come in and lay the foundational ecological site design work for them, making a meaningful and *fun* educational event out of it in the process! That's the VDI model: any new, professional-quality, Sustainable Community Design Project underway can be, simultaneously, a valuable educational experience for all those interested in learning.

Thanks once again for your participation!  
I truly look forward to meeting and learning from each one of you...

Ecopoietically,



Chris Mare,  
Director, VDI

**Village Design Institute**  
**Ecovillage Design Course**  
**Application and Student Profile**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE of BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_  
COLLEGE/MAJOR \_\_\_\_\_  
DIETARY NEEDS? \_\_\_\_\_  
ANY OTHER NEEDS? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CAMPING \_\_\_\_\_ or BUNKHOUSE \_\_\_\_\_  
HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT US? \_\_\_\_\_

IN CASE of EMERGENCY, CONTACT:  
NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate sheet of paper, please tell us a bit about yourself: What's your particular interest in this course? What will you do with the skills and insight you learn? Prior Permaculture Design experience? Prior mapping experience? Relative comfort level with drawing and creative artistic expression? Familiarity or regular practice with meditation, yoga, or other body awareness techniques? You can also send a resume if you like. All skills are important in the creation of a sustainable community!

Village Design Institute ~ 1205-B Lenora Court ~ Bellingham, WA 98225  
(360) 752-1310 ~ [www.villagedesign.org](http://www.villagedesign.org)

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (BONUS: remainder of payment received before July 1<sup>st</sup> is entitled to a \$50 discount, thus \$450 total)

WITHDRAWAL and REFUND POLICY:  
In the unforeseen event that you will be unable to attend the event after all, full deposit will be returned if notice is received 2 weeks prior to the start of the course. Deposit will be retained otherwise. Any amount exceeding deposit will be returned in full within 4 weeks of withdrawal; but we really want to see you there!



# Ecovillage Design Course Schedule Phase II

SESSIONS	WED 16	THURS 17	FRI 18	SAT 19	SUN 20
<b>DESIGN STUDIO I</b> 9:30am-1pm	Client Interview	A Pattern Language Design w/ Nature	Design Studio	Final Design Studio	Students Leaving Fare thee well!
	Consensus Decision Making and Group Process	Design Studio	Design Studio	Design Presentations	
<b>DESIGN STUDIO II</b> 2pm-6pm	Lunch 1pm-2pm Intro to Design Studio with Phil Hawes	Lunch 1pm-2pm Design Studio	Lunch 1pm-2pm Design Studio	Lunch 1pm-2pm Design Presentations	Students Leaving Fare thee well!
	Dinner 6pm-7pm Check-In 7-7:30pm Video/Case Studies Student Presentations * Sun Ray Kelly - Ecobuilding	Dinner 6pm-7pm Check-In 7-7:30 Video/Case Studies Student Presentations	Dinner 6pm-7pm Check-In 7-7:30 Reflection on What We've Learned * John Schimmerer	Dinner 6pm-7pm ~Closing Ceremony Party! Open MI  M.C. - Burke	
<b>EVENING SESSION (Optional)</b>					

**Ecovillage Design Course**  
**Daily Rhythm**  
**Phase 1: July 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>**

6am-7am: Meditation

7am-8am: Body Movement: Yoga/Tai Chi/Chi Kung

8am-9am: Breakfast

9am-9:30am: Attunement

9:30am-10:50am: **Session 1**

10:50am-11:10am Tea Break

11:10am-12:30am: **Session 2**

1pm-2pm: Lunch

2:30pm-3:50pm: **Session 3**

3:50pm-4:10pm: Tea Break

4:10pm-5:30pm: **Session 4**

6pm-7pm: Dinner

7pm-7:30pm: Feedback and Check-in

7:30pm: Evening Session (optional)

10pm: Lights out

**Ecovillage Design Course**  
**Daily Rhythm**  
**Phase 2: July 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>**

6am-7am: Meditation

7am-8am: Body Movement: Yoga/Tai Chi/ Chi Kung

8am-9am: Breakfast

9am-9:30am: Attunement

9:30am-1pm: **Design Studio**

1pm-2pm: Lunch

2pm-6pm: **Design Studio**

6pm-7pm: Dinner

7pm-7:30pm: Feedback and Check-in

7:30pm: Evening Session (optional)

## What to Bring

- ❖ Tent
- ❖ Sleeping bag/blankets/pillow
- ❖ All the toiletries you need, including soap, towel, etc. (mascara optional).
- ❖ Sunscreen & sunhat/broad brimmed hat, shades
- ❖ Light clothing. July is usually quite warm but can get chilly at night. Bring a raincoat as there is always the possibility of rain here in the rainforest of the Pacific Northwest.
- ❖ Other – swimsuit (for swimming or sauna), walking shoes or boots, water bottle, camera and films, flashlight, candle...make yourself comfortable.
- ❖ Notebook & Field Journal with pen (very important).
- ❖ Drafting tools and equipment (we will have a limited amount of these materials available for shared use)
  - ❖ Scale Ruler
  - ❖ Magnetic compass
  - ❖ Protractor, templates, or any other drafting tools
  - ❖ Drafting pencils: #2 and #5
  - ❖ Drawing pens and markers, colored pencils
- ❖ Information about your own project: e.g., slides, portfolios, etc. (if appropriate)
- ❖ Enthusiasm and an open mind!
- ❖ During the Opening Ceremony, we will be creating an altar. Please bring a small token – something important from your life – a rock, a crystal, a feather, an amulet, whatever – to contribute to the altar. During the Closing Ceremony, we will be redistributing these precious valuables amongst your fellow students, so make sure your token can be parted with and freely given away!

## Suggested Reading/Bibliography

(listed in no particular order)

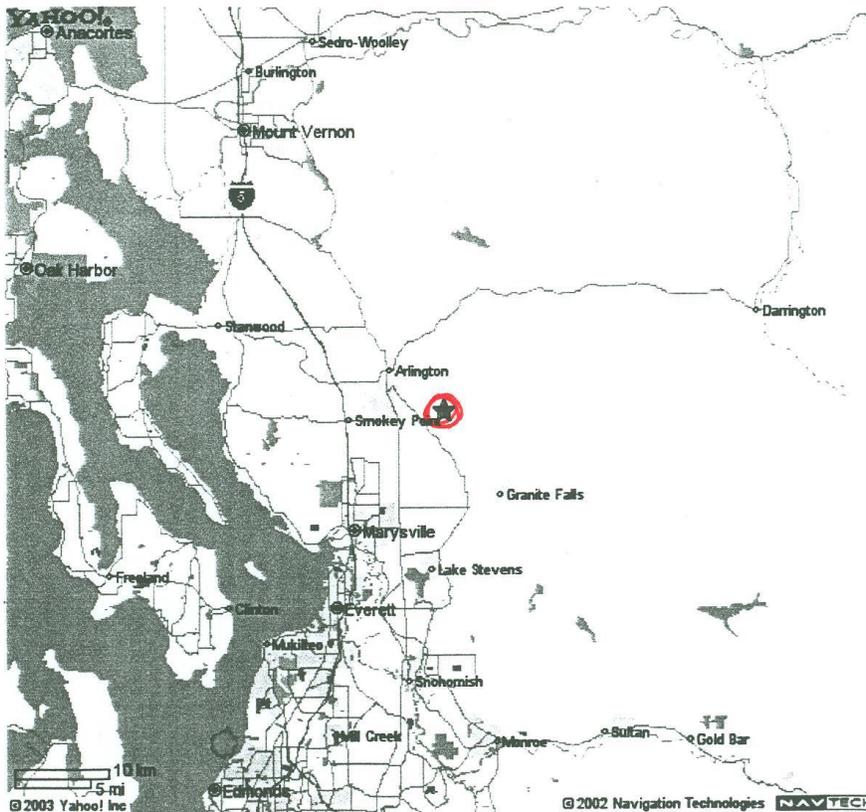
- *Introduction to Permaculture*. Bill Mollison; Tagari Press
- *Permaculture: A Designers' Manual*. Bill Mollison; Tagari Press
- *Ecovillage Living: Restoring the Earth and Her People*. Edited by Hildur Jackson and Karen Svensson; Gaia Trust
- *Eco-Villages & Sustainable Communities: Models for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Living*. Findhorn Press
- *Eco-Villages & Sustainable Communities: A Report for Gaia Trust*. Context Institute
- *Giving the Land a Voice: Mapping our Home Places*. Edited by Sheila Harrington
- *Design with Nature*. Ian L. McHarg; Natural History Press
- *Site Planning*. Kevin Lynch and Gary Hack
- *A Pattern Language*. Christopher Alexander et al
- *Designing Sustainable Communities: Learning from Village Homes*. Judy Corbett and Michael Corbett
- *Ecological Design*. Sim Van der Ryn and Stuart Cowan; Island Press
- *Design Outlaws: on the Ecological Frontier*. Edited by Chris Zelov
- *Rebuilding Community in America: Housing for Ecological Living, Personal Empowerment, and the New Extended Family*. Ken Norwood and Kathleen Smith

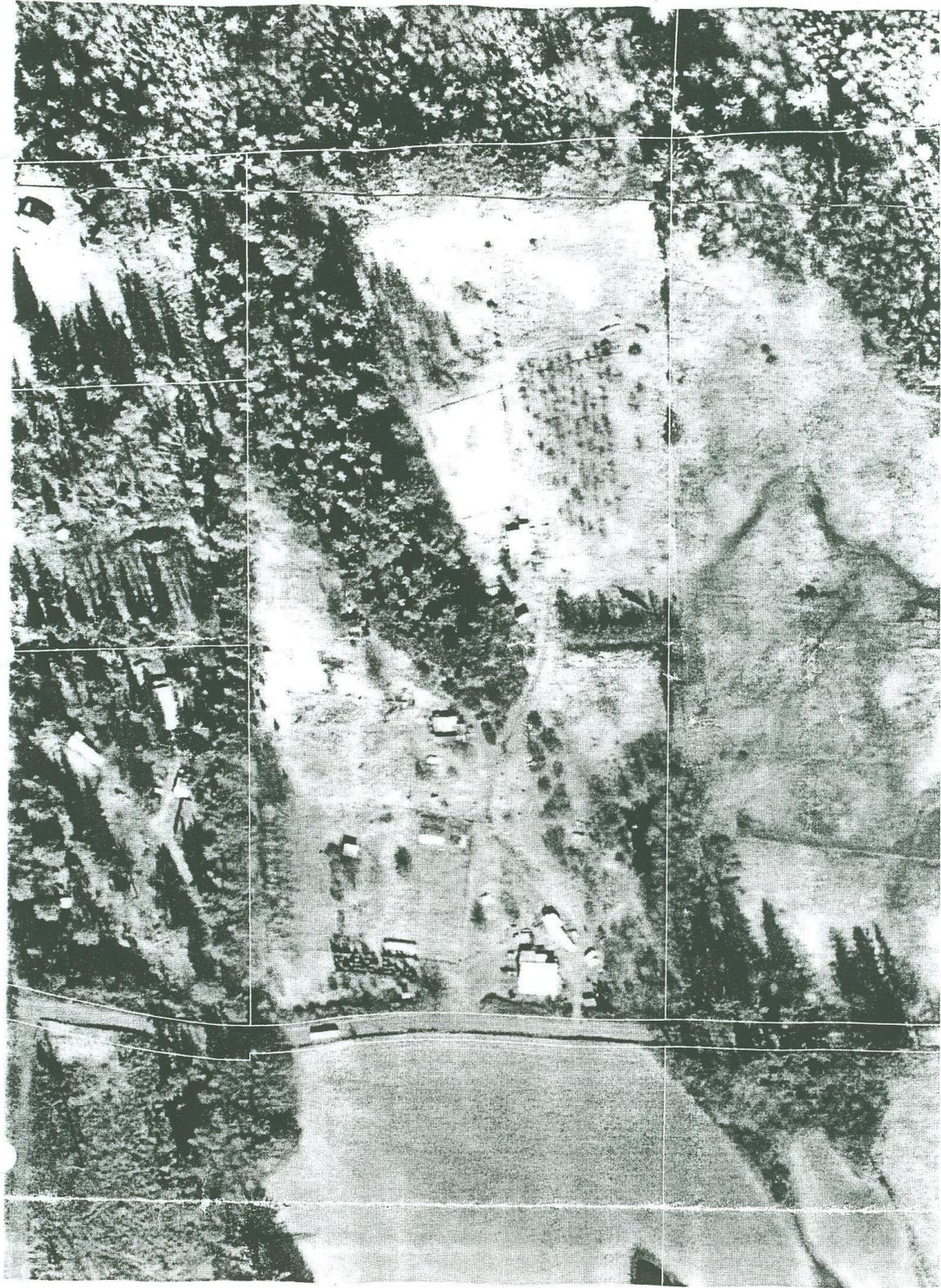
**Village Design Institute**  
**Ecovillage Design Course**  
**July 9-20, 2003**

**Directions to Pragtri Farm:**

**I-5 to exit 208 (Arlington/Darrington exit)  
Go East on Hwy 530 into Arlington  
At light, go left on Hwy 9  
Then an immediate right back onto Hwy 530  
Go through the stop sign then over the curved bridge  
Go ½ mile and take first right on Arlington Heights Rd.  
Go approximately 2 miles and take a right onto Jordan Rd.  
Go 4.2 miles until you see large power lines  
Take a left on 184<sup>th</sup> St NE/ Mattson Rd. (this is a so-called dead end)  
Go ½ mile and look for wagon wheel with colored streamers at  
driveway on left  
Relax and breathe - you're there!**

**13401 184<sup>th</sup> St NE \* Arlington, WA \* 98223-7946 \* (360) 403-0185**





# Pragri Farm Community

## Outline of Basic Policies and Procedures

### DECISION-MAKING:

Members and residents in the membership process meet regularly and use a consensus-seeking process. Anyone who applies for membership must be willing to complete consensus training as part of his or her membership process. While full participation is encouraged by all only full members have the ability to actually "block" a decision. Proposals regarding the land and community are brought before the community at meetings, preferably in writing and decisions are made in a timely manner.

Proposals for changes in existing community policies/procedures require written proposals that detail reasons for desired changes. It is crucial that the efforts and thought that has generated community procedures and policies is honored. Therefore the process to alter or change existing polices is only initiated after careful consideration.

Any stand aside positions within a consensus decision are strongly considered before asking for consensus. If there is more then one stand aside the community gives the decision extended time on the next meeting agenda before consensus is attempted again. If we as a community are unable to come to consensus, we hire a facilitator to assist our process.

The community organizes consensus trainings on a regular (annual or bi-annual) basis to ensure a common understanding of the consensus process and how we use it in this community, as well as to hone our facilitation, proposal making, and listening skills.

Literature on consensus process and facilitation is part of a packet of information all members and people in the yearlong membership process receive.

### MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

All people applying to become members of the community must:

- ♦Write a proposal that answers the questions outlined in our "request for proposals" document
- ♦Participate in an interview with community members and at least three workparties
- ♦Observe one community meeting.
- ♦Participate in at least three community meetings in which all parties may address membership and residency issues and concerns.

- ♦Receive go ahead from community members to begin yearlong resident-member process.
- ♦Participate in land and systems orientation before moving onto land.
- ♦Participate in three and 6-month evaluation of membership process with community members.
- ♦Abide by community policies, including participation in workparties, farm hours, community meetings and \$100 payment of monthly dues.
- ♦Participate in final review after four seasons of living in community on the land.
- ♦Receive “ok” for full membership in the community from the membership and assume full rights and responsibilities as a member of the Pragtri Farm Community and Evergreen Land Trust.

### MEMBERSHIP EVALUATION PROCESS

At 3 and 6-month intervals during the one-year, (four seasons) membership process the community will meet with those in process for a “check in” and reflection. Using the *Pragtri Community’s Mission Statement, Goals and Affirming Principles Document* as a guideline, individuals in the membership process will be asked to evaluate their commitment and relationship to the specific missions, goals and principles described in that document. There will also be time devoted to general and specific questions and evaluations between all parties.

Recommendations will be recorded and reviewed in 6 month and final review process.

### VISITORS

Personal visitors are the responsibility of the member of the community they are visiting. Visitors are welcome to use the Roadhouse upon pre-arrangement, (a phonecall) with community members. They are expected to contribute financially to the donation jar for their use of the land and community resources. There are suggested donations in the Roadhouse kitchen.

Visitors staying more than a week are considered extended visitors and their proposal to stay requires consensus by the membership. At least one member must volunteer to be that visitor’s sponsor/liaison for the community. Extended visitors shall assume financial responsibilities as determined by the community. Their proposal to the community must be in writing with a date of departure included. An extended visitor may occupy the dwelling of a member with the consent of that member.

Visitors are discouraged from bringing pets to the land. Un-neutered pets are prohibited.

## Evergreen Land Trust Purpose

- Protect and preserved agricultural land and wilderness from real estate speculation brought on by the urbanization, subdivision or other unsustainable management of such lands.
- Protect urban communities and individuals from speculative inflation in real estate values.
- Establish a model of compatibility between land use and land characteristics, in which the ecological and aesthetic needs of the land are given full and serious consideration and are in balance with human needs.
- Facilitate the distribution of land according to human needs and the ability of land to provide for human needs.
- To develop and share organizational models for the collective/cooperative trusteeship of land.
- To provide natural resources, wildlife, and conservation education, personal and creative growth experiences, and spiritual enlightenment through judicious use of workshops, seminars, physical expression and exercise, scientific and technical studies and other means to assist in the full development of the human potential while in harmony with nature.
- To promote, use and encourage humanistic principles in furtherance of communication between the species, so as to preserve the desirable qualities of life within a natural setting.
- To promote the study and research of ecologically-balanced life systems and to make sure such systems are available to people and other living things to enable present and future generations to enjoy these and related aspects of the good Earth.
- To take an active role in fostering movements within society compatible with Trust purposes.
- To promote cooperative communities that provides political, spiritual, economic, educational and social development to its members and to foster and maintain contact with like-minded communities.
- Finally, to perform all of the above as a corporation organized to operate specifically for public educational, charitable, scientific, spiritual and literary purposes, within the meaning and intent of section 501(c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code of the Department of the Treasury of the United States of America.

# PRAGTRI FARM COMMUNITY

## Mission Statement, Goals and Affirming Principles

### Mission Statement

To steward the land at PRAGTRI with consideration for past, present, and future, and for all of its inhabitants;

To support sustainable land based economies at PRAGTRI;

To foster environmental education programs at PRAGTRI;

To build and promote the wider movements for land trusts, intentional communities, and sustainable living and experiential education.

### Goals

To live well and ethically by implementing creative land use and building practices such as Permaculture and appropriate technology;

To foster our own art-making and the art of others in workshops and retreats;

To provide a space for a variety of individuals and artistic and political groups to strengthen themselves and explore a land trust in the foothills of the North Cascades.

### We Affirm

That the principles of liberation movements are put to use in daily endeavors and relationships;

That learning processes are respected and valued;

That the unpredictability of life at PRAGTRI will be balanced by consensus-driven decision-making, vision commitment, and kindness.

### EcoVillage Design Course Menu

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
7-9	--	--	Tomato-Peanut Soup Nori Rolls Coconut Ice Cream & cookie
7-10	Oatmeal Fresh Berries Toast Tea or Juice	Tepenade Sandwich Basalmlc Vinagrette Greens & Tomatoes	Sloppy Joes (seitan) Celeriac Salad Raspberry Crisp
7-11	Fruit Smoothie & Granola Toast Tea	Baked Yams with Sauteed Greens Bread	Lentil Soup Salad Bread Cookies & Tea
7-12	Pancakes with Homemade Applesauce & Maple Syrup Tea	Sesame Noodle Salad with Tofu Miso Soup	Curried Eggplant & Potatoes over Rice Lemon Pudding
7-13	Roasted Potatoes with Eggs Sauteed Greens Tea	Polenta Pizza Green Salad	Tofu Stir Fry Rice Mixed Berry Crisp
7-14	Fruit Smoothie & Granola Toast Tea	Pesto Sandwich Beet Salad	Red Beans & Rice Corn Bread Salad or Cooked Greens Rhubarb with Ice Cream
7-15	Rice Pudding Toast Tea	Lentil Burgers with Chips Salad	French Onion Soup Bulgar & Chicory Salad Linda's Chocolate Cake
7-16	Curry Tofu Scramble & Potatoes Toast Tea	Miso Soup with Cubed Tofu Rice	Fried Polenta with Black Beans Salsa & Avocado Strawberry Shortcake with Whipped Cream

7-17	Roasted Potatoes with Eggs Sauteed Greens	Tofu Sandwich Green Salad	Yam Pastry Puff Spinach Salad Homemade Croutons Vanilla Pudding with Fresh Fruit
7-18	Fruit Smoothie & Granola Toast Tea	Hummus Sandwich Greek Salad	Thai Curry with Coconut Milk and Tofu Rice Mango/Berry & Mint Leaves
7-19	Scrambled Eggs Roasted Potatoes Toast	Lentil Salad in Vinagrette Bread	Regional Potluck Salmon Bake Bread
7-20	Leftovers	Leftovers	



***the Village Design Institute presents:***

**~ ECOVILLAGE DESIGN ~**

***...a 10-day immersion course to be held July 9-20, 2003  
at Pragtri Farm, near Arlington, Washington.***

***Pragtri is one of the properties in the Evergreen Land Trust. The community is in the process of conducting a series of visioning meetings with the purpose of laying the groundwork for transforming the Farm into a model of Sustainable Community! Students in the Ecovillage Design Course will have the opportunity to participate in this process by engaging in foundational ecological site design work.***

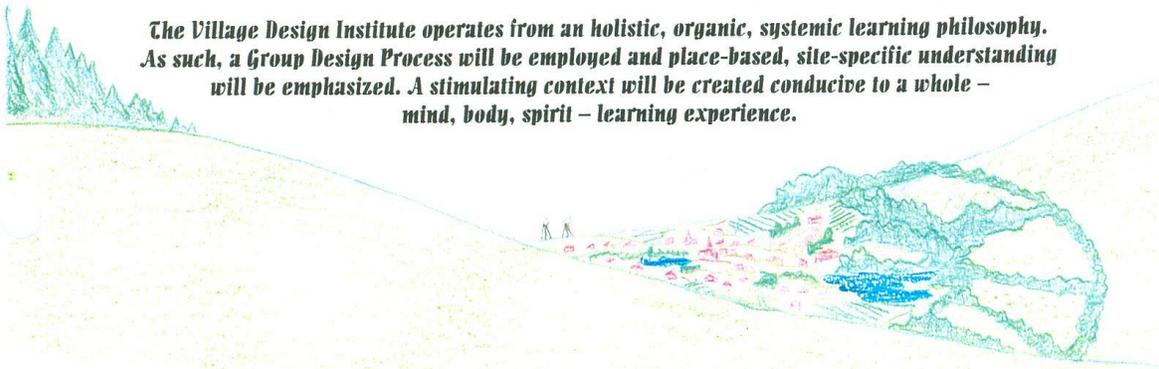
***The first phase of the course will be an extensive exploration of fundamental principles – forming a firm epistemological base from which to begin making competent and well-informed design decisions.***

***Subjects to be covered include but are not limited to:***

- Fundamentals of Permaculture
- Ekistics: the scientific, multidisciplinary study of Human Settlements
- Methodologies of Ecological Design and Whole Systems Design
- Patterns in Nature, "A Pattern Language," and "Design With Nature"
- Feng Shui and Sacred Geometry
- Living Systems Theory
- Community and Home-grown Economics
- EMergy and Energetics
- Appropriate Technology
- The Global Ecovillage Network
- and, the many facets and dimensions of Sustainable Intentional Community

***The second phase of the course will be conducted from the nexus of a Design Studio, where we will begin transferring design ideas onto maps, charts, and drawings. Open-ended creativity will be encouraged! The course will close with a presentation of design proposals to the decision makers of Pragtri Farm and the Evergreen Land Trust.***

***The Village Design Institute operates from an holistic, organic, systemic learning philosophy. As such, a Group Design Process will be employed and place-based, site-specific understanding will be emphasized. A stimulating context will be created conducive to a whole – mind, body, spirit – learning experience.***



Course Tuition: \$500; \$450 if paid in full by July 1<sup>st</sup>. This fee covers camping, three wholesome meals a day, all related course materials, and the opportunity to participate in an immersion experience in leading edge design work on an *actual project-in-process*. Course participants will be limited to 20, so contact VDI today to reserve a spot or for further inquiry: (360) 752-1310: [ecmare@antiochsea.edu](mailto:ecmare@antiochsea.edu): [www.villagedesign.org](http://www.villagedesign.org) (note: prior Permaculture Design experience preferred)

Instructed by: Christopher Mare and Tyrone Lafay  
Supported by: VDI Staff and selected Guest Presenters

~~~~~  
The Village Design Institute is an educational nonprofit registered in the State of Washington. Its purpose is to create, organize, and disseminate a scientific, multi-disciplinary knowledge resource base intended for promoting and facilitating the design of sustainable human settlements for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A fundamental working premise at VDI is that designing truly sustainable settlements is most effectively conceived and accomplished at *village-scale*, with all that implies. VDI defines 'ecovillage' as the sustainable 'unit' of human settlement in a theoretical ekistics for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Village Design Institute will eventually establish and become home to an accredited school, an holistic academy devoted to issues of Sustainable Community Design.

-----  
REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_  
DIETARY NEEDS? \_\_\_\_\_

YES! I want to participate in this groundbreaking, precedent setting Ecovillage Design event. (\$50 deposit enclosed)

Send check or money order to: Village Design Institute, 1205-B Lenora Court, Bellingham, Washington, 98225

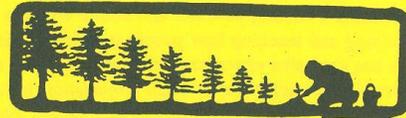


# EARTH-HEALING PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE



August 30 - September 14, 2003

Skalitude Retreat Center  
Methow Valley, Washington  
in the beautiful North Cascades.



A two-week  
permaculture design course  
focused on earth-healing and  
ecosystem restoration.

Instructed by:  
**Michael Pilarski**  
**Christopher Mare**  
**Anne Schwartz**  
& guest speakers.

### About this Course

Every permaculture course teaches how to design productive and beautiful yards, farms and properties. This course also has a major component on how to help restore degraded ecosystems in cities, agricultural areas, overgrazed, polluted and disturbed environments. You will learn how to help enhance and speed up nature's natural recovery processes.

**Healing the earth is one of the most important tasks facing humanity in this century!!**

This course will impart permaculture principles and methodologies which can be applied anywhere in the world. Through lecture, slide shows, discussion, observation, field trips and hands-on activities, permaculture design students will develop the practical skills and knowledge to design and implement sustainable systems that are in harmony with the natural world. We will cover hundreds of crops which can provide family needs or cash income. Medicinal herbs will be a major focus. Although this course's focus is on the Northwest, participants from other bioregions are welcome.

Course fee:  
\$650 if registered before July 1.  
\$750 between July 1 and August 1.  
\$800 after August 1.  
Some partial work trade positions available. Inquire.  
\$250 deposit holds your place (\$100 non-refundable).

### A related course: **ECOVILLAGE DESIGN**

July 9-20

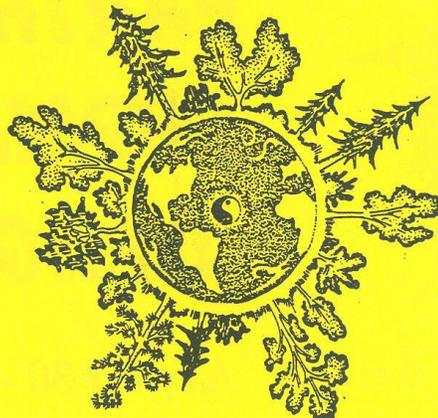
Christopher Mare and Tyrone LaFay, instructors. A 12-day course on sustainable design for villages and communities sponsored by the Village Design Institute. At Pragtri Farm near Arlington in northwest Washington. Contact: [ecmare@antiochsea.edu](mailto:ecmare@antiochsea.edu)

### For further information contact:

Friends of the Trees Society  
PO Box 253  
Twisp, WA 98856  
(509) 997-9200  
[friendsofthetrees@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsofthetrees@yahoo.com)  
[www.friendsofthetrees.net](http://www.friendsofthetrees.net)

### Course topics:

- \* Permaculture principles
  - \* Permaculture methodology
  - \* Large property design
  - \* Ecosystem restoration
  - \* Native plant restoration
  - \* Erosion control
  - \* Bio-engineering
  - \* Bio-remediation
  - \* Organic gardening
  - \* Organic agriculture
  - \* Agroforestry systems
  - \* Natural building
  - \* Livestock raising
  - \* Urban permaculture
  - \* Appropriate energy
  - \* Village development
  - \* Intentional communities
  - \* Observation skills
- \* Site analysis & design
  - \* Ethnobotany/ethnoecology
  - \* Water harvesting
  - \* Irrigation
  - \* Dry land strategies
  - \* Edible landscaping
  - \* Tree crops
  - \* Windbreaks, hedgerows
  - \* Medicinal herbs
  - \* Wildcrafting
  - \* Seed collecting
  - \* Aquaculture/ponds
  - \* Sustainable forestry
  - \* Integrated pest management
  - \* Permaculture networks
  - \* International resources
  - \* Barter economies
  - and much, much more . . .



Michael Pilarski is a farmer, educator and author who has devoted his life to studying and teaching how people can live sustainably on this Earth. He has extensive experience in organic farming, seed collecting, wildcrafting medicinal herbs, plant propagation, horticulture, teaching, and international networking. Michael has personally worked with over 1,000 species of plants. Michael is the founder of Friends of the Trees Society (1978) and is the author of books on forestry, agriculture and agroforestry. He has been involved in the permaculture movement since 1981 as a writer, teacher and networker. He has taught 20 full Permaculture Design Courses in the USA and abroad.

Christopher Mare designed the world's first B.A. degree in "Ecovillage Design". He has studied permaculture and ecovillage design in Ireland, Scotland, France, Australia, Mexico and the U.S. Currently he is finishing a Masters program in whole systems design at Antioch University, Seattle. Mare recently founded the Village Design Institute.

Anne Schwartz, of Blue Heron Farm & Nursery has been an organic farmer for 30 years. Her specialties are livestock, vegetables, berries, nursery stock and bamboo. Anne has been a leader and spokesperson for the Northwest's organic farming community for many years.

Other guest speakers to be announced. Course participants will also bring a wide range of knowledge and experience to share. We are all students. We are all teachers.

The Skaltitude Retreat Center is a beautiful site for the Course. It is nestled at the end of a remote mountain valley in the North Cascades in the Methow Valley watershed. The main inhabitants are ponderosa pines, douglas firs, aspens, bunchgrass, countless wildflowers, deer, coyotes, bear, and cougar. The center is a 160-acre site surrounded by national forest. Facilities include a large, log-cabin lodge which will be the main classroom. We will have a large, roofed, outdoor kitchen to prepare our community meals. Many course activities take place outdoors. There are showers and a sauna. The center's intent is to provide a retreat and educational space for healing and spirituality. In creating a Permaculture design for the property, these elements will be considered.

Permaculture, at its basic core, is about humans working with nature to establish healthy ecosystems in their yards, their neighborhoods, their cities, or wherever they live. We can assist nature to regenerate healthy biospheres. This means soils get richer, forests increase, trees get bigger, biodiversity increases, the web of complexity of relationships increases, more oxygen is produced and more carbon is stored. At the same time, the productivity of the landscape to meet human needs dramatically increases. Currently, almost all food, fiber, and wood products are imported into cities causing an immense strain on the world's ecosystems. We are going to see increasing global system perturbations and breakdowns until humans mend their ways. Permaculture offers a set of principles and a design process that can be applied on any site or within any culture in the world. Permaculture also offers a huge storehouse of strategies and practical techniques gathered from all around the globe. Permaculture is an international network involving tens of thousands of people.

**Certification:** Course graduates will be certified as Permaculture Design Trainees, and after two years experience will be eligible for Applied Permaculture Design diplomas. Graduates are entitled to use the term "Permaculture" in pursuit of livelihood, and for educational purposes.

#### Permaculture Design Course Registration form:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks out to Friends of the Trees.  
Send to Friends of the Trees, PO Box 253, Twisp, WA 98856

Send details on Ecovillage Design Course \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a separate letter with your dietary preferences, particular requests, transportation and carpooling information, questions and other pertinent details.

## APPENDIX 4 – AFFINITY MATRIX DIAGRAM FOR PROJECT ORGANIZATION

Affinity Matrix  
Ecovillage Design Course  
9 March 2003

### I) Teachers

Guest Teachers  
Sun Ray  
Greg Marchese  
Alternative Building  
Samya  
Chris Webb  
Engineering  
Cob Oven Workshop  
Trish and Alan  
Kelly Keane  
Gender Balance  
Staff  
Salary  
Clean-Up  
Jeffrey  
Skeeter  
Harley

### II) Course Pedagogy

On-Hands Projects  
Catering to All Learning Styles  
Organic Growth  
Conflict Resolution  
Interactive Learning  
Attunement  
Group Process  
Consensus  
Clans  
Theory

### III) Course Curriculum

Curricular Development  
Community Economics  
Pattern Language  
Ecological Design  
Permaculture  
Whole Systems Design  
Living Systems  
Appropriate Technology  
Fundamental Principles  
“Mapping Our Home Places”

Ecological Footprint  
Course Handbook  
Handouts  
Suggested Reading  
Bibliography  
Resources from Down Under  
Design Element (Social, Environmental, Economic, Spirit)  
Project Planning  
Site Selection  
Reading the Landscape

IV) Paradise Designs  
Weekend Permaculture Courses  
Cori

V) Antioch  
Context Paper  
Proposal  
Max Lindegger  
Documentation

VI) VDI  
Proposal  
Mission Statement of Purpose  
Logo  
Poster (Scotty)  
Web Page (Sherman)  
Bank Account  
Budget  
Flyers  
Insurance/Waiver  
Applications/ Registration  
Answering Service  
Cell Phone  
Seed Money  
T-Shirts  
Transportation

VII) Students  
Student Profiles (Demographics)  
Prerequisites  
Interns  
Student Portfolios  
Scholarship  
Accreditation  
Feedback

Certificates  
Volunteer/Work Trade  
Name Tags  
List of What Students Must Bring

VIII) Mind-Body Experience

Tai Chi  
Meditation  
Yoga (Colin or Meaghan)  
Healing  
Sweat Lodge  
Volley Ball

IX) Gateways

Community Growing Exercises  
Opening Ceremony  
Circle  
Orientation  
Talent Night  
Celebration  
Closing Ceremony  
Music  
Beer

X) Sustainable Human Settlements

Sustainable Development  
Regional Development  
Retrofit Design  
Urban  
Rural  
Suburban  
Civilization  
Settlement Scale  
CoHousing  
Ekistics  
Eco-neighborhood  
Ecohamlet  
Ecovillage  
Enclave

XI) Utilization of External Sources

Networking  
GEN  
City Repair Project  
PIL  
Permaculture Activist

NW Intentional Communities  
Planet Organic  
ETC  
ENA  
LSDG  
FTS  
Public Relations  
Outback  
Outreach  
Mainstream  
Community Sponsorship  
County Council  
Local Government  
Codes  
Zoning  
Community Participatory Processes  
Fairhaven  
Evergreen Sate College  
PLU  
Humboldt State  
CATT-Arcata  
Neighbors  
Love Israel Ranch

XII) Design Studio

Human Settlement Design Techniques  
Design Materials  
Drafting Equipment  
Scale Drawing  
Design Teams  
Presentations  
Art Supplies  
Maps  
Bus Map  
Transparencies

XIII) Classroom and Equipment

Class Size  
Desks and Chairs  
Outdoor Classroom  
Yurt  
Schedule Board  
Volunteer Board  
Teaching Materials  
White Board  
Easel

Computers  
Library  
Overhead  
Slide Projector/Screen  
TV/Video Player  
Schedule  
Nightly Sessions  
Case Studies  
Videos  
Slide Shows

XIV) Facilities

Free Time  
Kitchen  
Tea Time  
Greywater  
Cook(s)  
Food  
Garden for Kitchen  
Water  
Weather Contingencies  
Accommodation  
Outhouses  
Showers

XV) Base Camp

Seed Moment  
Start Where You Are  
Tipi  
Maria  
Conch  
First Aid  
Set-up  
Fire Pit  
Present Moment  
Site Visit  
Site Analysis  
On-site Resource Directory

XVI) Clients

ELT  
Proposal  
Venue (Pragtri)  
Sylvia  
Hugo  
Tour

History of Site  
Previous Work  
Community Rules  
Dogs  
Road House  
Orchard  
Wetland  
Trees  
Over-the Fence

## APPENDIX 5 – BRAINSTORMING RESULTS

Results of the Brainstorming Session held in early June 2003 for Pragtri Farm.

Note: the Affinity Matrix sub-categorization of all these elements and functions is still incomplete; it had only been taken to a preliminary level. Further sub-organizing these elements and functions into distinct Affinity Groups would make for a much more manageable Design Process. In many ways, this could be considered a generic profile for any Sustainable Community Model wishing to be an educational resource.

### I) Community Outreach and Educational Center

- Living/Learning Education Center
- Outreach
- Retirement Plans
- Acquisition of More Property
- City-Country Link
- Alternative/Home Schooling
- Workshops
- Accredited Education
- Logo
- Interns
- Cool Neighbors
- Peace With Neighbors
- Day Care
- Activist Training
- Education Fund
- International Connections
- Neighbors Part of Village System
- Remove Square Shape
- Sick Fund
- Partnership With Urban Schools
- Radio Station
- Web Site
- Community Meetings
- Permaculture Demo Site
- Educational Courses
- Foster Children
- Telegraph
- Community Bikes
- Learning Opportunities
- Meeting Hall/Multi-Purpose Space
- Shared Library

### II) Community Goals

- Travel Fund
- Annual Party
- Balance Between Productivity and Being
- Consensus Decision Making

Insurance Plans Shared  
Self-Sustaining  
Multi-Generational Community  
Interpersonal Structure and Process  
Community Barter System  
Appropriate Organization  
Free Flow of Money Energy  
Non-Violent Communication  
Community Vision  
Internal Economy  
Lotsa friends  
Network  
Model of Sustainability  
Community Land Trust  
More People – Appropriate Numbers  
Balance Between Community/Privacy  
Community Electric Van  
Money Energy Sink  
Local Government

III) Soil Fertility

Vermiculture  
Fertility Systems  
Biodigester  
Compost Heater  
Composting toilets  
Compost  
Soil Making  
Methane Production

IV) Water Systems

Diving Board  
Series of Ponds  
Water Slide  
Swimming Holes  
More Ducks  
Chinampas  
Cleaner Water in the Pond  
Whole Water System  
Water Cisterns  
Living Roofs  
More Water Storage  
Waterfall  
Aquaculture

V) Housing and Utilities

Guest Cottages  
Apartment Style Community Living  
Ponds by Homes  
Cob Cottages  
Tea House  
Geodesic Dome  
Strawbale House  
Low Income Housing  
Time Share Housing  
Community Bathtub/Wash Area  
Urban/Rural Link

VI) Buildings, Structures, Gardens & Things

Teepee  
Teeter Totter Water Pump  
Still  
Community Center  
Winter Veggie Storage/Root Cellar  
Cob Oven  
Tree House  
Snorkle Stove Hot Tub  
Consolidated Car Parking  
Lots of Gardens Everywhere  
Living Machine  
Tropical Fruit Atrium  
Seed Saving Garden  
Community Office  
Tool Shed  
Rare Seed Nursery  
Gardens Around Houses  
Benches  
Tomato Hothouse  
Community Bell  
Butterfly Garden and Pond  
Plants for Sale  
Outdoor Kitchen  
Sauna  
Sweat Lodge  
More Greenhouses

VII) Play

Maze  
Playground  
Cave-Dugouts  
Forts

Treehouse  
Bikes  
Tunnels  
Play in Ditches  
Hammocks  
Kid's Spaces and Activities  
Rock Climbing Wall  
Volleyball  
Trampoline  
Flying Trapeze  
Go-Carts  
Dance Parties  
Play Time  
Mud Wrestling  
Flying Machine

VIII) Animals

Cows  
Goats  
Llamas  
Pony  
Pigs  
Rabbits  
Horses  
Horse-Drawn Farming  
Bees  
Bat Belfry/ Bat Cave/ Bat Mobile  
Songbird Sanctuary  
Peacocks  
Children's Zoo  
Limited Dogs and Cats  
Shamanistic Power Animals

IX) Herbs

Unusual Herbs  
Hardy Ginger  
Ginseng  
Medicinal herbs  
Apothecary

X) Sustainable Forestry

Bamboo Garden  
Food Forest  
Orchards  
Forestry Protection Program  
Plant Nursery

Privacy From Road  
Basket Willows  
Sugar Maples  
Coppice System  
Arboretum  
Sustainable Forestry  
Natural Habitat  
Endangered Plant Preservation  
Agroforestry Demonstration Site

XI) Products

Microbrewery/Home Brew/Cider  
U-Pick Raspberries  
Grape Trellis  
Water Catchment  
Grains  
Grainery  
Wood Production  
More Berries  
Biodiesel Gas Station  
Wild-Crafting

XII) Health

Feng Shui  
Sacred Geometry  
UFO Landing Pad  
Crop Circles  
Naked Gardening  
Orgy  
Good Health/Long Life  
Art  
Healing Spaces  
Sacred Space  
Hermitage Retreat  
Meditation Center  
Yoga  
Consciousness Expansion  
Art Space  
Obelisk  
Spiritual Outreach  
Pottery Studio  
Sculptures  
Simplicity  
Time Capsule  
Lotsa Music  
Kids

XIII) Services

- Production Gardens
- Local Hardware
- Roadside Stand
- Food Preservation
- Food/Herb Drying
- Local Cenex (Farm Supply)
- Permaculture
- Roadhouse Store
- Cooking Classes
- Mail Order Businesses
- Restaurant/Café
- Mini Mart
- Bakery
- Cottage Industries
- Health Food Store

XIV) Appropriate Technology

- Solar Food Cookers
- Pumps
- Wind Energy – Electricity, Water Pumps, Friction for Heat
- Water Catchment
- Rockwalls/Heat Sinks
- Water Treatment
- Constructed Wetlands
- Solar Clothes Dryer
- Water Reticulation
- Creative Garbage/Recycle
- Pedal Power
- Alternative to Refrigeration
- Passive Solar Design
- Food Self-sufficiency
- Off Grid
- Certified Organic
- Biodynamic
- Aqueduct System
- Photovoltaic Electricity
- Bicycle-Attached Garden Cart
- Living Machine
- Solar Stage

XV) Boundaries and Pathways

- Bike Paths
- Berry-Herb Labyrinth
- Entrance Gate(s)
- Edible Landscaping

- Paths Lined with Food
- Living Fences