



News Release

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2011 National Cohousing Conference in Washington, DC Creating Better Neighborhoods for the Future

Washington, DC (February 25, 2011)---The Cohousing Association of the United States (Coho/US) announces its 11th conference, to be held at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel in Crystal City, Virginia from June 17-19, 2011. The conference will bring together aspiring cohousers, affordable housing experts, cohousing residents, cohousing professionals, community organizers, sustainability experts, academics, and those who are simply curious about living in community.

Cohousing is a type of collaborative housing in which residents actively participate in the design and operation of their own neighborhoods. Cohousing residents are consciously committed to living as a community. The physical design encourages both social contact and individual space. Private homes contain all the features of conventional homes, but residents also have access to extensive common facilities such as open space, courtyards, a playground and a common house. Nationally, there are over 124 completed cohousing communities occupied by close to 6000 residents with 55 more communities in various stages of development ranging from forming groups to communities currently under construction. Occupied communities are close in to Washington, DC, and four more are within a one-hour commute.

This year's conference theme – *Creating Better Neighborhoods for the future* – speaks to an option for living that is primed for wider recognition. Conference Chair Lisa Poley says, “The time is ripe for Cohousing to make the shift from being a small-scale experiment to finding its place in the mainstream as one of the key innovative housing options of the future. The 6000 plus current residents of cohousing know how it contributes to their quality of life, while recent research is beginning to tell this story though data measuring Cohousing's tangible benefits to residents and to society.”

Conference highlights include:

- **Sessions:** More than 40 sessions and presentations covering a wide range of exciting and relevant topics will spark new ideas attendees can use whether they are living in community, creating a new one or just wanting to find out more.
- **Community Tours:** These rolling workshops will take attendees to the Washington DC area communities so that they can experience and learn about cohousing first hand. For this conference, the Cohousing Association is partnering with the regional cohousing association, Mid-Atlantic Cohousing to offer the tours.

- **Cohousing 101** For those new to cohousing, Cohousing 101, offered twice during the conference, will provide a rich introduction to the basic components of cohousing, how it works and why it brings such value to residents.
- **Cohousing University:** These two-day workshops on Wednesday and Thursday, June 15 and 16 will focus on Cohousing Development, Sustainability, Dynamic Government, and Cooking for Community. The Cohousing Research and Writers workshop will involve scholars, practitioners and writers interested in the cohousing model and how it relates to broader social and sustainability themes.
- **Keynote Speakers:** : Ron Sims - Deputy Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). C.T. Butler & John Buck - authors, innovators and experts on consensus, sociocracy & collaborative community process. Liz Walker—founder of EcoVillage at Ithaca & author of several books on cohousing & sustainable living. Charles Durrett and Kathryn McCamant --cohousing leaders, architects and authors. More to come!!

Coho/US executive director Craig Ragland, "Whether you attend the whole conference or just one day, there is something powerful about "bringing diverse perspectives together." Presenters and participants represent numerous communities from all United States."

Conference registration is officially open. To learn about the conference and to find the answers to all your questions, visit the conference website at <http://conference.cohousing.org/>

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