



Introduction to Cohousing

Connecting, Growing, Making a Better World



cohousing



“Cohousing is about living the good life while using less of the earth’s resources, and having a good time doing it.”

- Katie McCamant

Why do we need community?

Why do we need community?



Mainstream lifestyles are isolating.



Why do we need community?



Cohousing creates connection.



Photo: Adam Johnson

Connection Creates:



Joy



“They say a person needs just three things to be truly happy in this world: someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for.”

— *Tom Bodett*

Connection Creates:



Health



“The clearest message that we get from this 75-year study is this: Good relationships keep us happier and healthier. Period.”

— *Robert Waldinger*

Harvard Study on Adult Development

Connection Creates:



Compassion



“When we know ourselves to be connected to all others, acting compassionately is simply the natural thing to do.”

— *Rachel Naomi Remen*

Connection Creates:



Growth



“It has been in the deepest connections with others that I have experienced the greatest degree of learning, healing and transformation.”

— *Kristi Bowman*

Connection Creates:



Sustainability



“There is a great need for the introduction of new values in our society, where bigger is not necessarily better, where slower can be faster, and where less can be more.”

— *Gaylord Nelson*

How does it work?

- Design for Connection
 - Physical Structures
 - Land Use
 - Practices of Connection
 - Relational Structures
 - Things We Do
-

Design for Connection

- Clustered Housing



Design for Connection

- Clustered Housing
- Parking Away From Homes



Design for Connection

- Clustered Housing
- Parking Away From Homes
- Pedestrian Streets



Design for Connection

- Clustered Housing
- Parking Away From Homes
- Pedestrian Streets
- Common Property



The Common House



*The heart of
the community.*



*Our common
house is an
extension of
my living room.*

The Common House

- Dining Room



The Common House

- Dining Room
- Kitchen



The Common House

- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Living Room



Photo: New York Times



Photo: Max Munoz



The Common House

- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Living Room
- Guest Rooms



The Common House

- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Living Room
- Guest Rooms
- Workshop



The Common House

- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Living Room
- Guest Rooms
- Workshop
- Kids Room



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Photo: Max Munoz

The Common House

- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Living Room
- Guest Rooms
- Workshop
- Kids Room
- Multipurpose rooms



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Individual Units

- Full Independent Living Spaces
- Kitchens Face Common
- Usually 800 - 1600 sq ft



Photo: McCamant Durrett Architects



Photo: McCamant Durrett Architects

Practices of Connection

- Common Meals



Photo: Doug Duran



Photo: Pete Pages



Practices of Connection

- Common Meals
- Consensus



Photo: Tony Finnerty



Photo: Phil Dowds

Practices of Connection

- Common Meals
- Consensus
- Self-management



Photo: Phil Dowds



Photo: Adam Johnson



Photo: Pete Pages



Photo: Doug Duran



Photo: Pete Pages

Practices of Connection

- Common Meals
- Consensus
- Self-management
- Culture of Sharing



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The Cohousing Secret Sauce ...

... how to sell your
community story

Alan O'Hashi
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What's on today's menu - "Sell your community story rather than tell about your community"



- Review the Secret Sauce recipe presented yesterday - there's a recording
- Create a desire for prospective community members to taste your Secret Sauce:
 - Go over some steps to write your community story that evolves into your project business plan

Cohousing Secret Sauce Recipe



- **Ingredients:**
 - Relationships among the community members
 - Shared Values, higher purpose
 - Balancing privacy with community
 - Participation in management, decisions by consensus

- **Preparation:**
 - Feasibility study
 - Develop budgets
 - Design and construction - Cohousing Stout, Lite, Ultralite

Now that you've bottled up your secret sauce, how do you get it on the shelves and into prospective community member shopping carts?

- **Elevator Speech**

Storytelling - boiling down millions of dollars, five years of process, 32 houses into 60 seconds or a sentence:



1. A logline must have the following

- the protagonists; their goal; their challenge

2. No need to name of the protagonists

- *group of burning souls*

3. Use an adjective to give a little depth to the project

It's helpful if the characteristic you describe will have something to do with the project.

- *A group of diverse burning souls repurpose a vacant Big Box store*

4. Clearly and quickly present the main goal

This is what drives your elevator speech story.

- *A group of diverse burning souls repurpose a vacant Big Box Store by building a new neighborhood*

5. Describe the Challenge as a premise - “what if...”

The challenge the burning souls face in getting the project to happen

- *What if a group of diverse burning souls repurpose a vacant Big Box Store by building a new neighborhood attracting 50 healthy-lifestyle minded people to thrive in an affordable, urban cohousing community?*

Living Business Plan



- **Executive Summary**

- Premise: *What if a group of diverse burning souls repurpose a vacant Big Box Store by building a new neighborhood attracting 50 healthy-lifestyle minded people to thrive in an affordable, urban cohousing community?*

- **Core Business**

- Key Staff, Burning Souls

- **Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats**

- Why is the project needed; what stands in the way;

- **Market Analysis**

- Housing market trends; competition; Intentional community trends

- **Financial Pro Forma**

Always be closing

“Oh, have I got your attention now? Good. ‘Cause we’re adding a little something to this month’s sales contest. As you all know, first prize is a Cadillac El Dorado. Anyone want to see second prize? Second prize is a set of steak knives. Third prize is you’re fired. You get the picture? ... Only one thing counts in this life. Get them to sign on the line which is dotted. You hear me? ... A-B-C. A-always, B-be, C-closing. Always be closing.” Alec Baldwin as Blake in “Glengarry Glen Ross (1992)



Find much more information at
www.cohousing.org
