

Links

Little Mountain Cohousing in Vancouver BC Canada :: <https://www.littlemountaincohousing.ca>

Day 3 Tour – Little Mountain Transcript

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Next up we have Kathy marinara from Little sharing little mountain cohousing in Vancouver BC.

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Okay, thanks. I'll just share my screen here.

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Is that are you seeing the full screen there.

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Yeah, so, wow, you're a hard act to follow Brian that was really exciting so we're back to North America here. So this is little mountain co housing in Vancouver, Canada, which is on the west coast.

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And it was completed and moved in just under a year ago. In March, 2021, and these photos I'll give credit to Martin Knowles, the architect that did this project submitted it for a architectural magazine so I'd had access to these, these nice photos.

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So, this is the building front facade, I was thinking of Federico yesterday, when he was talking about the brick in Belgium, because then Coover has this weird idea or an idea that to preserve neighborhood character you have to put some kind of more fancy

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material on building facades so the rest of the building as you'll see in the back is hardy plank, but in the front it's um it's got this fancy work.

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So, it's a six story wood frame building. It has one level of underground parking and it got a parking relaxation from the that it worked hard with the municipality to get a relaxing for five spaces because it was co housing and because the group had

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a strong commitment to car sharing.

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strong commitment to car sharing. It has a full roof deck with urban agriculture and she's just so over it some Passive House certified, and there's 25 units, one four bedrooms 13 three bedrooms, eight two bedrooms one one bedroom and then, and two to

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one bedrooms, lots of the biggest hassle for the architect was that the group was almost was really came together fast and so they had all these different economic needs for space and so the architect did a great job but it was really hard because

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there needed to be a lot of unit types.

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So this is the back of the building. That's hardly playing, this is the lane and this is the access to the underground parking. And it's got this courtyard the building as an L shape with courtyard.

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This is a view from above, of that courtyard.

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and the city also has mandates for multifamily building that there's a specific children's play area and it has to have specific components and we tried to argue against that but they wouldn't give us any flexibility so we have this little space that

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isn't really used by the kids the kids use everywhere else, but.

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So this is a view in from the courtyard. This is the common house area here and there's a little lounge here and then there's a children's play area over here, and the group was really excited to have outdoor corridors that a lot of CO housing projects

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have but in the end the way the building was formed. They didn't need much corridor space and so they have this little tiny bit because they all wanted to be able to work out over the courtyard and supervise kids and do stuff from there.

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The group was really selective about the area they wanted to be and they wanted to be specifically in this area that's called little mountain. So it took them about a year to find a piece of land because it's hard to find land there it's mostly a single

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family area, but this particular block area is very interesting in Vancouver because all of this section here this L section was wartime very small affordable housing, little houses and about 12 years ago, the provincial government decided to sell it

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sell that whole area, off to a developer to create more dense

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affordable housing, and it turned out to be a huge nightmare the developer that they sold it to was not good, and they immediately demolished all the housing, and it's 12 years later and only recently have they started building some of the multifamily

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buildings. So it's basically a vacant lot and it's a travesty for for affordable housing, but because this was going to become a more dense area the city, made a policy statement for this little section here that it would be.

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Eventually, all six storey multifamily buildings. So, though it's quite risky to try for a rezoning in, in certain single family areas. This one was was guaranteed that they didn't need to get a rezoning, and it has access to this fabulous huge urban

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park. Over here there's the big baseball stadium in town which is fun and then redone. Beautiful recreation center that was redone for the 2010 Olympics.

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This is a beautiful children's Park, and it has a huge community.

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Community Garden thing most of the community gardens around have individual plots but this is one that's gardened collectively, and it also has a year round weekly farmers market there.

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This is the main North bike path in the city.

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There's.

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These are main bus routes in the city these two here there's an elementary school. So there's a public transit underground speed.

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Stay station over here. There's restaurants along here this is this is Main Street it's not a super busy street but it's a very hot got lots of amenities, so this is why they wanted to be in this area it's a terrific area.

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So I'll just show you the the floor plans just to show mainly the, the common spaces and how its laid out. So this is the underground parking located, and where they got a relaxation if they hadn't got that relaxation they would have had to do two levels

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of underground parking given the, the footprint so that saved them tons of money. And so they have a big bike area, and then they have.

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There's a ton of musicians in this group so they have a soundproof music room in the arcade, and they have a woodworking workshop.

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And because they're doing extensive car sharing they had one parking spot left over so they have canoe and kayak storage, there's there's lots of people that.

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And this is on the ground floor This is that courtyard area so the common house and kitchen, the washroom. They have a big recycling and zero waste room.

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This is a lounge area, the laundry room, and the children's play area. And on the front of the building.

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There's four two storey townhouses that that 22222 bedrooms and two three bedrooms.

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That's a picture of the kitchen and the common house.

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And then this is the second level so it's the second level of the four town house this year. And then this is a stack of two bedroom units and this is a stack of three bedroom units.

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And this is one little tiny 500 square foot one bedroom that they, they fit in for one woman who needed it that small, she, she finds it really big because she moved in from 300, square feet.

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So, And this is the elevator in the building and right outside the elevator on every floor is what they call the elevator next, and they've converted each elevator to a different view so on one floor it's the library on one floor it's a games room place

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on one floor. It's a fabric heart thing and another floor it's a kids homework area so they're really having fun with those. And this is that one bit of outdoor a circulation area that connects to this one unit on this side and on the second floor they

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have a guest room, that's the that's the elevator know on the sixth floor the library one.

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And this is, and that was two older women that live in the building, reading stories to two kids at one of the single moms in the building.

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They made this co work room on the third floor, but they were telling me that they actually in the pandemic it's become that they do co working like pretty much all over the building people are working and forming little bubbles of work groups so that

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they've really expanded on the just the comment, the co worker room.

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So in here this came a stack of two bedrooms, this became a stack of three bedrooms and this is a three bedrooms and four bedrooms on the top level.

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This jumps up to the sixth floor where there's a common space so this is a big Multi Purpose room on the sixth floor with the bathroom. And then as a big, huge deck as well that's common.

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And then on their roof top, they have these plots for urban agriculture and an area for future solar.

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That's an image of the roof deck that gets great views around because it's mostly single family in the area, on, on the beside them there's already a six story building but they'll still have good views because it's on the top of the building and that's

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the, the level that the rest of things will be and

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this is the outer space of two of the town houses on the bottom, I just put this slide in because it's interesting that the contractor when he got the railings contract the release contractor came back with six story privacy screens between the townhouse

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adjoining balconies every unit has a balcony but most of them are separated but the town houses and the sixth floor balconies are joining, and there was the six but privacy screens and the contractor was very shocked that.

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The town has asked for the privacy screens to be removed so there, they join their patios and on the sixth floor they asked them to be made to three foot privacy screens.

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So that was just an interesting thing that we encounter.

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So, this is the group during construction, and it's so the development model is that it was an owner developer project there was no developer involved.

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And these two worthy.

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They worked with CDC pro housing so co housing development consulting which is renamed Matthew who's been the project manager for many many projects, especially here on the west coast of BC.

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And, and I worked with her on this project, and these were the first two founding members there, they're not a couple they're similar in age. But besides their age the most different people personalities, just their who they are so different, but they

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were so aligned in their vision and they were the first to to start it, and they incredibly got this group together with our help super fast so they approached us in January, 2015, and by May 2015, we had 20 people sign up with 20 household sign up with

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20,000 each, so it was really incredible and jack had this idea to have stone soup nights once a week at his house so he called them stone soup maps and he made a big soup, and then everybody had to bring something to embellish it.

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And those were super popular and and just anybody could come anybody that heard about it.

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And, and, as well as doing monthly information nights and things they were really quick to build the group that the timeline for the project ended up being six years, because it took them quite a lot from a year to find a land, because they wanted it

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in such a specific area. It took them two years to get there, rezoning and development Kermit the city is notoriously slow, and then it took them two years of construction because they they built on a lot of it was time.

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So, um, and, yeah, so they had to put in 40% of the financing as a, as a group, and the.

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They weren't because that that it's quite a desirable area they weren't eligible for any affordability incentives or or initiatives that the city sometimes can provide.

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So this is the group after they've moved in, they were having a party.

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And so, yeah, so there's 14 kids in the project and there's a adults of all ranges, and it's quite a diverse group although it doesn't, it kept spot all the faces when you're there, but.

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And there's, yeah. Several people of color household several LGBT q households it's a real mixed community which is fun in an urban context. They do three common meals a week.

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They have this thing because the elementary school is so close by. They've, there's all these older adult volunteers who go and take take turns picking up the kids, after school and bringing them home and giving them a stack and supervising them so none

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of the working parents have to arrange after school care, kids. And, yeah, they're very engaged as some of the European groups were lots of interest in solidarity projects lots of interest in community engagement in, especially, they've started out in

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their little section and covert it's harder but they are getting to know people in newer buildings that are beside them and pretty soon they'll be buildings on the other side as well and it'll be a little neighborhood have that they're hoping to contribute

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to a real whole neighborhood to.

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So, yeah. So that's little mountain cohousing.

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Thank you, Kathy.