



Cohousing in Corvallis

An E Newsletter from CoHo Cohousing
in Corvallis, Oregon

Issue 15 May 2006



Remember when your best friend lived right next door?

Countdown to "Sold Out!"



As we get closer to selling all of our 34 homes, there is a feeling of excitement, but also some apprehension. In the past, the community had planned to build only 24 homes and during the final flurry when the last few membership slots were taken, it was rough going. It's hard for this phase not to feel like a race or a win/lose competition.

Here's what we hope is a balanced view of "what we know" and "what we don't know" about the selection of our homes so this process can be as pleasant as possible.

What We Know	What We Don't Know
Households will join CoHo, leave CoHo and/or change their home selections. Change is guaranteed.	We just don't know "who, where, what, when, and why."
Our Home Selection Policy covers home selections by folks in the membership queue, current members, and folks on the Waiting List.	We don't know if you have questions on the Home Selection Policy. If you do, please contact us.
We want folks to take the time they need to make a thoughtful decision about CoHo membership. We hope that decision is based on the "co" (community) as much as the "housing."	We don't know the factors most important to you in making your CoHo membership decision.
Folks who "sit on the sidelines" and don't turn in a membership application are less apt to have a chance at a home. The initial application process takes only a small investment of time and money (\$100).	Your comfort level with risk-taking and moving forward without a 100% certain outcome is unknown.
Selling all of our homes ASAP benefits CoHo in many ways—negotiating our construction loan terms, bonding as a group, and getting projects in place prior to move-in (plus we'd make cohousing history!).	We don't know all of the challenges of an early sell-out because it isn't typical in the cohousing world.
CoHo has made a commitment that 30% of our homes will be sold to income-eligible households. We may need to hold homes open for these households in order to meet this goal.	We are awaiting data from members and currently don't know the total number of households meeting the criteria (income at or below 80% of Corvallis median income).

Membership Application

The Membership Committee has been thinking ahead about ways to support folks through the "final stretch." For example, they recently adopted a guideline to handle "photo finishes" (times when more than one household submits a membership application and check at the same time)—we'll draw names out of a hat to determine the order in the membership queue.



Buddy Program

The Membership Committee also coordinates the buddy program. As soon as someone expresses a strong interest in CoHo and/or attends a community meeting, they are assigned a buddy to help them through the membership process. Buddies are great coaches in thinking through options and strategies for home selection, plus paying attention to deadlines.



Waiting List

CoHo has also set up a Waiting List. Folks joining the queue are asked to list the homes they are willing to purchase. When they finish the membership process and decide to join CoHo, if all homes or all of the homes they are willing to purchase are reserved, they can go on our Waiting List. When/if a home becomes available, it would be offered first to the current members, then to folks on the Waiting List. This way, a household with a strong desire to be part of CoHo could stay connected and be ready to join when an opportunity surfaces.

Other Options

Other options are staying in touch with the community as a Friend of CoHo and keeping an eye out for resales in the future.

The Bottom Line

Staying focused on the "co" of cohousing (the community) may be the best strategy in dealing with the "housing" side of cohousing (the real estate).

It's not a race, it's a lifelong journey...together.



CoHoots together--enjoying chocolate at our holiday party, walking the dogs in Willamette Park, greeting baby Alex at Wellness Retreat, and hanging out at April Groundbreaking Ceremony (last photo was totally unposed—folks just wandered into each other's arms and a willing photographer happened to stroll by).

Member Close-Up

Anne joined CoHo in 2002 and was the first prospective member in the first Clearness Committee (the final step in the CoHo membership process). Anne connected with CoHo out of a desire to shift from the status quo of conventional neighborhoods to the cooperative, earth-friendly lifestyle of cohousing.

Anne has been active in a variety of roles—as our Secretary, a member of the Membership Committee, the designer and builder of our 3-D site model and the artist behind this lovely tree (photo to right) that shows the number of homes reserved in CoHo. If you attend a CoHo orientation (held at 4:30pm just before the second meeting each month at CNHS), you will be greeted by Anne (or Steve, our esteemed President).



On the personal side, Anne's "head for heights" led her to take trapeze lessons in San Francisco a few years ago. She is tempted to hang a trapeze in her CoHo home (she's a cinch to get a standing ovation at the first CoHo talent show).

Sneak Preview of Life in CoHo...

A new member recently said to a person just joining the membership queue--"think about how unusual it is to be meeting all of your neighbors before you move into a new home." This "sneak preview" sure beats a generic real estate flyer about the schools, shops, and parks in your neighborhood.

There are many "sneak previews" of life in CoHo. Folks can study our website, peruse our bios, meet us at Welcome Weekends, observe our meetings, listen at our orientations, read about CoHo in the *Gazette Times*, plus talk and/or email with members.

Because this is a "tell it like it is" newsletter, we're going to go beyond "sneak previews" and reveal the real scoop. Here's what you'd learn if you shadowed us for a week....



We already act and feel like next-door neighbors.

We have a strong track record of facing challenges together.

We carpool and bike to community meetings and gatherings.

We have good meetings and process (and we're good about ending on time).

We have Wellness Retreats twice a year to renew our commitment to community and each other.

We cherish children.

We are proactive. We already have policies in place that other communities wait to develop until after move-in.

We play together well.

We have a Sharing Circle when we need to slow down and take more time with a sensitive topic.

We have a cat/dog ratio of about 50/50.

We listen to each other. Really listen.



Get to know us and see if we live up to the "sneak previews."



Is it time to make your dream of living in community come true?

The clock is striking 8, marking the time that 8 homes are still available in CoHo!

This clock is on the Benton County Courthouse in downtown Corvallis. Built in 1889, it is the oldest active courthouse in the state of Oregon.

To find out more about CoHo Cohousing

Website: <http://www.cohousing-corvallis.com/index.shtml>

Email: info@cohousing-corvallis.com (answered by Mike Volpe) →

Phone: Juva DuBoise @ 541-908-5882 →

Susan Hyne @ 541-753-4453 →



These are the "front doors" Mike, Juva, and Susan posted on the site map at Final Home Selection workshop in February to celebrate our commitment to CoHo.

Click [HERE](#) to read issues of previous newsletters on our website