Fresno Cohousing
What to say to Potential Members

Opening Lines

Have you heard about the new child-friendly community we're building in North Fresno?

Have you heard about the new environmentally friendly neighborhood we're building?

Can I tell you a little bit about a project I'm involved in that I think you might find of interest?

Did you know that cohousing is coming to Fresno?

Do you know what cohousing is?

I bet you don't know that a very exciting new thing is coming to Fresno soon.

10 second responses to questions

Cohousing communities are small-scale neighborhoods that provide a balance between personal privacy and living among people who know and care about each other.

Cohousing is a neighborhood created by the residents themselves where they own their own homes and share common facilities.

Cohousing is a way of creating an old fashioned neighborhood where kids can run and play freely in a safe place where everybody knows them.

Cohousing is an environmentally friendly way of living where neighbors have their own energy efficient homes and share common amenities and resources.

Cohousing is a type of collaborative housing in which residents actively participate in the design and operation of their own neighborhoods.

Cohousing communities combine the advantages of private homes with the benefits of more sustainable living, including shared common facilities and ongoing connections with neighbors.

30 second explanations of cohousing

It's more than a neighborhood. It's a community of friends who have designed their own homes in the same neighborhood so that they can share resources, build friendships, and learn from one another. We each have our own home and privacy, but when we want to be with others, we share some common spaces like an exercise room, swimming pool,

workshop and green space. We can also share experiences, like meals, swimming, gardening, or simply hanging out.

Cohousing communities are small-scale neighborhoods that provide a balance between personal privacy and living among people who know and care about each other. Individual dwelling units enjoy convenient access to shared space including a common house with facilities such as a gourmet kitchen, dining room, children's play room, laundry facilities, guest rooms, library and sitting areas, and workshops. Each home is entirely self-sufficient, complete with a kitchen, but residents often prepare common meals together in the kitchen of the common house. These meals are very appealing to those with busy lives and most residents choose to participate.

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 common facilities such as open space, courtyards, a playground and a common house.

In many respects, the cohousing model is not new. Many of us remember places where people knew their neighbors and were familiar with each other's families over time. Cohousing communities offer a contemporary model for recreating neighborhoods with that sense of place, and the security and sense of belonging which accompanies it.

Cohousing communities also provide societal benefits such as greater resource efficiency, in terms of both materials and energy, and enhanced security for the community and surrounding neighborhood. Furthermore, by taking advantage of the benefits of clustering dwellings, this type of development makes higher densities more attractive, an essential element in reducing transportation requirements and suburban sprawl. The scale of cohousing communities (12 to 42 dwellings) make them ideal for urban infill sites or conversions of existing buildings.

2 minute educational speech on cohousing

In cohousing, we create the kind of lifestyle we want, incorporating environmentally friendly design, child-friendly spaces, extensive shared amenities, and beautiful private homes. The common house is the social center of a community, with a large dining room and kitchen, lounge, recreational facilities, children's spaces, a guest room, workshop, and laundry room. Communities usually serve optional group meals in the common house at least two or three times a week. The need for community members to take care of common property builds a sense of working together, trust and support. Because neighbors hold a commitment to a relationship with one another, almost all cohousing communities use consensus as the basis for group decision. In a cohousing community, you know who lives six houses down because you eat common meals with them, decide how to allocate homeowners dues and gratefully accept a ride from them when your car's in the shop. You begin to trust them enough to leave your 4-year-old with them. You listen to what they have to say, even if you don't agree with them at first, and you sense that you, too, are being heard.

It's more than a neighborhood. It's a community of friends who have designed their own homes in the same neighborhood so that they can share resources, build friendships, and learn from one another. We each have our own home and privacy, but when we want to be with others, we share some common spaces like an exercise room, swimming pool, workshop and green space. We can also share experiences; like meals, swimming, gardening, or simply hanging out. At La Querencia we will have 28 homes, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom townhouses ranging from 1100 to 1700 square feet. Many of us were acquainted with one another before we began the project, but we welcome others to join us who share our vision. We hope to have a neighborhood that fosters intergenerational sharing, community involvement, and a lot of fun. In addition to an interest in community, the families in our group are also interested in living lightly on the land. The homes and community are designed to be environmentally efficient. Our architect, Chuck Durrett, is known for designing highly functional and energy efficient spaces. We hope to break ground in mid-2006, and to move in mid-2007.

Cohousing communities respond to the basic needs of today's households (child care, social contact and economic efficiency) by combining the autonomy of private dwellings with the advantages of community living. With over fifty communities built in the United States and many more in the construction or planning stages, the cohousing concept is reestablishing many of the advantages of traditional villages within the context of late twentieth-century life. Each household has a private residence but also shares extensive common facilities with the larger group, such as a dining hall, children's playrooms, workshops, guest rooms and laundry facilities. Although individual dwellings are designed to be self-sufficient and each has its own kitchen, the common facilities, and particularly common dinners, are an important aspect of community life both for social and practical reasons. Because we are the developers, we can include all of the environmentally friendly and high quality construction techniques that we choose. We have designed beautiful, elegant homes with lots of natural light and views of green spaces.

A La Carte menu (build your own speech)

- Balance of privacy and community.
- Safe and supportive environment for children.
- Practical and spontaneous lifestyle.
- Help for busy people.
- Intergenerational neighborhoods.
- Environmentally-sensitive design.
- Pedestrian friendly spaces.
- Optimizing open space.
- We are the developers.
- High quality and sustainable building materials.
- Extensive common amenities.
- Comfortable places to gather.
- Beautiful homes with lots of natural light.
- 28 homes on 2.7 acres in North Fresno.
- Walking distance to Trader Joe's.
- Consensus based decision making, everybody is heard



- Non-hierarchical structure.
- Not a commune
- No shared income sources
- Not just a condo complex



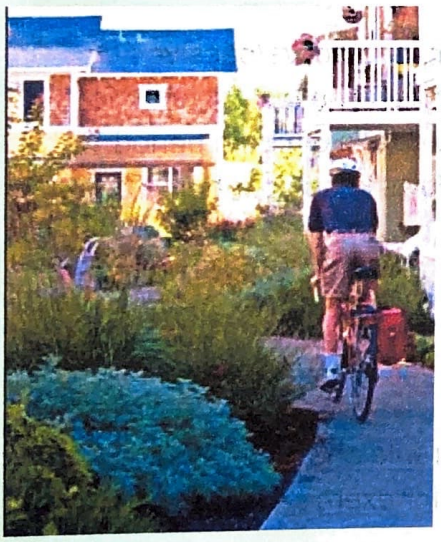
The Greenest Neighborhood in Fresno and the Friendliest too. That's Cohousing.



Cohousing is an intergenerational neighborhood designed by the residents themselves, where families, couples, singles and seniors are safe, have fun together and enjoy privacy when they want it.

Beautiful homes are clustered around extensive common amenities which include a community center, pool, exercise room, kids play room, teen hang-out, patios, workshop and garden areas -- all using state-of-the-art environmentally sustainable materials and design.

Cohousing is coming to Fresno, on Alluvial between Willow and Chestnut. Consider joining us.



Reduce Energy Consumption!
Live Safer and Healthier!

Come to one of our upcoming information events:
Thursday, Sept 28 at 5:30 PM
Tuesday, October 10 at 6:30 PM
Call or email for details: 559-272-2254
info@fresnocohousing.org
www.fresnocohousing.org





Printed on recycled paper

The Village It Takes to Raise a Child



a **free presentation** by national educator,
"Parenting in Community" author and mother

Neshama Abraham

Sunday, February 25th

2:00-3:30 PM

Sponsored by Fresno Cohousing

at

Mommy Matters
1010 E. Perrin Ave.
at Champlain

Supervised Children's Activities

Healthy Refreshments Provided

Space is limited. Please RSVP
866-246-7717 or visit
www.FresnoCohousing.org