



Cohousing – Is it for you?

Terrace

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birchwoodcohousing.com

COHOUSING is a neighbourhood design that combines the independence of private homes with the advantages of common amenities and a village-style support system.



Cohousing is...

- ☐ a closely knit neighbourhood
- ☐ a traditional village
- ☐ people supporting people
- ☐ a new trend in housing



Through cohousing, we can build a better place to live,
a place where we know our neighbours, a place
where we can enjoy a rich sense of community and
contribute to a more sustainable world.



cohousing and sustainability

social, economic and environmental



8 common elements of cohousing

- ☐ participatory design
- ☐ shared common facilities
- ☐ designed for community interaction
- ☐ collaborative decision-making
- ☐ resident management
- ☐ age-in-place, universal design
- ☐ environmental sustainability
- ☐ shared vision and values

what about privacy?

Cohousing strikes a balance that honours privacy and autonomy, but also encourages relationship-building and mutual support.



where can I learn more?

- ❑ Canadian Cohousing Network - www.cohousing.ca
- ❑ The Cohousing Association - www.cohousing.org
- ❑ Creekside Commons - www.creeksidecommons.net
- ❑ Belfast Cohousing - www.mainecohousing.org
- ❑ The Senior Cohousing Handbook by Charles Durrett
- ❑ The Cohousing Handbook by Chris & Kelly
Scotthanson

Birchwood Cohousing

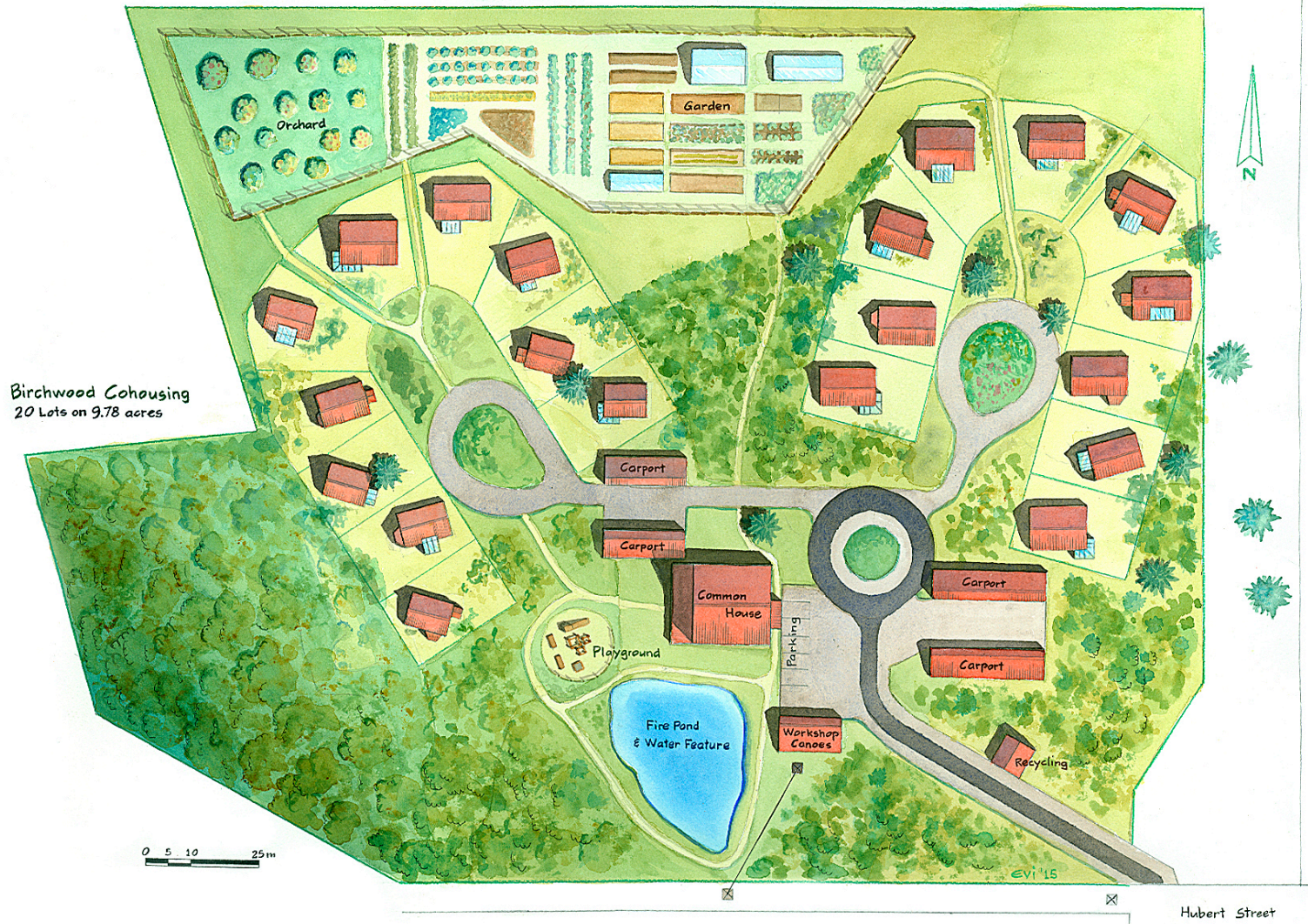
- ❑ what is it?
- ❑ what does it look like now?
- ❑ what will it look like?



before



after



location & features

- ❑ on bench between Highway 16 and Tyhee Park
- ❑ 4.0 ha (9.78 acres)
- ❑ gently sloping with 1/3 open field and 2/3 lightly treed with pine, spruce, aspen, and birch
- ❑ gently southwest sloping
- ❑ beautiful mountain vistas
- ❑ good southerly exposure for passive and active solar

birch grove Fun-Guys



location map



Google earth

feet
km

3000

1



development map



house designs

- ❑ Birchwood Cohousing is selling lots only; members are free to design and build their own house. Members need to follow a few agreed design guidelines to ensure some architectural harmony and enhanced environmental standards in keeping with our sustainability objectives.
- ❑ The maximum living space, including garden suite, is 1,500 sq. ft. per lot. Structures cannot be more than two-storeys. Basements are possible.
- ❑ Two basic passive solar house designs have been created.

Tyee house design



The *Tyee* is a one storey, 2-bedroom, 1,000 sq. ft. design, ideal for singles and older couples.

Babine house design



The *Babine* is a two storey, 3-bedroom, 1,500 sq. ft. design that shares the same footprint as the Tye. Ideal for small families.

development highlights

- ❑ 20 bare-land strata lots
- ❑ lots range in size from 400 to 440 m²
- ❑ 15% of land protected from development
- ❑ amenities include a common house, workshop, gardens, orchard, playground, covered parking, equipment and tool shed, and recycling shed
- ❑ pedestrian-oriented design
- ❑ decisions by consensus
- ❑ participatory design
- ❑ lots sold at cost

financial and legal

- ❑ bare-land strata development (ie residents own their lot and house)
- ❑ \$25,000 shareholder loan upfront cost (to be repaid when lot is purchased)
- ❑ cost of serviced lot est. \$75,000 +GST
- ❑ cost of amenities (common house, covered parking, workshop) est. \$20,000
- ❑ low strata fees to cover only common house and lot services

cost advantages

- ❑ lots sold at cost
- ❑ no developer or realtor fee
- ❑ the site is being offered below market price
- ❑ our environmentally sustainable site design qualifies for a \$3,500 savings in Development Cost Charges
- ❑ homes can be smaller due to the common house
- ❑ secondary suites are permitted
- ❑ using a *Tyee* or *Babine* plan will result in design and construction cost savings

next steps

- ☐ design and cost common house using CMHC grant
- ☐ submit development plan to Village of Telkwa
- ☐ continue outreach (need 14 lots committed to get a construction loan)
- ☐ set up development corporation
- ☐ negotiate construction loan with bank
- ☐ subdivide property into lots
- ☐ begin installing services

membership

- ☐ prospective
- ☐ associate
- ☐ equity



physical values

Group Value	Descriptor	Indicator
A. Environmental Stewardship	1. Energy Efficiency	passive solar (thermal mass, sunlight optimization, exceed min required R-values)
	2. Water Management	water catchment installation, low flow water fixtures, grey water use, cold water wash, recycle bins, permeable land surfaces
	3. Landscaping	indigenous vegetation, natural edibles, low water use
	4. Food Production	fenced garden, greenhouses, berries, fruit trees, livestock
	5. Air Quality	one woodstove/lot, low emission woodstoves, cured wood, electricity as priority
	6. Habitat Protection	conducive environment for amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals
B. Pet Ownership	1. Responsible dog ownership	no barking, clean up after dogs, no chasing wildlife

physical values (cont'd)

Group Value	Descriptor	Indicator
C. Lifestyle	1. Indoor	common house classes, exercise equipment
	2. Outdoor	trails, cycling
	3. Use of Human Power	snowshovelling, gardening
D. Ambiance	1. Light	motion detectors, low lit pathways, minimum overhead lighting
	2. Noise	some indoor quiet space
	3. Senses	creative & aromatic landscaping,
E. Safety & Security	1. Children Play Area	away from traffic, good visibility, simple and safe construction
	2. Parking and Walkways	winter lighting, no slippery surfaces
	3. General	Looking out for each other

social values

Group Value	Descriptor	Indicator
A. Community/Privacy Balance	1. Personal Interaction	participation in community events is encouraged but not required
	2. Site & Common House Design	space for solitary and group activities
B. Life-Long Learning	1. Electronic	internet availability with responsible use
	2. Literacy	library in common house: books, magazines
	3. U of BC	documentaries, presentations, speakers
C. Appreciation of others (inclusiveness)	1. Diversity	age, sexual orientation, racial, cultural, and religious diversity welcomed
	2. Listening to Each Other	meetings, beverage breaks
	3. Community Harmony	respect, tolerance, allowing differences, and acceptance of the actions and opinions of others

social values (cont'd)

Group Value	Descriptor	Indicator
D. Arts and Creativity	1. Visual	wall murals, favorites paintings & photography in commons
	2. Audio	small formal and informal music events in the commons
	3. Drama	theatre gatherings through the commons etc
	4. Landscaping	design ingenuity
E. Commitment	1. To principles of cohousing	help other communities with cohousing projects
	2. To community	attend community meetings to solve problems
	3. To each other	be good and helpful neighbours

questions ?



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