

Notes from Nov 17 2005 Sustainable Neighborhoods Group Meeting

THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS to develop new patterns of sustainable housing and neighborhood design. *Tenants in Common Workshop: a new approach to affordable housing for single adults wanting to share an interactive atmosphere.*

NOTES

From personal experience folks present spoke of their experience of living in a household that shared a kitchen. In one case, Bill lived with 7 other adults, some single and some couples in a house with 3 bathrooms. He chose to do most of the shopping for food (mostly organic), and the rest took turns cooking. Common meals were served 5-6 nights a week. This house had been a shared living home for 20 or so years near Boulder Colo, and according to a longtime resident (17 years) during Bill's 2-year stay, the dynamics were the best. The adults called themselves on their stuff, and there was some processing.

People gathered for breakfast, but cooked their own thing. The dining table was a big! chopping block. Bill misses the sense of community, and the FUN. People had TV's in their personal spaces. There was a six burner stove, and if you cooked, others cleaned up. There was a large garden. His idea now is to have a shared house with 3-5 members.

Others spoke of the right size of shared household as 2,3,4,or 5.

Two meals a week, ala' cohousing, is not enough to pull a group together.

The discussion moved into home design and flexible ownership models.

Home Design

Personal "suites" with a bedroom and office, or sitting area (divided with a wall or undivided), and a private outdoor space per each resident. Common amenities (library, laundry, etc) located between private suites and public areas kitchen, dining and living.

Sali, from a previous meeting, spoke about a large house where there were 5 fireplaces, so people could find a level of social intimacy that worked for them every meal. In that previous discussion, a second dishwasher, two sinks, and a second refrigerator were identified as good design features in a shared kitchen.

Flexible Ownership Models

Some wanted to have a second suite for rental or for parents. Multiple Ownership has it's challenges, ie when someone wants to sell out, how does the new owner (tenant) get approved? LLC, tenants in common, condominium were three proposed options. This topic needs more attention...later.