

Sunward Cohousing

Prospective Member Information Packet

Greetings from Sunward Cohousing in Ann Arbor, Michigan! We offer this information packet to you as a person considering joining the Sunward community and hope it will answer some of your basic questions about living here. It is intended as an informal sketch of the life and workings of our home and is just one step on your journey of exploring our community. It is not intended as a policy document. Your feedback on how it can be improved would be most appreciated.

Please visit our web site for more information about current openings, photos, history, and to join our email list to stay informed about happenings and future openings. We look forward to connecting when the time is right.

www.sunward.org

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*Prepared by the Sunward Membership Committee
January 2011*

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Basics

Sunward Cohousing offers its residents the benefits of a traditional village—a friendly and safe community with a sense of extended family and the opportunity to share resources. Sunward has private housing and shared common facilities all of which was designed and developed by the people who live here. Members plan and management the community, providing labor and leadership and make decisions by consensus. Sunward is designed to enhance human relationships and preserve green space. Our values include caring for each other and our environment, engaging in dialog, and collaborating to find solutions Our housing is clustered around pedestrian walkways and our Common House”. Cars are parked on the periphery of the site, and open spaces are maintained for nature and recreation. We are legally organized as Michigan condominium.

Sunward Cohousing

People

We are a community of 40 households including singles, couples, single parents, young families with children, empty nesters, cooperatively shared homes, owners, and renters. We range in age from infants to octogenarians. Our diversity crosses cultural, educational & occupational backgrounds, race, religious, spiritual & sexual orientations.

People have been attracted to our community for many reasons including: living in intentional community; raising children in a supportive village environment; practicing environmentally conscious living and stewardship of our land; enjoying deeper communications with others; acknowledging our interdependence; knowing all your neighbors; a rich social setting, fostering inclusive decision making processes; sharing of stuff; and creating a place supportive of the dreams and endeavors of its members. Be sure to ask to see our community photo albums and member profiles.

Vision and Values

The expression of values through our daily lives is an important part of life here for many people and an occasional focus of conversation.

Sunward’s Vision

A residential community in which the members share and work together to create a safe, joyful, and satisfying life. This includes:

- Dealing with diversity of opinions, expectations and life experience
- Learning to discern, respect and balance the differences between individual desires and collective good
- Creating a beautiful legacy for future generations

Core Values of Sunward

These commitments guide our actions and decisions.

- Care for each other and our environment
- Engage in dialogue to seek clarity and build connections
- Collaborate to find solutions

Membership

Membership Rights include a voice in our decision-making and the use of Sunward's land, facilities, and resources. Responsibilities include participating in our work system and our decision-making process, abiding by our agreements and norms, honoring and working toward our community vision and core values. There are four types of folks at Sunward:

- **Members** are individuals whose names appear on the deed to their home.
- **Associate Members** are non-owner residents who have chosen to take an active role in the life of the community with the support of their current host member. They have all the rights and responsibilities of Members, except where limited by our agreements and State Law. It is up to each Member to insure that any one in his/her household who wishes to become an Associate Member understands and fulfills the expectations of membership in our community.
- **Guests**, whether short or long term, are encouraged to participate in the life of the community. Long term guests (those receiving mail here for example) are required to participate in our work system or have their hosting household charged a monthly fee for the work done by the community on their behalf. Guests are not part of our decision-making process.
- **Dependents** are children, adult dependant children, or dependant parents. They are encouraged but not expected to participate in our work system.

Joining

We want prospective members to make a well-informed decision to join our community with a real understanding of Sunward culture and a good knowledge of how things work. It is important to get to know as many folks as possible in your exploratory process. Ask the same question of different people and request details from official sources such as committee conveners and our formal documents. Our Book of Agreements and Bylaws define the foundation of our community and detail what you agree to when joining.

To join as a full Member and buy a home at Sunward, prospective members need to:

- attend at least one monthly Community Meeting
- attend at least one social function (for instance, a Common House dinner)
- meet with several long-standing members (other than the seller)

A check-list for buying a Sunward home is attached to this document.

A guest can become an Associate Member at a Community meeting as follows. The sponsoring Member(s) who owns the house in which the guest lives states their desire to sponsor the guest as an Associate Member and the guests states their intent to become a full part of the community with all of the attendant rights and responsibilities. This must be done in person.

Our Life Together

Our Common House

Our Common House is the heart of our community life. We cook, eat, play, hang out, celebrate, meet, host events, do laundry, host guests, and work together at the Common House. It is an extension of our individual homes and allows us to live in smaller private homes than we might need outside of Sunward.

Our Common House includes a large kitchen, dining room, living room, children's play spaces, game room, meeting room, laundry facilities, member offices, exercise room, guest rooms, a video theater, a large workshop, and more. It is wheelchair accessible, with an elevator, wide hallways and doorways, and accessible restrooms. Our U.S. mailboxes and our internal mail "cubbies" are located in the Common House, providing Sunwardians daily opportunities to interact with each other. Spontaneity and serendipity play a major role in building and maintaining our relationships. We decorate the Common House with our laughter, photos, artwork, and our colorful selves. Our goal is for the Common House to be easy to use, necessary for daily life, and better than our own homes.

We encourage and host many community-wide and private events in the Common house such as performances, workshops, parties, for which members are welcome to reserve space at no charge (we own it!). Members are responsible for complete clean-up immediately after their event while regular cleaning and maintenance is done as part of our shared community work.

Common House Meals

Common House meals are a central and defining aspect of our community. In our hectic and fast-paced world, shared meals provide a regular opportunity to keep in touch with, and deepen relationships with one's neighbors, as well as work alongside each other making the meal and cleaning up afterwards. Preparing and sharing food is a great way to build community. Residents decide for themselves the level at which they wish to participate.

Dinners take place 2-4 times a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday), weekdays at 6:15 PM, Sundays at 5:30 PM. Just listen for the ringing of the dinner bell and you'll know it's dinnertime! Diners sign up in advance, as vegetarian or omnivore so the cooks know how much to make, and pay for their meals via a monthly household invoice. We encourage everyone to eat as often as they like and ask for a monthly work shift as assistant cook or cleaner. The head chef for a dinner team determines the menu and cost of the dinner, gathers ingredients, and presents the meal. Schedules are made a couple months in advance and everyone is responsible for covering their assigned shift or finding a reliable sub.

In addition to the dinner program, a variety of spontaneous breakfasts, potlucks, and cookouts draw people in for social dining fun.

Decision Making and Governance

A big part of community life is governance. The membership of Sunward is responsible for all aspects of running the community and holds decision making authority. We are organized legally as a Michigan condominium. Community decisions are generally made by **consensus**. Consensus decision-making is based on the belief that "each person has some part of the truth and no one has all of it." It is inclusive, and requires the active and responsible participation of members, and is rooted in our common vision and values.

Many people raised in American culture don't have experience with consensus process – it is not a common part of the mainstream social and cultural training. Authentically shifting to a cooperative from a competitive mindset may be a challenge. If you are new to consensus decision making, then you will need to learn about it in order to participate in our Community Meetings and decide if you want to live in a consensus-based community. We have occasional educational events to help. The Facilitation Guild can provide information and help. Our library of materials on group process. Just living and listening in the community with an open heart and mind is great on-the-job training!

Community Meetings take place monthly, usually on Tuesday or Thursday evening in the Common House and attendance is an expectation of Membership. A quorum of at least 21 households, must be established to make decisions. Guests are normally welcome to observe though occasionally meetings will be closed for members only. **Minutes** from the community meetings contain a wealth of information about our history and are an official record of our decisions.

Our **Book of Agreements (BoA)** is our official collection of all standing agreements that the community has made. It is our concise decision log from community meetings and a complement to the Master Meeting Minutes Archive. The Book of Agreements also includes guidelines and policies developed by various committees for items and practices falling within their areas of responsibility as well as committee charters and mission statements. Our **Bylaws** and **Master Deed** describe our underlying legal/financial structures and additional aspects of our operation. We intend to revise the semi-boilerplate bylaws we originally adopted. All members and residents are bound by the BoA and Bylaws and it is thus very important to review when considering life at Sunward. It is a right of Membership to propose improvements to our standing agreements.

Getting Our Work Done

Most of the work needed to keep Sunward humming along is done by the members and is organized in both formal and informal ways. Our cooperative work system builds community and interdependence.

The M-List is a schedule of some of the tasks necessary to insure the functioning and basic physical maintenance of our community. Most tasks are broken out into small monthly job allocations and the total hours and tasks are distributed among all members. As much as possible people do work they enjoy. The system is overseen by our wonderful Work Coordinators. The monthly hours/person/month are determined by our total labor budget divided

by the population of members and guests and currently averages 4-6 hours/month. Guests who choose not to join the work system are charged for the work done on their behalf.

Many other efforts that help our community to thrive are done as labors of love for our home. Getting our work done is an ongoing topic as we learn more about what it takes to make Sunward a great home.

Safety and Security

Sunward is generally a very safe place to live as we all know each other and look out for one another. Children playing around our pedestrian campus generally have numerous adult eyes watching in their best interest. Strangers visiting our land stand out immediately and are generally met by friendly, but inquisitive Sunward members. Our clustered homes make it easy to see who is coming and going and if anything is amiss. Restricting cars to the parking lot and away from our homes adds to the safe and relaxed environment for kids of all ages.

Organization

A big part of community life at Sunward is self-management of our operations, facilities and our governance. While our consensus-based Plenary holds the authority and makes big decisions, we delegate many things out to standing committees and ad hoc work groups. These can be grouped as follows:

Leadership

- Coordinating Committee (CoCo) is responsible for setting the agenda for community meetings, strategic planning and keeping tabs on the pulse of the community.
- The Board of Directors is an elected group that serves as our official and legal interface with external authorities and is responsible for making sure legal, maintenance, and financial matters are attended to.
- The Work Coordinators organize our community labor system to see that certain tasks necessary to the functioning and maintenance of the community are accomplished.

Community Life

- Facilitation Guild offers their facilitation skills for meetings in the community and works to improve our process agreements.
- Mediation Guild helps community members resolve conflicts and organizes training for the community.
- Scribes Guild manages our record keeping, takes, posts, and finalizes minutes for Community Meetings, and manages the Book of Agreements.
- Membership Committee assists with membership transitions, outreach, education, marketing, and a variety of member services.
- Sun-Life Committee plans fun for kids of all ages and helps integrate new members.

Common House OperationS (CHOPS)

CHOPS facilitates and encourages use of the Common House and has several sub-committees:

- Meals – organizes the dinner program and oversees the kitchen facilities.

- Furnishings – makes our Common House a warm and welcoming place to be
- Maintenance – keeps all the systems working and the upkeep kept.
- Cleaning – the glorious crew that keeps our place nice! (though everyone is responsible for cleaning up after themselves)
- Workshop – manages our wonderful workshop.

Buildings & Infrastructure (B&I)

The B & I Group is responsible for maintaining our physical plant which includes the exterior of each home. They coordinate community labor efforts and the hiring of professional contractors. Community members notify B&I when a common element is observed needing work. There are a couple of related groups

- Architectural Review Committee (ARC) facilitates review and approval of proposals to make changes to the outside of individual units.
- Barn OPERATION Committee (BOPS) helps maintain and improve the barn.

Land

- Land-use Committee guides the creation and implementation of our overall land-use plan and hosts our annual Land Use planning day.
- LAND-use Review Committee (LARC) facilitates review and approval of proposals to make changes to the use of our land.
- Landscaping Committee coordinates maintenance of and enhancements to our grounds through landscaping and the community labor involved.
- Garden Committee coordinates use of community garden spaces.

All of these committees are convened and peopled by Sunward members with passion for these efforts as part of our cooperative life together and they ebb and flow as needed. As you can see, there are a lot of opportunities to plug in and help the community thrive. What contribution will *you* make to Sunward?

Communication

The rich tapestry of life at Sunward courses with information. Communication and staying in touch is central to sharing our lives and management of the community through a highly participatory process. The most official channel of communication is our Community Meeting for which every member is responsible for the material presented and handed out. We also publicize announcements via assorted email, bulletin boards, and messages in our personal mail cubbies. Several standing committees keep notebooks of their activity available in the Common House for easy access. We facilitate communication with private, community-wide email groups as well as email groups for each active committee. Many members also enjoy having their own, distinctive *sunward.org* email account. We maintain phone and email and birthday lists for easy access and have a private member's website where many useful community documents are available. A great deal of communication happens casually over the dinner table, chatting on the path, while watching over a group of kids, picking up mail, etc,

Culture, Fun, Classes, Clubs, etc.

Sunward has a rich social life of its own emerging from the creativity, passion, and energy of our members. In addition to the day-to-day interactions of dinner, shared work and just hanging out, we've enjoyed several treats throughout the year. New Years Eve typically generates a party at one of our homes. Mardi Gras finds wild costumed dancing in the bead covered Common House, while May Day brings us the May Pole dancing the famous schlepping cart races. Halloween is the height of fun with costumed parade around the community, games for kids, a scary dinner, trick or treating, and a fabulous costume dance party till the wee hours. A beautiful and special shared Thanksgiving dinner, and a shared holiday dinner near the end of December warm our hearts. An annual Anniversary Celebration in November of creates a fun way to reflect on our shared life in community. A winter solstice gathering helps celebrate the return of light and reflect on our lives in the year ahead.

The ongoing Sunward Film Festival brings movie nights to our video theater in the Common House. We have had Round Robin dinners in each other's homes, "fun nights" in the Common House, and an occasional SNOOP* night where many members open their homes for a special progressive tour (* Sunward Night Observing Other's Places).

We also have an ever-changing roster of cultural events: concerts, lectures, yoga and dance classes, book-club, billiards lessons and card clubs. Whatever is offered seems to attract comers. An additional benefit of all of our homegrown culture is that we have less need to go out for it and, therefore, reduce our car use and the associated environmental impact.

Conflict Resolution

Being able to communicate and work things out with each other is key to Sunward's success. Living in community gives us the opportunity to develop the relationships that are helpful in addressing inevitable problems that come up. Some things get worked out one on one with a conversation, over a walk in the woods, or a series of chats. We have a number of skilled people in our Mediation Guild who sometimes help with communication around charged topics. We have agreed to use mediation to solve interpersonal problems that are not finding solutions in other ways.

Children

Sunward provides a very safe environment for children. Community members tend to be watchful and keep an eye on nearby children, playing or intervening as appropriate. Kids (and adults!) enjoy walking, biking, roller-blading, and riding scooters on the pedestrian paths. We have extensive outdoor play areas and kids space in the Common House. Cars are not usually allowed on the pathways.

Children at Sunward may get to know all or most of their neighbors, often developing close relationships with non-family members. Children are encouraged but not required to participate in the work of the community.

Pets

Sunward allows pets. Owners are completely responsible for all aspects of their pet's behavior and care and need to be responsive to other's concerns. Dogs need to be on leashes on campus and cats are strongly encouraged to be kept indoors to protect our many wildlife neighbors sharing our land.

Privacy

One of the appeals of the cohousing model of intentional community is the balance of community and personal privacy. We designed the community layout and our homes with the concept of a privacy gradient: privacy increases as you go toward the back of the house. If you are sitting on your *front* porch, you are letting people know that you are available to socialize. Kitchen windows are in the front of every house and we enjoy strolling along the pedestrian path and greeting our neighbors through the window. If you are sitting on your *back* porch, it is assumed you may be seeking privacy, and not want to socialize so people walking are being respectful (rather than rude) when they do not shout out greetings to you. Living in such close quarters, we need to be aware of, and respect these boundaries. While the inside of homes remain private spaces, it's important to be aware that one's life at Sunward affords less privacy than living outside of community.

Financial Matters

Each household receives a monthly invoice due by the 10th of each month. Monthly dues cover the cost of exterior insurance (fire and extended coverage, plus general liability), common area utilities, maintenance of exterior items, and are the source of funding for the various committee budgets and special projects. Monthly fees include contributions to a Reserve Fund for major maintenance and replacements (e.g. new roofs in 2018) which have been calculated to avoid the necessity for special assessments. Water is purchased and rebilled to the each household on the same invoice. It's important to realize that Sunward, like the community of Ann Arbor, is generally an expensive place to live. Homes have recently sold from \$140 to \$320K.

Land, Buildings, and Town

Land

We own and steward 20 acres of land with many diverse features.

Our **woods** are a wonderful 10 acre mature Oak-Hickory playground with paths, a nature study area, hidden hammocks, and rolling hills. They offer a serene change of pace in all seasons. For some folks the woods were the most important physical feature in choosing to join the community.

We have two **ponds** which are part of a tributary system of Honey Creek with an earthen bridge running between them. They are great for skating in the winter if it is cold enough and home to numerous water fowl in the warmer weather including a great blue heron.

Several acres of **prairie** grace our land which we've been tending for the last 5 years as a native prairie restoration project. A large playfield is home to many a sunward kid-league soccer match and frisbee tossing.

Our built and paved footprint or, **campus**, is about 5 acres and with tightly clustered homes to conserve the green and open space. This spot was formerly a backfilled gravel pit which made it very appealing for our community; we could build our homes on the existing scar in the middle of the land and mostly leave the woods and natural features intact.

Landscaping & Gardening

In general, we have encouraged an approach to landscaping that emphasizes native plants and permaculture design. Native plants are better adapted to our climate, and they encourage native critters like beautiful songbirds, humming birds, and butterflies. It's a great place for birding! The prairie is also easier to maintain than swathes of green turf would be. Many of our originally installed landscaping trees and sedge came to us through "plant rescue," transplanted plant materials that would otherwise be destroyed during development elsewhere.

We have several gardens areas. We try to satisfy the gardening needs of all of our members by designating two of the large gardens "community gardens". The others are being used by individuals for their own garden plots. Currently we have more gardening space than is being used. Our strawberries, raspberries, and fresh herbs make wonderful additions to our Common House dinners!

Buildings & Parking

Sunward's architecture was thoughtfully designed to encourage interactions and spontaneous connections that are the life blood of the community. We have a variety of structures in addition to our Common House: 40 individually owned housing units with a range of sizes and layouts spread across 9 buildings; garages which are individually owned by some households; a large barn, located north of the woods off Park Road, which was built during the 1910s; and a few very useful sheds.

Sunward has a condominium ownership structure so that homes are privately owned inside to the paint on the interior walls including windows and doors, but the community owns the structure and anything outside the unit. Individual owners are responsible for maintenance inside of their units, for insurance on contents, and for added improvements. It is important if you are buying a Sunward home that you are informed by the seller of any improvements they or previous owners made over the original community design.

We have an open parking lot with spaces used on a first come basis. Each unit may build one, not more, parking structure (garage/carport).

Pedestrian Campus & Vehicles

Sunward is a pedestrian community, and vehicles are kept at the periphery. We see the benefits of this daily as residents visit and children play on the pedestrian paths. To move most items around campus and to/from your car, you can use one of our many schlepping carts kept at useful locations around campus. Some people also buy their own folding cart and keep it in their car trunks. Don't feel shy about asking your neighbors for help. Cooperation goes a long way! On rare occasions, such as moving large furniture, vehicles may come directly onto Sunward campus. Drivers should be extremely cautious, driving no faster than walking speed. We keep "pedestrian-only" signs at the entry points and if you must bring a vehicle on campus you need to move and immediately replace the sign when passing in *both directions*, just like closing a farm gate.

Maintenance, Recycling, Composting & Snow Removal

Maintenance of our individual small yards is the responsibility of the household. Our common spaces are maintained by our joint work efforts and through our association fee. We hire some of the professional work out, but we accomplish a lot ourselves through work parties for specific projects and asking for volunteers to be responsible for certain activities, which helps to keep the association fee lower. Recycling and composting are very important elements of our material stream management and we have assorted facilities for both. We arrange private contracts for our recycling and trash pickup and do most of our own snow clearing with our Bobcat plow and our dedicated snow team. Individuals are responsible for their own front walks. Folks often try to shovel their neighbor's walks before one another.

Schools & Libraries

Public schools: Although we are located in Scio Township, Sunward is in the Ann Arbor Public School District and the Washtenaw Intermediate School District. In addition to regular public schools, Ann Arbor also has alternative public schools to which students may apply. Call 994-2236 for information about public schools. Bus transportation is available to regular public schools and some charter/private schools.

Charter and private schools and homeschooling: The Ann Arbor has a broad range of charter, secular, and religious private schools. Some private schools arrange bus transfer locations at public schools. Check with the school for details. A number of Sunward children attend the Steiner school. The Ann Arbor Observer (a monthly magazine) publishes an annual City Guide that briefly describes all schools. Home schooling: a few Sunward families home school with some collaborative activities.

Libraries: Sunward residents use the fantastic Ann Arbor District Library. The main library is downtown in Ann and the West Branch is located near Sunward at Jackson and Maple Roads.

Background & History

Early History

We are creating a story bead necklace as a community heirloom – each carefully chosen bead represents a year or major event in our history. Sunward has its origins around an Ann Arbor kitchen table in *December 1993* with our visionary founders. In *April 1994*, Kathryn McCamant, the architect who popularized the cohousing model in the U.S. conducted a cohousing workshop in Ann Arbor, arranged by Nick Meima, which spawned a group who met regularly to establish criteria for site selection. Our land was found in *1995*. While an initial offer was refused due to suspicions about our intent, a subsequent offer was made and accepted on the present property. We all became developers by forming our own Limited liability corporation called Ann Arbor Alpha. The Architectural firm Sunstructures Architects was selected as architect in *June 1996*. Kathryn McCamant and her partner Charles Durrett conducted two workshops to help us design our site plan and Common House.

The sale of the land was closed in *1996*. The group began searching for a builder and the core membership group reached 22 households in December. The final site plan was approved with contingencies in *January 1997* and our group grew to 28 households. Phoenix Contractors, Inc. was selected in February to build the project. By May, 36 households were committed and unit pricing and final selections were made. Groundbreaking and construction began *May 22, 1997*. The community was fully subscribed with 40 households by August 1997. By *April 1998*, the first homes were certified for occupancy and community members began to move in. Construction was completed on all of the homes and the Common House in *November 1998*. See our website for more recent doings.

What is Cohousing?

Cohousing offers its residents the benefits of a traditional village—a friendly and safe community with a sense of extended family and the opportunity to share resources. Cohousing is private housing and shared common facilities all of which is designed and developed by the people who live there. Residents help plan their community and handle the ongoing management, generally making decisions by consensus. Communities are designed to enhance human relationships and preserve green space. The housing is typically clustered around pedestrian walkways and a “common house”. Cars are parked on the periphery of the site, and open spaces are maintained for nature and recreation.

The cohousing model evolved in Denmark in the late 1960s when a group of dual income professional families were searching for better childcare and a way to share evening meal preparation. Its roots go deep into the long history of intentional communities in the U.S. and Europe. Over 300 projects have been completed in Denmark since the first community was occupied in 1972. In 30 years it has matured into an intergenerational mix of family types, attractive to young families and single parents, as well as retired couples and singles. As of Winter 2004 there are around 74 completed cohousing communities in the United States and 20 under construction. In addition, there are 85 communities in various stages of planning and development. Cohousing is quite possibly the fastest-growing form of intentional community today. Future growth potential is huge, as is the positive modeling for mainstream urban planning and alternatives to sprawl. Sustainability scholar and activist James Crowfoot observes that cohousing is a template that can be readily replicated and adapted for community building in our society.

Some describe Cohousing as an attempt to recreate a traditional village in the midst of complex modern life in a sea of suburban isolation. In the US, the model has deep traditions in American culture including neighborliness, cooperation, and independence. In addition to a clear common denominator of people joining together intent on cooperation as a means of improving their lives, there are six main characteristics of a cohousing community:

1. Participatory Process. Members organize and participate in the planning, design, and development process for the housing development, and are responsible as a group for all the final decisions, either with or without a separate developer. (In most mainstream housing, all this is usually done by a developer before a home buyer looks at a model or meets their future neighbors.)

2. Intentional Neighborhood Design. The physical design and architecture encourages a strong sense of community and increases the possibilities for spontaneous social contact. Much emphasis is placed on pedestrian village site design, open common space, and greenspace preservation. Typical (optimal?) community size is 18-32 households.

3. Private Homes Supplemented by Extensive Common Facilities. Each household has a complete private residence but has access to common areas and facilities which are integrally designed for daily use to supplement private living areas including a large common house with dining, laundry, child care, office space, etc. This allows for smaller, more affordable individual homes. Cohousing supports diverse definitions of households and families.

4. Complete Resident Management. Residents manage the development and community after move-in, making decisions of common concern at community meetings using inclusive, participatory decision making processes. Nearly all cohousing communities use a facilitated Consensus process supported by an empowered committee structure.

5. Non-Hierarchical Structure. While there are leadership roles, the responsibility for the decisions is shared by the community members and no one person dominates the decisions or the community process. Typically a community will have a shifting core of dedicated people (burning souls) that provide key leadership at different phases. It's been proposed that there are 3 waves of burning souls: Visionaries, who launch the project; Doers, who tackle the myriad details of creation; and Sustainers, who pick up the reigns for the long haul.

6. Separate Income Sources. Households are responsible for their own income and finances and do not rely on the community for their primary income.

Other very **common aspects** of cohousing communities include: a high degree of ecological awareness; a fun place to live; intergenerational; and a nurturing environment for children.

Resources to Learn More

The follow are key starting points for learning more about Sunward, the cohousing model and how it fits into the broad umbrella of the intentional communities movement. Please explore them as you consider Sunward Membership. Hard copies are often available to barrow from the Sunward Library.

www.sunward.org

Sunward Cohousing's very own website. Check here for info about openings, bits of history and news, and photos from the community. Request our free, seasonal eNewsletter to stay in touch.

www.cohousing.org

The Cohousing Association of the United States (Coho/US) web site featuring up to date lists of cohousing communities across N. America, news, events, resources & more.

www.ic.org

Intentional Communities web site – the source for community information since 1994.

Communities Magazine

Journal of cooperative living since 1972. A quarterly publication of the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC). See issue #106 (Spring 2000) for a special focus on the cohousing movement and experience and edited by one of Sunward's members.

Visions of Utopia: Experiments in Sustainable Culture

Video Documentary new for 2002 featuring: A brief history of 2500 years of shared living; Insights about what works and what doesn't; Exploration of the "glue" that holds communities together; Profiles of 7 very diverse contemporary communities.
<fic.ic.org/video/>.

Cohousing, A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves

Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett (Ten Speed Press, 1994). The book that helped launch a movement in the US.

Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities, Diana Leafe Christian, New Society Publishers 2003.

Communities Directory

The Book about intentional communitiy. Amazing. <directory.ic.org>.

Yellow & Blue Group Process Books

Good community requires good group process. Check out these two essential volumes, by the Center for Conflict Resolution and published by the FIC.

[A Manual for Group Facilitators](#), (yellow)

[Build United Judgement](#), (blue)

Checklist for Buying a Sunward Cohousing Home

Dear Prospective Member,

The purpose of this checklist is to help you learn about Sunward Cohousing and to ensure a good fit between Sunward and new members. We want you to know about the opportunities and responsibilities that come with being a Sunward member and make an informed choice about joining our very special community.

Learn about Cohousing by reading:

- The Cohousing Book by McCamment & Durrett
- Communities magazine, Cohousing special issue, #106, Spring 2000
- www.cohousing.org

Read Sunward's documents:

- www.sunward.org
- Prospective Member Packet
- Financial Overview Packet (Memo from Board, Recent Budget, Auditors Report)
- Book of Agreements (everything you are committing to by joining)
- Minutes from recent community meetings
- Summary of Consensus Decision Makings

Talk & Visit:

- Talk to the seller about his/her unit and about Sunward
- Talk to the Membership Committee convenor who can assist you in learning about Sunward and has responsibility for helping with Sunward membership requirements.
<info@sunward.org>.
- Talk to anyone and everyone at Sunward about what life here is like.
- Ask for a guided tour of our 20 acres of beautiful land.

Fulfill requirements to become a member:

- Attend at least one community meeting
- Attend at least one social function (such as a common house meal)
- Meet with several long-standing members (other than sellers) to get questions answered

Read Your Contract:

- Make sure that your sales contract includes the contingency that you, the buyer, shall become informed about cohousing and shall become a member. Membership requires full acceptance of the existing community agreements as recorded in the *Book of Agreements*. You shall have the right to rescind the contract if, after receiving this information, you do not wish to join the community. The seller has the obligation to rescind the sales contract if you, the buyer, do not comply with the contingency within four weeks of signing the sales contract or prior to closing, whichever comes first.

Keep us informed:

- Talk to your contacts, especially the Membership Committee convenor, to let us know how it's going and how we can be of help.
- Ask the Membership Committee to provide you with a Sunward Buddy prior to your arrival.
- Let us know when you have completed your purchase and when you plan to move so that we can welcome you and help you settle in to your new life in community at Sunward.



Notification List Inclusion Request

www.sunward.org
contact12@sunward.org

We maintain a notification list for people with a strong interest in joining our intentional community. We encourage you to learn about Sunward by reading our web site www.sunward.org and our *Prospective Members Packet*. Members who want to sell their units may contact people on the notification list. **Email** is the primary means by which we contact people. To join our notification list, please complete this information:

Today Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Email(s): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone - Home: _____ Work: _____

Please mark all that apply:

I am interested in: Renting Purchasing Sharing Staying in Touch

Size of home? 1 bedroom 2 bedroom 3 bedroom

Timeframe of interest (e.g. fall '11 till '13) _____

How did you first learn about and become interested in Sunward?: _____

Please tell us something about yourself and your interest in community (use a separate page if desired): _____

<p><i>Please return this form to:</i> Sunward Cohousing, Membership Committee 424 Little Lake Dr. #41 Ann Arbor, MI 48103</p>	<p>Please update us if you change email address & Check www.sunward.org for news and updates on openings.</p>
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