
Cohousing in America

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Cohousing Overview

- Cohousing Objectives
- Retrofit and New Development Cohousing
- The N Street Cohousing Project
 - History
 - Layout
 - Ecological Benefits
 - Objectives

Cohousing: Objectives

- Create a close community whose residents own private property and also share ownership of common areas
- Bring back an “old-fashioned sense of neighborhood”
- Reduce community’s negative environmental impact

Cohousing Developments: Characteristics

- Contain private dwellings and common areas
- Designed/managed by residents
- No authority positions
- Communal meals
- Encourage diversity

New Development Cohousing

- Pre-formed community plans and builds development together
- In N. America:
 - 73 completed
 - 63 building
 - 40 forming



Sunward Cohousing, Ann Arbor

New Development Cohousing

Advantages

- Custom design
- Can incorporate ecological building techniques

Disadvantages

- Uses greenfields
- Expensive
- Difficult to plan

Retrofit Cohousing



- Community buys up adjacent houses, grows gradually
- 7 forming in N. America

San Mateo Retrofit Cohousing

www.cohousing.org/retrofit

Retrofit Cohousing

Advantages

- Less expensive
- Easier to start
- Uses pre-existing housing

Disadvantages

- Design may not facilitate spontaneous social interactions
- Probably not ecologically designed



- Location: Davis, California
 - University town of about 61,000
 - East side: low-budget neighborhood of 1950's ranch houses
 - High proportion of rental properties

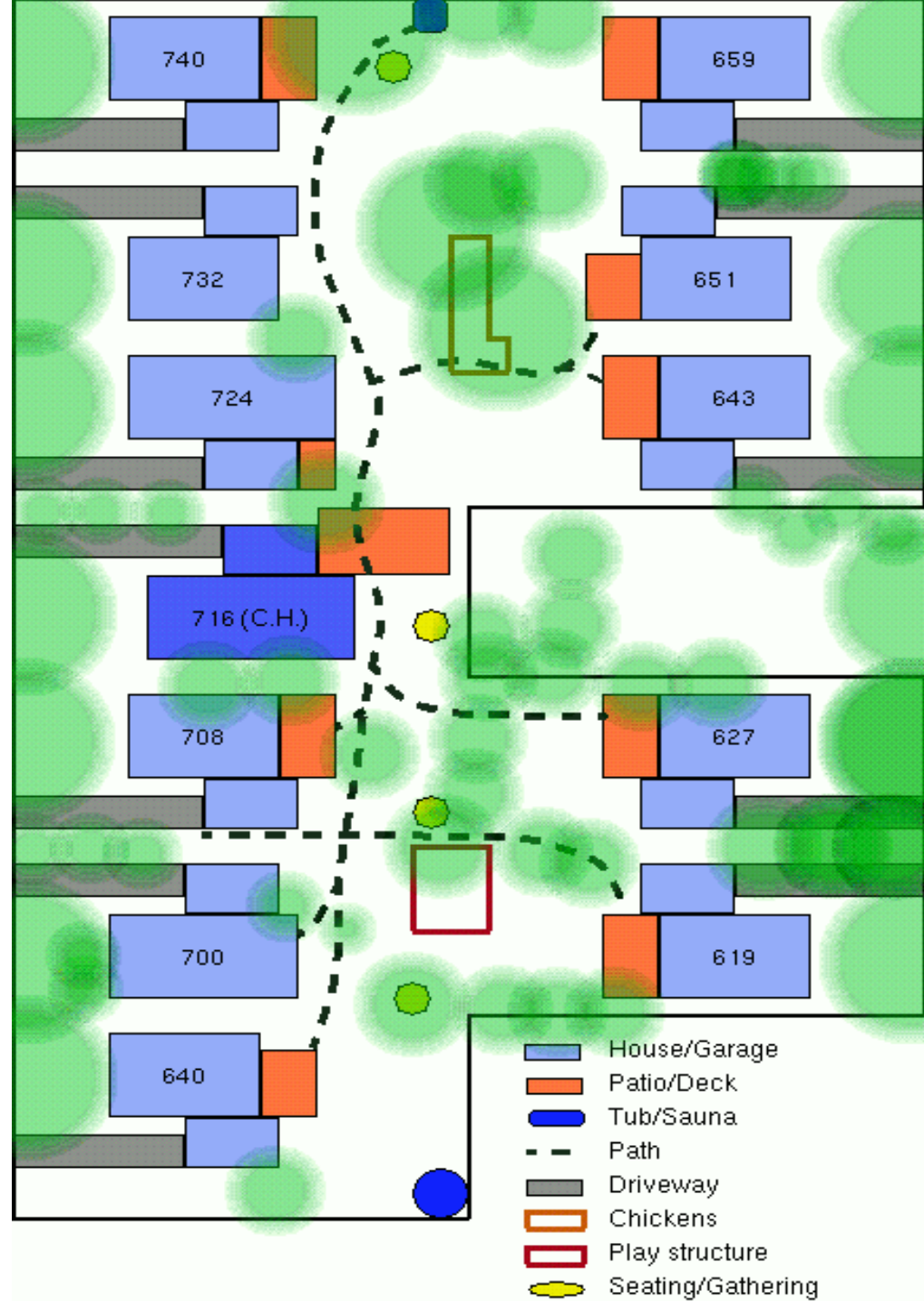
<http://wheel.dcn.davis.ca.us/go/nstreet/homepage.html>

N Street: History

- 1979 - 716 N Street becomes a co-op
- 1984 - First two houses joined
- 1988 - McCamant and Durrett publish “Cohousing”
- 1991 - Common house renovation
- 1999 - Rezoned as a planned development

N Street Layout

- 1999 - 12 adjoining houses, plus two across N street (not shown)
- Current total = 16.



N Street: Common House



Dining Room.



Kitchen.

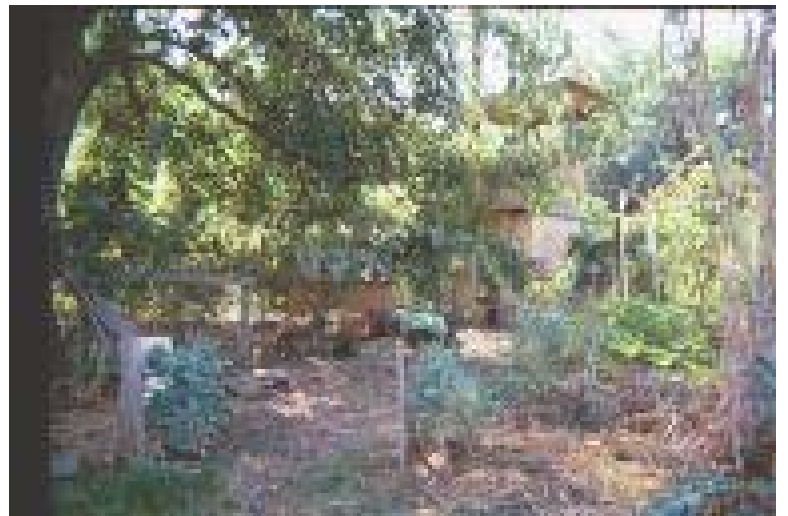
- Amenities include TV, foosball table, piano, woodshop and laundry rooms.

N Street: Common Yard

- Includes vegetable gardens, fruit trees, chicken coop, children's play area, picnic tables, hot tub, and storage areas.



Play area.



Chicken coop.

N Street: Ecological Benefits

- Community produces much of its own food
- Makes less waste
- Used no new land/materials
- Achieves higher density

N Street: Official Goals

- Provide social support
- Conserve resources, lessen negative environmental impact
- Encourage diversity/maintain affordability
- Community childcare
- Encourage more community involvement throughout the neighborhood