Cohousing As An Urban Housing Alternative in Indiana

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Cohousing As An Urban Housing Alternative in Indiana
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Dedication
I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents who are my best friends; I love you very much. Thanks...for everything.

More Thanks
Thanks to Nancy and Johanna who put up with my eccentricities while working on my thesis and trying to figure out what I want to do for the rest of my life. Thanks to my studiomates and their eccentricities, for without their influence, good and bad, I would not be the person and planner I am today. Finally, thanks to Jerry who claims to like my eccentricities and who helped me get through thesis.
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Executive Summary

After World War II, single family housing became the ideal housing option. The family of the '50s for whom this housing was intended makes up just 10% of '90s families. Singles, single parents, and elderly will continue to become a larger percentage of the American population with needs that cannot be met by traditional single family housing. Rising costs and decreases in real pay make it continually more difficult for everyone, including traditional nuclear families, to survive without two incomes.

Cooperative housekeeping and community living arrangements are not a new idea. Between 1840 and 1930, a variety of cooperative communities were proposed in America and Great Britain to better house the working class, provide relief for overworked, middle class wives, and to foster economic efficiency in the home.

Cohousing is an exciting housing option that is well-known in Europe, but relatively new in the U.S. Seven factors make a cohousing development: common facilities, private dwellings, resident-structured routine, resident management, design for social contact, resident participation in the development process, and pragmatic social objectives. The thesis of this paper is that cohousing is a viable housing alternative for that can work in Indiana.

Cohousing offers many of the same benefits proposed in the cooperative housing schemes of the 19th century. In cohousing, common meals are prepared by each adult for the entire community on a rotating basis. Depending on the number of adult residents, one might not have to cook but one night a month. This saves time, money, and hassle for everyone involved. Often, baby sitting or child care efforts are shared with adults organizing a casual system of after school supervision for those children
whose parents work late. Elderly residents have the security of others around without having to compromise privacy. Living with children, adults, and older residents gives them a more varied group of people to interact with as opposed to life in retired communities. Costs are kept to a minimum by sharing meals, laundry facilities, guest rooms, workshops, and other niceties such as TVs, pianos, and computers.

Three development alternatives will focus on examples of cohousing developments in Denmark. These examples offer some ideas as to how cohousing may be applied in different forms. One U.S. cohousing development will also be described. A site in Muncie will then be developed as cohousing to illustrate how the process might work in Indiana.
Cohousing As An Urban Housing Alternative in Indiana
Chapter 1

Introduction

The family of the '90s is quite different from that of the '40s and '50s. Economically speaking, people are making less money than before. With the consciousness raising of women in the 1960s and '70s, more women are working than ever before. On a related note, the divorce rate is much higher than it was fifty years ago. Improvements in food, housing, and medicine are leading people to live into their eighty's and ninety's. Changes in telecommunications, such as computers, TV, and faxes, make the world much smaller than before. Technology has changed the whole lifestyle of the U.S. Over the past fifty years, life styles and priorities have changed, yet housing choices have not. Every major city is surrounded by an ever-expanding suburban ring. These suburbs are filled with single family low density housing that is inappropriate housing for an increasing percentage of the population. The developers have gotten more sophisticated about design and the planners have gained more control over development, but the same mind set of the post-World War II housing boom prevails. People seem to have left the city because of undesirable qualities. They forgot the advantages of living in a well-developed urban neighborhood. They thought that the suburbs would be the best of both. The suburbs have developed a life of their own; however, and now residents find many of the urban problems their parents left within their own suburbs.

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to educate citizens and planners about a housing alternative that is relatively new to the United States. This thesis intends to promote cohousing as a viable urban housing alternative in Indiana. Cohousing has existed in Europe for twenty years and has been very successful. For the past five years, cohousing has been growing in
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this country, and it offers many benefits for any type of household. This thesis will describe cohousing then explain how many American households can profit from what cohousing offers. The typical American family no longer consists of a working father, homemaker mother, and two children. Even though this traditional family is a minority of households in the ‘90s, most housing remains in the form of single family homes that became the norm fifty years ago when this type of family was commonplace. More than ever, cohousing meets the needs of the changing American population.

Methodology
Much of this thesis is based on literature review. The chapters on American housing and the history of cohousing are based upon secondary information from published sources. The European development alternatives are from the same published source, CoHousing. The American example of Monterey in Minnesota involves information gathered first hand from personal interviews conducted there. The steps in the case study are based on the steps mentioned in several sources; however, the information provided at each step was collected first hand by the author. The process of starting cohousing in Indiana is also based on several previously published models.

Brief Outline of Thesis
This thesis begins with a brief description of the history of housing since World War II, focusing on the development of the single family household as the dominant housing type. Chapter 3 discusses a housing type imported from Scandinavia that was developed in response to the changing needs of modern households. Following that will be an exploration of different physical cohousing developments illustrating the variability of cohousing, breaking down the discussion into European and American cohousing. This is followed by a case study of a site in Muncie. This site will be theoretically developed as cohousing to better illustrate the development process as it relates to cohousing in Indiana. The case study leads into a discussion of how cohousing may be started in Indiana. The final chapter summarizes cohousing as an urban housing option in Indiana.
Definitions
To better understand terms within this thesis, the following are definitions that the author has used.

**Apartment**—single floor dwelling within a building with other units that is rented for specified period; it may be quite spacious, but typically consists of one- or two-bedrooms with common spaces (hallways, driveways, lawns) maintained by the owner.

**Condominium**—single floor dwelling within a building with other units that is owned and may have a mortgage; because they are owned, they tend to be more expensive and luxurious than apartments; common spaces are maintained by an association or service.

**Cohousing**—English term for cooperative housing developments in Europe. These involve attached single family dwellings and a common house where common facilities are located (kitchen, laundry, hobby rooms, dining room). In these developments, residents depend on each other to take turns cooking, taking care of children, tending to gardens, etc., through a formal, organized self-governing body.

**CoHousing**—this refers either to the title of the book, *CoHousing*, or the newsletter. Cohousing with a small "h" refers to cohousing in general. When first introduced to the U.S., this housing was referred to as "CoHousing" which was originally a trademark of McCamant and Durrett. Since the trademark has been dropped and cohousing has become more widespread, the common usage is now "cohousing."

**Community**—community has several meanings in this text. Community is another description for a cohousing development; they often refer to themselves as cohousing communities. Community is also used to describe the sense of familiarity and companionship between those who have things in common.

**Common facilities**—rooms or structure with rooms to accommodate clothes washing, cooking for larger groups, hobby rooms, TV rooms,
libraries, music rooms, guest rooms, and other similar uses that may be expensive for individuals to maintain, but are made affordable by sharing.

**Row house**—urban attached dwelling, ownership like a condo or townhouse, built with more than one level—constructed as individual units building upon the wall of another unit already in existence—typically entry is half-story off the street level—commonly found in eastern cities

**Shared duties**—most commonly, cooking duty; also child care, grocery shopping, and other maintenance duties accomplished on a rotating basis where residents take turns, most often with a formal rotation pattern in place and perhaps even required by pre-arranged agreement.

**Townhouse**—a structure in which vertical units are attached, they are purchased and owned like condos, but have a basement and second floor.

**Limitations and Assumptions**
One important limitation is that only a handful of successful cohousing communities exist in the United States while there are dozens in Europe. This may affect the focus and scope of the final perceptions. The main assumption in this thesis is that community life and human interaction are missing from most people's lives and that these qualities are highly desired because they seem so inaccessible today.
Chapter 2

History of U.S. Housing

"We shape our dwellings, and then our dwellings shape us."
—Winston Churchill

This chapter is meant to focus mainly on the rise of post-World War II housing and how it affects housing choices today. Some attention will also be given to early experiments in communal living.

Two Contrasting Communities

Vanport, Oregon, as described by Dolores Hayden, was an unusual experiment in planning, home building, and social service delivery. This town was built from scratch in 1943 by shipyard owner Henry Kaiser, to support all the workers for the shipyards in the area. Men and women of all races were to work there. In order to attract workers, the town also required hundreds of "support" workers—nurses, doctors, school teachers, day care workers, and maintenance workers. This effort resulted in the first integrated, publicly subsidized new town in the U.S. One interesting part of this design was the communal nature of services. Day care services were open 24 hours a day, offered infirmaries for sick children, bath tubs to make sure all were presentable, and home cooked meals to go that mothers could pick up along with their children at the end of the day. The entire child care service cost only 75 cents per child per day in 1943 dollars. The program specified that the town offer affordable housing for all types and sizes of households, including singles, single parents, and non-family groups. Low maintenance and energy efficiency were also required with an emphasis on public bus transportation. Housing had to be situated near jobs and day care. Overall, 718 low-rent buildings were constructed at a cost of $25 million (Mason, 37). The wartime effort was largely responsible for this innovative and immense
undertaking.

Six years later in 1948, Bill Levitt built Hicksville on Long Island, which eventually became a national symbol of everything opposing the ideals represented by Vanport, Oregon. Hicksville was built to serve returning veterans, particularly white veterans, who were the breadwinners with a non-employed housewife and two children. Levitt built strictly to make a profit. The post-war role of women and the trend of consumerism forced women out of the factories and into what Hayden describes as “dream houses.” Hayden looks at women’s roles in society and how they have changed along with the purpose of shelter. She notes that what was once a great emphasis on community has become a great emphasis on housing. After so much freedom during World War II, the woman was told to reassume her place as homemaker. The woman’s job has always been to care for husband and children, to emotionally nurture them, and to make the home presentable. After the war, she was led to consume household appliances and such to help her in her “job.” Hindsight indicates that the suburban tract homes were not the best after all. The energy efficiency of pre-war design was gone. The extensive use of personal appliances did not help energy efficiency. The suburban dream was very isolating. Without a car, living there was impossible.

The most obvious explanation for the difference in these two communities is the social climate created by the war effort and then the postwar effort. The war effort caused great shortages and put production of almost all consumer goods at a standstill. The country was just beginning to recover from the Depression when the war began. Housing starts which had been slowly rising, declined again as materials went directly to shipyards and factories for tanks, planes, and ammunition. All Americans were united in the “war effort,” everyone doing their share of recycling and doing without. The History of Housing in the U.S., by Joseph Mason, looks at the history of home construction from 1930 to 1980. While it is very much from the view point of builders and developers, it describes well the social and governmental forces behind the trends in housing.
Post-World War II Housing

In 1941, the federal government, through the War Production Board, proposed closing down all private defense housing and replacing it with public housing. At this point, the two national builders groups, the Home Builders' Institute and the National Home Builders' Association, and state and local organizations banded together to create a Home Builders' Emergency Committee (HBEC) to meet with men in Washington and protect their interests (Mason, 33). Members of this committee persuaded Washington to continue to allow private defense housing. Though some rivalry continued between the HBI and NHBA, the two organizations were eventually merged into the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). The combination of the war and threatened action by the government caused the home builders to be united into one large group with enormous lobbying power. It was this unification and pooling of resources that created at tight network of people with the power to influence a major market: housing.

The following chart illustrates the number of housing starts begun between 1940-49.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Public</th>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>603,000</td>
<td>530,000</td>
<td>73,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>706,000</td>
<td>620,000</td>
<td>86,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>356,000</td>
<td>301,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>191,000</td>
<td>184,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>142,000</td>
<td>139,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>326,000</td>
<td>325,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>1,023,000</td>
<td>1,015,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1,268,000</td>
<td>1,265,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>1,362,000</td>
<td>1,344,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1,466,000</td>
<td>1,430,000</td>
<td>36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7,443,000</td>
<td>7,153,000</td>
<td>290,000</td>
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source: *History of Housing In The U.S.*

After 1943, much thought was given to post-war housing. The NAHB expanded the Emergency Committee to prepare for this impending crisis. Their plan was to build 1 million homes a year with FHA Title VI loans of
25-30 years and 5% down (Mason, 44). Later in 1943, Congress approved an extension of FHA financing of $400 million.

By 1944, new housing starts were almost non-existent. Materials continued to be scarce, leaving thousands of homes almost finished. In August of 1944, Congress passed the G.I. Bill of Rights that guaranteed home loans to veterans (Mason, 45). On May 7, 1945, the Germans surrendered and three months later, on September 2, the Japanese surrendered ending the war. Two months later, in October of 1945, the War Production Board and the National Housing Authority loosened restrictions and housing controls opening the door for the post-war housing construction boom.

The American builders who built tanks and planes and defense housing had progressed in their technology of building. The need for easily assembled, lightweight goods mass produced from scraps gave home builders a whole new set of skills for building pre-fabricated housing quickly and inexpensively. There were several reasons to expect an increase in housing construction: 10 million veterans were returning from the war eager to settle down and rebuild their lives; there was still a considerable housing shortage remaining from the Depression; Americans had been saving their money during the war and now had an opportunity to spend it; the FHA and VA offered favorable loans to returning veterans; and there was a large skilled labor force ready to tackle domestic housing construction (Mason, 46).

Veterans, their families, and the public in general were attracted to the advertising of new homes and modern conveniences. Touring model homes became a Sunday pastime and women’s magazines overflowed with decorating and home making tips. Mason describes the new communities as achievements in planning, construction, and efficient architecture. The housing industry continued to boom until the Korean War began in 1950 when America went back into war production mode. In truth, Levitt, Kaiser, Hill, and the others did fill the need for low cost housing, with the help of the federal government. Levittown, built by Levitt on Long Island, was built on the fields of a potato farm, and this type of new construction was common with many of the post-war
housing developments. In 1952, President Truman signed the Veterans' Readjusted Assistance Act—"G.I. Bill of Rights" (Mason, 64).

The new Federal Highway Act of 1956 and the resulting construction of interstates encouraged new housing developments away from the city. FHA loans and tax exemption for home ownership encouraged people to own homes rather than rent.

The housing boom, though a successful effort from the builders' point of view, also has a less ideal aspect. New suburban developments were designed to serve the needs of the returning war veteran who had a wife and one to two children. It was assumed that he would work all day in the city at a modest government job while his wife stayed at home to raise the children, keep house, and preserve the moral character of family life. This scenario worked as long as the husband made enough money to support the family, the wife was satisfied in housekeeping, the children had good schools and places to play, and the neighborhood or development offered amenities such as schools, parks, local stores, and connections to mass transit.

The women who stayed home were most closely in touch with the realities of the neighborhood while being engulfed by the fantasy of suburban life created and perpetuated by women's magazines and later television. Without a second car and in a neighborhood without parks and small retail, housewives looked to their homes and their neighbors for companionship, stimulation, and relaxation. The many gadgets that captivated young home buyers were either too expensive for them to purchase or did not really save time anyway. Gadgets required special cleaning, care, and repair, ultimately being served by the housewife instead of the other way around. Backyard space was not sufficiently large for children and toys and interior space was equally crowded. Everyday, the same routines of laundry, house cleaning, child care, and meal preparation were duplicated by every wife and mother, leaving little time for personal pursuits or paid work.

In less than 120 years, the ideals of domestic management had done a
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complete turnaround. The single family home with its individual physical design and the societal notion of the art of home making strictly defined the roles of men and women in the home.

The Cooperative Movement of Great Britain
Beginning in the 1840s, women theorists in Great Britain and America rediscovered the benefits of community housekeeping and wrote about ways to integrate such a concept into modern home management. The focus began originally with group housing for single working women and the low classes. Though not the first, Mary Gillies wrote in 1847 about a hypothetical associated home for the working class. She described 100 homes in the block with one to five rooms in each. Hot and cold water was piped to every floor, while meals could be eaten in the dining hall or in private rooms. Cooking and washing were performed communally (Pearson, 17-18).

In 1868, Isaac Doxsey published an article titled, “Domestic Co-Operation,” in The Co-Operator. He imagined a large building to house ten to twelve working-class families each with their own home but a shared dining hall and washhouse. The wives would take turns cooking dinner for everyone, thus allowing the other women time with their children. They could share cooking tips, house keeping chores, and make the home more attractive for the husbands. He makes no mention of men taking an active role in housekeeping or child care.

American Melusina Fay Peirce started the Cambridge Cooperative Housekeeping Society in 1869. She had written a series of articles in the Atlantic Monthly about cooperative housekeeping and the society was begun in an attempt to see those theories put into practice (Pearson, 19). Her plan revolved around twelve to fifty women working together to provide cooked food and sewing and laundry service. The profit would then be returned to investors. The three areas of cooking, sewing, and laundry would be supervised by the ladies of the association in a centralized location set up much like commercial laundries and kitchens of the time (Pearson, 20-21). The only remaining household task was house cleaning. Peirce suggested that the few servants that were needed would be hired.
by the central organization to perform the housekeeping chores. Physically, her plan called for homes arranged around a central grassy courtyard with the central facility within easy distance of each family dwelling.

In 1869, there was a feeling of discontent with the standards of housekeeping. Women worked long and hard at tasks considered indecent and incompatible with their status as upholding the moral structure of the family. Peirce's theories were somewhat acceptable because she did not support communal living and cooperative theories overall continued to enjoy discussion and experimentation.

E.V. Neale wrote in 1872 about his support for the associated home and described it as follows. There would be private flats but also a central kitchen, laundry, bathroom, dining room, library, smoking and billiard rooms, and a nursery (Pearson, 28). He envisioned a five story building, no doubt causing inconvenience when performing daily tasks in facilities that were located on different floors. Also, his programming of the rooms was separated into recreational functions for the men and work related for the women. Neale did not say much about life in the associate home, but conveys the idea of common facilities shared by several families.

In England in 1873, Elizabeth Moss King had published a paper about what she called confederated homes. Her approach was to support the economies of scale allowed by shared resources. She suggested central heating, lighting, and water and waste disposal services which would be too expensive for one household but made affordable with many households. These homes would be more economical, she argued, because of less food waste and bulk buying (Pearson, 32). As a closing point, King stated that confederated homes would take up less building area allowing space to be set aside for parks and gardens. Not everyone thought confederated homes and the like were a good idea; at least one publication criticized Mrs. King stating that her proposal was nothing better than a residential hotel that would not be comfortable in the least.

In spite of such opinions, Marie C.C. Morfit proposed in 1874 a cooperative building containing six flats. Each flat had bedrooms, a dining room,
and a drawing room, but no kitchen or bathroom. Meals prepared by the staff (paid servants) were to be delivered by dumbwaiter to the individual units. At the same time, a very similar structure known as catering flats were under construction in London. These structures were modeled after hotels and functioned in much the same way. Families could rent suites with their food prepared and either delivered to the suite or served in the dining room. Those who wanted better food service or room cleaning would pay additionally. Wives would then be relieved of the mundane housekeeping chores and be free to concentrate on their children or perhaps paid work. Catering flats continued to be built and to be fashionable until just after the turn of the century.

The Decline of the Cooperative Movement
After the turn of the century, the cooperative movement lost much of the support it had gained at the end of the 19th century. During World War I, communes and community kitchens were set up to assist those in London. After the war; however, the government did not see a need for such arrangements. Cooperative housing designs were restricted to design competitions held by various women's groups who had no real influence in architectural circles.

Meadow Way Green South in Letchworth, England was the first successful cooperative built after World War I. It was built in 1920 as a quadrangle with a common dining room and kitchen, seven apartments, and six cottages (Pearson, 164). In 1923, Gueszens Court was constructed as a three-sided quadrangle of apartments with a restaurant, kitchen, and guest rooms shared by the residents. The annual rent included use of dining room and each renter was required to spend a pre-set minimum sum in the restaurant each week. Other services could be bought and rent included upkeep for the property and use of the tennis courts (Pearson, 170).

After World War I, more women were in the work force and domestic servants became increasingly difficult to find and afford. Modern houses were more easy to maintain than Victorian homes and widespread electricity promised to improve conditions at home as well. Labor saving
devices became extremely popular in the 1930s (Pearson, 159).

The 1930s in England mark the beginning of a renewed interest in single family housing. Electrical appliances became more affordable, homes were easier to care for, and people felt wealthier. Perhaps the single most liberating home appliance was the washing machine. It allowed servants and wives to clean clothes while pursuing other tasks (Pearson, 178).

One of the benefits but also the downfall of the cooperative movement was its representation of an alternative life style with the suggestion of eventually an alternative society. It appealed to those who were unhappy with their current life style (working women, middle class wives, and servants), but threatened those who had decision-making power (male politicians). Only when it was necessary during war time were communal arrangements approved and supported.

In England and America, the communal nature of services inspired by World War I and World War II remained popular only as long as each war. Up through the 1950s, women's groups and labor groups wrote papers on communal housing in an effort to gain government support. These articles were more often than not ignored or overlooked because women were not on influential committees advising the government and because architects (mostly men) were considered to be more knowledgeable about the proper design of a home than the women who lived there. Architects and politicians insisted they were supporting what women really wanted, but never seemed to take the time to actually ask or listen if they did ask.

Between 1840 and 1920, the papers calling for cooperative housing situations were designed to meet a variety of goals. Many of the initial articles were looking to create adequate housing for single, working women. Others focused on lower class working families. Still others, often men, proposed cooperative housekeeping as a way to encourage women to obtain paid work outside the home. A few writers focused on building community for those women (lower and middle class) who do housework without the assistance of servants. Some articles focus on
improving the technology of housekeeping while others look at cooperative communities as an economic investment.

These underlying objectives influence how the different cooperative housing solutions were designed. It has not been until recently that community housing ideas have been reinvented in an effort to bring back a sense of community.

Conclusion
Clearly, the idea of living communally is not a new one. There is a cyclical nature to the popularity of cooperative living arrangements. The cooperative housekeeping movement was in full swing in the 1870s and was all but gone by the 1940s. Cooperative arrangements were considered to meet a variety of needs, but rarely the need for community. In the 1980s, cooperative housing has begun to pick up momentum and, in many cases, people are building and developing their own cooperative organizations. Cohousing, the subject of Chapters 3 and 4, is a publicized, perhaps more structured example of the general movement towards rebuilding community and sharing resources for the common good.
Chapter 3

History and Definition of Cohousing

Cooperative housing and cohousing are two names for a similar concept of community-based housing. *CoHousing*, by Kathy McCamant, *Collaborative Communities*, by Dorit Fromm, and *Living Longer, Living Better*, by Jane Porcino all discuss this form of housing. Kathy McCamant’s work is the first American authority on what she coins “cohousing.” As an architect, she and her architect husband began studying European cohousing in 1984. They wrote *CoHousing* and began their own consulting business in California. Since writing the book in 1989 in which the term “cohousing” is their own registered trademark, they have dropped the restriction on use of the name (see Definitions in Chapter 1).

Cohousing as described in this thesis began over twenty years ago in Denmark. It is important to look at the history of cohousing and examples of different developments that are existence to better understand what cohousing involves. Groups that are interested in cohousing can gain valuable insight and ideas that may lead to other variations of cohousing. The nature of cohousing is grass roots and reflects the type of individuals involved with a particular community. European cohousing has been adapted from the first experiment to fit a variety of physical spaces and meet a variety of social needs.

Fromm examines Danish, Dutch, and Swedish developments with commentary on how similar aspects might be applied in the U.S. He makes no distinction between what he calls “collaborative” housing and what McCamant describes as “cohousing.” “Cohousing” has become the accepted term because it does not sound threatening and describes a housing type that is different from what have been called “cooperatives”
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and "communes."

The First Cohousing Community
In 1964, Danish architect Jan Gudmand-Høyer met with friends to discuss their housing options. He and his wife wanted to start a family, but did not want to live in the city with the common scene of decay and loss of community. He and his friends agreed that neither single family housing in the suburbs nor multi-family apartments offered appealing options. Row houses, they felt, were somewhat better, but still lacking a true sense of community. In their further discussion and exploration, they read several historical works that described shared community space and homemaking cooperatives for meal preparation and child care. By the end of 1964, the group of friends were actively developing the idea of bofællesskaber, the concept of what is today cohousing. They purchased land and drew plans of the buildings and site for their development. Though the local officials supported their proposal, the neighbors did not and succeeded in stopping the development by purchasing land necessary for access to the new site. In the mid-'60s, with the western movement to question accepted rules and behaviors, ideological and religious collectives and communes became visible. These were particularly popular with younger people. To couples with children; however, this type of life style was not a realistic long-term option. An article written in 1967, "Children Should Have One Hundred Parents," argued that children are at best tolerated by most of society and that a positive housing environment should be child friendly in physical and social terms. The author, Bodil Graae, put an ad in the paper seeking people interested in a housing collective that would be geared in large part to the creation of a healthy environment for children. She received over fifty responses to her ad and the group began meeting to fulfill their dream.

In 1968, with the writings of Graae and Gudmand-Høyer serving to inspire others in Denmark, Graae and Gudmand-Høyer and the group from the first attempt began serious work on a site in Jonstrup. In the fall of 1972, twenty-seven families moved into Sættedammen in Hillerød. A year later, thirty-three families moved into Skråplanet in nearby Ballerup.
Seven Qualities of Cohousing
Dorit Fromm defines collaborative communities with seven qualities that make them different from any other type of housing available: common facilities, private dwellings, resident-structured routine, resident management, design for social contact, resident participation in the development process, and pragmatic social objectives. Using Sættedammen as an example, he explains the seven points.

Common Facilities
The shared facilities are located at the common house. This is where the residents gather to prepare and eat the evening meal, where children may be watched in the afternoon, and where coffee is shared on Sunday mornings. Sættedammen also has in their common house, a laundry room, sauna, play areas, and a central heating facility that provides heat at a reduced cost. In order to pay for the common house, the floor area of each residence was reduced by 7%. The popularity of common houses has grown so that now it is typical that 10-15% of the floor space is donated. Correspondingly, the size and importance of the individual units has decreased. Other common rooms found may include, dark-rooms, soundproof music rooms, teenagers' room, guest rooms, and libraries.

Private Dwellings
The residences at Sættedammen each contain a kitchen, living-dining room, and one or more bedrooms and baths. The kitchens are in the front facing toward the common areas while the bedrooms are near the back to afford privacy. The row houses are close to single family standards with 1,500-2,422 square feet. Because Sættedammen was the first experiment in cohousing, the residents did not know how large the common house and dwellings needed to be. They made the common house smaller and the residences larger in case the common house failed to build community and the residents wished to retreat to their own dwellings. Now, new developments put more money and size into the common house and have down-scaled individual residences to 538-1,313 square feet. Kitchens, for example, have gotten smaller as the popularity of sharing meals nightly has increased. The living room is also smaller because meeting space has
been found in the common areas. Guest rooms, TV rooms, and hobby rooms have been taken out of the private dwelling and moved to the common house. This decrease in the size of the private unit encourages use of the ample common areas designed.

**Resident-Structured Routines**

One of the key aspects that makes cohousing different from any other type of housing is sharing daily duties and the sense of community created by this sharing. Work such as cooking, cleaning, and watching children is shared so that not everyone has to do these tasks all the time and also, as these tasks are being done, there is an opportunity to talk, to meet neighbors, and to develop relationships. Preparing and eating the evening meal for everyone in the community is perhaps the most obvious advantage for everyone. The expense of purchasing food and the time and energy spent on preparation and clean up afterwards is shared by everyone participating.

The meal plans vary greatly from development to development. Some groups have decided to eat together only one to two times a week while others enjoy it so much they meet every night but two during a month. In all cases, residents are required to assist in cooking and cleaning up after the meal on a rotation schedule. The meals are reasonably priced—$2-3 for adults, less for kids and most communities arrange it so that one only pays for the meals eaten. Fromm explains three basic eating arrangements: 1) the dinner club where three to four households rotate dining at each other’s private residence; 2) eating groups where combinations of six to ten households eat at the common house with each household rotating meal preparation; and 3) a residential cooking team is chosen on a rotation basis to prepare dinner at the common house for the households. At Sættedammen, the residents organized themselves into small eating groups for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and a gourmet group on Sunday. In this case, residents typically sign up to eat together once or twice a week. No money is exchanged and everyone accepts that some residents may be able to afford more for a fancier meal.

In other cases where smaller groups meet at individual residences, the
guests might bring their own dishes to save time cleaning up (Fromm, 12). In a newer community, Jystrup Savværket, community dinners are served six nights a week and residents choose the days they would like to eat there. The cooking crews consist of six adults and several children who cook one week in seven. The money is collected from everyone who eats and repaid to those shopping for the food. The few residents who cook their own meals and do not participate in the cooking rotation are expected to contribute to the community in other ways: participation on maintenance, gardening, child care committees, or other projects.

Resident Management
Resident management is another key to the difference between conventional housing and cohousing. Responsibility for management of the community is shared by all residents. They decide on rules and policies for the community and criteria for new members. Some groups have a board of directors who oversee bookkeeping and organizational tasks. At Sættdammen, the residents meet monthly to work through issues and problems by a process of direct democracy and mutual agreements. Problems arising between residents are resolved within the community. This level of responsibility and accountability helps to build community and is also made easier because of the community.

Design For Social Contact
Building community extends beyond resident ownership and community dining. The design of the site and structures is planned to encourage contact between individual residents, between residents and the cohousing community, and between the cohousing community and the public. (Fromm, 12). At Sættdammen, as with most other cohousing developments, the parking is kept at the periphery of the site. This serves many purposes, including creating the opportunity for residents to interact. This design also leaves the center of the site free for children to play and for preservation of natural features on the site.

The individual residences are designed with the private bedrooms and yard to the rear and the kitchen and public entry in the front facing the common areas. Soft edges are incorporated in common areas to encour-
age casual interaction between residents. The common house is often located between parking and residences to encourage use of the facility and provide opportunities to socialize with other residents. The common house is where residents gather at meal times, for meetings, and for other special occasions to interact as a larger group.

One important concern of cohousing communities is how to relate to the neighborhood outside. Danish cohousing tends to turn its back on the surrounding community. Sættedammen, for example, has their parking lot as the prevalent feature. Newer cohousing developments have experimented with facing buildings out and also with play fields and parking areas that may be used by outside neighbors.

Resident Participation In The Development Process
The strong resident participation that is required in cohousing is a vital part of laying the foundation for the community to be built. With Sættedammen, the idea began with a few people who made it happen. In general, Fromm outlines five steps to the development of a cohousing development: 1) the idea is formulated and a core group is formed; 2) goals are agreed upon; 3) land is obtained; 4) architectural plans are completed; and 5) contractors bid on the plans and the housing is built. The development process will be explored at length in the case study in Chapter 5, but is also summarized in Appendices D and E.

Pragmatic Social Objectives
Though cohousing is reminiscent of communes of the 1960s, cohousing is not based on any political or religious ideology. Residents often share many values, but this is not an intentional part of the community. People who are drawn to cohousing represent all occupations, religions, races, ages, and both sexes. They seek to live within existing society, but want to strengthen the sense of community in their own lives.

Cohousing Variables
Though cohousing can generally be defined by the presence of the seven qualities above, there are several variables that contribute to the character of the individual development. Physical design, location, ownership,
programming, management, and community size vary from community to community demonstrating the flexibility of cohousing as a housing option. Chapter 4 examines four individual cohousing communities comparing variables similar to these six here.

**Physical Design**
The physical design plays an important role in shaping how the goals of community are met. Many cohousing developments have been built new because it is difficult to find a desirable site layout or building that is conducive to casual but intentional interaction. Most Danish cooperatives have been constructed new, but a handful are in renovated buildings. Typically, when constructed new, the cohousing community constructs attached dwellings with a common house in the center or where two halves of the development meet at a 90° angle. One of the assets of cohousing is that it can be adapted to fit any type of physical structure. Stacken in Sweden, for example, began as an eight story housing project in the '60s. The building was purchased and remodeled for cohousing with common areas on the ground and fifth floors. Winihoes, in the Netherlands, is developed as row houses. Others examples of cohousing may be found developed as single family houses with a certain density per acre.

**Location**
Along with the physical design of the site is its location within the larger community. Cohousing can be found in rural, suburban, and urban areas. Purmerend in the Netherlands, which is three stories in a "C" shape around a central courtyard, is considered urban. Jerngarden, described in Chapter 4, is a collection of row houses in an inner city neighborhood. Sun and Wind (Danish) is located outside of an urban area where many of the residents work.

**Ownership**
Ownership is an important decision for a new cohousing community. When cohousing was first developed, the housing units were individually owned with shares in the common house. In looking to include lower income groups, some efforts were made to develop rental units as well.
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Drejerbanken (Danish), which is discussed at length in Chapter 4, is half owner and half rental. Stacken, a high rise in Sweden, is entirely rental units. Almost all Dutch cooperatives are rental while over half Danish cooperatives are owner occupied. Almost all of the Swedish developments are tenant and company managed.

Programming
While programming differs in each community, there are some general consistencies from country to country. Danish developments, for example, are traditionally heavy on community dining. The private kitchens are adequate, but community meals nightly are the preferred form. In one Dutch example, the structure was designed more in clusters where residents within each cluster do more activities together than the entire development does as a whole. At this development, kitchens were designed to be utilized by each cluster. To encourage this, the private dwellings are designed with a very small kitchen that is inadequate for preparing actual meals. In Stacken, the five households on each floor are particularly close and often program their own activities separate from the community as a whole.

Management
Some residents, new to cohousing, say they felt that every decision was important and spent hours and hours discussing and debating an issue with everyone present. The group finally had a small committee do research and make recommendations which voted on by the group as a whole. In Østerhøj 1 (Danish), a board of directors, chosen by future residents, was elected. At Stacken, the residents found that dividing residents into smaller groups to handle issues was more effective. Before moving in, a renters’ association was put together to work with the public housing company that was developing the structure.

Community Size
There is much discussion in defining the ideal number of people for a community. If there are too few, decisions might be easier to make, but chores have to be done more often. Everyone has to pull his/her own weight. In a large community, chores rotate on an easy schedule, but it’s
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more difficult to agree. Residents may participate as much or as little as they like, but inevitably, someone will feel that s/he are doing more than their fair share. McCamant’s book, Cohousing, has many personal interviews with European cohousers. From her research, most cohousers (regardless of their own community size) agree that a medium sized development of 15-33 households is the best size. With 33 households, adults only cook once a month. It is necessary to point out; however, that there is no ideal size and that even if a community has 15-33 households, there is no guarantee that life in the community will be perfect.

Experiments In European Cohousing
Designers and developers are continually working on improvements to the basic cohousing development. Cohousing is popular, though perhaps not widespread, in Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands. The communities have been discussed, studied, and the occupants interviewed, photographed, and quoted. Hindsight has been the impetus for changes to be tried in the new developments that continue to be constructed. In 1985 and 1986, design competitions were held for the planning and building of two urban neighborhoods. The competition sponsors were interested in exploring alternatives for suburban housing and shopping. Entrants were to look at design to combat the typical suburban sprawl that is automobile dependent and hostile to families and pedestrians. Some ideas generated by the competition include: the inclusion of schools, local shops, and small businesses on a pedestrian street with housing intermixed; a variety of housing including attached, detached, and multi-family; housing placed in clusters each with a distinctive identity; and the restriction of automobiles to the periphery of the site. Angels Colom and Jan Gudmand-Høyer, both architects, won both competitions.

The two phases of this urban neighborhood (Egebjerrgard and Østerhøj) for which the competition was held are currently being constructed in the town of Ballerup, just west of Copenhagen. This large site includes two man-made lakes, parks, plazas, a school, sports hall, and shops. By including a school, the development is making an attempt to be integrated with the surrounding community. Often, when cohousing developments were first making their appearances, communities were wary. Tradition-
ally, cohousing has developed as inward facing. More and more, these cooperatives are including schools, parks, and multipurpose rooms that are open to the community or at least the immediate neighborhood. Purmerend (the Netherlands) is one cooperative with somewhat open facilities. They began with a pub, child care, laundry, rentable spaces, and restaurant. These spaces; however, were not the profit makers they were intended to be. While the child care program was successful, the laundry was a failure. The pub/restaurant was sold to a private interest and is too expensive to be patronized by the cohousing residents. Though not a complete success, this example suggests possibilities for other cohousing developments.

Benefits
There are many benefits involved with cohousing. The most critical benefit and the thing that separates cohousing from most traditional housing is the sense of community that is formed; that is, in fact, required for this type of development. The routines of daily meals and day care are both cost effective and time effective alternatives related to the community aspect mentioned above. Sharing other facilities such as washers and dryers, tools, and guest rooms is another example of the cost effectiveness of cohousing. In order to save more money, many cohousing communities decide to do the finishing construction themselves, sharing skills with their neighbors. This makes each unit more individual as well as less expensive. Individual housing units are clustered further adding cost effectiveness through energy efficiency. Clustering also preserves more of the natural amenities of the site. Parking is clustered at the edge of the property to preserve the site and create safe recreation areas for the children. These benefits particularly address the needs of elderly, single parents, and singles.

Needs

Elderly
In a personal interview with McCamant, one elderly resident pointed out that she can have her own small unit, but if she wants to enjoy a group dinner or spend time with children or teens, she can always find someone around. Even those elderly residents who do not care for children find it
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pleasing to have children around to bring some vitality into the community. The security of knowing that others would be around in case of an emergency is a great comfort to older residents. There is also increased physical security because outsiders are quickly spotted in the tight-knit development. Being around people of all ages assures one elderly man that he has people to help him take care of his unit. In return, he takes care of part of the community gardens (McCaman, 143). Each person participates at a level that they are comfortable with and in a way that each can enjoy the activity. The cost is a big factor too. Sharing facilities, such as common dinners and washers and dryers, makes it easier for the elderly to live independently.

Single Parents
The two biggest problems single parents face is not enough time and not enough money. The rotating schedule of common meals allows for single parents to have more free time when returning home from work. As with the elderly, the sharing of facilities helps to reduce the cost of living to a level more attainable on a single income. Like the elderly, single parents are often faced with isolation. The availability of other adults and children fills the need of both parent and child to be in touch with others in a supportive community setting.

Singles
Though singles are generally not considered a needy group, they do constitute an increasing percentage of the population. While it has commonly been thought that single people are able to take care of themselves and make enough money to do so, they too can realize benefits from participating in cohousing. Physical security is one issue faced by singles. Most singles cannot afford alarm systems and 24 hour doormen (Struyk, 111). Living in a cohousing community offers security in that everyone knows everyone else. Singles, like the elderly and single parents, are faced with isolation. Singles most often associate with friends from work or other organizations. They tend to associate with people much like themselves. Cohousing offers an opportunity to be around children and adults of all ages in a more diverse and stimulating environment. Through working as a community, single members of the develop-
ment have the opportunity to share their skills and talents with others and make a positive contribution to the group effort.

Problems
In looking at potential problems, it is important to realize that no new development or new community is going to be established over night by itself. With cohousing, most problems that have arisen have been resolved to the satisfaction of the cohousing residents and the surrounding community. Working to overcome these problems helps the cohousers unite as a group and provides them with a sense of accomplishment. Banding together to realize their goal of cohousing gives them an increased stake in making their community work.

The potential problems a cohousing community might have can be classified into to different groups: external and internal. External problems might be zoning issues, use issues, or complaints from the neighbors. Internal problems are those that appear when a group of strangers assemble to build a housing type that none of them may be familiar with.

External Problems
In an area new to cohousing, dealing with neighbors of a potential site may become a problem. When cohousing was a very new idea, surrounding neighborhoods were not very happy when a group was looking to purchase land near them. The stigma of communes and the multi-family, high density nature of the development made them wary. They saw the character of their neighborhoods being threatened. Though neighbors can forced cohousers away from some property, most neighbors, once they learn more about the cohousing development, come to view it as positive, rather than negative, addition to the neighborhood.

Often, in suburban and rural areas, the cohousing site is oriented inward. Neighbors are most likely to see parking or the backs of buildings (where the private part of the individual cohousing unit is). Some neighbors may feel that the new development is ignoring the existing neighborhood community. The different housing character—attached vs. detached single family homes—has made neighbors fearful of their own property
values. Some wonder what type of people will be attracted to the community, usually assuming they will be undesirable types. Neighbors often expect a large amount of traffic to be generated by such developments, further making their neighborhoods unattractive. Some have expected the cohousing development to turn its back on the neighborhood and not to contribute in any way at all.

Fitting into the surrounding neighborhood has not been a significant problem for most cohousing developments. Savværket (Danish) contrasts sharply with the surrounding single-family homes. The massing, colors, and density are all different from the neighbors. If the site chosen is large enough, though, the cohousing development may surround itself with high trees and bushes, disguising their higher density.

Those who fear that undesirable people will move into the neighborhood have been surprised. Armed with information, graphics, and models, the future residents of Drejerbanken went to an appeals meeting and questioned the rejection of their proposal. Once the board and neighbors of the proposed project saw that the cohousers were people much like themselves, they realized that cohousing was not such a radical idea after all. In Denmark, the turnover rates for cohousing units are less than those for single family homes creating more stability in a neighborhood and not harming property values at all.

Increased traffic has not been a problem either. In cohousing, it has been found that the need for more cars actually decreases. Single parents or the elderly for example might car pool or borrow another’s car instead of owning their own (further keeping their personal costs down).

Related to traffic is the issue of parking on the site. Multi-family developments require a certain number of parking spaces per unit. Developments are often required to devote a large portion of the site to a paved lot that is never used because of the decreased need for cars mentioned above. McCamant explains that one development proposed a percentage of the paved parking requirement (adequate for what they expected) with the provision that the additional land required was set aside to be paved at a
later date if needed. For this group, this solution was a good compromise with the local zoning agency.

Lastly, many cohousing communities have taken an active interest in their larger neighborhood serving as the catalyst for change or participating within the already organized neighborhood community. People who participate in cohousing and all the decision-making that goes on are often the same kind of people who are active in general.

Occasionally, neighbors may object to certain aspects of the proposed community to keep the entire project from happening. Most often, these objections rise out of a misunderstanding of what cohousing is. The best defense against such road blocks is to be open about what the cohousing group is doing and encourage the neighbors to see beyond their preconceptions. By avoiding an adversarial position with the neighbors, the cohousing group will be better off and the neighborhood as a whole can then benefit.

Internal Problems
Internal problems can also become barriers to realizing the goal of the cohousing community. Most cohousing groups, particularly the early ones in Europe, experience stress during the planning process. Members of the cohousing groups seldom agree on a standardized form for the kitchen—this difference of opinion can get blown out of proportion when the group is already stressed. Conflicts may arise with architects and contractors further hampering communication within the group. Differences in expectations are the biggest problem. When outlining the goals for the community, members often have conflicting ideas about participation: some expect community meals five nights a week, while others feel more comfortable with two a week. Some potential residents go to a meeting expecting to participate very little in community living. Not everyone has the same idea about what s/he want out of cohousing. Deciding how children will fit in to the community or what improvement project should be undertaken first are questions the group needs to agree on from the very beginning. This is part of the planning process that builds the community that everyone hopes to enjoy eventually.
Once the residents have moved in, other conflicts might occur. Some groups might experience tension when they finally move in together because the relationship changes from people who meet weekly to friends and neighbors. The issue of privacy may come up. Most communities have informal signs to indicate that residents wish to be alone. Drawing the curtains that face the common areas is one example. By necessity, everyone learns to respect others' need for privacy.

Conclusion
Cohousing is a modern adaptation of an old idea: cooperative home making and shared resources. This housing type offers many benefits to all types of people. Though it is not without problems, meeting these challenges works to strengthen the community.
Chapter 4
Development Examples

Cohousing in Denmark had fifteen years to develop before being imported to the United States. Naturally, American cohousing groups look to their successful European counterparts as examples of what and what not to do. The following examples of European cohousing developments serve as examples for this study of how the design and programming of a development can be altered to fit in to the Muncie community. The three examples of this study are: Trudeslund and Jerngarden, both examples of different physical forms of cohousing and Drejerbanken as an example of mixed owner and renter occupied cohousing.

CoHousing, by McCamant and Durrett, visits nine cohousing developments in Denmark. Three of these developments will be featured in this chapter. Trudeslund is an example of a typical cohousing development that is built on vacant land in a suburban area. Jerngarden was created when the neighbors bought a city block and joined backyards. Cohousing can be developed urban, suburban, or rural and these two cases illustrate how either might work in Muncie. Both Trudeslund and Jerngarden are owner occupied. To contrast these examples, Drejerbanken, which is half renter and half owner occupied will be examined as an ownership alternative that might apply to Muncie. Each case (when available) looks at the history, physical design, common meals, ownership, meetings, projects, neighborhood involvement, and problems of the cohousing development.
Cohousing In Europe

Physical Variations
Trudeslund
Bikerkø, Zealand, Denmark
The first of the case studies will focus on Trudeslund in Denmark. Trudeslund is what might be considered a “typical” or “ideal” cohousing example.

History
In December of 1978, a group of twenty families first got together to discuss the construction of a cohousing community. At that time, only eight cohousing communities were in existence in Denmark. When the desired site became available, they were so rushed to draft a proposal to secure the site that they did not clarify their goals and objectives. Problems arose between members causing half of the group to drop out. After that, the remaining members were careful to be clear in their objectives and move on to formulate a development plan (CoHousing, 27).

In searching for an architect, the cohousing group held a limited competition asking four firms to submit plans. All members were involved in some form or another. Two residents quote, “Everyone was involved in the work. In the most active period there was at least one meeting a week for the least involved, and three or four for the most involved, after which came ‘homework’ to prepare for the next meetings.” (CoHousing, 27) The pressure of increasing interest rates kept the project on a tight schedule. Overall, from first meeting to construction completion, the process took two and one-half years. Residents of Trudeslund number 33 families, approximately 110 people. Almost fifty of these residents are children.

Physical Design
In keeping with the initial definition of cooperative housing, Trudeslund is designed with a common house for meals and community space and private dwellings for each household. The site is designed on a corner with the common house at the point and two rows of housing (facing each other) forming a 90° “L.” The interior of the site is preserved with original vegetation and parking is at the periphery.
Private units range in size from 970 to 1,500 square feet. Besides the community kitchen and dining room, the common house has a laundry room with two washing machines and a dryer. Purchasing a washer and dryer for each private unit was an option, but only one family opted to do so. Detergent is purchased out of the community budget monthly, encouraging the use of that shared facility.

There is a community store where residents may pick up an item at any time and record their purchase in the account book. Each household has a key to the store allowing for access at any time of the day. Intentional theft has not been a major problem because the residents know that if such a problem arises, the store will close permanently. When accounting discrepancies due occur, usually because of forgotten entries, the expense comes out of the monthly community budget.

Also at the common house are a workshop, photography darkroom, television room, walk-in freezer, guest room, and music room. Most individual households cannot afford to keep these kinds of facilities for themselves, but by sharing with other households, these luxuries become available. Many residents also share items informally. Two families own a car together while another five own a boat. Items that are not in constant demand, such as typewriters, camping gear, and tools are most cost effective when residents can borrow or share them. The sharing of material objects as well as services allows cohousing residents to enjoy more luxuries at a lower cost than what a single family household might spend for the same. This sharing also encourages the community building that is integral to the process and success of cohousing communities.

Common Meals
The most important event is the evening meal that is prepared for the entire community every night except for two Saturdays a month. With 60 adults total and two adults preparing dinner each night, the residents only have to cook once a month. Most residents find this schedule acceptable because it allows them about twenty-nine nights off. The cost of the meal is divided by the number of people eating, with children costing less.
Adults prepare the evening meal on a rotating basis at Trudslund (McCamant, 20).

Ownership
All of the units are owner occupied with a financial structure similar to condominiums. Each household owns their own unit and a share in the common facilities. When the project was completed and the residents moved in (1981), the cost for the unit and a share in the facilities ranged from $91,400 to $117,600 which was comparable to single family units in the area. With the construction of Trudslund, there was no limit set on the cost of private units. As with any housing type, the value of the units have increased causing the units to be out of price range for many potential cohousers.

Neighborhood Involvement
With so many people and so many opportunities within the cohousing development, it would seem that the residents might not feel it necessary to relate to the surrounding neighborhood. In the case of Trudslund, this has not been so. Like any other group of active residents, the people of Trudslund participate locally in politics, theater, sports, and schools. Their common house is open for neighborhood activities such as practice for the local samba band (CoHousing, 33).
Problems
The only real problem residents have identified relates to the common house. Many feel that it is underutilized despite the evening meals and community and neighborhood activities. In retrospect, many residents feel they should have made the common house larger and the dwelling units smaller. At the time, constructing the development was risky anyway, and no one wanted to be stuck with a housing unit that was so strange that it could not be resold.

Jerngarden
Århus, Jutland, Denmark
Jerngarden, located in the inner city of Århus, Denmark, is an example of an urban cohousing community suggesting potential redevelopment of housing in America’s inner cities.

History
As with many older cities in the 1970s, the residents in a neighborhood in Århus began to see signs of decline. To protest the flight to the suburbs and to improve their environment, they began a neighborhood organization that demanded new playgrounds, restriction of commercial traffic, and loans for building improvements. Many of the members began discussing pooling their money to purchase weekend property in the country. Instead of leaving the city on the weekends, they agreed that it would be best to improve the daily routine of city life.

New ordinances in the city had forced the closure of an old junkyard (jerngarden). The junkyard owner, who also owned eight deteriorating row houses on adjoining land, was ready to sell. This group of individuals saw the opportunity to develop cohousing right in their urban neighborhood. By combining the former junk yard and the backyards of the existing row houses, they would be able to create one large private area to be enjoyed by everyone.

The group first purchased the junkyard. Forty years of accumulated junk needed to be removed, and the row houses, which were in bad shape,
were currently rented by senior citizens, students, and retired sailors. To avoid turning these people out on the street, the group then devoted their efforts to finding them new housing. Among the group of eight families, there were two residents with architectural training and four with construction skills. Each family was responsible for rebuilding its own house; however, the group worked closely throughout to share skills. At first, the neighbors were skeptical. They were uneasy about the "collective" nature of the project. Once construction began; however, even those who had reservations were attracted by the change and accepted the development.

Physical Design
The site is situated on a corner lot with the row houses facing out onto the street on both sides. The common house, formerly the junkyard office building, is located at the corner where the streets intersect. The center of the site is devoted to open space. While each residence has access to the street, most residents choose to enter through the backyards and walk past the common house to get home. The row houses are painted in traditional Dutch colors to blend in with the surrounding neighborhood.

Jerngarden uses existing row houses in an urban setting (McCamant, 67).
Jerngarden is one of the smaller cohousing developments with only eight households and the residents of Jerngarden are happy with the size. It allows them to become intimate within their community, but because the city is around them, they are not dependent on one another for constant company and entertainment.

Common Meals
Common dinners nightly began during the renovation process and have continued since.

Ownership
Each household owns their own row house with expenses for the common house shared.

Neighborhood Involvement
The residents of Jerngarden are still very active in their neighborhood. A community center was built a few blocks from the cohousing development, and many feel that Jerngarden was the impetus to local improvements. Their small size helps them to blend into the neighborhood.

Problems
The cohousing residents began with a good idea for the reuse of physical space. There were no significant ties between them before the process and so, they have had to work to create a close-knit community. In this way, their urban location may work against them because there is not such a need for interdependence.

Ownership Variations
Drejerbanken
Skalbjerg, Isle of Fyn, Denmark
This community is unique in that it was the first cohousing development to be designed as half owner and half renter. This is particularly important as a possible model for cohousing to include lower income groups.
Cohousing As An Urban Housing Alternative In Indiana

History

When the group was initially defining their goals, it was important for them to include all income levels. Not knowing how much the development would cost, they realized that it might be difficult to offer housing at the desired below market rate. They found a site in July 1975 and hoped to begin building by May 1976. The county put off the sale of the land to them until November 1976 during which time they refined their proposal and plans. At this point, because not everyone could afford to own a unit, they decided to try alternative financing. The group approached a local non-profit housing developer and offered to develop rental housing with their help. The local non-profit had only developed 35 new rental units and was willing to listen to their ideas. They understood that the future renters would also be involved in the planning and development of the units, an idea that was new to the non-profit.

In September of 1975, the town planning board rejected their proposal because of the high percentage of rental units. This, most residents felt, was just an excuse to reject their plan. After the appeals hearing, the county approved the project with the condition that only ten units be rental. In the end, the community developed ten owner-occupied and ten rental units. First, the architects worked with the group to choose from a selection of site plans. Next, the residents used cut-out pieces to design the individual units. Because of the non-profit financial aid, the rental units were now subject to greater restrictions and involved in a longer approval process. The residents agreed to begin planning these units first in order to get them in the works. It was difficult for construction decisions to be made on the rental units because they needed to be adequate for many different types of renters. They designed the units with the following objectives (McCamant, 110-111):

- compact and inexpensive
- natural materials
- minimal hallways
- bedrooms off of living areas
- possibility for later additions
- simple geometry, consistent construction techniques
- standardization of kitchens and baths
- living spaces oriented toward rear of house
- large kitchens oriented toward front of house
• possibility of installing solar panels at a later date
• medium-sized bedrooms, small living areas
• good exposure and accessibility between indoors and out

Because the renter portion of the development was receiving public housing money, they could not explore alternative energy ideas originally considered. The Ministry of Housing also required that the common house be separated into renter and owner sections with a fire wall between them. McCamant does not say exactly what happened, but after much discussion, the residents were allowed to build the common house as one open building. The design of the rental units was so successful that the group decided to make only minor changes for the owned units allowing for upgrades if the resident wanted to pay an additional amount.

Ownership
The owner/rental mix has provided a more diverse group of residents than might otherwise have occurred. At the time CoHousing was written, there were twenty-eight adults (eighteen women and ten men) and twenty-four children. Of the twenty households, seven are couples, eleven are single parents, and two are singles. The owner/rental mix also allows people to move from renter to owner when they have the resources and the is space available.

Physical Design
The buildings on the site are clustered and the residents have used the remaining space on the site for a soccer field, common garden, wooded area, and chicken house. The owned units range in size from 845 to 1,370 square feet and the rental units range between 765 to 1,100 square feet. Their common house is 5,100 square feet with a main floor and basement. Inside, they have dining room, kitchen, pantry, reading room, two children’s playrooms, and a entryway where the mailboxes are located. The workshop, laundry room, and proposed sauna are located in the basement.

Common Meals
Common dinners are prepared every night. Three adults and two
children make dinner and then clean up. Each adult cooks three nights a month and every child helps two times a month. The residents have set the meal prices at $1.20 and half that for kids. Saturday mornings are reserved for common house clean-up with mandatory participation within every four weeks. Brunch afterwards makes the effort a bit more rewarding. Other less exciting jobs, such as cleaning out storage areas and scrubbing the chicken coop, are also factored into the work days of the year. These tasks are done strictly on a volunteer basis. The high turnout for even less desirable tasks indicates the level of support and community spirit these residents have.

Meetings
Both renters and owners are involved in the management and organization of Drejerbanken. The residents hold meetings every two weeks. Renters and owners will have separate meetings if they need to discuss particular issues related to their status. Financial decisions are also made at group meetings. If a proposed expense exceeds $58, an individual does not have to contribute. Residents are assessed a monthly fee, based on the size of the unit, for repairs and purchases. The fees average $60 a month. Cultural activities and work projects are financed separately (McCaman, 114).

Projects
Yet another community component is the annual project. Past annual projects include the remodeling of the common house and the construction of a new chicken coop. The annual project helps maintain a sense of community and continues the enthusiasm the residents have for their community.

Every winter, the residents hold a series of night meetings that make up an “evaluation week.” Small meetings are held where people can air grievances. Eventually, a list of topics gets put on a weekend agenda where the residents discuss at length the topics presented. After the week, the residents hold a “winter fest.”
Problems
In spite of the problems that might have occurred, the owners and renters get along well. From 1978 to 1989, three owners and two renters had left the community. It has been proven at Drejerbanken that renters take care of their property as well as the owners. The rental units were also thought to slow the appreciation rate of owner occupied houses. Cohousing units generally appreciate faster than other types of housing and this has been the case at Drejerbanken.

Cohousing In America
Cohousing is becoming more accepted in the US. There are a handful of cohousing communities across the country in areas such as California, Washington, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Georgia (see Appendix C).

Monterey
St. Louis Park, Minnesota, USA
Perhaps the best example for developing cohousing in the United States is to look at other such developments. Since cohousing was first inspired in the U.S. in 1989, cohousing has attracted a growing and devoted group of participants.

History
Three years ago, in 1991, Judy Baxter and other Twin Cities residents began a cohousing network of people interested in developing cohousing communities in the area. By joining the Network, potential cohousers keep in touch with each other, receive a newsletter, and join a core group, if possible. Core groups are created out of the membership of the Network. They are made up of people from the Network who have similar goals for their cohousing experience. Though one has no real obligation to remain with a particular core group, most people find they are comfortable with their group and continue on through the process once a location is found. Once a core group is assembled, they run the risk of becoming stagnant if they cannot find property within a reasonable amount of time.
Michelle Schutt, one member of the core group of future Monterey residents, first heard about a property for sale. It was a Georgian mansion just over the Minneapolis border in St. Louis Park. The bank had foreclosed on the rooming house and was accepting offers for the property. She notified members of the group, and within three days, twenty-eight people had gone to look at the site. The group had assembled their earnest money and made an offer to the bank. At the same time and to the same bank, the American Youth Hostel organization was bidding on the property. Though the core group was offering more, the bank was suspicious of the nature of their group. The bank decided to accept the Hostel’s offer, but they had their own problems. The Hostel had a hard time getting the financing the bank required and they needed to secure zoning changes that they seemed unlikely to get. The core group decided to begin looking for other sites, though none appealed to them as much as the Georgian mansion. In October, after four months of working with the Youth Hostel, the bank called up the core group and asked them to make another offer. The bank was tired of waiting for the Hostel to get organized with their financing and they did not feel that the Hostel would be a viable investment for the bank. The Hostel had also not received the zoning changes it requested. The earnest money had not been returned to the group members, so they hastily assembled, with plans developed from before, and made an offer that the bank accepted. They had six weeks to straighten out the financing and look for new members (some had to drop out because they did not have available money). During that time, they met often, and on December 12 held a members’ retreat to hash over all the details. The following week, they purchased the 2.7 acre property and began moving in January of 1993.

Physical Design
Unlike most other cohousing communities, Monterey combines some dwelling units and the common house in one building. The basement of the mansion is reserved for the kitchen, dining area, shop, video/computer room, laundry, furnace, and playroom. There are also other various storage rooms and the group is making plans to remodel in order to use the space more efficiently. The kitchen, they feel, is too large and impersonal for their purposes as is the laundry room. The first floor
contains a front room, paneled library, small office, two dwelling units, access to the verandah, and two guest rooms. The third floor contains four units—one efficiency, one one-bedroom, and two two-bedrooms and the fourth floor contains two two-bedroom units. The group did not have a problem selecting their units. Because they did not build their own units, they did not have the luxury of choosing and designing their space. Instead, some people had certain constraints, such as needing to live on the first floor. Everyone had to be fairly flexible.

Much of the furniture was purchased along with the house from the previous owners. Other items, including a washer and dryer and the TV and stereo, were donated by residents or, in the case of the stereo, "shared" with everyone in the house. If, for example, the stereo were damaged, the non-profit cohousing organization would pay for the expense.

The structure was originally built in 1924 to be a retirement home owned by the Christian Science Church. Because it was designed as a multi-unit building, extensive remodeling was not required to meet codes or suit cohousing use. Some walls have been knocked out, new doors put in, and

The Monterey Cohousing community is located in an old mansion (photo by author).
bathrooms remodeled. One of the residents is a carpenter who is paid for his in-house work. Phase I of their community is the use of the mansion for eight condominium-like units. The residents are now working on the procedure to gain Planned Unit Development (PUD) status. Their current zoning is R-30. The PUD will allow them to build at higher densities and have greater flexibility in design and use of the property. Phase II involves the construction of townhomes on the property. The group is proposing to construct sixteen to eighteen additional units. Currently, they are in the process of finding new members and financing the construction of the townhouse units.

Common Meals
While the residences are still being fixed up, only three units have what might pass for a kitchen. Because of this and to keep non-resident members in touch, community meals are prepared about five nights a week. Friday night is reserved for the potluck dinner. The residents are quite casual about their dining arrangements. Those preparing dinner sign up several nights ahead of time. Those planning on dining sign up about two days in advance. If someone decides they want to join in after the two days’ notice, they seek out the cook and make sure it is not a problem. There is no set rotation and no one seems to mind. Dinners get prepared somehow.

Much of the food is purchased by the community, though residents still maintain some of their own private stock. The meals cost $1.75, though they are considering an increase to $2. They use meal tickets to keep track of payment and actual dining.

Child Care
Though there are only eight households living on the property now, there are still members of the core group waiting for the construction of townhouses. Currently, twelve adults and one child live at Monterey. Within the larger group, there are twelve households—twenty-one adults and eight children. They still do not have all of the townhouses sold yet. The policy at Monterey is that everyone supports the integration of children into the community and everyone contributes to the cost of child
Monterey is faced with some Minnesota laws concerning child care. Either Rule 2 or Rule 3 will affect them, depending on how they structure their child care. Rule 2 applies to in home child care. At this point, Monterey has only hired outside help when they have their meetings on site. They do not need a child care license because it is in-home and because the parents are on the premises. If Monterey eventually expands their child care to take care of kids during the day while parents are at work, or if they open their doors to outside children, Rule 3 applies. In that case, they will need to get a child care license and meet other standards. They are hoping that they will start with a more structured child care routine and that eventually it will not be necessary, as in the case of Trudeslund.

Ownership
Payment for the structure and the upkeep is through a cooperative which gives the group a single mortgage and allows them to qualify as an aggregate. The residents are assessed a monthly fee of $50 for individuals and $75 for married couples which covers utility expenses among other things. This is added to the monthly payment each household makes toward the mortgage. Though it is somewhat complicated, the rates for a unit depend on the square footage of the unit and the arbitrary cost of $1,000 per window in the unit. Windows are considered both an amenity and a heating liability. The units range in cost from $22,000 to $78,000. They range in size from 1,500 square feet to 3,000 square feet.

Meetings
They run their group meetings using the consensus model. Each group member (resident and non-resident) is a board member of equal status. It is very important for all members to be present at the group meetings every other week and committee (team) meetings during the week as necessary. They hope to have only one core group meeting in a month. So far, the group has had too many decision to make to meet less often than twice a month. They use what is called “Fist To Five” for attaining a consensus at all of their meetings. Holding up five fingers (open hand)
means that one offers full support of the issue in question. Four and three are less enthusiastic, two still less, and one means serious concerns but that the individual will not block the motion. When ones and twos appear, those residents make their statements and continue discussion. Any person can hold up a fist (no fingers) and thereby block the motion. In this case, the issues and solutions are discussed and reevaluated, and new solutions, if possible, are considered.

Management
All adults are responsible for sixty hours of community work in a quarter, or twenty hours a month. One hour of work is equal to one chit. As part of their structure, they have an Oversight Team that has four sub-areas: development; financial/legal; community services; and building services.

Problems
As with other cohousing groups in the United States, there has been some concern about the behavior of children at dinner. Monterey is dedicated to children, but they (and others) have found that many times children get too excited and run around or talk loudly. Even the most nurturing of parents finds this trying at times. One father from the Muir Commons in Davis, California commented on how their community was experiencing tension from those residents who are less enthusiastic about children. His solution is to pick up the family meal at the common house and then take it home to eat. The residents of Monterey are still working through this issue. Given their current set up, very few of them have any place to take their meals to.

Conclusion
In comparing the prospects of cohousing in Europe and cohousing in the U.S., it is important to note cultural and historic differences that may influence the development of these communities. The Danes, referenced here through the cohousing alternatives, are a homogenous group of people. They are friendly but polite. They tend to be what we would consider liberal: The work week is 33.6 hours, education is free and