



KEY NOTES

October 2008

New web site goes live!

GreenSong is pleased to announce that its new web site, www.greensong.ca, is now online.

Here you will find detailed information about us, our professional team, and the vision for our community. We explain the concept of cohousing (Home page) and point you to specific resources and readings, including recent broadcasts and articles about the cohousing movement and eco-friendly living (Media).

The Common Questions section is very helpful and answers such questions as "How do I join?", "Is cohousing a way to get a house that costs less?" and "Will I still have my own privacy?" You will also find back issues of *Key Notes* and notices of upcoming events.

Of particular note to those earnestly seeking to participate in GreenSong is the Membership section.

Serious about membership in GreenSong? Or just curious?

Becoming a GreenSong member is a very individual decision. The first step is to satisfy your curiosity!

1. Explore our web site, especially the Common Questions and Membership sections.

2. Come and meet us. Perhaps even come out to several of our board meetings. Observers are always welcome. We usually have a short social time before and after board meetings, and this is a wonderful opportunity to meet group members.

3. Attend a one-hour orientation. This will give you an overview of the current stage of development and explain how the group functions from a legal and financial point of view.

Once you have met us and attended a board meeting or two, the next step to full membership is to attend a detailed session with several GreenSong board members about the financial and legal aspects of the project. The tools for the session include the GreenSong Book of valuable background information. This is your opportunity to ask specific questions about the nuts and bolts of how the whole concept comes together.

We allow seriously interested people as much time as they need, along with opportunities to explore the idea and get to know the current members, in order to decide whether or not cohousing is right for them at this time in their lives.

For specific details about the steps to membership, please visit the Membership section of our web site (www.greensong.ca/membership) and contact us at info@greensong.ca.

"Given the challenging times and recent world developments, the effectiveness of creating a critical mass of correct Identity and harmony cannot be underestimated. Communities could focalize that power."

Kenneth G. Mills

New survey results

In August 2008, Ed Starr of SHS Inc. conducted a Cohousing Development Initiative Preference Survey among the founding shareholders of GreenSong Inc., to assist in determining their preferences with regard to some important aspects of the development.

Here are some of the highlights:

Location

- a rural setting outside of an established community
- within 1½ hours' drive of Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- within a 15-minute drive of a grocery store and a GO station
- within 30-minutes' drive of a hospital

Development concept

- built with elements resulting in 50% energy conservation
- 20-25 household units of mixed types (single detached, semi-detached, and townhouses)
- housing units of 1,500 to 2,000 sq. ft.
- unit design to include two bedrooms, two bathrooms, unfinished basement or attic, office space
- unit price range of C\$250,000 to C\$300,000
- smaller personal living space in favour of enhanced shared community facility
- smaller private garden in favour of larger common green space
- ability to grow our own food
- willingness to pay 5%-10% premium on the cost of

individual units in order to support a community facility

- common building to include meeting room, kitchen, dining room, library, guest rooms

Cohousing offers opportunities for boomers

In an interview with Craig Ragland, executive director of the Cohousing Association of the United States (posted on May 30, 2008, at <http://blog.seattlepi.newsourc.com>), Consumer Specialist Rita R. Robison asked, "What are the benefits of cohousing for boomers?"

In his reply, Mr. Ragland said that from his own experience as a 50-year-old living at Songaia Cohousing (a community of 15 homes near Seattle) for the past 16 years, cohousing had brought more meaning to his life.

"I share leadership of this community with 25 other adults, and we learn from each other and our 12 children constantly. When I've lived in a single-family home or apartment, my social life has never been so rich, and I never would have developed real relationships with such diverse personalities. Here my ideas get explored by other thoughtful, intelligent folks and sometimes acted upon."

He also finds that cohousing "conserves resources and preserves natural spaces.... Our homes are all clustered on about two acres of those 11 acres. This means that there is lots of open, green space - you know, the part of the earth that produces oxygen and allows non-human life to thrive.... I'm proud to be part of a strong, viable alternative that offers a way for 'normal people' to use their lives to make the world a better place, one neighbourhood at a time."

Rita Robison also asked, "Are there specific features that boomers ask for in cohousing?"

The executive director's answers concerning WIFI, efficient systems, multi-generational communities, and more can be found at <http://blog.seattlepi.newsourc.com/boomerconsumer/archives/140103.asp>.

"A community is like a ship; every one ought to be prepared to take the helm."

Henrik Ibsen

Canadian Cohousing Network

The Canadian Cohousing Network (CCN) is a registered non-profit organization that "promotes the creation of cohousing communities as a model for sustainable development, by raising public awareness about cohousing and by bringing people together to form communities." One of the most valuable functions of the CCN is making connections with people who are interested in living in a cohousing community.

GreenSong now has a listing at www.cohousing.ca/detailed.htm#ON and visitors can find us easily from there via a link to GreenSong's web site.

Specifically, the CCN

- promotes and facilitates the development of cohousing communities across Canada;
- fosters public, government, and building professions' awareness about the nature and benefits of cohousing;
- provides educational services for creating cohousing communities;

- enables networking opportunities for those interested in cohousing;
- establishes standards for cohousing development including accreditation of cohousing professionals;
- maintains a cohousing resource directory; and
- provides support services to groups involved in creating cohousing communities.

GreenSong Inc.

Officers:

President - Laurie Mace
Treasurer - Michael Abbott
Secretary - Peggi Mace

New email address:

info@greensong.ca