

Vision

In order to support informed decision-making and the well-being of the community, the process of becoming a unit owner at CoHo provides timely information and connection to both the prospective owner and to CoHo community members.

Policy

Membership in CoHo Ecovillage is based on self-selection. Community members have a way to share concerns about or support of an application for membership.

Overview

In support of this policy, the following overview is provided within the policy document. Specific details are listed in CoHoMembershipGuidelines (see the most recent version; also see documents listed in Related Files section at the end of this policy). All of the categories of membership and affiliation are defined and listed in these guidelines, along with details on the application process, rights, and responsibilities for each category.

Application Process

CoHo's Membership Team helps prospective members start and complete the membership process.

A prospective member seriously considering the purchase of a unit is pursuing two tracks at the same time with a shared deadline. One track involves the legal and financial details in negotiating a purchase. The other track involves the steps in becoming a member of the community. According to the CoHo Condominium Declaration, only unit owners can be members. Closing on a CoHo unit is the final step in the owner membership process (creating the shared deadline).

The application process is designed to provide enough time for community members to connect with the prospective member. The application timeframe is flexible. It is recognized that the resale process may need to move quickly for financial or logistics reasons. If the prospective buyer is already a Friend of CoHo or an Associate Member, the membership application process will go more quickly. If the prospective buyer is new to CoHo, the process will take longer.

During the application period, prospective members complete a series of steps to enable them to understand expectations of life in a cohousing community (including reviewing documentation, taking part in meetings/meals/activities, having at least one Clearness Committee meeting, and becoming familiar with Nonviolent Communication processes) and reach a decision about joining the community.

During the application process, open and ongoing communication with prospective members is encouraged (via conversations with community members, buddies, at least one Clearness Committee meeting, and mediation assistance if needed). Community members with concerns about prospective member(s) are asked to use these channels to share their feedback and work toward a resolution.

The Membership Team also provides assistance after the application process is completed, including coordinating a Welcome Ceremony and orientation to CoHo's features (meal program, Tiki, Common House, Bike Barn, etc.).

Membership Rights

CoHo Ecovillage is a condominium, with a Home Owners Association, as per Oregon Condominium Act, and legally governed by a Home Owners Association (HOA). (See Recorded Declaration and Bylaws document.) Owning a condo unit, whether or not it is in a cohousing community, does place some restrictions on what unit owners can do. Prospective buyers are strongly encouraged to read the Recorded Declaration and Bylaws document, as well as all CoHo policies and decisions documents. In particular, careful reading of CoHo Ecovillage's policies on Firearms Safety, Home Businesses, Pets, Rentals and Smoking, in addition to our collective decisions regarding mitigation of sound transfers in our flats (*Community Decisions on Mitigation of Sound Issues in Flats* document) may impact decisions regarding unit purchase.

Membership in CoHo has many benefits – including use of email communication and intranet features, inclusion in the meal program, use of facilities (Common House, Bike Barn, workshop, greenhouse, gardens, etc.), social support, participation in activities, and a strong sense of community.

Membership Responsibilities

As a cohousing community, CoHo Ecovillage is a highly participatory place to live intentionally. Involvement provides for opportunities for connection with other community members, resulting in richer and deeper relationships with neighbors. Community member involvement also allows us to save money on management, maintenance and landscaping costs, resulting in lower HOA dues.

Adult community members are expected to regularly attend monthly general meetings, participate in monthly work parties, join a Team which will include meetings and/or tasks, and attend our spring and fall Wellness Retreats. Children and youth are welcome to participate in these activities, as suited to their stage of development and interests.

Additional responsibilities include abiding by agreements, participating in community work/life, and meeting financial commitments. There are many, many ways to become involved at CoHo, and to contribute to and connect with the community. See the CoHo Participation Policy and the *Opportunities for Connection* document for more information.

Additional information

Non-resident owners have additional responsibilities to support the connection between their renters and the community (such as designating a resident owner as a buddy to the renter). A percentage limit on rental units in CoHo is set in the CoHo bylaws because this impacts mortgage availability for prospective buyers.

Members participate in our exit process when leaving the community.

Needs

- **Connection.** Helps prospective unit owners build connections with the community prior to unit purchase.
- **Clarity.** Clearly defines the application process, plus responsibilities and rights of unit owners.
- **Trust.** Facilitates the development of trust and safety through regular ongoing contact prior to unit purchase.
- **Communication.** Encourages open sharing and communication via buddy and clearness committee.
- **Ease.** Supports a smoother transition for sellers, buyers, and the community.

Vision and Values, Purpose Statement

This Owner Member Policy supports our community values of:

- **Sharing Our Lives.** Connection is the foundation of our community and welcoming new members is an ongoing connection process.
- **Safety and Trust.** This policy provides both the prospective member and the community an opportunity to build trust through the application process.
- **Purpose Statement/Enrich Our Lives and Refresh Our Spirits Through Connection and Cooperation.** Prospective members add a new dimension and energy to the community.

History

The membership application process has changed as the community has grown and evolved.

What has remained crucial to the ongoing health of CoHo Ecovillage as a vibrant, active cohousing community is for the community to continue to ~~play~~ have an active role in helping prospective buyers gain sufficient information, experience, and feedback to make a decision about purchasing a unit and becoming an active, satisfied member of CoHo Ecovillage.

Related Documents

See the most recent versions of these documents (dates omitted to avoid frequent revision of this document when related documents are updated)

CoHoMembershipGuidelines
ParticipationPolicy

OwnerMembershipPaperwork
Resale Guidelines

Rental Policy
Resident NonOwner Application & Agreement

Orientation Binder (provided to new unit owners upon move in)

Revision History

A Membership Policy was adopted in 2004.

The MembershipDefRRPolicyAfterMoveIn was adopted in March 2006.

In 2008, ResponsibilitiesGuidelinesV1 was generated to more easily display the information in the 2006 policy, but the policy itself was not updated.

In 2012, ResponsibilitiesGuidelinesV1 was expanded to create CoHoMembershipGuidelines20121021 which lists all categories of membership (including the new Associate Member category added in 2011).

In 2012, the 2006 policy was revised and renamed OwnerMembershipPolicy20121021. The focus was changed to reflect the membership issues with resale of units by owners.

In 2013, the 2012 policy was modified slightly to reflect revisions of related documents.

This updated and reformatted policy was approved by the community on the 29th of August 2019.