

The Dual Role of Open Agricultural Spaces

A History of Community Gardening

Modern community gardening first appeared in New England when the transformation from agriculture to industry started to push farmers into cities and open spaces into the country. This migration of laborers to city centers transformed cities to where there were no open spaces for farming. During the turn of the 20th century people started to create spaces in the city for private food production. Laborers and land owner formed co-ops that would supply a substantial amount of locally grown food. During WWI and WWII the need for a self-help attitude gave birth to the "victory garden."



As the power of self-agriculture gained momentum, communities started forming community ownership gardens in residential neighborhoods. Groups from New England to the west coast formed close knit communities that based their principles on strengthening social fabric through the use of co-agriculture.

During the 1970's the "back to the land movement" motivated people to once again rely on a small bit of land for a sustainable life style. However, that was short lived, and a better solution was born, i.e. co-housing.





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Community + Agriculture =
Great Community

Carla Farsi, Coming together, oil on canvas



How Do People Come Together?

Though Co-Housing communities most always start with a committed group of people, cohesion in the community develops over time. Engagement in the community, or 'commitment to, or involvement with, people, place or activity' is essential to success of any co-housing community (Meltzer, p147).



A Necessity and a Goal

Growing food is one of the most basic activities that a community can engage themselves in together. All aspects of growing food in the community directly reflects a desire and commitment to live sustainably, allowing residents to be active in their own self sufficiency.



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Shared gardens and agriculture do a number of things, namely:

- involve residents in social activities outdoors
- provide a venue for skills to be learned and shared through generations
- provides a space for conversation and connection
- reconnect us to the land and our food sources, righting the assumption that 'food comes from the grocery'



"Eaters ... understand that eating takes place inescapably in the world, that it is inescapably an agricultural act, and how we eat determines, to a considerable extent, how the world is used".

(Wendell Berry)



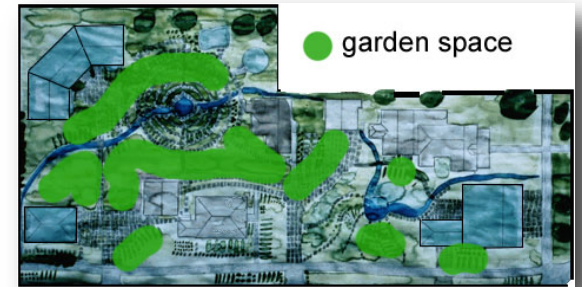
Alex Miller

Sam Rusek

The Dual Role of Open Agricultural Spaces

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN SPACES IN
CO-HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Provide enough open space to sustain at least 10% of total food production in community



Create a space that is accessible to all members of the community



Use open growing space in conjunction with other active areas, i.e. living spaces



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Maitreya Ecovillage -Eugene, OR

Maitreya began in 1991 with a concern on a sustainable life style.

Total land size: 3 acres.

Permanent members: 5

% of food grown on site 6-20%

Maitreya's Principles are:

- To create a community that forms tight social networks by working together.
- To hear the individual voice as well as the communities voice.
- To promote local cottage industry.
- To produce organic food which can in partnership with local farmers.
- To reduce waster by practicing ecological friendly principles.
- Considering non-renewable resources and easing our dependability.
- To nurture the body, mind, and spirit.
- To communicate our differences.
- Balance social interaction with personal space.
- To share with others the beautiful space that we have made



PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN SPACES IN
CO-HOUSING COMMUNITIES



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PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN SPACES IN CO-HOUSING COMMUNITIES



- Relatively small spaces in between households, and central area donated to growing area



- Privately owned and operated Spaces for growing are only to be used by residents



- Spaces for growing are spread out as to increase variety of accessibility



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PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN SPACES IN
CO-HOUSING COMMUNITIES

Eco Village- Ithaca, NY

Eco Vilage began in 1990 with a concern on a sustainable life style.
Total land size: Nearly 200 acres.
Permanent members: 20+ families
% of food grown on site 20-50%

Eco Village Principles are:

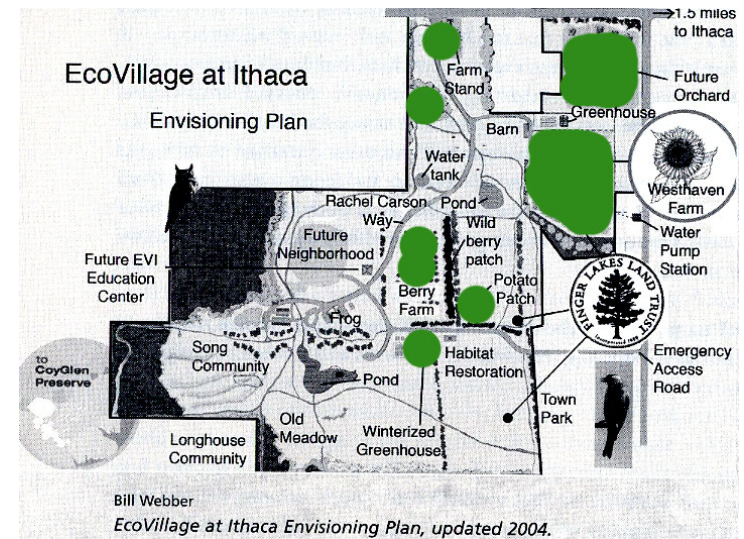
- To create a sustainable way of life through utilizing every aspect of community.
- Involving the broader community in small scale businesses
- Giving the extended community a chance to participate in sustainable life stlye



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PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN SPACES IN
CO-HOUSING COMMUNITIES

- Spreading out the different garden areas so that there can be a spacial communication of involving the garden space into the private areas of the garden



- Making the garden a transition space from community area to the natural world
A bridge from eco-living to eco-life





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PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OPEN SPACES IN
CO-HOUSING COMMUNITIES

- Always have the opportunity to have small garden areas in between houses or close to any dwelling for easy accessibility

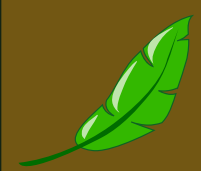


Putting gardening or growing spaces along boundaries of dwellings to link each space by a common point of interest



- Making the garden a transition space from community area to the natural world
A bridge from eco-living to eco-life





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Maitreya - Social Agriculture



Rainwater catchment swale that meanders through site

Maitreya Ecovillage

In terms of goals, Maitreya works to improve their food supply by growing organic produce themselves, and by fostering exchange relations with local farmers.

To accomplish this goal, Maitreya is using many strategies including:

- A significant portion of their land is devoted to growing organic fruits and vegetables, raising geese, rabbits and chickens, and bee keeping. A woman who keeps goats delivers their milk to us weekly.
- We help local farmers with their work in exchange for produce.

(www.maitreyaecovillage.org)

Permaculture is defined as the "conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive eco-systems that have the diversity, stability and resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people, providing their food, energy, shelter and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way."
(www.maitreyaecovillage.org)



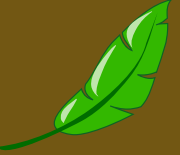
Outdoor space serves as improptu gathering spots for the many workshops that Maitreya holds through the year.



Being a small community built with an emphasis on permaculture principles, Maitreya continues to challenge itself and improve. They intend to further their commitment to growing food and learning better ways of using their land.

Alex Miller

Sam Rusek



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Ecovillage at Ithaca - Social Agriculture



Eco Village at Ithaca

On 175 acres of land, the village houses two communities, FROG AND SONG. The community leases out 10 acres of land to a local CSA farm, West Haven. The farm was one of the original concepts of the Ecovillage and the one that materialized first.

West Haven is a place where the surrounding community comes to work, pick up their weekly produce or shop their farmer's market, serving both as economy and place for community events. This allows the Ecovillage to have visibility and more exposure to the surrounding community.

The West Haven farm is a private business, where two residents own the farm, not the land. Establishing a sense of community ownership of the farm is difficult. Some see it as an essential part of the village, to others it is only a minor part of their daily lives (Walker, 43).



Buried cistern, Ithaca has the capacity to collect 30,000 gal of water.



This green house was built by the residents to grow seed starts for there shared gardens.



Building new fences for this shared garden creates deeper relationships among the residents.



West Haven is a Community Supported Agriculture farm and sits adjacent to the Ecovillage settlements.

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Conclusion Comparison



Maitreya Ecovillage



Ecovillage at Ithaca

<p>Social Climate:</p>	<p>Small, facilitating a close-knit community with permaculture ideology. Clustered single and multi-family homes. Consensus decision making.</p>	<p>Multi-community village. Two large common houses. Consensus decision making.</p>
<p>Agricultural Scale:</p>	<p>Food grown for residents supplemented with outside food</p>	<p>Village leases land to 10 acre CSA farm, community gardens also grow food to supplement resident's needs</p>
<p>Private and Public Interactions:</p>	<p>Private with minimal public visibility</p>	<p>Private communities with public outreach including a book and CSA farm for visibility</p>
<p>Goals:</p>	<p>To live more harmoniously with nature's cycles, close the loop of waste and become socially sustainable</p>	<p>To be a demonstration for community life sustainably</p>