



*Building a better society,
one neighborhood at a time.*

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1999 Conference

The 1999 North American Cohousing Conference was held in Amherst, MA, amidst the colorful fall foliage one weekend in October 1999. The two oldest cohousing communities on the East Coast – Pioneer Valley and Pine Street – jointly hosted the event. Unlike previous years where conferences were in convention facilities, the gathering took place in actual cohousing communities. In these venues, attendees experienced life in cohousing firsthand. They assisted in preparing meals, addressed building design and site planning issues, and spoke with residents about creating and living in a cohousing neighborhood.



Pioneer Valley Community

The conference was a festive and memorable occasion with singing, dancing, performance and hands-on activities. In addition to presentations and workshops, special events included a talent show, a cohousing slide show, an auction, a bus tour of two Boston area cohousing communities (Cambridge and New View), and a “doctor-is-in” tent where experienced cohousers addressed individual questions.

Three programs took place before and after the main conference:

- The Cohousing Network’s annual membership and board meeting
- “Burning Souls” Day – A Burning Soul is a self-selected person involved in the development of cohousing both in their community and beyond.
- Professionals Day

The conference program

Formal presentations during the conference were organized into two tracks: one for those already living in cohousing communities and one for those in the planning and development stages.

Living in cohousing track

- Getting the work done
- Community meals
- Conflict Resolution
- Raising children in community
- Resales in cohousing

Getting it built track

- Finding the “perfect” location
- Working with professionals
- Creating the “social community”
- Sustainable building practices
- Financing and affordability

Workshops

Here is a sample of the fun and learning opportunities enjoyed by participants:



A hands-on landscaping workshop at the conference

- Cooking for 50
- Building a solar cooker
- Growing your own food
- Garden tour
- Landscape tour
- Garden workshop
- Landscape workshop
- Craftmaking

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