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**You're invited to a very special evening...**

Diana Leafe Christian - author, former editor of *Communities* magazine, and a national speaker and workshop presenter will speak on "*Ecovillages: Where They Are, What They're Doing, Why They're Important*" Friday, March 20, 7:00 - 9:00 pm, at the Hutchinson Center, 80 Belmont Ave, Belfast, ME

**Next Open House:**

Saturday, April 11  
*Family Fun: Decorating Easter Eggs, Planting Seeds and Cohousing Updates* 2:00-4:00 pm  
 Waterfall Arts  
 256 High St, Belfast

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[Visit our website](#)



***Greetings!***

You are receiving this newsletter because we thought you'd be interested in hearing about our evolving cohousing neighborhood in Belfast, Maine.

In each issue, we will try to share what we've been working on, where we're headed, and how you can get involved if you are so moved. If ever you want to unsubscribe from this newsletter (though we can't fathom why you would!), see the bottom of the page.

Welcome, and read on!

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Project Update

Latest developments in our community-building efforts

On The Land

What's happening in the natural world around us

Member Profile

Get to know a member of the community

Notable Quotes

What folks have to say about Belfast Cohousing & Ecovillage, and about cohousing in general

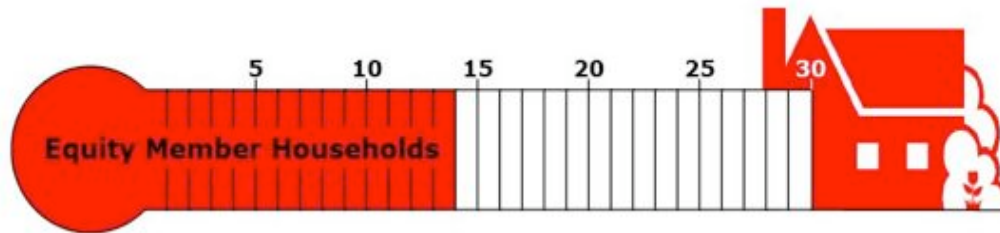
Membership Information

Membership levels and current enrollments

Our Mission

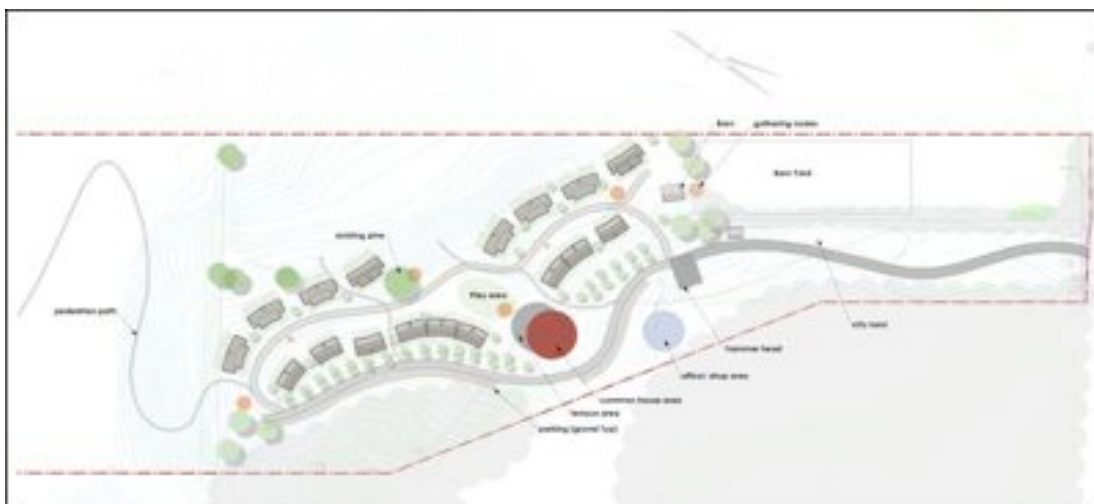
Sustainability, affordability, farmland preservation

**Project Update - Sanna McKim**



Membership Update: To date we are 14 Equity Member households and 16 Exploring Member households, but we have room for a few more! Join now as an Exploring Member if this project is of interest to you as we hope to be full this summer.

Project Progress: Following an inspiring site planning workshop with cohousing pioneer Chuck Durrett, where we started to really imagine living together as neighbors, we surprised ourselves by coming around to fully support the idea of duplexes for a lighter construction and home heating energy "footprint," and also just to be closer to each other. We then consulted engineers to survey 1' contours of the 3 acre building area, calculated solar angles for passive solar designs, discussed pros and cons of how our entrance would feel coming through the woods vs. the field, debated gravel vs. pavement and city-owned road vs. community-owned road in to the development, and fine-tuned our "crescent" site plan to present to the City of Belfast for Sketch Plan Review. We learned, among other things, that, while we had hoped to keep cars entirely on the periphery, we will instead need to provide permanent emergency vehicular access to the front door of each house where we had previously envisioned pedestrian-only access.



So our challenge is to design an alluring human-scale, rural pathway as the artery of our community leading to the common house (the heart), that can ALSO serve as a highway to accommodate huge emergency vehicles should the need arise. (To be frank, we had to admit that, when it comes to heavy sofas, broken legs, newborn children, a little too much snow, and high wind chill factors, we will all benefit from the door-to-door option anyway!).

So we're now set to explore cost-effective and sustainable approaches to designing and locating (nestling in among veggie gardens and pastures) the all-important but banal features like septic systems and storm water run-off solutions, which was not exactly what we envisioned as a top community-building priority, but apparently it is. This, hand in hand with permaculture master-planning, and the critical design and siting of the common house and community barn, will finish our site plan for the next step in City and State permitting process this spring. I'm pleased to report that we are still on schedule for ground-breaking in the fall.

Stay tuned!

### **On The Land - Mike Shannon**

Let's rendezvous with early Spring... a time between seasons... a time to celebrate mud, greenness and renewed life.

As winter ebbs and the days lengthen into spring, there comes a hint of thaw, and a trickle of water is heard on the land.

As spring emerges, our Belfast Cohousing community continues to advance confidently. As our vision develops, let us not forget the kindred spirits that share this land with us. A world without wildness would be a diminished world for humans. The wisdom to live well is not lost - it lives on in the lives of plants, habits of animals and the way that each of us enjoys being a part of our places. It feels good to be so connected.

One of the great opening acts of spring is the sky dance of the American Woodcock.

Listen! Peent... it's doing it again! Robert Finch has described this dance as a 'crepuscular (dawn and dusk) ballet performed on the teasing edge of visibility.'

The woodcock, a migrant/resident bird of bogs and young woodlands, is a most interesting wooing artist. As the annual cycle of courtship begins, his aerial technique, bizarre and mysterious, places him up front as a strange suitor.



He stands at twilight with bill pointed downward and his body inclined forward. He calls "peent!" Then he suddenly springs into the air and flies in a low sweeping arc, rising higher and higher in an ascending spiral. At about 200 feet, he levels out and plummets back to earth, making a lovely kiss-like chirping sound - the true song of a male woodcock. On the ground, he again struts and "peents" in all directions in preparation for further aerobatics. Such romantic antics.



### **Member Profile - Anne Hallee, Nathan Larlee & daughter Aveline**

We are a family of three currently living off the grid on 22 Acre Farmstead in Troy, Maine, in a home that we started building four years ago.

Anne farms about 2 acres of sustainably raised nursery stock of grafted fruit trees, hardy nut selections, perennials and other stock species of kiwis and grapes. She sells most of her plants to Fedco Trees and works the dark days of winter there at the warehouse in Clinton packing seed orders. Aside from tending the garden and nursery crops, mothering,

swimming and sweating through the dog days of summer, she caters for Trillium Catering out of Belfast.

Nathan works for Camden Regional High School at the Zenith Program as one of three alternative education teachers. His teachings focus on Math and Science comprehension. He longs to play more basketball and more music. He spends his summer vacations doing the fun stuff with Av.

What are we looking forward to as homeowners in Belfast Cohousing Ecovillage? Watching our girl learn to ride a bike with all of her big kid friends there to encourage her. Oohh, and the thought of taking an after-dinner family bike ride down to the harbor to watch the sun go down from dingy beach.

Anne says, "I've realized that at the end of the day, what matters to me is knowing I have people to share the experience of being human with. I think this need for community outweighs priorities that I had earlier in my life, like private land ownership, self-reliance, independence. In many ways, I spend most of my energy incorporating the needs of our friends' families with our family's needs. This process of expanding ourselves to acknowledge the richness of this experience has become the reason for my waking life.

### **Notable Quotes**

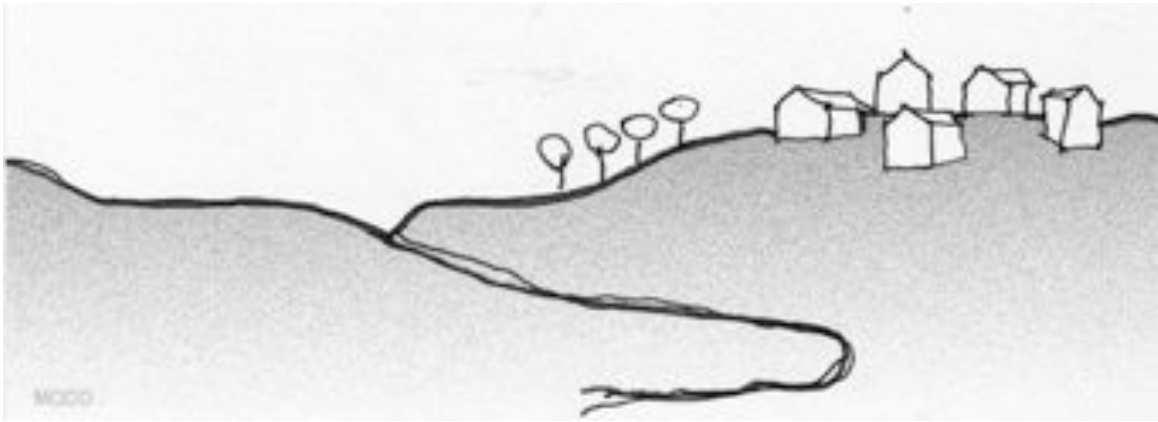
*Listen to Kathryn McCamant, of CoHousing Partners, speak on the history and underlying philosophy of cohousing in the United States at [Green Living Ideas](#)*

### **Membership Information**

Equity Members are those households who have already committed to purchasing a home in the community. There are currently fourteen of a projected thirty Equity members. Exploring Members are those households who have an interest in becoming Equity Members, but are not yet ready to fully commit. There are currently sixteen Exploring members. Friends are those who are interested in our project, but are not members. See the [Membership](#) section of our website for further details.

### **Our Mission**

To be a model environmentally sustainable, affordable, multi-generational cohousing community that is easily accessible to Belfast, includes land for agricultural use and open space, and is an innovative housing development option for rural Maine.



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