



# DRAGONFLY

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COHOUSING

## Membership Manual

## Document Change Log

As documents are revised, important information is added or removed. Enter changes and needed additions in this table so users know what has changed. Refer to this table to make sure you haven't missed the latest information.

Date yyyy/mm/dd	Changed By	Description of Change	Reason for Change
2010/12/26	Jana	Initial Compilation	
2011/04/03	Jana	Membership Table (p5)	updated
		Communication Section	added
		Membership Categories	Revised based on 13/03/2011 proposal
		Membership Roles and Responsibilities	Revised based on 13/03/2011 proposal
		Becoming a Member	Revised based on 13/03/2011 proposal
		Membership in Good Standing	added
		Appendix #2 Membership Questionnaire	added
		Appendix #3: Withdrawal procedure	added
2011/05/13	Jana	Membership Table (p5)	updated
2011/06/18	Jana	Membership Table (p5)	updated
		Site and Design Team description (p 7)	updated
		Equity member responsibility(p 16)	Changed from "pre-approved" to "pre-qualified" with respect to mortgage
		Legal Structure (Sec VI)	Incorporation June 2011
2011/12/22	Carolyn	Welcome Section	updated
		Membership Table	Removed – is on Yahoo d/t speed of changes
		Quorum Description (Sec III)	Updated to 50%+1
		Decisions regarding choosing units (Sec III)	added
		Becoming a Member	updated
		Legal Structure (Sec VI)	updated
		Appendix #1: Membership Agreements	Updated

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## Welcome to new and potential new Members

Thank you for your interest in **Dragonfly Cohousing**. We are a group of Calgarians dedicated to creating a new way to live in this city. Through consensus-based decision making and our shared vision of urban living, environmental sustainability and a vibrant community, we are working to create a new cohousing project.

Developing this cohousing community is a participatory process – as is typical of all cohousing projects. While we are all actively involved in developing this project, it is not the sole focus of our meetings to discuss building plans. Of equal importance is the time we spend together now, creating the bonds which will sustain us through the building process and be the true foundation for our community.

Dragonfly Cohousing came into existence in October of 2010 when Whiskeyjack Cohousing and Silver Sky Cohousing merged. Up until this time, Whiskeyjack Cohousing had been meeting regularly for almost two years. Silver Sky Cohousing was formed in the spring of 2010, with the original intent of including an aging in place component. After the merger, Dragonfly Cohousing had 17 member households with 14 equity members and 3 associate members.

Our membership is truly multigenerational – our youngest member joins us sometime in 2011 and our oldest member hopes the project will be completed before his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Our members include families, couples, singles, single parent families and seniors.

In November and December 2010 we handled many small merger details, reviewed policies and documentation, applied for a Federal grant, developed rough site criteria and began preparing for two workshops. In January we met with Lynn Hannley of The Communitas Group from Edmonton and in February with Ronaye Matthew from Cohousing Development Consulting from Vancouver. These workshops presented by professionals provide the basis for making decisions about hiring professionals (project manager, lawyer, etc.), project financing, incorporation structure and how to begin our land search. In addition we gain from their experience with other cohousing and cooperative housing groups.

In May 2011, we hired Chris ScottHanson (author of the *Cohousing Handbook*) as our project manager. With Chris' help and guidance, we are incorporated and setting up our legal structures. We have developed a budget and have put in an offer to buy land in Crescent Heights, walking distance from downtown. We are very happy with our partnership with Chris and look forward to the exciting times ahead.

And it's not all work. Whether we enjoy each other's company during potluck dinners after meetings, throw a Frisbee around at a picnic in Riley Park or join in a workbee at someone's home, social times bring us together.

## **Section I: Introduction**

### **THE VISION AND PEOPLE OF DRAGONFLY COHOUSING**

Dragonfly Cohousing has the following vision.

#### **Vision statement**

*Dragonfly Cohousing is an intentional community that values building relationships through collaboration, respect and trust. Celebrating our gifts and differences, we appreciate diversity and honour multiculturalism. As a community, we are committed to the environment and conserving resources while creating and maintaining healthy, sustainable homes.*

#### **Our members**

An up-to-date list of Dragonfly members, with their contact information, can be found on our Yahoo! Group under Database/Contact List.

## Section II: Organizational Structure

### THE TEAMS

Currently we have six teams established to move our project forward:

**Coordination Team** (consists of one equity member from each team plus one or two others) whose duties include:

- a. Coordinate and oversee administrative tasks (e.g. meetings, minute taking, proposals, authorizing contracts, etc.)
- b. Develop and oversee organizational structures and documents
- c. Be the principal point of contact with the Project Manager and other professionals
- d. Identify aspects of the community where development of policies and procedures would be beneficial
- e. Develop policies and procedures in consultation with the whole group
- f. Plan ahead for future needs of group
- g. Review the big picture and set agendas for general meetings

**Membership & Marketing Team**, whose duties include:

- a. Oversee the preparation, organization and running of information sessions
- b. Oversee the preparation and organization of all promotional materials
- c. Develop procedures for contact management and outreach
- d. Develop procedures for orienting new members (e.g. buddy system, documentation)
- e. Oversee member education
- f. Review applications for membership
- g. Keep member manual up-to-date
- h. Publish regular newsletters and updates

**Process Team** whose duties include:

- a. Facilitate development of and ensure ongoing effectiveness of communication channels within the group
- b. Develop mediation and conflict resolution skills
- c. Be aware of conflicts that arise in the community, decide the best way to deal with them and resolve them
- d. Be aware of individual needs in the community & coordinate a community response if appropriate
- e. Suggest ways of enhancing community life (e.g. workshops, clearing circles, etc.)
- f. Facilitate the integration of new members into the group
- g. Facilitate meetings or assist others in developing facilitation skills

- h. Organize “rites of passage” or other celebrations for various members in the community

**Social Team**, whose duties include:

- a. Organize and create social events and get-togethers
- b. Coordinate bookings for general meetings and any social activities
- c. Organize and schedule cooking teams for shared evening meals

**Financial / Legal Team** whose duties include:

- a. Monitor and oversee finances
- b. Plan and monitor budgets
- c. Research and identify legal structures
- d. Review and develop contracts with the Coordination Team

**Site and Design Team**, whose duties include:

- a. Develop the design program for the group, including research of building options
- b. Compile initial site criteria
- c. Create a site checklist to be used when reviewing sites
- d. Review potential sites

In addition to these six teams, from time to time we also need to form **Disappearing Task Forces (DTFs)** which are set up to undertake a special project or to deal with a particular issue. Teams and DTFs pave the way for decision-making by researching issues and preparing recommendations (in the form of proposals) that they present to the full membership.

## **Section III: Meetings and Decision-Making**

### **TYPES OF MEETINGS**

#### *General Meetings*

- To conduct the normal business of the community. These require full community participation.

#### *Team/Task Force Meetings*

- To conduct the normal business of the community as it has been delegated to a committee.

#### *Information Meetings*

- To introduce the project and the group to potential new members.

#### *Workshops*

- These have several purposes:
  - Education: To learn about particular community building, legal and design aspects from professionals as the project progresses
  - Skill-building: To develop particular skills, such as facilitation or conflict resolution
  - Decision-making: To make decisions about the community

### **QUORUM**

Quorum at a business meeting is necessary for decisions to be made. The standard of quorum for Dragonfly Cohousing is a simple majority or 50% + 1 of Equity Members.



## **MEETING GROUND RULES**

Ground rules are commonly used by a group to record the assumptions, expectations, and framework that underlie its meeting and decision-making processes. They are intended to make these things explicit so that everyone knows what they can count on from others and from the group as a whole.

### ***1. Show Up***

- ◆ Respect time commitments, be on time
- ◆ RSVP in writing – always!!
- ◆ Come prepared (read the previous minutes, the agenda and current proposals)

### ***2. Get Present***

- ◆ Bring yourself fully into the here and now
- ◆ Pay attention: to yourself, to others, to the meeting process and tasks
- ◆ Listen respectfully to others, including feelings and body language
- ◆ Ask yourself regularly “Can I support these decisions?”

### ***3. Speak Your Truth***

- ◆ Be concise – ensure space for others
- ◆ Express yourself fully – feelings are important
- ◆ Provide direct feedback – voice concerns as well as support but be RESPECTFUL at all times

### ***4. Release the Results***

- ◆ Avoid getting attached to your position or to any particular result
- ◆ Allow for synergy, group wisdom
- ◆ Be open to outcome and to change
- ◆ Keep open to co-creating new ideas

## ***Child Care***

In general, child care is provided at the meeting location, or very close by. Dragonfly Cohousing and Dragonfly parents share child care costs at daytime meetings, including general meetings and workshops. Payment is calculated per child and the current tariff is recorded in the decision log.

Children of guests are welcome with advance notice and guests should enquire about childcare costs prior to the meeting.

## DECISION-MAKING AND MEETING PROCESSES

### ***Using the Consensus Process<sup>1</sup>***

Consensus is different from most other kinds of decision making because it stresses group members working together to cooperatively develop a decision. Since the goal is group unity, rather than winning a majority of votes, every member is considered important and the group tries to listen to and respond to each person's needs and opinions. Because of this process of incorporating all members' wisdom, consensus can create better decisions.

A consensus decision has 3 essential ingredients:

- It is made with the community's best interest in mind.
- Everyone takes responsibility to speak their point of view and to listen to others.
- Everyone agrees not to hinder its implementation.

We believe that making a decision by consensus allows us, as a group, to create a solution greater than any one of us could reach alone. We recognize that the consensus process requires commitment and patience but we believe that the resulting decisions are better, more effective and, in the long term, more time efficient. A true consensus decision reflects the concerns and creativity of all the members of the group, and the process of uniting these generates the solution that best responds to the needs of that group.

### ***Reaching Consensus<sup>1</sup>***

Reaching consensus requires gathering and blending the ideas and concerns of individual members, and synthesizing these into a decision with which everyone in the group can live. ***Full consent does not mean that everyone must be completely satisfied with the final outcome. The decision must be acceptable enough; however, that everyone will commit to support the group in choosing it.*** The object is to create a process in which each person feels that his or her concerns are heard, and a solution that everyone agrees to support.

A consensus decision relies on the assumption that every individual's contribution is valuable and important to the final solution. Some people's contributions may be more difficult to reach or understand than others, but respecting each one is key to the process.

Consensus strives to incorporate every voice, acknowledging both the validity and the importance of each contribution, and leaving no residual minority to feel that a decision has been imposed on them. When decisions do not belong to one person, but are a creation of the whole group, not only are ego issues avoided, but decisions are more enthusiastically implemented. When everyone is in support of the action, both ownership and responsibility are shared.

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<sup>1</sup> Used with permission from Prairie Sky Cohousing Member Manual

## ***Principles of Consensus<sup>2</sup>***

### **Unity of Purpose**

We are working together to make the best decisions possible for the good of the group. We are guided by our shared beliefs, which are described in our Vision statement.

### **Cooperation**

We share information and resources and provide mutual support and suggestions. We are all working to find a solution that best meets everyone's needs. Our ability to reach agreement will depend on truth, creativity, logic, respect, and love, and will not involve deception, coercion, lobbying or malice.

### **Trust**

Consensus only works in conditions of trust. We trust that each person is honestly keeping the best interest of the group in mind and that every contribution will be offered and received with respect and patience.

### **Differences are Valued**

In an atmosphere of trust, we appreciate that difference and disagreement are not damaging but are, in fact, important and creative processes. Conflict, when dealt with in the safety of the group, can often lead to the greatest solutions.

### **Feelings are Valued**

Knowledge does not just exist at an intellectual level and we believe that emotion and intuition are powerful tools for understanding an issue. Emotions and gut reactions are valued for the breadth and depth of understanding they provide. If emotions are not addressed, the process suffers and good decisions cannot be made.

### **Equal Power, Equal Responsibility**

Because consensus decision-making requires a high level of involvement and responsibility from all participants, we strive to ensure that we all have equal opportunity for participation, leadership roles and access to information. Each of us needs to feel responsible for every decision made and every meeting we attend.

### **Common Ownership of Ideas**

A consensus decision is owned equally by all of us. All members agree to support the decision and not hinder its implementation.

### **Time & Process**

In order to make good decisions and nurture our community, we respect the process and give it the time that it needs.

### **Willingness to Learn Skills**

Consensus decision-making requires skills such as communication, facilitation, and meeting participation that we may not have yet developed. In order to develop these skills, we are willing to work to learn them.

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<sup>2</sup> Used with permission from Prairie Sky Cohousing Member Manual

## Dragonfly Cohousing Consensus Model

The basis of all decision making in Dragonfly cohousing is consensus and the foundation of consensus is that everyone has a right to be heard and understood. We believe that all people have a voice and that this voice must be heard not only for the sake of the person but for the sake of the group; it is not enough for a person to be heard but that his/her concerns must also be understood for the group to benefit. Therefore, each member of Dragonfly Cohousing has an equal voice in decision-making.

As the raison d'être of our project is community, we believe that by coming together peaceably we shall learn to know about each other and each other's concerns. Thus, when we enter into discussion, we shall be armed with empathy, wisdom and open hearts to make decisions. Our model allows the group to move rapidly when needs be and to deal with the unfortunate and rare circumstances when a member is unable to work within the value system that we have established. And yet, even then, consensus is and shall always be the avowed goal of our community.

Blocking should very rarely be used if community members listen to each other, give time to each other, build up trust in each other and strive for what is best for the community. Blocking should not be used for personal preference.

Dragonfly Cohousing meetings are moderated by the **Facilitator**. This individual ensures that the agenda is being followed, that time constraints are respected and that all members have an opportunity to voice their concerns in a manner that respects the group's rules and regulations.

The Facilitator is aided by the **Timekeeper** who reminds the group when they have surpassed or are about to surpass the estimated amount of time for a specific topic within a meeting.

Dragonfly Cohousing uses a system of cards to ensure that when a person has something to add to a discussion or to vote, that they can be 'heard' without any inappropriate shouting taking place.

The cards used are as follows:

<b><u>Colour</u></b>	<b><u>Discussion phase</u></b>	<b><u>Voting phase</u></b>
Green	Raise a point	I agree to the proposal
Yellow	Ask a question for clarity	I have reservations but I will stand aside
Orange	I am ready to vote	I am neutral
PURPLE	Raise a point of order	---
RED	---	I disagree

A point of order shall have precedence over other concerns. It is used to indicate that due process is not being followed.

The **Cardwatcher** sits beside the Facilitator and as the discussion progresses and writes down the names in order and precedence to allow the Facilitator to fully follow the discussion while still keeping track of members who wish to be heard.

The **Vibewatcher**, when needed, sits beside and supports the Facilitator. She/he has a function to watch the members and to take note of their emotional state that might be missed by the facilitator especially as the group gets larger. Specifically, the vibewatcher is to take note of members' verbal tone, language used, body language, facial expressions or silence and to keep the facilitator up to date.

### **Testing Consensus**

Any equity member may block a proposal's adoption by voting *I disagree* with the proposal. A person blocking a proposal automatically becomes chairperson of the ad hoc committee of 3 or more members whose specific task is to compose a counter-proposal which will take into account both the concerns of the blocking member(s) but also the wishes of the people who supported the initial proposal, unless the initiator of the proposal withdraws the initial proposal. In the event of more than one dissenter, one of the dissenters may volunteer to be the chairperson. If no one volunteers, a name is drawn from a hat. The ad hoc committee has until the next general meeting, or in the case of time sensitive decisions, a time/date as decided by the group at large (3/4 majority), to make its counter-proposal.

### **Super Majority**

In the case of a situation needing an urgent decision, a  $\frac{3}{4}$  super majority process (at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the members agreeing) will be used after 1 meeting. In circumstances that need a decision, but not immediately, the super majority decision process will be used after 3 meetings if no consensus has yet been reached.

After the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> meetings, the initial proposal, not having gained a unanimous level of acceptance, would be tabled until the next meeting. In the consequent meeting which may be the same day (or even later in the same meeting if a decision is needed expeditiously), the counter proposal will be presented and discussed. At this stage, any proposal coming to a vote will only need a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority to be accepted by the group.

The proposal voted on may be the counter-proposal, the initial proposal or a modification of either. If it is unclear which proposal is to be dealt with, then a two step vote will be held contrasting two proposals. The super majority format is intended to deal with the unlikely event that someone is egregiously obstructionist (i.e. raising red cards for issues not associated with the organization's core values or safety issues). The first vote determines the preferred proposal (simple majority decides). The second vote determines whether a sufficient percentage of the membership support it. If  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the equity membership vote to block the preferred proposal, then the motion is tabled.

## **Decisions regarding Choosing Units**

When choosing which units they want to live in, equity members will choose in the order in which they joined as equity members, referred to as seniority.

After individual purchase and sale agreements have been signed, members who insist on switching units will be responsible for paying all administrative costs of making the change, plus they will risk losing any monies paid toward the purchase of options and upgrades on their original unit selection. It is agreed that administrative costs will be a minimum of \$2,500, with one half of this being paid directly to Urban Cohousing Associates (UCA), and the other half being paid to the Dragonfly Cohousing general fund. In addition, when a member insists on switching units, it is understood that no guarantee is made that options and/or upgrades can be transferred to the new unit.

## **Section IV: Membership in Dragonfly Cohousing**

### **MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

Cohousing communities are typically designed and developed by the members, with the help of professionals as required, throughout the community development and physical development phases. The membership process is generally “self-selective” in that people who have a genuine interest in a community of this sort will probably already share most of the core values important to the other members of the group.

However, different members will join the group at different times and at different phases of the development of the group and of the project. It is very important to reflect these differences and it is usually done in cohousing communities by having different membership categories.

Dragonfly Cohousing has two membership categories: associate and equity. Associate Members are exploring the possibility of becoming Equity Members and living in and being a participant in the life and growth of Dragonfly Cohousing. Associate members actively participate in design and community process discussions. Equity members want to live in Dragonfly Cohousing when it is built and have made a large commitment to drive the project forward, both through financial contributions and time invested in developing group processes.

The details of the rights and responsibilities of each of type of membership are outlined in the following section.

## MEMBERSHIP ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Associate Members:

- ◆ have attended an information session and at least one general meeting.
- ◆ have met with a member of the Membership Team to discuss their involvement with the group.
- ◆ pay the non-refundable \$75 three months' membership fee.
- ◆ renew their membership every three months. Renewal of membership includes:
  - a discussion with one of the Membership Team about their future involvement with the group.
  - payment of the \$75 three months' membership fee (to a total maximum of \$450).
- ◆ learn about the consensus process for discussion and decision-making.
- ◆ sign a Dragonfly Cohousing membership agreement form. (see Appendix 1)
- ◆ join and actively participate on a team.

### Associate Members may:

- ◆ attend general and committee meetings. After their first couple of meetings they are encouraged to actively contribute to group discussions.
- ◆ participate in many group decisions
- ◆ join the Dragonfly Cohousing Yahoo! Group.
- ◆ attend Dragonfly Cohousing workshops.
- ◆ become Equity Members.
- ◆ participate in Disappearing Task Forces (DTFs) if approved by a vote of Equity Members.
- ◆ facilitate general meetings after having attended six general meetings.
- ◆ take minutes at general meetings after having attended six general meetings.
- ◆ not block (red card) decisions.



## Equity Members:

- ◆ must first be associate members.
- ◆ have attended at least three general meetings.
- ◆ are sponsored by an Equity Member who has volunteered to be their 'buddy' by signing their Equity Membership Application Form
- ◆ meet all the guidelines for associate membership.
- ◆ along with their buddy, meet with representatives of the Membership and Financial Teams to thoroughly discuss the implications of Equity Membership, including their rights and responsibilities as Equity Members
- ◆ provide a mortgage pre-qualification letter from a recognized financial institution as proof that they qualify for a mortgage of at least \$300,000.
- ◆ fill out and submit an Equity Membership Application Form (see Appendix 1)
- ◆ fill out and submit an Equity Member Bio Form (see Appendix 2)
- ◆ pay the initial non-refundable equity membership payment of \$1000 per household.
- ◆ make further financial contributions as needed in order to meet the requirements of equity membership and the development of the cohousing project. These contributions will be credited to the equity member at the time of purchase of a unit, in a manner described by the Early Member Incentive Plan.

## Equity Members:

- ◆ have full rights and privileges on all decisions affecting the group and project.

## **BECOMING A MEMBER**

Anyone interested in learning more or becoming a member of Dragonfly Cohousing should contact us at [info@dragonflycohousing.ca](mailto:info@dragonflycohousing.ca). In general, anyone interested in getting to know our group is welcome as an observer at our business meetings. Our social events are always open to visitors and in fact, this is possibly the best way to really get to know us. Prospective members should contact the Membership and Marketing Team, who will arrange for a membership information session.

New associate members are paired with a 'buddy' (see description below), join a standing team, join the Yahoo! Group and are given a copy of the *Cohousing Handbook*.

The Dragonfly buddy system pairs new associate members with equity members who have experience with the history and workings of our group. The member who takes on the role of a Buddy is responsible for contacting the new members and is the primary source for information about the community.

Some ways the Buddy might help new members:

- maintain regular contact (phone calls, email, etc.)
- available before and after meetings to answer questions
- help learn about decision-making processes
- guide the new member through the process of learning about our group
- help navigate the Dragonfly Yahoo! Group
- make introductions to other members
- relate existing decisions and documents
- provide information as needed

**You may become an Associate member when you have:**

- attended an information session and at least one general meeting
- met with someone from the Membership & Marketing Team
- signed an Associate Membership Agreement Form
- paid the \$75, non-refundable, 3-month membership fee

When you become an Associate member you will be:

- paired with a buddy
- invited to join our Yahoo! group (with access to all files and communication)
- asked to join a team
- encouraged to participate as fully as possible in our project

**You may become an Equity member when you have:**

- attended at least three general meetings
- met with someone from the Membership/Marketing team
  - signed an Equity Membership Agreement Form
  - agreed to supply a copy of a Police Check (including Vulnerable Sector Search) within 90 days
- met with someone from the Financial/Legal team
  - provided the Financial/Legal team with a copy of a mortgage pre-qualification letter for your desired unit
  - paid 10% of the budgeted price of your desired unit
  - read and signed your share subscription of our Shareholder's Agreement

When you become an Equity Member you will be

- a shareholder in our company
- one of our future neighbours!

## **MEMBERSHIP IN GOOD STANDING**

Membership in Dragonfly Cohousing is by household.

- Members in good standing
  - have paid all dues, fees and payments in full.
  - are involved on an ongoing basis.
  - strive to attend all general meetings and their team meetings.
  - shall inform the group if and why they are unable to attend meetings, and where necessary shall take responsibility for transferring their responsibilities to other members.
  - actively follow the Dragonfly procedure for consensus-based discussion and decision-making.
  
- If there is a loss of good standing by a member household, the Dragonfly procedure for the resolution of concerns is as follows:
  1. An assigned person from the appropriate team will approach the household in question and offer assistance to resolve the matter. (e.g. The financial team would approach the household about unpaid fees, the membership team would approach the household about attendance, and their own team(s) would approach the household about work load issues).
  2. If the issue is not simply resolved, the team will collaborate with the member to develop measurable steps toward resolution.
  3. If the issue remains unresolved after a reasonable period of time, formal notice may be made to the entire group.

## **Section V: Communication**

Effective communication is a vital aspect of Dragonfly Cohousing. General and team meetings are a focused time for members to relay their own thoughts, information and feelings to the group and to hear from other people. There is also extensive communication outside of meeting times, in the form of phone calls, email, Yahoo! Group posts or Skype calls. All of these tools are necessary for conveying information between members. It is also important that we use these tools carefully and responsibly.

### **E-MAIL AND YAHOO! GROUP ETIQUETTE**

1. Remember, in an e-mail, you lose the benefit of eye-contact, body language, a firm handshake or a smile. By taking the time to create e-mails and by editing them before they are sent, you ensure your meaning is communicated while minimizing possible negative perceptions and misunderstandings.
2. With every e-mail you have the opportunity to communicate with clarity. The onus is on you as the author to ensure that the intent and tone you wish to relay is what comes across to those you e-mail. And, with every e-mail you also run the risk of being misunderstood or giving a less than positive impression by not paying attention to detail.
3. If your e-mail is emotionally charged or you are unsure about suitability, walk away from the computer and wait to reply. Review the sender's e-mail again so that you are sure you are not reading anything into the e-mail that simply isn't there. Consider a phone call instead or send your e-mail to a member of the process committee for review to avoid sounding misinformed, rude or condescending.
4. Feel free to post any positive feelings - these are encouraging, instill confidence and build the group up, leading to more positive feelings in others.
5. It is ill-advised to post negative feelings - these can lead to anger, frustration, fear and nagging doubts in others. This can polarize people into emotional ways of thinking outside of group time. Meeting time is then spent breaking down those barriers. If there is something sitting heavily on your mind or you are struggling with negative feelings about the group, contact your buddy, a friend in the group or a member of the coordination team to discuss them.
6. Yahoo!GROUPS is a valuable and convenient tool. Not replying when required or in a timely manner can be frustrating to those trying to put things together. Please list on the database if you check emails infrequently. Also, please include the best way to get in touch and the best times.

## **Section VI: Legal Structure**

### **LEGAL STRUCTURE**

In June 2011, Dragonfly Cohousing incorporated as a limited liability company. In the months following the initial incorporation set-up, we finalized the details of our shareholder's agreement which was signed by all equity members in October 2011. Bylaws and the final legal structure for the built project (condominium or co-operative) will be decisions that the group will make before construction has begun.

# Appendix 1: Membership Agreements



## Dragonfly Cohousing (1615264 Alberta Ltd.) Associate Membership Agreement

I want to help to create a cohousing community in Calgary. As an Associate Member of Dragonfly Cohousing I will explore the possibility of becoming an Equity Member of the group by participating as fully as possible in the Dragonfly Cohousing initiative.

1. I understand that membership involves active participation. I will join a team, and contribute to the best of my ability to both general and team meetings.
2. I will attend a minimum of two general and/or team meetings monthly.
3. I will inform the group in advance if I am unable to attend a meeting, and I will be responsible for staying updated on the group's development.
4. I will join such online sites and services as are currently being used by the group for communication and sharing of information. I will read and respond to communications in a timely fashion.
5. I agree to past decisions made by Dragonfly Cohousing, and will work within the structure of the policies and decisions already implemented by the group. I will follow the consensus-based decision making process practiced by the group.
6. I attach my non-refundable \$75 three months' Membership fee.

Associate Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of application: \_\_\_\_\_

Joint Associate Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of application: \_\_\_\_\_



## Dragonfly Cohousing (1615264 Alberta Ltd.) Equity Membership Agreement

1. I want to help to create and then live in a cohousing community in Calgary. As an Equity Member of Dragonfly Cohousing I will attend general business meetings, join and participate in a team and follow and respond to all communications in a timely manner.
2. I hereby subscribe to become a shareholder of the project developer 1615264 Alberta Ltd. (Dragonfly Cohousing) as an Equity Member. I am contributing the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ at this date for this purpose. I understand that I am required to enter into a Shareholders Agreement with other Members of the Company, the terms of which I have reviewed and accept.
3. I am aware that I am investing these funds to create a housing development and that there are risks attached to that process. If the development does not proceed or is not completed, I am aware that I may lose all of the money that I have invested. If the Company is dissolved before the completion of the project I will be refunded a share of money proportionate to my financial contributions.
4. I am aware that if I choose to not purchase a residential unit at Dragonfly Cohousing my equity payment will be refunded only if it is not to the detriment of the Company, at a time not later than 60 days after the housing complex is ready for occupancy. I further understand that the purchase price of my share shall be equal to my total capital contribution, less the costs of replacing me as a shareholder as determined by the Company up to a maximum of 10% of the total funds I have contributed.
5. I have reviewed the Dragonfly decision log and agree to support all previous decisions made by Dragonfly Cohousing.
6. I understand that I must submit a current Vulnerable Sectors Police Check to the Dragonfly Cohousing Membership Team within 90 days of becoming an Equity Member.
7. I have reviewed the contract Dragonfly Cohousing has entered in to with its Project Manager, Chris ScottHanson, and I agree to the terms and conditions set forth in this contract.
8. I understand that during the construction phase I will not go on the job site independently, nor communicate with the general contractor, their subcontractors or employees. I understand that Dragonfly members may participate in site tours arranged at least monthly by the Project Manager Chris ScottHanson and conducted by the Clerk of the Works, the Project Architect and/or an authorized representative of the contractor. Furthermore, I understand that any costs incurred due to my breach of this provision will be paid for by me.

9. I understand that after the construction phase has begun no member may request changes to the design of their individual unit or to the project as a whole as this will materially impact both the budget and the timeline of the entire project. As an Equity Member I understand that:
  - a. I will have the right to purchase a certain condominium unit at Dragonfly Cohousing as soon as an occupancy permit has been approved for that unit. I understand that at the time title to the strata lot is created in the Land Titles Office, I will be entering into an agreement to purchase the unit. I understand that unit prices will not be finalized until the time at which construction commences.
  - b. As an Equity Member of Dragonfly Cohousing I will have priority in choosing a unit based on the date of my Equity Membership financial contribution.
    - i. If the unit selection process has not yet occurred:
      1. I understand that there are \_\_\_\_\_ Member households who will choose their units ahead of me.
    - ii. If the unit selection process has occurred:
      1. I intend to purchase unit: \_\_\_\_\_. I understand that I cannot be displaced by any Member whose Equity Membership started at a date later than my own.
  - c. In signing this agreement I certify that I understand my financial obligations and can qualify to purchase an available unit at Dragonfly Cohousing once the occupancy permit has been issued. I will provide evidence of my ability to qualify financially to purchase a unit at Dragonfly Cohousing.
  
10. I understand that after members make their final unit selection, switching units will be discouraged. Members who insist on switching units will be responsible for paying all administrative costs of making the change, and will risk losing any monies paid toward any purchase of options and upgrades to their original unit selection. I understand that administrative costs will be a minimum of \$2,500. In addition, if I insist on switching units it is understood that no guarantee is made any options and/or upgrades can be transferred to the new unit.

Equity Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of application: \_\_\_\_\_

Joint Equity Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of application: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 2: Membership Questionnaire

I know this fits on one page, but there isn't room to answer the questions fully  
Welcome to our community! We're delighted that you have decided to join us, and want to learn more about you. Please take the time to fill out this form and to share some information about yourself. Note that there are no right or wrong answers, this is an opportunity for us to get an idea of who you are before (and after) we have the pleasure of meeting you face to face.

Information from this questionnaire will be added to our Yahoo! Group for other Members to read. Information about Equity Members will be added to our public website.

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Telephone:** (please indicate which number you prefer us to use)

Home

Work

Cell

**E-mail:** (please indicate which address you prefer us to use)

**Others in your household:**

Name

Relationship to you

Age

**Where do you come from?**

**What do you do? How do you work and how do you play?**

**Why do you want to be involved with Dragonfly Cohousing?**

**How do you feel membership with Dragonfly Cohousing will benefit you?**

**What contributions do you bring to our community?**

## **Appendix 3: Membership Withdrawal**

Just as members have joined (and will join) Dragonfly Cohousing at various stages in the development of the project, members may choose to leave for a wide variety of reasons. This is a natural part of a cohousing community's development, as individuals determine whether or not the community fits their needs. Many of Dragonfly's previous members maintain contact with Dragonfly as Friends, receiving newsletters, updates and invitations to join us for events.

The procedure for withdrawing membership from Dragonfly Cohousing is:

- Contact the membership team (or one person from the membership team) to let them know about the intent to withdraw.
- Unsubscribe from the Yahoo! Group

Members who withdraw are asked to please refrain from sending bulk emails or posting comments in the Yahoo! Group. Any membership withdrawals are announced publicly at the following general business meeting.