



Construction site for Sunnyside Village Cohousing on Wednesday, Aug. 28, 2024 in Marysville, Washington. (Olivia Vanni / The Herald)

In Marysville development, community and sustainability ‘go hand in hand’

Sunnyside Village Cohousing will have 32 all-electric homes. Some residents can expect to move in next year.

- by [Ta'Leah Van Sistine](#)
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MARYSVILLE — At Sunnyside Village Cohousing, before residents pick their homes, they’ll pick their neighbors — many of whom are avid gardeners and electric vehicle drivers.

Here, community and sustainability “go hand in hand,” said Jennie Lindberg, one of the founders of Sunnyside Village.

The nearly 5-acre property at 3121 66th Ave NE will have 32 cottages, with two-bedroom and three-bedroom options at 1,200 square feet each. As of this week, five cottages were available. Construction is expected to begin early next year.

As one of six cohousing communities in Snohomish County, members of Sunnyside Village hope to create a new neighborhood model where residents with shared values live and work together.

Native vegetation will thrive throughout the landscape in lieu of sod grass and residents will park their cars in one of four lots, instead of garages.

A 3,350-square-foot common house will have solar panels and all 32 cottages will be equipped for solar, if residents choose to purchase panels.

The community garden will supply food for shared dinners residents can participate in three nights a week.

“It will be a time to come home from work and somebody else has already set the table and made the stew,” Lindberg said. “You just walk in and sit down and get to talk to your neighbors.”

Lindberg and her husband Dean Smith purchased the property in 2018, after searching for cohousing communities to join along Puget Sound. With no openings available, the couple decided to start their own environmentally friendly community — in line with their background as founders of the local climate activist group 350 Everett.

Lindberg and Smith said cottages cost between \$700,000 and \$800,000, which includes each buyer’s share of the common house and community garden. The founders don’t have a firm price on the cottages but expect them to be at market value.

Seattle-based construction technology company Green Canopy NODE is working on the project.

“Sunnyside Village Cohousing will be a 4-Star Certified Built Green project featuring all-electric homes that reduce dependence on fossil fuels,” said Nina Milligan, an associate project manager for Green Canopy NODE.

Sunnyside member Norm Frampton expects to move in within a year. Frampton heard about the project in 2022, after reading about the sustainable community in The Daily Herald.

While reading, he realized “these are my people,” he said.

Many members participate in weekly Zoom meetings, or talk regularly through email threads and at social events.

Lynne Joachim, who lives in Sebastopol, California, committed to moving to Sunnyside after hearing about the community from a neighbor.

“I thought it was a wonderful way to share property, to share skills, to have a much smaller impact on our environment,” she said. “That’s always how I’ve wanted to live.”

Neighbors plan to share equipment like ladders and lawnmowers, she said, as well as organize group shopping trips and carpools.

“It’s like the saying,” Joachim said, “‘Many hands make light work.’”

An owner of an electric Hyundai IONIQ 5, Joachim will also be able to charge her vehicle on the property as it will have three stations with dual charging ports.

Everett resident Alison Ahlgrim and her husband plan to move to Sunnyside, so their two young children can foster connections with, and learn from, adults in the community.

Growing up in Oregon City, “a roving pack of kids” regularly played together at nearby trails and parks, creating a tight-knit neighborhood, Ahlgrim said.

If she missed the bus, neighbors offered her rides to school. When she crashed her bike, a parent walked her home.

“We always knew that if we needed something, there were adults around,” she said. “It was nice, as a kid, to know I was safe.”

Many Sunnyside Village members work in, or are retired from, helper professions: nurses, teachers, doctors and therapists who are excited to help raise children in the community.

For Ahlgrim and her husband, Sunnyside’s sustainability features are “a bonus.”

Near her family’s Everett apartment, Ahlgrim said, there are no immediate green spaces. Going to a park is a “whole to-do,” making sure to pack enough sunscreen and snacks for an outing.

But at Sunnyside Village, “there’s a green belt wetland space, there’s a creek and trails,” Ahlgrim said. “This reminds me of home.”

To learn more about the community, interested residents can go to sunnysidevillagecohousing.com and attend an introductory meeting via Zoom from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays.

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