

Overall Design Goals and Considerations

This is the general part of the design program document for the current (Spring '19) Common House design work. It's modeled after similar sections in the design program for the residences. It's a bit of mix of different elements – not written for narrative coherence, but just for alignment of a range of goals between us and our architect. – Anthony 03/18/19

A. Ecology: Ecologically Responsible and Regenerative Construction

- Sustainability: Our ways of living and building should do the least environmental harm and aim, as far as practical, to have a net regenerative impact on the environment.
- Build to high performance standards, but do not plan to pursue certifications.
- Incorporate passive solar principles to the greatest degree as practical.
- Balance energy efficiency and cost of construction.
 - Aim for net-zero energy usage (at least at community scale)
- Affordable while being as “natural” as possible with the least negative environmental impact.
- Solar: plan for photovoltaic arrays on roofs. Use rule of thumb area for potential net zero energy.

B. Architectural Design and Character

- Complementary to the general aesthetic of the residences
- Orient roofs for solar panel installations.
- Orient layouts for passive solar.
- Lots of natural light into the interior
- 9' ceilings minimum
- Vaulted ceiling over dining space (need to coordinate with second story)
- Feel like the building is alive and breathing, incorporating natural materials, nature inspired design elements, natural ventilation, natural lighting.
- Favor two stories in order to minimize footprints and impervious surface
- Good sound buffering
- Layered relationships from indoors to outdoors and private to public.
 - Presume consented HM accessibility standards but reconsider as necessary

C. Construction Materials and Finishes

- Easy maintenance
- Low environmental impact, considered over building lifetime as well
- High carbon sequestration
- Locally and responsibly sourced when possible
- Non or low toxicity
- Natural materials and finishes
- Durable materials

D. Keep materials/methods options open. Various alternative construction approaches are under consideration: therefore, keep plans welcoming to earth-build and DIY approaches, at least for parts of the buildings.

E. Other systems, elements, and considerations

- Allow space in bathrooms for the substitution of self-contained composting toilet in place of regular toilets at a later time.
- Much attention to the surround – landscaping, terracing, patios, etc. as part of overall village layout design – of course!