SESSION 35

ECOVILLAGE DESIGN

Intentional Communities
**What is an Eco-Village?**

**Ecovillage:** A rural or urban community that is consciously designed through locally owned, participatory processes in all four dimensions of sustainability (social, culture, ecology and economy) to regenerate their social and natural environments. Ecovillages strive to create sustainable and regenerative human settlements that include shared values and ethics toward the environment and living community.

**Village:** A clustered human settlement, larger than a hamlet but smaller than a town, with a population ranging from a few tens to a few thousand. Though often located in rural areas, the term urban village is also applied to urban neighborhoods.

**Community:** The word “community” comes from the Latin “communis”, which means “shared in common” and typically refers to:
- A group of people living in the same place
- A group of people sharing certain attitudes and interests.

**Intentional community:** A group of people who intentionally live together or share common facilities and co-create at least some of their social, economic, ecological and/or cultural relationships.

There is an overlap between intentional communities and ecovillages, yet they are not the same. Traditional ecovillages are not intentional communities. Some intentional communities are too small to be recognised as ecovillages.

**Some common values include:**
- Moving toward self-sufficiency in food, energy & water
- Personal development, involvement and building a resilient community;
- Strengthening nature, restoring biodiversity
- Cooperate with the local economy and local residents
- Sharing resources like tools, library, laundry facilities, vehicles etc.
- Child Friendly
- Diversity in population

**The Built Environment Includes:**
- Using sustainable materials and methods for building structures
- Passive Solar Design and Renewable Energy
- Mixed Use: Live/work environments
- Pedestrian friendly
- Reduce need for cars
- Efficient use of materials Ex. Clustered housing to conserve on pipes, wiring, access road materials etc.
- Non-Toxic bio-regionally appropriate materials

Global Ecovillage Network
https://ecovillage.org/
We understand that an ecovillage is defined as a rural or urban community that is
• consciously designed through locally owned, participatory processes
• in all 4 dimensions of sustainability: social, culture, ecology and economy
• to regenerate their social and natural environments.

We understand that ecovillages strive to become demonstration sites for sustainable living.
We understand that within the Global Ecovillage Network we are creating a pool of wisdom for sustainable living on a global scale.
We aim to integrate and realize the following principles:

**BEST SOCIAL PRACTICES**
• Nurture diversity and cohesion for thriving communities
• Build trust through transparency and accountability
• Transform conflict into win-win-win solutions
• Empower collaborative leadership and participatory governance
• Ensure equal and lifelong access to education for sustainability
• Promote health, healing and wellbeing for all

**BEST ECOLOGICAL PRACTICES**
• Grow seeds, food and soil through regenerative agriculture
• Clean and replenish sources and cycles of water
• Move towards 100% renewable energy and transport
• Innovate and spread green building technologies
• Work with waste as a valuable resource
• Increase biodiversity and restore ecosystems

**BEST ECONOMIC PRACTICES**
• Live a good life within the means of the planet
• Commit to responsible production, consumption and trade
• Cultivate social entrepreneurship for local regeneration
• Generate wealth through sharing and collaboration
• Move towards equitable stewardship of land and resources
• Use banking and exchange systems that strengthen communities

**BEST CULTURAL PRACTICES**
• Clarify vision and higher purpose
• Nurture mindfulness and self-reflection
• Enrich life with art and celebration
• Honour indigenous wisdom and welcome positive innovation
• Engage actively to protect communities and nature
• Reconnect to nature and embrace low-impact lifestyles

**BEST INTEGRAL DESIGN PRACTICES**
• Learn from nature and practice whole systems thinking
• Identify assets, needs and leverage points
• Adapt solutions to people, place and purpose
• Be aware of privilege and use it for the benefit of all
• Build alliances across all divides
• Engage all stakeholders in designs for the future
• Embrace prototyping and feedback loops
• Listen to the whisper of the future
New Urbanism is an urban design movement which promotes environmentally friendly habits by creating walkable neighborhoods containing a wide range of housing and job types.

New Urbanism is a planning and development approach based on the principles of how cities and towns had been built for the last several centuries: walkable blocks and streets, housing and shopping in close proximity, and accessible public spaces. In other words: New Urbanism focuses on human-scaled urban design. Its goals are to reduce dependence on the car, and to create livable and walkable, neighborhoods with a densely packed array of housing, jobs, and commercial sites.

Village Homes Davis California
http://www.villagehomesdavis.org/
https://gfycat.com/
accomplishedaridacornbarnacle

Video of Village Homes with Bill Mollison
https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=v_05oRQxsSQ
BOOKS

The Death and Life of Great American Cities
by Jane Jacobs

Sustainable Revolution: Permaculture in Ecovillages, Urban Farms and Communities Worldwide by Juliana Birnbaum and Louis Fox

Ecovillages Lessons for Sustainable Community

Permaculture: A Students Guide to the Theory and Practice of Ecovillage Design

Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities by Diana Leafe Christian

Finding Community: How to Join an Ecovillage or Intentional Community by Diane Leafe Christian