

COHOUSING from previous page

ties: urban, suburban and rural," McAulay said. "Baby boomers are looking for ways to do retirement and aging differently from their parents, and cohousing is one such avenue."

Village Hearth Cohousing formed in April 2015 to create an active aging in community for LGBTs, friends and allies, who are 55-plus in age, according to co-founders Roesch and McAulay (villagehearthcohousing.com).

"We're gathering interested folks to build 22 to 30 single-family, fully accessible homes on 15 beautifully wooded acres in north Durham just 18 minutes from downtown," McAulay said. "We are still accepting members."

Intown Neighborhood Place is interested in creating an adult (age 50-plus) micro community (30 homeowners) by building an affordable urban community. The group is accepting members now. For more information contact Marjorie McKenzie via the Fellowship for Intentional Community website at ic.org/directory/intown-neighborhood-place/

A rural senior cohousing community, Elderberry, located in Rougemont, just over the Durham County line in Caswell County had its first residents move into its one- and two-story duplexes in 2014. Six homes are complete; 10 are under construction; and two just started construction this fall. There are three homes for sale in the community (elderberry-cohousing.com).

Village Hearth Cohousing has hired McCamant and her husband, Charles "Chuck" Durrett, both architects, to guide the group as it develops: McCamant as the group's development consultant to help guide the group through the long development process typically involved in establishing a cohousing community; and Durrett, of McCamant and Durrett Architects for site planning and architectural services.

"Chuck designed our favorite senior cohousing community, Oakcreek Cohousing Community in Stillwater, Oklahoma," McAulay said. Durrett is scheduled to lead Village Hearth Cohousing in a site programming workshop the weekend of January 23-24, 2016.

McCamant will explain the development phases,

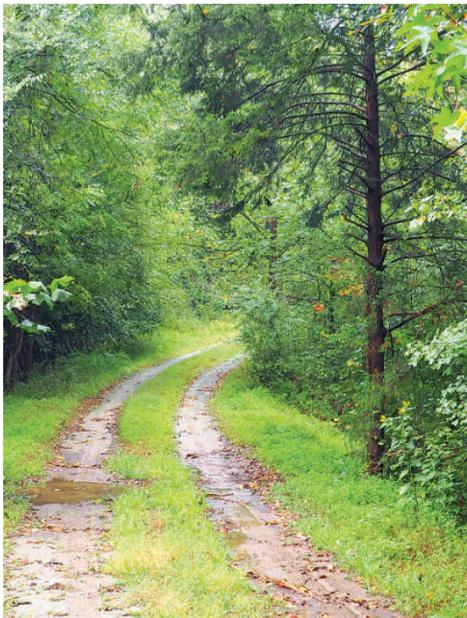
For more information about McCamant and Durrett, go to cohousing-solutions.com to see examples of the wide variety of cohousing communities they have worked on in their long careers. Find a list of established cohousing communities in the Triangle at villagehearthcohousing.com.

timeline, draft budget and home-pricing targets, along with best practices of other successful communities at Village Hearth Cohousing's Kick-off Workshop on Saturday, November 14 and Sunday, November 15.

McCamant studied cohousing in Denmark in the 1980s and, with Durrett, introduced the concept of cohousing to Americans with their book "Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves." They are credited in the Oxford English Dictionary with coining the word "cohousing" and have received numerous awards for their work, including the Vision 2020 Award of the Sierra Business Council in 2007 for the couple's "commitment to promoting a unique solution to one of the most vexing problems in the Sierra Nevada - the growing need for affordable, high quality housing."

Durrett has an architecture degree (1982) from the College of Architecture and Environmental Design of Cal Poly Pomona in San Luis Obispo, California. McCamant graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture at UC Berkeley and did graduate work at the Royal Academy of Art and Architecture in Copenhagen, Denmark.

In 2006, McCamant and California developer Jim Leach of Wonderland Hill Development Company founded CoHousing Partners (now CoHousing-Solutions) after a decade-long collaboration. CoHousing-Solutions provides development consulting services for cohousing neighborhoods and other collaborative groups; and is soon to train sustainable development entrepreneurs through the new, year-long "500 Communities Program."



The old farm "road less traveled" in north Durham provides access to the secluded area where homes will be clustered.

SMART from previous page

be unwilling to visit due to its lack of street appeal.

"Pick out the two or three strengths of the house and be sure your agent highlights these in your marketing," says Tyson, the real estate author. "Maybe you have wonderful natural light, or a beautifully wooded backyard. Think back to the factors that drew you to the house when you first saw it," Tyson says.

If your house is located close to a highly rated public school or is set in a walkable urban area, those are also strong selling points.

Consider hiring a photographer.

More than ever, buyers are previewing properties online. It's not unusual for a listing agent to post between four and 10 photos of a house on the Internet.

Your agent may be skillful at taking photos with a cell phone. But if your home shows poorly from the street, Tyson says you could still do better with a professional photographer.

Your listing agent may ask you to cover the photographer's fees. Yet Tyson says the money could be well spent if it brings in prospects who might otherwise fail to visit the place.

Request that your listing agent conduct one or more "broker's opens."

Most people are familiar with public open houses, where anyone can show up. But Tyson says a more effective sales tool is a "broker's open," limited to real estate agents from the surrounding area.

"These kinds of open houses are incredibly important. That's because the vast majority of serious buyers still work with agents. If agents come through the house and like it, they're more likely to show it to their clients," Tyson says.

Add appeal to your property with a new front door.

It's rare for listing agents to recommend major upgrades to the exterior of a home in order to sell it, but one upgrade that can prove worthwhile is a new front door. The cost: perhaps a few hundred dollars at most.

"The front door is the focal point of the house. If it's attractive, people will focus on this," Ellsworth says.

If you don't want to spend the time or money to replace your front door, consider other, less costly steps, such as repainting the door or adding new polished brass hardware.

Emphasize highly visible upgrades.

Not all sellers have time to make surface enhancements to their home, especially if they're making an urgent move. But those with sufficient time — and funds — generally more than recoup their expenses, Ellsworth says.

Flowers, new greenery and freshly pruned shrubs help entice buyers who might otherwise refuse to venture inside. Also, outlays for interior painting, carpet replacement or hardwood floor improvements are typically worth doing, as is replacement of outdated kitchen appliances.

"Very visible improvements could pay you back several times over," she says.

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