Who’s in the Room?

- Your name
- Where you’re from
- Current cohousing status
- What brought you to this session?
- What do you hope to learn today?
Our Journey
Today

- What are the challenges millennials face in the home-buying market?
- Facts and misassumptions
- What draws young adults to community-focused living?
- What fears may they have about joining a community?
- How do you reach young adults in your area?
- Survey share on millennial priorities
What trends/barriers do you feel makes recruiting millennials difficult?
“I just think we’re in an era of shifting priorities. Millennials are looking at their parents and grandparents and saying, You’re not happy. This model did not bring you happiness. I don’t want to do what you did.”

- Laura Seidman, teacher at University of San Francisco
Millennial Generation

Born early 1980’s - late 1990’s

Roughly 20-35 years old
Millennials Facts

- **U.S. millennials** = 66 million individuals and 24 million households
- See their home as a reflection of themselves more than financials
- The median age for **first-time home buyers** is 31 years old
- Millennials are **renting** for a median of six years before buying
- **Half of homebuyers** are under the age of 36
- 70% of Millennials like using an **agent** for the home search
- *By the way…it’s not the word we’d prefer for you to use in marketing…*

* info from Zillow housing survey
Benefits of Having Younger Folks

Thoughts from recent CRN survey...

- “New members challenge “old-timers” to give attention to things other than health or dying.”
- “Older residents unable to work as much so we hire more help.”
- “As the infrastructure starts to age, our core maintenance committee members are starting to age.”
More than half of all Millennial buyers (54%) purchase a home within a community that has shared amenities.
Asked what they believed were the biggest obstacles to getting a mortgage, millennial renters gave these answers, in order:

- **Insufficient credit score** or history
- Affording the **down payment** or closing costs
- **Insufficient income** for monthly payments
- Too much **existing debt** (student loan debt has surged 56% in the past decade, an average of $28,950 per borrower)

Keep these in mind, but remember cohousing does have it’s own unique challenges and opportunities…
Connect Us with Financial Advisors

If we’ve been renters all our lives…

we may not understand all the mortgage options fully.

Connect us with resources to better understand the process to a first-time homebuyer.
Millennial Values, Synched with Cohousing

- DIY ethos
- Sharing culture
- Familiar with communal living
- Takes pride in energy efficiency, conscious consumerism
- Emphasis on local
- Inherently optimistic
- Meal sharing – cooking with roommates
- Ridesharing – Lyft, Uber, Zipcar, bikeshare
- House sharing – AirBnB, couch surfing, WOOFing
- Goods trading – eBay, Craigslist
- Skills sharing – Simbi, Care2Share, SwapRight

Yet…
Increasing Isolation

“There are a handful of technologies that made it easier to isolate. Air conditioning encouraged us to stay inside instead of cooling off on our front porches, chatting with neighbors. Television allowed for nightly entertainment. The phone, of course, dramatically changed the speed and frequency with which we could communicate, but it also created a kind of physical stasis. And now, in addition to the internet, we have the shut-in economy born of it: Netflix, Amazon, etc.”

- Ringer article

A desire to counter this isolation has lead to the creation of...
Cohousing-esque trends on the rise

Starcity in San Francisco: “live a more intentional life.”

Our Values

We’ve set out to create a new constitution for living as a group. We resolve to form a more perfect union within our community and live by these values.
Cohousing-esque trends on the rise

**Coliving.org:** worldwide map of shared housing opportunities

**Common:** “Shared housing for those who live life in common.”

- Now thriving in New York, San Francisco, Washington, DC.

Community: Co-living, co-eating, co-playing, co-creating. This is what it means to live life in common.
Cohousing-esque trends on the rise

WeWork

Workspace, Community, & Services for a global network of creators

To create a world where people work to make a life, not just a living.

- Coworking– common areas, happy hour events, team culture
- Small biz/entrepreneurs cultivating a new office culture
- Tapping into “the power of community” to keep motivated
As young adults, we're setting new standards for living expectations - whether renting or buying. Our priorities may be misunderstood or typified, and we'd love your help setting the record straight.

39 respondents, age 22-35

- 13 from the South (Georgia & Florida)
- 15 from the Pacific NW (Washington & Oregon)
- 9 from California
- 2 from Mountain West (Montana)
Q: How likely is it that you will buy a house, condo or other residence in the next 5 years?

- Very likely: 43.6%
- Somewhat likely: 17.9%
- I already happily own a home/condo/other residence: 17.9%
- More likely, I'll be renting: 17.9%
- More likely, I'll be living with family members: 17.9%
- Undecided: 17.9%
- Other: 17.9%
Q: What examples of the sharing economy have you participated in within the last year?

- AirBNB, hom...: 26 (66.7%)
- Lyft, Uber, Z...: 34 (87.2%)
- Crowdsourcing...: 12 (30.8%)
- Coworking (...): 6 (15.4%)
- eBay, Craigslist: 30 (76.9%)
- Simbi, Care2...: 1 (2.6%)
- Other: 2 (5.1%)
Q: Rank the following lifestyle values/characteristics according to their importance in your decisions about where to live, with 1 as the highest and 9 as least important.

- #1 = Affordability
- #2 (discounting affordability) = Proximity to workplace/school
- #3 = Green space
- #4 = Neighbors and sense of community
- #5 = ethnic/cultural diversity
- #6 = ecological design
- #7 = age/family structure diversity
- #8 = nightlife & entertainment
- #9 = school quality
Resonating Advantages of Cohousing
Biggest Fears About Cohousing

Not meshing with neighbors (10)
Lack of privacy (9)
Time commitment/obligations (5)
Cost (2)
Poor management (2)

“My fears would be the social aspects of collaboration and confrontation.”

“It brings back memories of living in the dorms - if you didn't get along your neighbor you still had to share a bathroom/common area/dining area with them. Also, although not one individual would hold decision making power - it's human nature that there will always be one or more people within a group that take charge and try to overpower others.”
“I love the idea of co-housing, but wonder how the execution and dynamics of it work. I’m a bit of a private person and avoid drama. I have images of people arguing about what color I want to paint my home or when I let my chickens free range. It's enough of a mental image that we avoided buying a home in a home owners association.”
Countering Stresses

- Neighborhood collaboration before move-in builds bonds

- It’s not hustle and bustle and community all the time; you get to decide your participation…

- Stress privacy of your own home, no forced community interaction

- Outline different community roles available – not everyone’s on 10 committees, working parents/busy folks contribute other ways

- Don’t sugar coat costs, but explain cost savings through collaboration, common house amenities, etc.
Tips: Mobile-Friendly Matters

100% (seriously) of people age 18-29 own a cell phone and 92% own a smartphone*

Mobile friendly website, newsletters, accurate site address to be searchable via Google Maps, etc.

9 out of ten millennials turn to the internet and 8 in 10 use mobile devices or apps to help with the home-buying process

* Recent PEW survey
88% of those 18-29 use social media and 88% of those users are on Facebook

Q: Say you're researching your housing options when moving to a new area. Which platforms do you guess you'd use?

Craigslist – 72% of survey takers would home shop there
Zillow – 64%
Realtor.com – 28%
Current Challenges

Affordability
- About 60% of communities in a recent CRN survey have rental units (or rent out part of a unit), majority is 1 or 2 per community
- Increased rentals could be an easier gateway into later buy-in

Case Study:
"Cohousing community put up $30,000 to help three parties buy three smallest units."
Declining Car Ownership = Accessibility is Key

Between 2007 and 2011, the number of cars purchased by Millennials fell almost 30%.

High value placed on access to alternative transit: biking, busing, high speed rail.

Many used to the ease of Uber, ridesharing, carpooling.

Communities out in the boondocks may have less appeal to this age group. Carsharing and carpooling opportunities could increase attractiveness.
Opportunities

Small Unit Paired with Sharing Culture

Experiences count more than having lots of stuff or space to call their own to many of this age group.

Doesn’t mean privacy isn't important, just that sharing is a norm.

Times and tastes are changing – driving by a new values culture. Local and personable experiences win out (even the fast food chain monolith is slowly going under.)
Opportunities

Trust and Credibility

We want to know cohousing isn't a passing craze. Build the **credibility** of the movement, and send us links to do more research on our own.

Don’t promise what you can’t offer (i.e. lower cost units than possible)

You really have to have a **website** (Facebook is nice too, keep front of mind with Event invites, photos, updates). Work with varied communication styles.

We're working long hours, juggling kids, paying bills. We may have missed your newsletter invite to an event. **Be personal**, call & invite us.
QUESTIONS?

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