



Plans Revealed for Re-imagined, Senior-Focused Housing

For more than a decade, efforts have been made to provide community-oriented, affordable, senior-focused housing options in Yellow Springs. After several attempts, Home, Inc. has made considerable progress this past summer in both planning and financing a re-imagined 32-unit senior-focused housing community, The Cascades, on close to two acres of land between Herman and Marshall Streets.

Preliminary architectural designs, business plans, and fundraising milestones are now in place. Fundraising milestones include an agreement for donated land and permanent financing approvals with new Phase 1 banking partner, Wright-Patt Credit Union. So far, Home, Inc. has landed more than \$250,000 in grant funds to help make—and keep—rents affordable for village seniors, with responses to more applications pending.

Phase 1 of the project will provide eight rental units for seniors of low-to-moderate income. Based on community feedback, the rental portion of the project will be reserved for seniors, while up to 10 for-sale townhomes along Marshall Street, designed with accessibility and multi-generational living in mind, will be available more broadly. All units will be highly energy efficient for added affordability.

More than 90 local residents participated in surveys and listening sessions in June, which informed the project design alongside significant input over a number of years by way of focus groups, interviews, listening sessions, and public

outreach meetings. A community forum was then held on November 17 to share the resulting plan with neighbors, prospective residents, and the broader community.

Located across the street from the Friends Care Community nursing and rehab campus and directly adjacent to the Miami Township Fire Rescue office, the project site was selected by a group of passionate local senior activists, part of a Senior Housing Working Group. The project's benefits are meant to include accessibility features, amenities, supportive service partnerships, walkability, green space, safety, affordability, and a felt sense of community—the last of these in response to a finding by the Yellow Springs Senior Center that isolation is a significant problem for local seniors.

The project was designed in response to the growing affordability crisis in Yellow Springs. According to a recent Opportunity 360 dashboard report, more than half of renters and more than a quarter of homeowners are housing-cost-burdened in the Village. Seniors on fixed incomes are particularly vulnerable to escalating property values. Currently more than 275 households are on Home, Inc.'s list of people interested in affordable rentals.

According to Executive Director Emily Seibel, Home, Inc. staff are working to secure the remaining funds needed for Phase 1, with the goal of putting shovels in the ground as early as the fourth quarter of 2023, just in time for the organization's 25th anniversary.

A Place for Everyone: Glen Cottages and the Blessings of Diversity

Ask Denver, age four, his favorite part of his new house, and he'll say, "My toys." It's a valid answer. Some of his toys are, in fact, quite excellent.

Ask him again, and Denver will tell you about the Friends Care trail in the woods just behind his house, tailor-made for a four-year-old hiker. Denver and his mother, Chandra Kessler, frequently make the scenic trek.

For Denver, the house itself, a home in the Glen Cottages pocket neighborhood, doesn't enter into the equation.

When you're four, "home" as a concept, is easier to feel than to articulate. It means, among other things, security, consistency — things that, frankly, a kid of Denver's age shouldn't have to think about. It's just a place where you keep your toys.

But when the security and consistency that are so often taken for granted fail, when a house disappears or maybe never materializes in the first place, home takes on a far more conscious, far more tangible significance.



Photo credit Chandra Kessler

Chandra and son, Denver (left), one of the families making their home in the Glen Cottages Pocket Neighborhood.

Chandra, a native of Bethel Township and a former resident of several places in Greater Dayton, could not have moved to the Village without Glen Cottages. The same likely goes for many, if not most, Glen Cottages residents. Moving to the village would not only have been unlikely but nearly impossible.

When the Glen Cottages Pocket Neighborhood was conceived, it was with the goal of helping to alleviate the Yellow Springs housing crisis. By creating twelve new dwellings, a mixture of

houses and apartments, for sale and rent, Glen Cottages was meant, like all Home, Inc. developments, to serve a multitude of groups underserved by the prevailing housing market.



Knock randomly on any colorful front door in the pocket neighborhood, and you'll see first-hand that Glen Cottages has achieved this goal and then some. Several children, along with Denver, are a part of the neighborhood's inaugural class, and with them a proportionate number of mothers.

In fact, right next door to Chandra and son Denver live mother Shonda and daughter Dakota.

However, it's not all mothers and children. You'll find retirees, Village natives returned from long sojourns, and current residents. Married couples and single occupants, too, round out the Glen Cottages inaugural class.

In short, the broad demographics along economic, gender, age, familial, racial, and disability status of residents in Glen Cottages reflect the commitment to diversity envisioned with the neighborhood's conceptual design. Glen Cottages perfectly illustrates what magnificent things can occur on just over an acre.

Ten years from now, ask teenaged Denver his favorite part of his not-quite-new house. Maybe he'll wax philosophical about family or the importance of affordable, sustainable housing, detailing how home ownership is one of the few effective ways to build generational wealth.

Then again, Denver's answer might be just as short and sweet as it was the first time he was asked. If so, Glen Cottages will have done precisely what it was designed to do: provide the security and consistency that should characterize home.

Board Spotlight — Lela Klein

Labor activism runs in Lela Klein's blood. She remembers sitting on her mother, Julia Reichert's, shoulders at protests and rallies in Dayton. In her first year of college, Klein joined the student anti-sweatshop movement, but that wasn't enough for her. "I packed one suitcase and took a Greyhound bus to New York City" to intern for the garment workers' union there, she recalls.

This was also the first time she experienced the lack of affordable housing. "I could never find a stable place to live. I slept in Penn Station, couch surfed, cat sat. Unaffordable housing forced me to leave the work." She also saw her grandmother in Yellow Springs who, being on a fixed income, could not move out of an inaccessible third floor walk-up, despite having spent years on affordable housing waiting lists. "It was just a squeeze for her."

Klein moved back to Yellow Springs to attend Antioch. She only stayed a year, but she says her work in student governance stuck with her. "We had a lot of control." Eventually, with a JD from Harvard Law, she practiced labor law for major unions in the Midwest and D.C. She later returned to Dayton with her husband to help care for her mother.

After the police shooting of John Crawford at a nearby Walmart, Klein volunteered as legal counsel for the protestors. It's there she became close friends with African American activists challenging food apartheid in West Dayton. The group subsequently formed the



Board member Lela Klein

worker- and community-owned Gem City Market. "Four hundred people voted on the name of the store," Klein says. "When people said they needed to learn the skills to prepare the foods they now could access, the cooperative added a teach-in kitchen."

From the birth of the Gem City Market came Co-op Dayton, where Klein is the Co-Executive Director. The nonprofit supports co-op initiatives in the Dayton area, including a design maker space and a prenatal care program.

As a YSHI board member, Klein would like to bring to Home, Inc. the model of "limited equity cooperatives," which she explained is a hybrid of a community land trust and a cooperative housing unit. Klein believes that "Yellow Springs is at a crossroads and Home, Inc. has an important role to play to fulfill that vision of affordability for those who need it."



Alicia (left) and Abe (center) Boden and their four children recently purchased a home with a low-interest mortgage provided through a Home, Inc. partnership with USDA. Program Manager Chris Hall (right) is a certified loan packager — one of a handful in Ohio — and administers the program. Featuring little to no down payment and below-market interest rates, USDA mortgages are available to eligible homebuyers in Yellow Springs and Miami Township.

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Photo credit Alex Scott

It's Nice To Be Nice

In April, May, and July, Yellow Springs Home, Inc. held several family-oriented community appreciation gatherings. Home, Inc.'s "It's Nice To Be Nice" events, hosted by Tuck-N-Reds at the Millworks Plaza, offered relaxed Saturday afternoons filled with local musical guests, children's juice tastings, games, food trucks, sidewalk art, and spirited conversation. Local groups HUMAN, NAMI and The Feminist Health Fund partnered with us to provide a much-needed respite from the stresses and isolation of the last few years and an opportunity to just take a load off and talk with fellow locals. Home, Inc. looks forward to more community events like this in the future.



Photo credit Alex Scott



Photo credit Emily Seibel

Adult Homecoming

On September 24th 2022, Yellow Springs Home, Inc. hosted "Adult Homecoming: The Twilight Zone" at the Vernet Ecological Center at Glen Helen. DJ Basim Blunt presided over a wonderful evening of dancing, laughter, raffles, and photo ops with Twilight zone-themed props. Many attendees wore costumes from Twilight Zone episodes with others stepping out in classic formal attire. Refreshments were donated by Yellow Springs Brewery, The Winds Cafe, Wheat Penny Oven and Bar, Yellow Springs Baking Company, and Trader Joe's. Many local citizens volunteered as bartenders, planning committee members, and event workers. An "out of this world" night was had by all.



Photo credit Angie Hsu



Photo credit Alex Scott

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held on Thursday, August 18 at the Herndon Gallery at Antioch College. Open to all in the Yellow Springs community, the event featured door prizes, raffles and refreshments. Presentations were held on 2021 accomplishments, client spotlights, and future projects.



Photo credit Alex Scott



Home, Inc. Chris's Take on Tour de Gem

Home, Inc. Board Chair Christopher Bongorno and Program Manager Chris Hall teamed up to ride the Tour de Gem on Sunday, October 9. The Tour is a fundraising cycling event for local nonprofits to raise money and bring awareness to their important missions. This inaugural ride brought in over \$1000 and will be a regular part of our annual events moving forward. Email info@yshome.org to learn more about how to join our team for next year!



More Home Repair Grants Offered

Home repairs, financed by a \$200,000 grant from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), are all but completed at the Thistle Creek homes of the first two selected projects for these funds. Four other Village homeowners are awaiting their turn.

Matched by a \$12,000 grant from Village Council, the funding awarded to Home, Inc. earlier this year is designed to maintain the health, safety, energy efficiency, and accessibility needs of income-eligible homeowners in Yellow Springs. The first two grant recipients were both Home, Inc. owners and part of a pilot project to work out the kinks in administering this program, according to Home, Inc. program manager Chris Hall.

Beth Knepper moved into her Home, Inc. house in Thistle Creek 15 years ago and has loved living there ever since. Nevertheless, after a decade and a half, the home will benefit from window replacement, new siding installation, HVAC work, and ceiling repair. The other project underway includes accessibility upgrades as well.

Beth, a now-retired health unit coordinator at Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton, grew up on a farm in Iowa and first heard about Yellow

Springs during a semester she spent at Grailville, in Loveland, Ohio. “I kind of worked my way north over the years,” she says.

Eventually, she moved from Dayton to a small apartment on Limestone Street in Yellow Springs and, finally, to her own home in Thistle Creek. “That was a long process,” Beth recalls, “but certainly worth it.”

The process for successful applicants to get their homes repaired with USDA funds is a longer one as well, involving Home, Inc. staff time, along with that of outside inspectors, consultants, and contractors. It’s just begun for four more villagers, two Home, Inc. owners and two other successful applicants outside of the Home, Inc. homeownership program. The prospective work will cover a variety of grant-eligible needs: a new roof, insulation, accessible bathrooms, structural support, and deck repair, among others.

Whether any additional projects can be financed from this round of the grant is unclear, Chris says. “It doesn’t seem likely, but we have to wait and see how much, if any, money is left when we finish the six we have.”

While some later applicants will likely miss out this year, the good news is that Home, Inc. plans to apply for these USDA funds again next year, as part of a comprehensive approach to addressing housing affordability in Yellow Springs.



We are so grateful to receive the Carol M. Peterson grant. Receiving the grant enabled us to update some of our electrical wiring, which was hazardous and left our home darker than it should have been. We also got insulation for the upstairs kids' bedroom, which will be more cozy and bring down heating costs this winter! Chris Hall was a pleasure to work with — responsive and very helpful, and we are so grateful for the whole Home, Inc. team!

— Yellow Springs Resident

Photo credit Rachael Chrome

Sue Parker, recipient of the Tony Bent Affordable Housing Award for 2021. The 2022 recipients are Maureen Lynch and Richard Lapedes (see photo of Maureen and Emily Seibel on page 4).

Inclusive/Resilient YS Coalition Going Strong

Last year, the Inclusive and Resilient Yellow Springs Coalition conducted survey and community information gathering activities. In early 2022, the results of the Livable, Equitable, Age-Friendly YS survey were tabulated. The coalition then began listening sessions with Gatekeeper organizations representing diverse groups outside of Yellow Springs and listening sessions within the Village in September 2022.

Data, once analyzed, will inform local task forces around specific topics, resulting in citizen-led action plans to be shared with the community, local organizations, and the Village government. Plans will work toward the goal of a more equitable, inclusive, and livable Yellow Springs for all.

The task forces will cover AARP’s eight domains of livability: Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, Community Support and Health Services, with a ninth domain of Equity added by the coalition. In the meantime, the coalition has identified nine projects critical to supporting diverse communities in Yellow Springs by identifying and removing barriers to opportunity and success.

Current Coalition-Supported Activities:

1. Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Initiatives — Championed by the Coretta Scott King Center for Cultural and Intellectual Freedom at Antioch College, the Yellow Springs Schools, and the 365 Project, this initiative includes two different types of JEDI trainings offered through the Coretta Scott King Center to the community, alongside internal JEDI work for all coalition partners.

2. Housing Gaps: Build 32 Units of Affordable, Senior-Focused Housing — Championed by Yellow Springs Home, Inc., pre-development is under way for the project at Herman and Marshall Streets in Yellow Springs.

3. Health & Safety in Rental Housing — Championed by the Village of Yellow Springs and LEAF YS (Livable, Equitable, Age-Friendly Yellow Springs), specific tasks will include research and outreach to gather information about what other communities are doing, as well as connecting with code enforcement agencies and resources for landlords and tenants in the community.

4. YS Equity (Guaranteed Income Project) — Championed by the Yellow Springs Community Foundation, the YSCF’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion program has created a universal basic income Pilot program, and began taking applications for its first round of 15 participants on November 11.

5. Affirmative Marketing, Outreach, Engagement & Education — Championed by Yellow Springs Home, Inc. and the 365 Project, this initiative includes distribution of the 365 Project’s Affirmative Marketing brochure for African-American families who may be interested in moving to Yellow Springs as well as an Affirmative Marketing & Outreach workshop for Yellow Springs organizations.

6. Support to Unhoused in YS — Championed by LEAF YS, funding sources are being identified to allow an existing social worker who only works with families experiencing homelessness in Greene County to also assist individuals in Yellow Springs.

7. LEAF YS (Livable, Equitable, Age-Friendly YS) — Championed by LEAF, and backed by full coalition participation, this initiative gathers information through community conversations that continue to inform other coalition projects, including community-informed action plans.

8. Housing Stabilization: Home Repairs — Championed by Yellow Springs Home, Inc. See Page 6 for more details.

9. Collaboration/Elimination of Organization Silos — A full-coalition activity, this task encompasses all of the other coalition projects and includes a planned “Yellow Springs Day of Healing,” slated for 2023. This day is intended to help rebuild respectful and compassionate community dialogue through opportunities for community members to reconnect and re-engage with each other while learning about nonviolent and compassionate communication.

As the new year approaches, the coalition is moving existing projects forward through direct action on the above tasks, creating connections with partner and funder organizations, and engaging in community outreach.

Please visit yshome.org/Inclusive-resilient or search “Inclusive & Resilient Yellow Springs” on Facebook for updates and ways to get involved.

The Inclusive & Resilient Yellow Springs Coalition Steering Group consists of the following members and organizations:

Alexandra Scott
Yellow Springs Home, Inc. (Lead convener)

Shadia Alvarez
Antioch College,
Coretta Scott King Center

Antonia Dosik
Livable/Equitable/
Age-Friendly Yellow Springs, Yellow Springs Senior Center

Terri Holden
Yellow Springs Schools

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Giving Tuesday on
November 29.



Fiona, the newest Yellow Springs Home, Inc. resident, relaxes in her home on Dayton Street.

Resident Spotlight — Alex Oliver (& Fiona)

Alex Oliver was among the six original renters at Home, Inc.'s Forest Village Homes project, living in a unit reserved for a person receiving services from the Greene County Department of Developmental Disabilities. Seeking a larger apartment that would accommodate a roommate, he moved out of Yellow Springs in 2021. As it turned out, he decided that he wanted to return to the Village where he grew up. So, Alex reached out about returning in early 2022. Now “back” in his “new” apartment, he’s found someone to share it with him: a kitten named Fiona. He’s delighted with his new roommate and thrilled to be back in his hometown.

