## POLITECNICO DI TORINO FIRST SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE Master of Science in Architecture (Urban and Territorial Design) <u>Honors theses</u>

#### Cohousing in the voluntary city. A methodological proposal for classification: rationale, principles and approaches by Valeria Baglione

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The research presents new solutions to the issue of urban regeneration as phenomenology of urban practices (Amin, Thrift, 2002) and the Voluntary City (Beito D.T., Gordon P., Tabarrok A., 2002). Cities have spontaneous ability to learn, communicate, invent and provide to themselves (Jacobs, 1961). In recent years voluntary phenomena have emerged in the processes of urban change, voluntary model of organization of land use and coexistence, defined "contractual community"<sup>1</sup>.

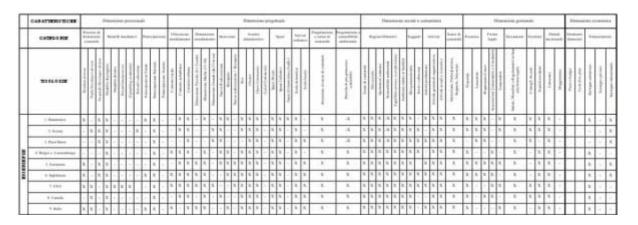
CARATTERISTICHE	CATEGORIE	TIPOLOGIE
Dimensione processuale	Processi di formazione comunità	Resident-driven / Profit Developer-driven / No-profit Developer-driven
	Modelli insedistivi	Madello di progetto / Modello di lotto / Streamlined process / Espanding community / Retroft cohouing
	Partecipazione	Pattecipazione Totale / Parziale / Assente
Dimensione progettuale	Ubications insediamento	Contesto rurale / Schurbano / Urbano
	Dimensione insediamento	Dimensiame Piccola (6-12 unità abitative) / Media (13-34) / Grande (da 35 in su)
	Intervento	Nuova Realizzazione / Recupero / Nuova realizzazione + Recupero
	Assetto plandmatrico	Row / Chater
		Open Community / Gated Community
	Spani privati e collettivi	Compresenze Spazi Priveti, Spazi Collettivi, Spazi di transizione (huffer)
	Servini collettivi	Scula domestica / Scula locula
	Progettezione e senso di commità	Aree commi / Visikilità / Vizinanza / Sicurezza / Azcessikilità / Condivisione / Spazi di transizione (htfler)
	Progettazione e sostenibilità ambientale	Pratiche di progettazione sostenibile
Dimensione sociale o comunitaria	Ragioni/Obiettivi	Senso di comunità / Mix sociale / Apertura al contesto / Sostenibilità ambientale / Equilibrio privery e condivisione / Ambiente edatto al bamb
	Soggetti	Mix generationals / Sensor cohearing
	Amyak	Attivžš preliminari / Attivžš gestimaži organimetive / Attivžš sociali e ricrestive
	Comportamenti sociali	hefinerus / Socializzazione/ Scambio / Anto / Appartenenza / Efficacia / Sostenibilità
	Senso di comunità	Intervainne / Pertscipezione / Supporto / Sirureana
Domensione gestionale	Possesso	Proprietă / Loceniume
	Forms legals	"Commité Proprieturie"/"Associazioni Commitarie" o condomini /"Cooperative"
	Documenti	Statuto / Manifesto / Regulamento
	Destinne	Gestione tramite Consigli (boorol) / Totalna residenti
	Metodi decisionali	Cansenso / Maggiaranna
Dimensione economica	Stromenti firanziari	Project budget / Cash flow plan
	Meccanismi di finanzismento	Sostagno Autonomo / Prirvto / Istituzionala

## Cohousing model Characteristics

Source: Personal elaboration

<sup>1</sup> Defined as "Private land-based communities able to self-regulate and provide themselves infrastructure and services" (Brunetta, Moroni, 2008)

The purpose of this research is the investigation of the cohousing model - as a recent example of "contractual community" - through the definition of its characteristics (procedural, planning, social, economic and management dimensions besides categories and types) and a classification proposal using an inductive method of research that starts from the international experience.



Comparative Array. Cohousing model Characteristics / Experiences

Source: Personal elaboration

The research is divided into two sections. The first analyzes the cohousing model theoretical aspects, starting from voluntary community models<sup>2</sup> in the past to the current proposals. The second section describes the international cohousing communities (Europe, U.S. and Canada), and recent Italian experiences (Milan, Turin, Bologna and Rome) collected in a comparative Array. This analysis revealed common characteristics<sup>3</sup> to all experiences, such as the guiding principles, the democratic management - "agreement method" - and environmental sustainability.

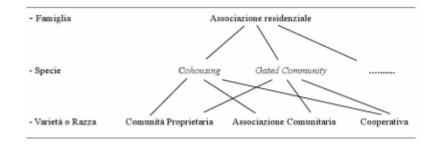
The guiding principles shared by all experiences have enabled the creation of complementary<sup>4</sup> and alternative<sup>5</sup> classification proposal: cohousing model is a "Species" of residential association different from "gated community" for guiding principles. Gated communities are based on principles of exclusivity and selection, exclusion and closure, with all the border implications. Cohousing, on the contrary, is based on the sense of community, openness to the social mix and context, environmental sustainability and a balance between privacy/sharing.

<sup>2</sup> Historical models are those proposed by Howard (Garden City) and Geddes

<sup>3</sup> The proprietary system is not a common characteristic to all experiences. Social and community dimension is the most important guiding principle also applied in different cultural contexts

<sup>4</sup> The first classification sees "contractual community" declined in "proprietary community", "community association" and "cooperative" (Brunetta, Moroni, 2008)

<sup>5</sup> A first alternative classification sees: "Class" = residential settlement, "Family" = "contractual community", "Species" = "community association" and "Variety" = cohousing (Chiodelli, 2009)



#### Residential Association (RA) classification proposal

Source: Personal elaboration

The advantages of the cohousing model are those of "contractual community": voluntary membership, citizen empowerment about their life-style, urban shape and services commensurate with real needs. Those are valid even for developers - to maximize profits and reduce project risks - and for institutions – to reduce the demand for resources and pressure on central services.

Cohousing model represents a virtuous experience because it's voluntary and represents a viable solution for sustainable urban development and cities regeneration. While maintaining a public role in safeguarding the rules of coexistence and the provision of basic services, the Cohousing could represent also a "mixed model" of regional planning. It gives greater prominence to voluntary self-organization, giving effect to the principle of "subsidiarity"<sup>6</sup> and basing itself on shared values that inspire the creation and the management of the community.

The prospect is a network of cohousing communities in which each one is unique and similar to another at the same time. It promotes an approach that goes beyond the past and looks to the future, realizing a society based on a greater sense of community without the oppression of superordinate authority that manages the dynamics and imposes cultural patterns and values. No ideology, then, but a future based on the value of the exchange of knowledge, improving reality and limiting damage to the environment and to our society. Perhaps the cohousing can really be the "germ of cities regeneration" (Jacobs, 1961).

<sup>6</sup> The constitutional amendment 3/2001 to the 118 Article reads: "The State, regions, metropolitan cities, provinces and municipalities shall promote the spontaneous initiatives of citizens, individual and associated, to carry out activities of general interest based on the principle of subsidiarity";

# Essential bibliographical references

Amin A, Thrift N (2002), *Cities: Re-imagining the Urban*, Polity, Cambridge Beito DT, Gordon P, Tabarrok A (2002), *The Voluntary City: choice, community and civil society*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor Brunetta G, Moroni S (2008b), *Libertà e istituzioni nella città volontaria*, Bruno Mondadori, Milano Chiodelli F (2009), *Abbasso il cohousing?*, XXX Conferenza Italiana di Scienze

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