



Garden Spot Village Cooperative Living House

433 South Kinzer Avenue, New Holland, PA | Affordable Housing

Company: SFCS Architects

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Community Website: <https://www.gardenspotvillage.org/residential-choices/cooperative-living>

Critical Details

Date of Completion: 2018

Project Size (Square Feet): 3,973

Owner(s): Garden Spot Village

Operator: Garden Spot Village

Architect: SFCS Architects

Interior Design Firm: SFCS

Builder / General Contractor: Musselman Homes, LLC (& Volunteers)

Photographer(s) & Designers for Photos & Renderings: Alise O'Brien, Garden Spot Village

Text for Consideration (500 words)

Several years ago, Garden Spot Communities began exploring opportunities to develop housing for low income persons in our region. In the course of that research, two things became clear: 1.) current government sponsored initiatives (including tax credit programs) are difficult to access, and 2.) based on projections by the Congressional Budget Office, it is doubtful that the federal or state governments will have the resources to keep up with the growing demand for safe, affordable housing for lower income older adults.

In response to this, Garden Spot Communities spearheaded the development of a grass-roots solution to the need for safe, high-quality housing for low income seniors in eastern Lancaster County, PA. The foundation of the model is that it cannot rely on government funding for either initial construction or on-going operations and must be financially self-sustaining. The outcome of that effort was a co-operative living house, where five biologically unrelated older adults live together and share a common residential structure. Each person (or couple) has a private suite, including a bedroom and a bathroom. In addition, the common areas of the dwelling include a shared kitchen, dining room, living room, den, laundry room, storage areas and garage, plus outdoor spaces.

In order to accomplish this effort in a manner which ensures that it is financially self-sustaining, it was critical that we keep the costs of construction as low as possible by joining together with other members of our community for a “house-raising” effort. To this end, Garden Spot Communities invited local businesses, churches and community organizations, to help build a Cooperative Living House. With agreements for collaboration and support from SFCS Architects, RGS Associates, CrossNet Ministries, as well as several local churches, businesses and civic organizations, Garden Spot Communities broke ground for the home in December 2016. Volunteers included Garden Spot Village residents and staff, local churches, businesses, construction companies, civic groups, colleges and the local high school.

This project is about a community supporting community. With the first house in the project now completed, the real part of this experiment in Grace begins. History has shown that social engineering, prescribing how people should live, often has had less than positive outcomes. What is unique about this house is that it addresses needs where conventional models for dwelling have failed. The reason for living cooperatively fills a gap for seniors living alone. Our hope is that it offers a richer and more rewarding life for each member of the house, and eventually this neighborhood green.

The end goal for the project goes beyond completing the next four houses that are planned for this site. Our desire is that other retirement communities and towns will adopt this or a similar model, to meet the needs of lower income seniors within their own communities.

Garden Spot Village Cooperative Living House

Garden Spot Village – Cooperative Living
House

433 South Kinzer Avenue

New Holland, PA 17557



Garden Spot Village Cooperative Living House

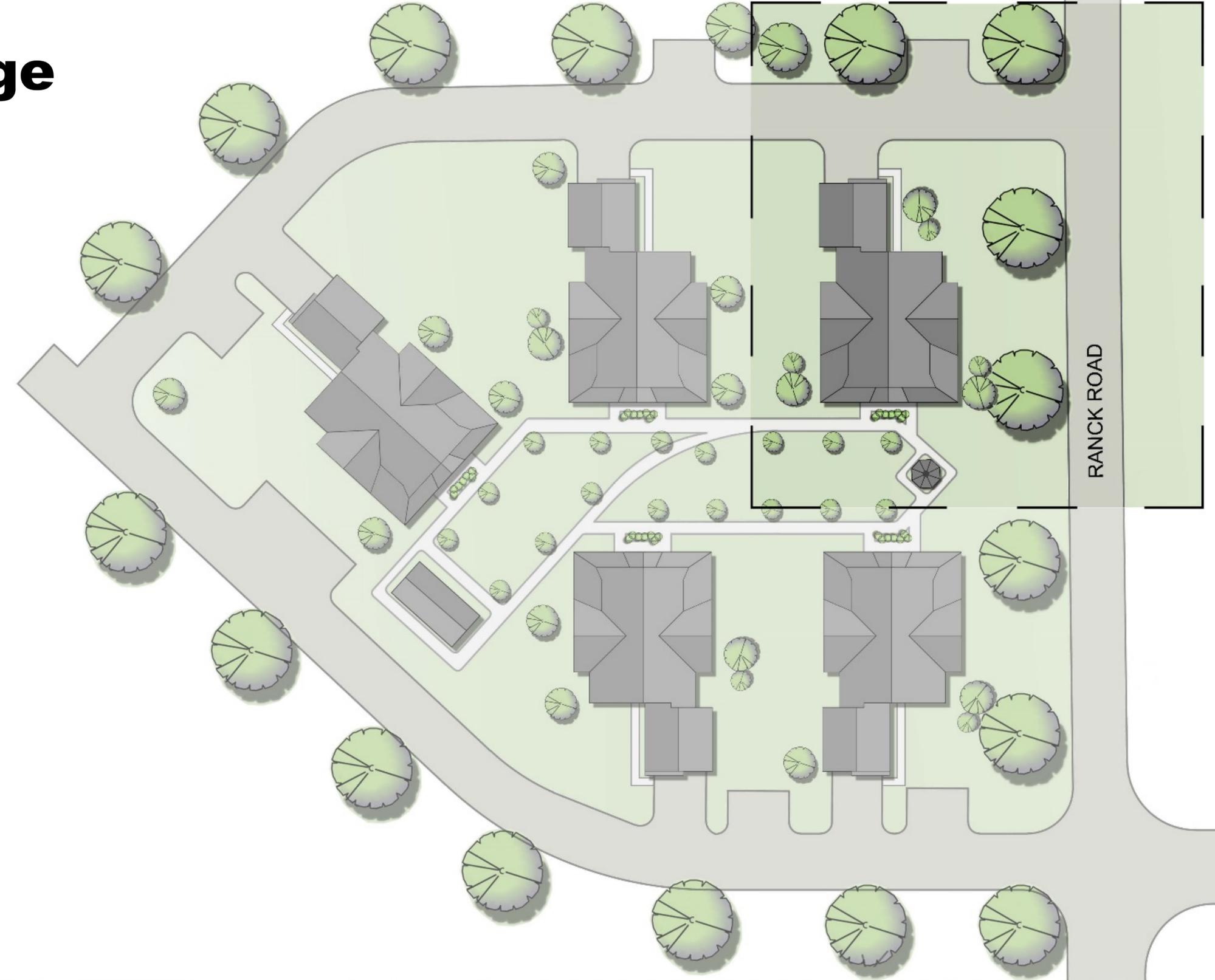
The Details

Date of Completion: March 2018

Project Size: 3,973 SF

Owner: Garden Spot Village

The open field directly across the street from the Garden Spot Village Campus provided an opportunity to develop a plan to build five cooperative living homes with a small community building. The homes will be arranged in a neighborhood green configuration with houses surrounding a central green. This submission focuses on the first house constructed in 2018.



Site Plan

New Approach to a Growing Problem

Several years ago, Garden Spot Communities began exploring opportunities to develop housing for low income persons in our region. They saw a growing issue where older adults were living in poverty and couldn't afford housing, insurance, medications, transportation and food.

This became an opportunity for Garden Spot Village to reach out to the greater New Holland community to embrace their mission and vision to solve the growing issue of older adults living in poverty without using government funding. Many groups and businesses joined the project, offering expertise, materials and volunteers.

"Volunteers had a huge part in the project. Involving the community at a grassroots and volunteer level brought a deep sense of ownership and partnership of our community coming alongside the mission and vision of the home."

- Lead Pastor, Weaverland Mennonite Church



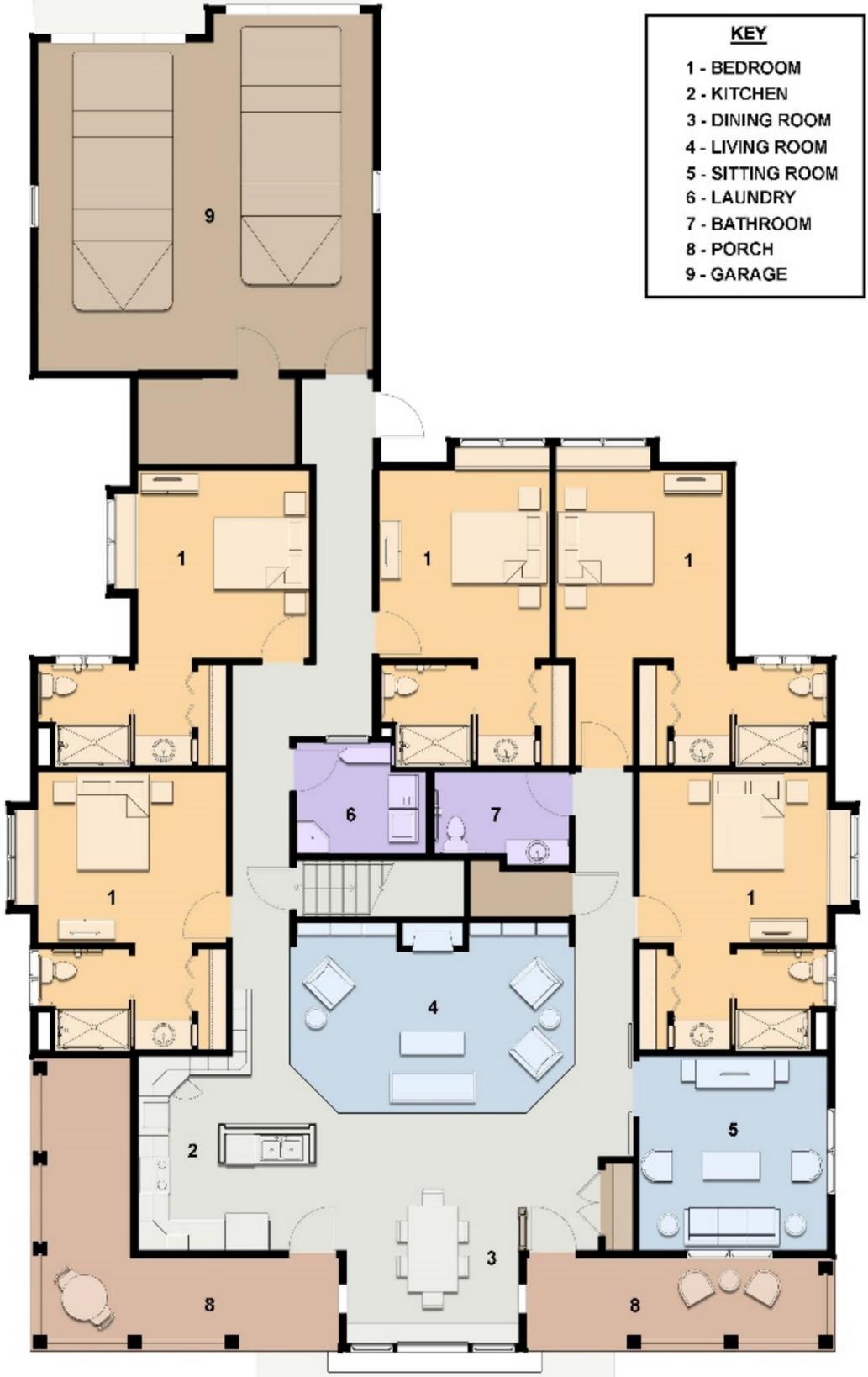
Cooperative Living House

Safe, Quality Residence

Additionally, there were specific features incorporated that were designed to increase the likelihood of resident interaction that would lead to deepening relationships.

Each person (or couple) has a private suite, including a bedroom and a bathroom.

In addition, the common areas of the dwelling include a shared kitchen, dining room, living room, den, laundry room, storage areas and garage, plus outdoor spaces.



1st Floor

Shared Community Space

The outcome of that effort is a co-operative living house, where five biologically unrelated older adults live together and share a common residential structure.

The cooperative living house does not require home ownership in a neighborhood setting. Housemates share common spaces, like the living room and kitchen and have an opportunity to feel like a family.

Garden Spot's facility services and campus teams help housemates with upkeep of the home and grounds.



Dining/Kitchen

Intentional Living

The focus of the project was placed on the design elements that would create a sense of place and promote the intimacy of a small neighborhood.

The open floor plan offers an opportunity to combat isolation and purposeful living.

The project goes beyond the sticks and bricks. The home allows housemates to experience relationships in a unique and meaningful way. It's about people and relationships.



Living

Living with Purpose

What is unique about this house is that it addresses needs where conventional models for dwelling have failed. The reason for living cooperatively fills a gap for seniors living alone. Our hope is that it offers a richer and more rewarding life for each member of the house, and eventually this neighborhood green.

Each resident has a private bedroom and bathroom. They're able to stay close to their friends, family, church and still have a safe place where they can live a full and meaningful life.

The window bench provides a visual connection and also allows additional storage.



Bedroom

Opportunities for Privacy

The residents have areas that allow for privacy when they need it. The parlor area allows residents to have a place to relax privately or with guests in a safe environment.



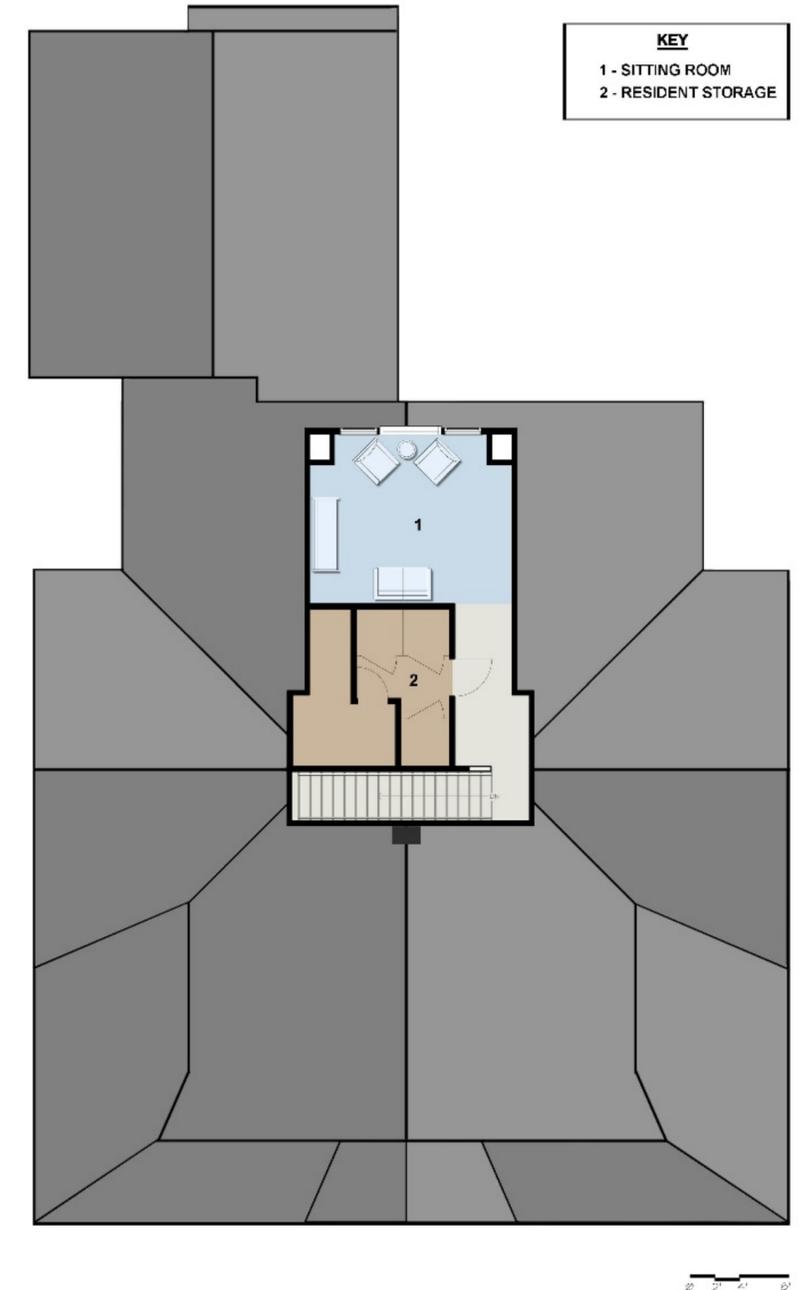
Parlor

Bonus Living

The second floor provides another opportunity for residents to watch tv or participate in game night. Natural light floods into the space with beautiful views to the outdoors.

The Cooperative Living house is about a community supporting community.

With the first house in the project now completed, the real part of this experiment in grace begins.



2nd Floor Sitting Room