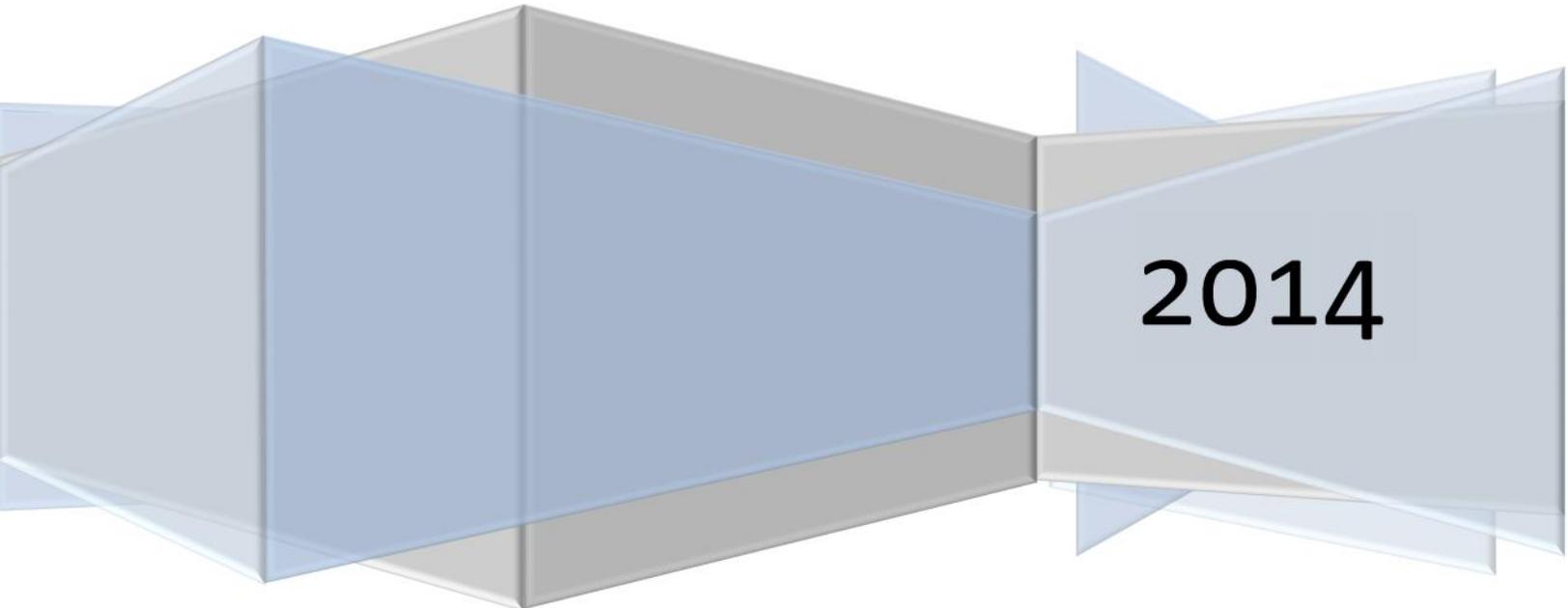


Grier Heights Community Improvement Organization

Board Retreat

Hosted by the City of Charlotte at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus



2014

Grier Heights Community Improvement Organization

2014 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, February 15, 2014, the board members of the Grier Heights Neighborhood Improvement Organization participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Regina Gill
- Gloria Green
- Barbara Simpson



The City of Charlotte values citizen leadership and its ability to make an impact in the communities, in which we all live, work, play and shop.

With this in mind, the board retreat process was initiated to help neighborhood based organizations develop strategic plans to improve quality of life in their communities.

Purpose

The purpose of the board retreat was to

- Generate meaningful conversations around improving quality of life in our community
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)
- Develop a vision and strategic priorities for our community

By participating in the retreat, our board earned a \$1,500 Neighborhood Matching Grant credit to help execute one of the projects we identified.

Process

Our board retreat was conducted by trained facilitators tasked to keep our conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to help capture the best of the past, the best of the present, and how we can add to our strengths to build a better future. The focus was:

- Developing a vision to guide our decision making and activities
- Developing strategic priorities that aligned with our vision
- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Introductions
- Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?: Arrow Activity
- Where We Want to Be: Vision Statement Exercise

- Seeing the Forest through the Trees: Developing Strategic Priorities
- Working Lunch – The Year Ahead
- Idea Development – Time for participants for develop an action plan for goal achievement.

Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?

We began our day with paired interviews, using the “Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?” activity. The activity was intended to help us reflect on:

- What we value
- What are the best things about our community and the people who live here
- What are our past successes
- Where are the potentials and possibilities

After interviewing our partners we shared our discussion with the group, finding commonalities in our conversations.

Where We Were: Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?	Where We Are: Why/why not would a person/business want to move into our community?	Where We Want to Be: If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong history - Homeownership - Entrepreneurship - Community stores and filling station in the community - Strong social community Churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CMPD partnership - Cash for Trash - New homes, creating new home ownership opportunities - Projects for children - Critical home repair - Business partnerships with - - Thompson Children’s Home, CMC Randolph, Crossroads and Self-Help - Website - Strong church community <p>Other successes: Decrease in crime Connecting with property owners and absentee landlords Remodel old school site Neighborhood garden brings people together Strong relationship with neighborhood school (Billingsville) Strong relations for city staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring back the village feeling - Beautification/Aesthetics - Community center, gathering place for kids - Empowering young people to do the right thing - Creating a sense of ownership - See seniors enjoy porch life

Our Vision

Our vision is the unifying statement for our community that will guide our decision making and reminds us of what we are trying to reach. It is based on our shared values and preferences for our community's future. It combines the best of what was, what is, and what could be.

OUR VISION:

Grier Heights Neighborhood Improvement Organization continuing to make history by empowering people to give back, to educate – live with a purpose.

to achieve our vision. Strategic priorities are initiatives that will help us move closer to our vision of our community. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.

We started out thinking big and then narrowed down our focus using the Affinity Mapping Process, detailed below:

- Grab some sticky notes from the table. Keeping the vision statement in mind, write down as many of the following as you can think of, one per sticky note:
 - Current action items getting you closer to our vision.
 - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.



Place the sticky notes on the wall. **Strategic Priorities**

- After committing to a shared vision, the board began to brainstorm on strategic priorities. This is where we began to define what is most important to us in order
- Organize the ideas by natural categories, once everyone agrees on the groups, give each one a name.

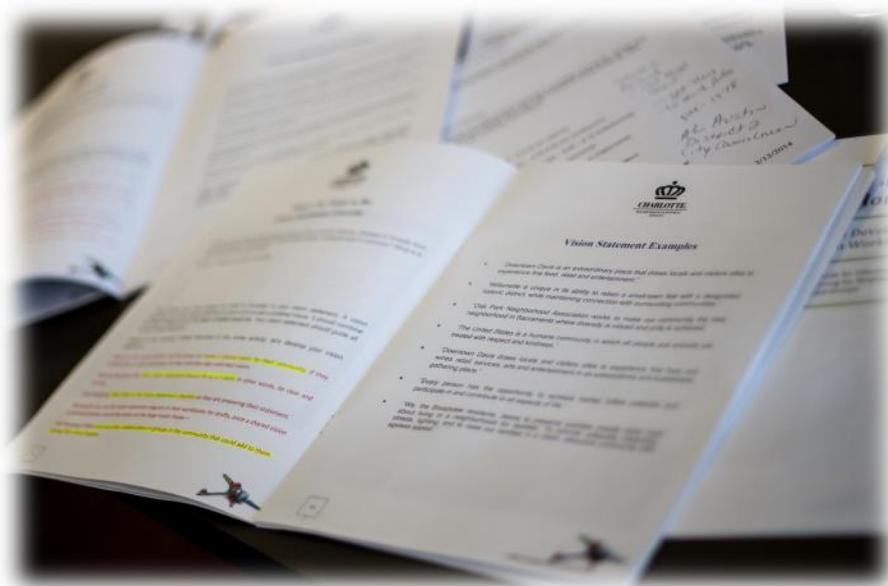
This activity led us to the following categories and action items being identified as important within our community:

Each participant was provided three (3) stickers to be used for voting. Stickers could be placed all on one or two items or shared amongst all of the ideas identified. The three categories receiving the most votes are the strategic priorities that are most important for us to begin working on to achieve our vision, these are:



Action Items for 2014-2015

The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities in 2014-2015 are:



2014 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Grier Heights Community Improvement Organization

OUR VISION:

Grier Heights Neighborhood Improvement Organization continuing to make history by empowering people to give back, to educate – live with a purpose.

TO HELP US REACH OUR VISION; WE WILL FOCUS ON THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1

Finances

2

Community Engagement

3

Beautification

IN 2014-2015, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

1

Community
Membership Drive

2

Town Hall Meeting

3

Garden Irrigation
System

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 Town Hall Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey residents prior to hosting the town hall. 	<p>Survey Monkey is an online survey tool www.surveymonkey.com Sample neighborhood survey http://www.santacruzneighbors.com/files/form_sampleneighborhoodsurvey.pdf</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate information about events and meetings in a variety of ways 	<p>Set up a conference call option for meetings www.freeconferencecall.com Nextdoor: Create a private social network for your neighborhood https://nextdoor.com/about_us/ Make signs to announce meetings with FastSigns® Reusable Yard Signs http://www.fastsigns.com/sg-yard-signs/Yard-Signs Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator to announce events www.mailchimp.com</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan a great meeting 	<p>Meetings tips for neighborhoods http://nacok.org/association-tools/effective-meetings/ http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective-Meeting_Agenda</p>
Project # 2 Community Membership Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get some ideas from professional fundraisers 	<p>Charlotte Association of Fundraising Professionals has resources and workshops about fundraising techniques http://www.afpcharlotte.org/</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentivize people who pay dues early or on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give a discount to those who pay early dues - Mention those who have already paid their dues on website/newsletter - Recognize people who have paid dues in a community meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a fundraising event in partnership with a restaurant 	<p>How to host a fundraising event with a restaurant http://www.squidoo.com/restaurant-fundraising</p>
Project #3 Garden Irrigation System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get some advice on types of irrigation 	<p>Keep Charlotte Beautiful has grants and volunteers for cleanups www.keepcharlottebeautiful.org How to build rain barrels for water collection Do-It-Yourself Rain Barrels http://www.gardensimply.com/how-to-guides/build-rain-barrel.php Types of irrigation for gardens http://www.caes.uga.edu/Publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=8045</p>

