



CHARLOTTE

2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



Medford Acres

Hosted by City of Charlotte Neighborhood & Business Services at UNC Charlotte Center City

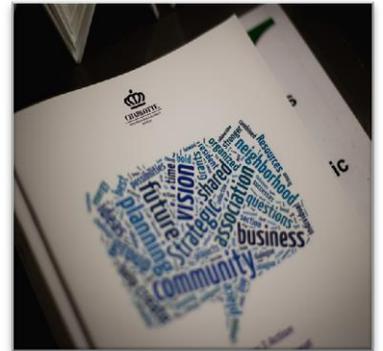
Medford Acres

2015 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday July 18th, 2015, the board members of the Medford Acres participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at UNC Charlotte Center City. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Leslie D Lemley
- James Brown
- John Lewpold
- Cecelia Ewing
- Kamala Hughes
- Imogene Lewpold
- Michael Pliaconis



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 would or wouldn't 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"> • Very quiet • More access to shopping and other amenities within walking distance • Vibrant area • More social neighborhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In process of getting organized • Development along edge is an issues in the neighborhood • Trends are positive, location is close to everything 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve aesthetics and image/appearance of area • Better development along corridors • More pedestrian friendly environment

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:

Medford Acres – Small Diverse Neighborhood, Charming,
Caring Community

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 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.
- 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:

- Environment / Developments

Better Retail Surrounding Corridors	Publix Grocery store	Land Use watcher	Encourage good housekeeping habits by starting “clean up our area days”
Make sure we are constantly monitoring activity in area	Be more informed of surrounding corridors	Protect trees – educate neighbors about leaves, care, etc.	Environmental improvement

- Community Image

Work on making entrance area more attractive	Streetscapes	Neighborhood entrance upgrades
Common area i.e. pocket park or dog park	Beautification 1) unique street signs and lighting. 2) Attractive entrance sign. 3) Central Ave. medians	Street topper / street signs

- Social / Community

Little Free Library	Welcome new neighbors	Community events	Method (procedure) to welcome new residents
Develop and sustain strong political relationships; maintain regular communication with politicians as well as planning dept.	Make more political contacts to stay informed “attempt” to influence	Work together to maintain contact and communication both on social media and in person	More face to face involvement of neighbors not just social media

- Transportation Improvements

Traffic abatement	Signage with plantings	More visible, decorative stop signs, street toppers	Pedestrian accessibility
More stop signs to control traffic in the neighborhood	Sidewalks	Roundabouts with signage and flowers	

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:

1
Transportation
Improvements

2
Community Image

3
Social / Community

[Action Items for 2015-2016](#) The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities are activities in 2015-2016 are:

Roundabout with
Flowers and
plantings

Street Signs /
Toppers

Little Free Library

2015 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Medford Acres

OUR VISION:

Small Diverse Neighborhood, Charming, Caring Community

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

1

Transportation
Improvements

2

Community Image

3

Social / Community

IN 2015-2016, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

Roundabout with
Flowers and
plantings

Street Signs /
Toppers

Little Free Library

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 Transportation Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundabout with Flowers and plantings/ Contact CDOT to discuss challenges/opportunities 	<p style="text-align: center;">Charlotte Department of Transportation Contact Chip Gallup 704-336-3922 or rgallup@charlottenc.gov</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research process to apply for a Neighborhood matching Grant 	<p style="text-align: center;">Neighborhood Matching Grants Contact Atalie Zimmerman for more information: azimmerman@charlottenc.gov 704-336-4594</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss potential ideas for beautification projects 	<p style="text-align: center;">Charlotte Community ToolBank is a great place to borrow tools for projects http://charlotte.toolbank.org/ Home Depot provides grants to communities http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/page/grants</p>
Project # 2 Community Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop/send out a survey for neighbors with options on projects to improve image 	<p style="text-align: center;">Online survey tool: www.surveymonkey.com Sample neighborhood survey: http://www.santacruzneighbors.com/files/form_sampleneighborhodsurvey.pdf</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage your neighborhood initiatives 	<p style="text-align: center;">Keep Charlotte Beautiful provides litter clean-up opportunities and grants http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/nbs/kcb/pages/home.aspx or 704.353.1235 Volunteer Appreciation Ideas http://blogs.volunteermatch.org/engagingvolunteers/2012/04/05/7-ways-to-appreciate-your-volunteers/</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage your elected official in your conversation 	<p style="text-align: center;">Invite your City Council representative - City Council Members: http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/CityCouncil/MeettheCouncil/Pages/home.aspx</p>
Project #3 Social / Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on a Little Free Library project – research other ideas and opportunities 	<p style="text-align: center;">The Foundation for the Carolinas provides Front Porch Grants to build a sense of community in neighborhoods http://www.fftcc.org/page.aspx?pid=663</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get tips to develop a neighborhood watch in your community 	<p style="text-align: center;">CMPD: Neighborhood Watch Program http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cmpd/safety/neighborhoodwatch/Pages/default.aspx Tips from the National Crime Prevention Council http://www.ncpc.org/topics/home-and-neighborhood-safety/neighborhood-watch</p>

Your community is located within Charlotte’s North East Service Area, your staff contacts for following up and community assistance are:

Charlenea Duncan, Community Engagement Specialist cduncan@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-2173	John Short, Community Engagement Lead jshort@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-3862
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