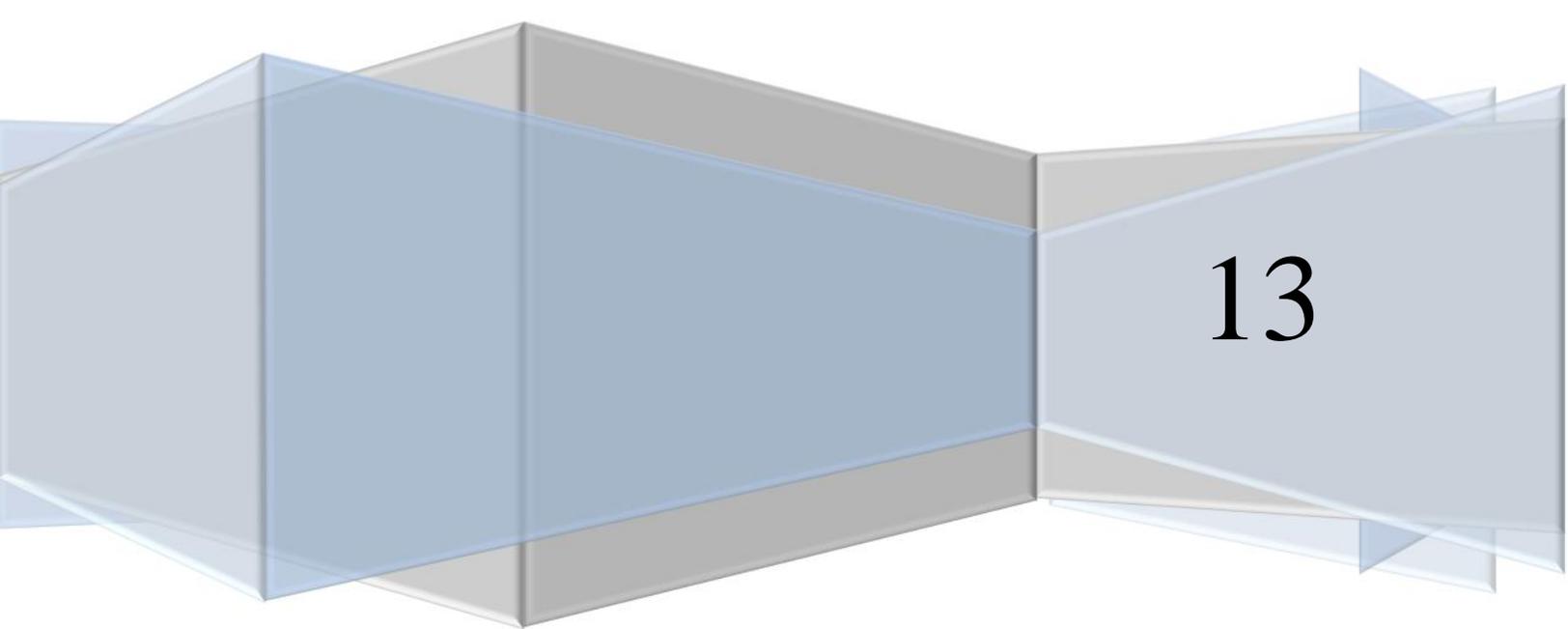


Belmeade Green Homeowners Association

Board Retreat

Hosted by the City of Charlotte at Foundation For The Carolinas



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Belmeade Green Homeowners Association

2013 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, July 20, 2013, the board members of the Belmeade Green Homeowners Association participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at Foundation For The Carolinas. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Liesha Seseika
- Dianne Maddock

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 \$3,000 Neighborhood Matching Grant credit to help execute one of the projects we identified.

Process

Our board retreat was conducted by an external facilitator, tasked to keep our conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to help us capture what was the best of the past, what is 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
- Where's the Energy – Energygram Exercise
- Project Planning Worksheet Review

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?
<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active HOA board - Lower speed limit/streets - Facebook Page - Connecting with homeowners - Great location (close to White water center, Uptown, Airport, I-485) <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sink holes in community - Appearance of neighborhood (poor) - Lack of resident involvement - Rental property appearances - Vacancies 	<p>Why</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location <p>Why Not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rental properties - Vacancies - Blight; poor appearance of homes; out of shape homes/shutters, lack of landscaping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field development & greenway connection to Whitewater center - Change by-laws; for owners to commit to keeping up their properties (name on the deed?) - Community events & youth programs

Based on this activity, our group identified shared values that would help us craft the vision for our community:

- Pride
- Diversity
- Involvement
- Engagement
- Safety
- Quiet/tranquil

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:

Our community will be a safe and family-oriented neighborhood where residents are motivated to live, work and play within a diverse environment. We value the commitment of our caring neighbors and their investment in our 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. We utilized 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.
 - Current realities keeping you from our vision.
 - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.
- Place the sticky notes on the chart paper.

- Organize the ideas by natural categories. Which ideas go together? Feel free to move any post-it note to another place. Move yours, move those of others, and feel free to do this. Do not be offended if someone moves yours to a place where you feel it does not belong, just move it where you believe it goes.
- Once everyone agrees on the groups, give each one a name.

This activity led us to the following categories:

Community Engagement

- Attend monthly meetings
- Communicate with residents
- Yard of the Year event
- Lack of community involvement

Partnerships

- Partner with local church
 - Do youth events/programs
- City departments
 - Code enforcement
 - NMG program
- Whitewater center
- Schools
 - Bus stop issues



The board then identified the three priorities that were most important for us to begin working on to achieve our vision:

1
Lack of Community
Involvement

2
Community Engagement

3
Community and City
collaboration

Potential Projects

The board then began to brainstorm on possible projects or activities that aligned with their strategic priorities:

Lack of Community Involvement

- Meet with other neighborhood associations
- Community brainstorming session with NBS
- Knock and Talk with Code Enforcement
- Partner with Shadybrook church on youth programs

Community Engagement

- Hold an event involving family pets
- Create an organized Halloween event (costume contest)
- Beautification Project (garden, clean ups, pet waste)
- Community yard sale with proceeds going to HOA

Community and City collaboration

- Create a shelter house/picnic area
- Create a sports/recreation area in vacant field
- Initiate contact with Whitewater center with help of NBS

Action Items for 2013-2015

After identifying potential projects, the board voted on one project to pursue for each strategic priority in 2013-2015:



OUR VISION:

Our community will be a safe and family-oriented neighborhood where residents are motivated to live, work and play within a diverse environment. We value the commitment of our caring neighbors and their investment in our community.

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

1
Lack of Community
Involvement

2
Community Engagement

3
Community and City
collaboration

IN 2012-2014, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

1
Greenway/trail to
Whitewater Center

2
Recreation area in
vacant field area

3
Beautification Project

