



**August 20, 2022**

**Belmont Community Association**

**Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services**

# Belmont Community Association

## 2022 Board Retreat

### Background

On Saturday, August 20, 2022, members of the **Belmont Community Association** participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat hosted by the City of Charlotte at Central Piedmont Community College. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

- Kendra M. Macon
- Iveska Patel

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 the quality of life in the neighborhood
- Outline a direction for the future of the neighborhood that represents the needs and desires of current and future residents
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)

By participating in the retreat, the board earned up to \$1,500 toward volunteer hours required for the Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects listed below.

To receive this credit, neighborhood organizations will submit a copy of the Developing Your Ideas worksheet with their NMG request. This credit will expire following the March 1, 2024, NMG application deadline.

### Process

The board retreat was conducted by trained facilitators tasked to keep conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to build on the organization's current strengths, identify opportunities, and create a short-term vision for the neighborhood. The focus was:

- Analyzing neighborhood trends and conditions
- Developing strategic priorities
- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Welcome & Overview
- Introductions
- Group Agreements
- SOAR Model (includes QoL review)
- Conducting a SOAR Analysis
- Lunch/Networking
- SMART Goals
- Developing Your Ideas
- Participant Survey
- Wrap-up/Next Steps

## SOAR Analysis

The primary retreat activity was a group discussion using the SOAR analysis framework. The activity was intended to help participants reflect on:

- Their values
- The best things about the community and the people who live there
- Past successes
- Potentials and possibilities

Our discussion helped us to find commonalities in our conversations.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Historically white mill community</li><li>• Current lifecycle has more black families moving into community</li><li>• Investor need to consider more affordable housing and more infrastructure for growth</li><li>• Community has retail stores and five (5) churches, breweries and co-working office space</li><li>• Elderly and assisted living reside in the community</li><li>• Greenway and light rail are accessible to residents</li><li>• Community garden and walkability to Uptown businesses is accessible to residents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connect with Plaza Midwood Community Association</li><li>• Need for grocery stores/farmer's market</li><li>• Investors need to meet with neighborhood residents before making decisions about what development is planned for neighborhood</li><li>• More engagement with neighbors and investors. Had to pivot due to COVID-19, but plan to engage more in-person for social &amp; emotional wellbeing of neighbors. Plan to follow health protocols to keep neighbors safe.</li><li>• Diversity of people (income level, education, etc.) moving into the area creates a generation gap, but we plan to bridge the gap with more social events to engage residents</li></ul>

After identifying the organization’s strengths and opportunities, participants began to brainstorm aspirations for their neighborhood. These aspirations will serve as short-term goals for the organization. This is where participants began to define priorities for their neighborhood.

Participants generated a list of aspirations and then narrowed that list down to three priorities. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.

Aspirations	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to amenities (grocery, post office, park, awareness of local community)</li> <li>• History of Belmont – need to change the narrative for residents to know the rich history.</li> <li>• The community is located in the heart of Charlotte surrounding neighborhoods</li> <li>• Collaboration of nearby communities such as NoDA, Plaza-Midwood, etc.</li> <li>• Boundary lines makes the community feel less attached to the nearby communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop District 1 Coalition with the support of District 1 representative Dante Anderson to create a cohesive narrative that demonstrates the uniqueness for each community and shows the strength of forming a Coalition.</li> <li>• Accurate data that represents Belmont Community which includes baseline data, history and future development.</li> <li>• Projected outcome is to create a neighborhood resource guide for residents to know the history of all the neighborhoods associated with the newly formed Coalition</li> </ul>

## Results

Three aspirations were agreed upon by the group. These aspirations will serve as the organization’s strategic priorities for the next twelve months. Participants then identified a desired result for each priority that they felt would be most impactful.

### **Aspiration 1:** Community Engagement

**Desired Result:** From 25% to 50% more residents engaged within 6 months or by February 2023

### **Aspiration 2:** Re-build the board and committees

**Desired Result:** Fill five (5) open committee chair seats on the board by December 2022

### **Aspiration 3:** Control narrative and create an identity for Belmont Community Association

**Desired Result:** Maintain and create identity which showcase the rich history and branding

The strategic priorities and activities are summarized on the following page.

## 2022 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

### Belmont Community Association

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

1

Community Engagement

2

Re-Build the Board/Committees

3

Control Narrative  
Create Presence

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR ASPIRATIONS:

Within six (6) months, increase community engagement from 25% to 50% by hosting various events that attracts all ages

By December 2022, recruit five (5) new board and committee members through personal invites, during in-person and virtual community events and social media

In 18 months, create community awareness for Belmont Association to be recognized as an attraction/destination through branding, advertisement, etc.



**Resources to Get Started-** You've rolled up your sleeves and established your vision. We have compiled resources that may assist your organization in achieving your goals on our Neighborhood Training Programs and Resources [website](#). We have identified resource categories that may be applicable to your projects below; please do not hesitate to explore more categories as you undertake your work! Links and contact information are provided for information only and are subject to change.

Project	Potential Resource
<p><b>Community Engagement:</b>            Within six (6) months, increase community engagement from 25% to 50% by hosting various events that attracts all ages  <b>Lead(s): Board and committee chairs</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Community Engagement Training on Demand</a> and <a href="#">Neighborhood Training &amp; Resources</a>. Websites, personal contacts, newsletter, local businesses advertising and promoting events by placing flyers in establishment</p>
<p><b>Board Development:</b>            By December 2022, recruit five (5) new board and committee members through personal invites, during in-person and virtual community events and social media  <b>Lead(s): Board and committee chairs</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Community Engagement Training on Demand</a> and <a href="#">Neighborhood Training &amp; Resources</a>. Personal contacts, websites, newsletter, recruit during in-person and virtual events</p>
<p><b>Branding:</b>            In 18 months, create community awareness for Belmont Association to be recognized as an attraction/destination through branding, advertisement, etc.  <b>Lead(s): Board and committee chairs</b></p>	<p>Build relationship with <a href="#">City Council District I Representative</a>; <a href="#">Research neighborhood history</a> - volunteers to capture history and webmaster to put history on website, newsletters; Connect with neighboring coalitions: <a href="#">ECCON</a> and <a href="#">CharlotteEast</a>.</p>

Your community is located within Charlotte's **Northeast** Service Area. Your staff contact for following up and community assistance is:

Brittany Baldwin, Service area Community Engagement Liaison	Charlenea Duncan, Service Area Community Engagement Manager
<a href="mailto:brittany.baldwin@charlottenc.gov">brittany.baldwin@charlottenc.gov</a> (704-353-0486)	<a href="mailto:charlenea.duncan@charlottenc.gov">charlenea.duncan@charlottenc.gov</a> (704-336-2173)



## DEVELOPING YOUR IDEAS

**Priority:** In 18 months, create community awareness for Belmont Association to be recognized as an attraction/destination through branding, advertisement, etc.

**1. What is the purpose of this project?**

To inform, educate, engage, connect, rebuild and collaborate with neighbors and the surrounding communities

**2. Are there similar projects within the community that could provide synergy, partnership potential or lessons learned?** There are similar projects with the surrounding community that can provide synergy and potential partnerships by creating a District 1 Coalition which includes Plaza-Midwood, North Davidson (NoDa), Villa Heights; Optimist Park, and other communities.

**3. What would be a successful outcome of completing this project? How will we measure success?** A successful outcome will be the creation of District 1 Coalition, which we will track with attendance and sharing our resources to develop a resource guide to share with residents and on the website.

**4. What are the benefits to the community? The community will benefit from the following**

- Educating others about Belmont history
- Diminishing of unwanted activity and behaviors
- Creating awareness for incoming and current residents and business
- Bridging generation gap
- Creating presence and identity for Belmont Community Association

**5. What are your strategies, first steps and what resources do we need to make it happen? (in-kind donations, grants, partnering organizations, volunteers, technical expertise)**

- Contact information for District 1 representative
- Making connections with the other neighborhood organization leaders
- Creating a charter and Memorandum of Understanding to form the District 1 Coalition
- Engagement with CMPD for Belmont Community
- Volunteers and technical expertise for community events, website, newsletters, resource guide, etc.

**Point Person/Action Team:** Kendra Macon, President Belmont Community Association and board members

**Timeframe or Proposed schedule:** 6 months