2016 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT

Biddleville-Smallwood Community Organization

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

Biddleville–Smallwood Community Organization

2016 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, July 16th, 2016, the board members of the Biddleville-Smallwood Community Organization participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at UNC Charlotte Center City. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Happy Mullen
- Justin Harlow
- Ashley Curtis
- Michael Doney

- Rico Mungo
- Linda Henderson
- Jennifer Hill
- Anna Kate Moeller

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 match credit toward a Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects we identified.

To receive this credit we'll submit our completed Vision to Action Idea Development Plan Workbook with our NMG request. This credit will expire following the September 1, 2017 NMG application deadline.

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?
Best: • Low crime rates • Community events • Caring homeowners • Welcoming Committee • Diversity/long term residents • Momentum within the organization Worst • Social media miscommunications • Fear of change • Excludes senior neighbors • Lingering Crime	Would: • Location, opportunity and affordability • Diversity • Commercial property potential • People • Historic aspect/architecture Wouldn't • Bad reputation from the past • Lack of property upkeep (need for beautification) • Lack of information on neighborhood brand • Lingering prostitution/crime • Low ranking schools • Lack of walkability to retail	• Cleaner community • "Dinner with strangers" • Park improvements • Traffic/walkability improvements • Gathering place to socialize • Maintain housing diversity • Increased resident involvement • Improved schools

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:**
>
> Biddleville-Smallwood: Neighbors growing a vibrant, cohesive community, rich in history and diversity.

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:

311	History & Preservation	Schools	Beautification	Community Events
• Code Enforcement • Animal control	• Historic designation • Guidelines for development	• Bruns school improvements	• 5 Points park makeover • Clean up event	• Social events • Community engagement • Internal and external relationships for events • Engage long term residents • Do a "City walk"
Youth programs	**Traffic improvement**	**Marketing**	**Retail development**	**911**
• Youth involvement	• Traffic/parking improvements • Less Mill road traffic • Additional stop signs/crosswalks • Solutions to parking on Rozzelles Ferry	• Develop and increase neighborhood brand recognition • Build website and promotional gear • Logo • Welcome letter/basket for new neighbors • Volunteer opportunities for neighbors	• Grocery store/retail • New business • More local entertainment venues	• Eliminate prostitute

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	2	3
Beautification	Marketing	Traffic improvement

Action Items for 2016-2017 The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities are activities in 2016-2017 are:

5 Points Park makeover	Branding & website	Create parking on Rozzelles Ferry/traffic reduction

Biddleville-Smallwood Community Organization

OUR VISION:

Biddleville-Smallwood: Neighbors growing a vibrant, cohesive community, rich in history and diversity.

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

1	2	3
Beautification	Marketing	Traffic improvements

IN 2016-2017, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:

5 Points Park makeover	Branding & website	Create parking on Rozzelles Ferry/traffic reduction

Please list any parking lot issues or items here:

- NMG peer mentor contacts the following project ideas: speed humps, park improvements and website/branding
  - Speed humps: Griers Grove: Felicia Thompson, 704.458.6154, frtlrb@yahoo.com
  - Park improvements: Pine Valley (Playground): Marshalle Peay, 704.390.1914, marshalle.peay@aol.com
  - Website/branding: Grove Park (Sign toppers): Emily Wu, 704.568.0463, werewushaw@bellsouth.net
- UNCC contact for possible student support in master planning for 5 Points Park improvements (see resources)
- KCB information in Adopt a City Street: (see resources)
- Charlotte School of Law contact information: Prof. Rocky Cabagnot, rcabagnot@charlottelaw.edu, 704.808.4991
- CDOT contact for road closure/block party: http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/Pages/Home.aspx

Resources to Get Started- You've rolled up your sleeves and established your vision. The following resources may assist your organization in achieving your goals. Links and contact information are provided for information only and are subject to change.

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 5 Point Park makeover	• Meet with Mecklenburg County Park and Rec to learn about their master plan and opportunities for collaboration	**Neighborhood Matching Grants (NMG):** Charlotte's NMG Program can provide grants to eligible neighborhood organizations for community improvement projects. To determine eligibility or to review program details please visit http://charlottenc.gov/nmg or call 704-336-3380. **Online survey tool:** www.surveymonkey.com **Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation:** http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Pages/Home.aspx, 980.314.1000 **How-to lessons at Lowe's:** http://www.lowes.com/cd_How+To+Library **Master Gardeners of Mecklenburg County:** http://www.mastergardenersmecklenburg.org/ **Home Depot Workshops:** http://workshops.homedepot.com/workshops/home?cm_mmc=SEM|THD|G|BT2|Resources&gclid=CJi3x9XeuMACFQ1p4AodDx0AmQ&gclsrc=ds **Charlotte Community ToolBank is a great place to borrow tools for projects:** http://charlotte.toolbank.org/ **Use NextDoor to discover neighbors who might be able to volunteer, donate materials, create a landscape design, and more.** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9V1tlhGjSMc; https://nextdoor.com/about_us/ **TreesCharlotte for education and tree planting:** http://treescharlotte.org/ Keep Charlotte Beautiful (KCB) volunteers have been helping to keep Charlotte clean & beautiful since 1974. Visit http://kcb.charmeck.org or call 704-353-1235 to learn how to Adopt a City Street (AACS), participate in a Great American Clean-Up event or to learn tips and borrow supplies for your next neighborhood clean-up. **UNC Charlotte Urban Institute:** https://ui.uncc.edu/
Project #2 Branding & website		**Neighborhood Matching Grants (NMG):** Charlotte's NMG Program can provide grants to eligible neighborhood organizations for community improvement projects. To determine eligibility or to review program details please visit http://charlottenc.gov/nmg or call 704-336-3380. **Use Nextdoor to find a local designer to help create a logo, or to hose a "vote for your favorite design" campaign with your neighborhood:** www.nextdoor.com **How to Brand Your Neighborhood:** http://www.communityprogress.net/tool-3--marketing-the-neighborhood-pages-278.php **Create a Facebook page for your neighborhood (it's free!):** www.facebook.com

		Digital Charlotte: http://digitalcharlotte.org/ **SouthWood Identifying our Community Grant Program:** http://www.southwoodcorp.com/ **4Imprint One by One Program provides grants for promotional items:** https://onebyone.4imprint.com/ **Examples:** MORA, http://moraclt.org/; Charlotte East, http://charlotteeast.com/ **Charlotte Center City Partners:** http://www.charlottecentercity.org/
Project #3 Create parking on Rozzelles Ferry/traffic reduction		**Neighborhood Matching Grants (NMG):** Charlotte's NMG Program can provide grants to eligible neighborhood organizations for community improvement projects. To determine eligibility or to review program details please visit http://charlottenc.gov/nmg or call 704-336-3380. **Charlotte Department of Transportation can help you assess pedestrian safety:** Contact Chip Gallup 704-336-3922 or rgallup@charlottenc.gov **Charlotte Department of Transportation for information on street closure procedures and approval:** http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/Pages/Home.aspx

Your community is located within Charlotte's Northwest Service Area. Your staff contacts for following up and community assistance are:

Cherie Grant, Community Engagement Specialist	Randy Harris, Community Engagement Lead
Cherie.Grant@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-3322	rharris@charlottenc.gov or 704-432-1579