



NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



February 23, 2021

Coulwood Community Council

Hosted online by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services

Coulwood Community Council

2021 Board Retreat

Background

On Tuesday February 23rd the board members of the Coulwood Community Council participated in the virtual Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte online. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

- Misty Johnson
- Mark Zagar
- Rhoxie Booth

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 a copy of the Developing Your Ideas worksheet with our NMG request. This credit will expire following the June 1, 2022 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
- Seeing the Forest through the Trees: Developing Strategic Priorities
- 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 group discussion 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

Our discussion helped us to find 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?
<p>Best</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very vivacious and celebratory neighborhood in the 1970's-90s • Neighbors spent long summer days at the swimming pool • In the past there was more connectivity between neighbors and the community was flourishing <p>Worst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteerism slowly began to decrease • The aging population began to have to find new leadership without a clear succession plan • Difficulty adjusting to new forms of communication 	<p>Would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood has large land lots, sturdy houses, and increasing property values • A great place to retreat after a long day/ far enough away from center city • Neighbors look out for one another • Neighbors have a great relationship with their CMPD coordinators <p>Would not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of retail, shops, and social activities • Surrounded by tank town/ industrial area • The restaurant industry doesn't flourish/ not much variety 	<p>Wishes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More neighborhood events • More awareness and engagement throughout the neighborhood • More community use of the pool and park areas • Updated amenities and common areas

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. This activity led us to the following priorities/action items being identified as important within our community:

- Improve the look and functionality of common areas
- Park enhancement / community events
- Develop a better communication strategy
- Tree canopy preservation
- More youth related engagement
- Create a dog park
- Updates to the pool / clubhouse

The three priorities receiving the most votes are the strategic priorities that are most important for us to begin working on to achieve our vision. Within these three categories, there were three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities.

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



2021 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Coulwood Community Council

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



IN 2021-2022, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:



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 Categories of Interest
Apply for a Neighborhood Matching Grant by March 1, 2021 to improve upon common areas to help build community and engage residents	Neighborhood Improvement
Use a portion of approved NMG funds to host (at least) one community event per month until the end of 2021	Community Engagement
Develop a quarterly newsletter with updated information beginning June 15, 2021. Put up yard signs and update communication bulletin boards one week prior to each event	Communication

Your community is located within Charlotte's Northwest. Your staff contact for following up and community assistance is:

Aisha Sabur, Northwest Community Engagement Liaison	Randy Harris, Northwest Community Engagement Manager
Aisha.abdus-sabur@charlottenc.gov	Randy.harris@charlottenc.gov