

Coulwood Hills Community

Board Retreat

Hosted by the City of Charlotte at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus



2014

Coulwood Hills Community

2014 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, February 15, 2014, the board members of the Coulwood Hills Community participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Gus Kretschmer
- Joanne Shoemake
- Marge Sweigart



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/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?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large lots • High home ownership • Lots of trees and natural terrain • Close community ties • Ideal neighborhood: safe, friendly • Lots of participation within the community 	<p>Why</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community space (parks and clubhouse) • K-8 access within walking distance • Diverse schools (charter and public) • Access to amenities • Open access to enter and exit neighborhood • Diverse neighborhood designs • Diverse people, middle America community • Community appearance <p>Why not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor access to public transit • Volunteer activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased home ownership • Improve pool and clubhouse • Community events (parade, memorial day, Christmas events, race, yard sale)

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:

Coulwood Hills Community is an oasis preserving the qualities that people value most, with easy access to any part of the city.

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:

- Pool/Clubhouse
- Community Engagement
- Branding

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:



Action Items for 2014-2015

The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities in 2014-2015 are:



2014 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Coulwood Hills Community

OUR VISION:

Coulwood Hills Community is an oasis preserving the qualities that people value most, with easy access to any part of the city.

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

1

Pool/Clubhouse

2

Community Engagement

3

Branding

IN 2014-2015, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:

1

Pool/Clubhouse
updates

2

More volunteers for
committees

3

Keep Fourth of July
Parade going

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 Pool/Clubhouse Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check out other communities' pool/clubhouses to get new ideas DIY websites for ideas 	<p>Get DIY Ideas on Pinterest www.pinterest.com DIY Inspired for videos and ideas http://www.diyinspired.com/</p>
Project #2 More volunteers for committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with existing volunteer groups to recruit additional volunteers 	<p>Hands On Charlotte matches volunteers with projects. www.handsoncharlotte.org Volunteer Match will post volunteer opportunities online. http://www.volunteermatch.org/ Habitat for Humanity Group Volunteers http://www.habitatcharlotte.org/getinvolved/volunteer/groups</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a workshop about volunteer recruitment 	<p>MAVA- Metrolina Area Volunteer Administrators offers workshops on volunteer recruitment http://mavanc.org/ Online Resources for neighborhood associations: http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association</p>
Project #3 Keep Fourth of July parade going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find resources to fund parade 	<p>Neighborhood Matching Grants can help fund a project in your neighborhood up to \$25,000 Contact Atalie Zimmerman at azimmerman@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-4594 http://www.charmeck.org/city/charlotte/nbs/communityengagement/nmg/Pages/default.aspx</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with City to ensure proper licenses/approvals are obtained for event 	<p>Charlotte Department of Transportation for information on street closure procedures and approval http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/Pages/Home.aspx Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department for sound permits http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/CMPD/Pages/default.aspx</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite council representative to the event 	<p>Contact City Council representative and invite he/she to the event http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/CityCouncil/MeettheCouncil/Pages/home.aspx</p>

