Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services at
Central Piedmont Community College

July 15, 2017
Background

On Saturday, July 15, 2017, the board members of the Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at CPCC. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Scott Gartlan
- Mark Landon
- Jessica Landon
- Jim Farley
- Lea Broche
- John Brien

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, 2018 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where We Were: Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?</th>
<th>Where We Are: Why would or wouldn’t a person/business want to move into our community?</th>
<th>Where We Want to Be: If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Affordable  
1988 neighborhood association started  
Not much communication  
Few families – not many children  
All white residents  
Surrounding area had substantial Asian community  
Park was in disrepair; first project was to clean up park  
Garden club had been prominent; had some leftover funds  
Great access to Central, Independence, I-77, I-85, downtown | Great proximity to “fun areas” and restaurants in NoDa and Plaza-Midwood  
A lot more children and families now in community  
Some difficulty in getting long-time residents to engage  
Undergoing gentrification – old homes being renovated  
Speeding and cut-through traffic is a problem  
Diversity is increasing: age, race, etc.  
Welcoming – great inclusion  
Board has improved communication and the block captain system  
Block captains welcome new residents and engage in neighborhood watch  
Improved schools – Garinger, Shamrock Gardens, Eastway | New, more interactive website  
Have the board more engaged in rezonings (new board position)  
More board diversity  
Traffic calming; not speed bumps  
Possible greenway near creek – connections across creek; walking bridge  
Keep garden space green; include amenities  
Be more engaged with surrounding neighbors – Aldersgate, Midwood neighborhoods, apartments |
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:**

*Country Club Heights is an established mid-century neighborhood on the eastside where neighbors are proud to live, that strives to celebrate its diverse culture by committing to quality schools, green space, walkability, and a sense of 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 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:

- **Traffic Calming**
  - Paint/art project at crosswalk on Shamrock Drive with art
  - Paint/art project at crosswalk on Anne in front of Shamrock Gardens Elementary
  - Get in-street lights for crosswalk that illuminate when someone crosses
  - Traffic calming for Hilliard, Shamrock, and Anne
  - Close Hilliard at Eastway
  - Walking bridge that crosses creek from Brixton or Harrow; possible greenway connection

- **Garden Projects**
  - Put a concrete pad in community garden
  - Trash cans in community garden
  - Dog waste station on Dunlavin near garden

- **Board Diversity & Improvement**
  - Actively increase board diversity through outreach
  - Have a new board position to organize parties or gatherings
  - Have association meetings at Shamrock Gardens Elementary
  - Improved code enforcement
  - Personally reach out to Latino neighbors and invite them to meeting
  - Add board position for zoning liaison – help preserve multiple income levels in neighborhood

- **Neighborhood Engagement**
  - More parties
  - Community potluck event – include neighboring apartments
  - Engage more with Country Club Apartments
  - Engage more with older residents
    - Use Aldersgate partnership to help
    - Storytelling sessions
    - History talks
    - Pot lucks
    - Reach out to history museum

- **Park Projects**
  - Repair park drinking fountains
  - Food trucks in the park
  - Organized park activities for kids
  - Monthly BBQs
  - Add streetlights around Shamrock Park
  - Lighting around scenic overlook

- **Branding & Communication**
  - Revamp website
  - Collect photos, stories, and history of neighborhood to add online
  - Make website more immersive and interactive

- **Infrastructure Improvements**
  - Street sign clean-up and repair
  - Beautification of connection at Dunlavin and apartments
  - Mini soccer field at the end of Hilliard
  - Repair bulletin board in park
  - Additional water fountains around neighborhood
  - Replace bridge over briar creek
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. 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.
2017 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Country Club Heights Neighborhood Association

OUR VISION:

Country Club Heights is an established mid-century neighborhood on the eastside where neighbors are proud to live, that strives to celebrate its diverse culture by committing to quality schools, green space, walkability, and a sense of community.

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

1. Branding & Communication
2. Traffic Calming
3. Improve Board Diversity

IN 2017-2018, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

Website improvement
Painting crosswalk at Anne & Cheryl
Reach out to international residents in community and have a neighborhood cultural festival
Please list any parking lot items or additional activities beyond the initial 3 here.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Potential Resource Categories of Interest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website improvement</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painting crosswalk at Anne &amp; Cheryl</td>
<td>Neighborhood Identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reach out to international residents in community and have a neighborhood cultural festival</td>
<td>Welcoming &amp; Engaging Neighborhoods</td>
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Your community is located within Charlotte’s Northeast Service Area. Your staff contacts for following up and community assistance are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charlenea Duncan, Northeast Community Engagement Liaison</th>
<th>John Short, Northeast Community Engagement Manager</th>
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<td><a href="mailto:csduncan@charlottenc.gov">csduncan@charlottenc.gov</a> or 704-336-2173</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jshort@charlottenc.gov">jshort@charlottenc.gov</a> or 704-336-3862</td>
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