

Eastwood Acres Community Association

Board Retreat

Hosted by the City of Charlotte at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus



2014

Eastwood Acres

2014 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, July 19th 2014, the board members of Eastwood Acres participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus. The following board and community members participated in the retreat:

- Diane Garris
- Sarah Simmons
- Carol Chapman
- Tamela Fennell
- Chris Poole
- Rhonda Poole
- Marc Edwards
- Frank Quattrochi
- Eric Smart



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?
<p>30 years Ago</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of community • No drugs • Hardworking families • Higher homeownership • Businesses in community • Walkable <p>10 years ago</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic disturbances • Isolated by physical features • Theft and drugs 	<p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gun Fire • Drugs/Gangs (starting in mid-90's) • No curb appeal <p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbors know each other • Slow improvements around the neighborhood-people are starting to care • Location • Tree canopy • Affordability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in community • Invest in homes • Increase homeownership • Sense of commitment • More beautification • More volunteers/partnerships to help with improvements • Cooperation with businesses • Promote local businesses and motivate them to move into the community • Involve renters • Outdoor bulletin boards • Communication plan • Extension of briar creek greenway • Investor friendly

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: Eastwood Acres in an affordable pocket community, abundantly rich in history, natural beauty, diversity, centrally located and accessible to all modes of transportation

Stakeholders that Add Value to Our Vision:

- Youth
- Garringer High School
- Neighborhood Businesses/restaurants
- One Seven Ministries
- Aldersgate
- Charlotte History Museum
- Private investors and multi-family investors
- Shamrock Apartments
- Surrounding Neighborhoods

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:

Partnerships

- Faith Communities
- Neighborhoods

Beautification/Community Identity

- Entrance Signs
- Historical Markers
- Fences

Transportation

- Bike Lane connecting our neighborhood to the new blue line extension and uptown

Homeownership

- Increase property values
- Nicer homes
- Increase homeownership

Safety

- Increase police presence
- Street Lights

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 are activities in 2014-2015 are:



2014 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Eastwood Acres

OUR VISION: OUR VISION: Eastwood Acres in an affordable pocket community, abundantly rich in history, natural beauty, diversity, centrally located and accessible to all modes of transportation

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

1

Safety

2

Community Involvement

3

Community Identity

IN 2014-2015, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

1

More street lights in our neighborhood with help from CDOT, and neighborhood database

2

Obtain contact information from 25% of homeowners, renters and investors. Roots: (knocking on doors, data centers, Service area staff, neighborhood

3

Install Neighborhood Entrance Signs. Roots: NMG, In Kind Donations, Youth, CDOT, local businesses, Eagle Scout project, service area staff

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
<p>Project #1 More street lights in our neighborhood with help from CDOT, and neighborhood database</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request a report from CMPD to evaluate areas of safety concern 	<p>Contact the City by calling 311 or visiting http://tinyurl.com/ceglDMF to request an upgrade for street lighting</p> <p>Request a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design study through CMPD to find out where trouble areas may be in your neighborhood crimepreventionunit@cmpd.org</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the Charlotte Department of Transportation 	<p>Charlotte Department of Transportation http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/Pages/Home.aspx</p>
<p>Project # 2 Obtain contact information from 25% of homeowners, renters and investors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to Service Area Team for help in reaching out to residents 	<p>Northeast Service Area Team Leaders:</p> <p>Allison Naftel, co-leader anafel@charlottenc.gov</p> <p>Curt White, co-leader jcwhite@charlottenc.gov</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop communication tools for reaching out to residents 	<p>Nextdoor: Create a private social network for your neighborhood: https://nextdoor.com/about_us/</p> <p>Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator: www.mailchimp.com</p>
<p>Project #3 Install Neighborhood Entrance Signs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for a Neighborhood Matching Grant to purchase signs or make improvements to existing signs 	<p>Neighborhood Matching Grants http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/nbs/communityengagement/nmg/Pages/default.aspx</p>

