



NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



August 7, 2021

Far East Neighborhoods Coalition - FENCO

Hosted online by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services

Far East Neighborhoods Coalition - FENCO

2021 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, August 7, 2021, members of the Far East Neighborhoods Coalition (FENCO) 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:

- Allen Baker
- Patricia Battle
- Patricia Campbell
- Mark Jerrell
- Vernetta Mitchell

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 March 1, 2023 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
- SWOT Analysis
- Seeing the Forest through the Trees: Developing Strategic Priorities
- Idea Development – Time for participants for develop an action plan for goal achievement

SWOT Analysis

We began our day with group discussion using the SWOT Analysis framework. 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.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity (people & geography) • Green space • Accessibility • (amazing) outdoor recreation facilities • Affordability • Friendliness/true Charlotte culture/people • Tree canopy, clean air • Unique culture • Residents “know the geography”/familiar with area | <p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor communication system/60+ neighborhoods • Large lot home “outside” of neighborhood • Disconnectedness • Mobility challenges – among all transportation modes • No plan for the area • Organization’s inability to engage residents • Inconsistent attendance by organization members • Area schools becoming over crowded • Lack of activities for young people/lack of access to activities that youth might like to attend • Inability or difficulty for seniors to age in place |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization’s opportunity to “design” impact what FENCO can/will become • Building cohesive community • Better marketing of the area • Economic development (consider talent and major investments in the area) • More parks • (appropriate) handling of wildlife • To sustain diversity of the area • Development of the physical culture of the area • Building relationships with developers/opportunity to sit at table with them • Engagement of local government & community groups | <p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled development • Destruction of tree canopy • Losing momentum • Loss of land availability • Lack of meaningful jobs in the area • Entertainment dollars go to outside communities • Not enough schools in the area • Attainable (affordable/) housing • Not enough schools of excellence (A or A+ schools) • Lack of proactive activities for young people • Little available to motivate young people • Lack of mobility • Inability to “age in place” in the area • Not developing a livable community for seniors |

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:

- Affordability
- Lack of Area Plan
- Economic Development/investment
- Uncontrolled development

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

Far East Neighborhoods Coalition - FENCO

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 |
|---|---|
| Define affordability for FENCO area by December, 2021 | Neighborhood Improvement |
| Contact Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Department to discuss Area Plan process by October 31, 2021 | Neighborhood Improvement/Community Engagement City of Charlotte Planning |
| Request & review existing area plans relevant to FENCO geography by January 31, 2022 | Neighborhood Improvement/Community Engagement City of Charlotte Planning |

Your community is located within Charlotte's Southeast Service Area Your staff contact for following up and community assistance is:

| | |
|--|---|
| Faith Estrada, Southeast Service area Community Engagement Liaison | Kim Barnes, Southeast Service Area Community Engagement Manager |
| Faith.Estrada@Charlottenc.gov and phone number (704) 353-1879 | Kim.Barnes@charlottenc.gov and phone number (704) 336-8408 |

