



# **NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT**



**July 31, 2021**

**Farmwood North Owners Association, Inc.**

**Hosted online by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services**

# Farmwood North Owners Association, Inc.

## 2021 Board Retreat

### Background

On Saturday, July 31, 2021, members of the Farmwood North Owners Association, Inc. 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:

- Angela Burns (at-large member)
- John Troutman (secretary)
- Jeffrey Larson (president)
- Bill Carson (vice president)
- Gail Keene (treasurer)

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

### 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 to 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;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiet, low crime, trees</li> <li>• Full HOA board</li> <li>• Rural feel, really close to University city &amp; Concord, but still a relatively quiet neighborhood</li> <li>• Larger lots, space in between houses</li> <li>• Don't have an overbearing HOA</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No sidewalks, lack of street lighting</li> <li>• No community area or amenities</li> <li>• Lack of community engagement and participation in HOA</li> <li>• Complaints; lack of care for property. Street lighting is up to the individual homeowner. Some have streetlights and some don't, so it's hard to be uniform. With no dominant HOA, it's hard to gain consensus.</li> <li>• Vehicles parked in the street</li> <li>• Tons of new developments being built around them, burdening the low-density infrastructure</li> <li>• Many of the items discussed and the potential loss and charm and the "look and feel" of Farmwood North</li> <li>• Extremely car dependent and increase in traffic</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street lighting, working with Duke Energy to get plan designed for better street lighting in neighborhood.</li> <li>• Opportunities to grow interest and involvement by increased communications and HOA board member involvement (forward facing) with initiatives</li> <li>• Increased neighborhood events and meetings</li> <li>• Front entrance renovation within the next 6 months</li> <li>• Welcoming baskets (or something) for new residents</li> <li>• Neighborhood directory</li> <li>• Website for neighborhood</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HOA raises \$4,000 year (can't afford to do what they want to do)</li> <li>• Decorative street lighting is current out of reach without financial assistance</li> <li>• Upcoming UDO and zoning changes could threaten their neighborhood since increased density would affect entrance/exit</li> <li>• Tearing down 40 acres of land to build approximately 200 homes</li> </ul>

## 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:

1. Front entrance beautification/renovation
2. Develop a communication plan to improve community engagement; website development for neighborhood
3. Street signs (replace street signs that are not decorative to be consistent)

Additional Priorities Discussed:

- Encourage property care, i.e. yard of the month, or something similar.
- Work with City of Charlotte/Duke Energy to get decorative street lighting

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

### Farmwood North Owners Association, Inc.

**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
Front entrance beautification/renovation to debut in Spring 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Front entrance renovation</li> <li>- Hire a landscape architect to review front entrance</li> <li>- Renovation will be complete in 2022</li> </ul>	Beautification
Develop a communication plan for community engagement by December 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Considered developing a communication plan to improve community engagement by the end of September 2021, in order to execute by October 2021.</li> </ul>	Communication <a href="#">Training on Demand - Communication Strategies for Neighborhood Organizations</a>

Replace street signs that are not decorative to be consistent by the end of 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Street sign update</li><li>- Find a vendor</li><li>- Look at pricing</li><li>- Count signs</li><li>- Put together a budget</li></ul>	Neighborhood Improvement
---	--------------------------

Your community is located within Charlotte’s Northeast Service Area. Your staff contact for following up and community assistance is:

Charlenea Duncan, NE Community Engagement Manager
704-622-1786 or <a href="mailto:csduncan@charlottenc.gov">csduncan@charlottenc.gov</a>