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NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



July 14, 2018

Laurelwood Neighborhood Association

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services at

Central Piedmont Community College

Laurelwood Neighborhood Association

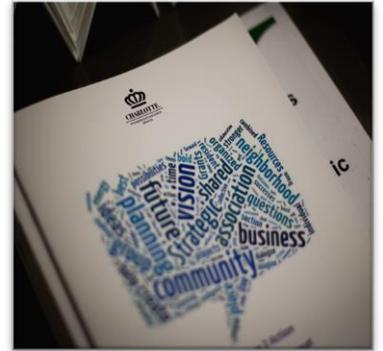
2018 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, July 14, 2018, the board members of the Laurelwood Neighborhood Association participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at Central Piedmont Community College. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

Drew Thrasher
Heather Corbin
Kevin Butler

Jackie Shaw
Naomi Jameson



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
- 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 would or wouldn't 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"> • Aspen Street Party (no longer have this event) • Neighborhood “trail/goat path” between neighborhood and commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally establish Laurelwood identity • NEW* Ladies of Laurelwood (monthly meetings/socials) • Safety concerns – either actual increase in car break-ins or the perception that these are increasing. • Lack of property maintenance of houses/lawns in neighborhood – either due to aging and ability to maintain or rentals. • Increase contact + communication with Sharon Towers • Laurelwood Block Party in October 2017. • Bench at stop sign for school kids/Sharon Towers paid for it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Parties (Easter, Halloween, etc.) • Grow the Ladies of Laurelwood group and segway into more community parties/events. • Establish the structure of a formal neighborhood association for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decision-making ○ Communication ○ Self-sustained ○ # of meetings/year • Improve appearance – signage + identity, including physical street toppers + entrance signage.

Where We Are: Why would or wouldn't a person/business want to move into our community?

- Saussy Burbank re-zoning participation. Neighborhood input and cap height of buildings. \$4000 to neighborhood improvements/signage to identify neighborhood.
- City to recognize Laurelwood on maps
- NextDoor updated to include Laurelwood
- Fairmeadows and Laurelwood share a swim club but are separate neighborhoods.
- Fairmeadows established signage to delineate neighborhood.
- One of the first official members of SPAN (Southpark Association of Neighborhoods), key member, joined in August 2017.
- Have email address for 55 of the 85 total properties in the neighborhood.



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:

The Laurelwood neighborhood will maintain its identity as a safe, tranquil, unpretentious neighborhood by enhancing its sense of community and preserving its natural environment through communication and inclusiveness.

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:

- **Physical Improvements**

- Entrance sign to neighborhood (including a landscaped area)
- Tree planting campaign (to maintain tree lined streets)
- Laurelwood street signs
- Well-manicured homes
- No duplexes
- Historical marker
- Neighbor's investment + property values

- **Safety**

- Speedbumps
- Crime Watch Program
- No soliciting
- Support book
- Slow (down) driving
- Sidewalks
- Street (?) parking to decrease cut through



- **Neighborhood Association**

- Neighborhood fundraising goals
- Fairmeadows "treaty" / statement on peaceful co-existence
- Fix MLS
- Temporary signs to announce meetings
- Neighborhood directory
- Stop commercialization of neighborhood
- Linkage to GIS data
- Board Retreat – Round 2
- Historic District Designation
- History of Laurelwood
- Go to Sharon Tower rezoning meeting
- Quarterly meetings w/Sharon Tower + Hotel Owners
- Pool support – Board seat (specifically dedicated to Laurelwood NA)



- **Morale + Engagement Idea/action item a**

- New Neighbor package
- Neighborhood awards
- Neighborhood party
- Scheduled youth activities
- More members in Ladies of Laurelwood
- Encourage home ownership
- Holiday organized events
- Yard of the month

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.

2018 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Laurelwood Neighborhood Association

OUR VISION:

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



IN 2018-2019, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:



Please list any parking lot items or additional activities beyond the initial 3 here.

1. Street sign poles – upgrades to black base

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
Design and install neighborhood sign toppers by August 2019	Beautification
Formally establish the neighborhood association by the end of 2018	Board Development
Work with CDOT to install speed bumps on Hazelton & Fairheath by August 2019	Public Safety

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

Kim Barnes, Southeast Community Engagement Manager

kbarnes@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-8408

