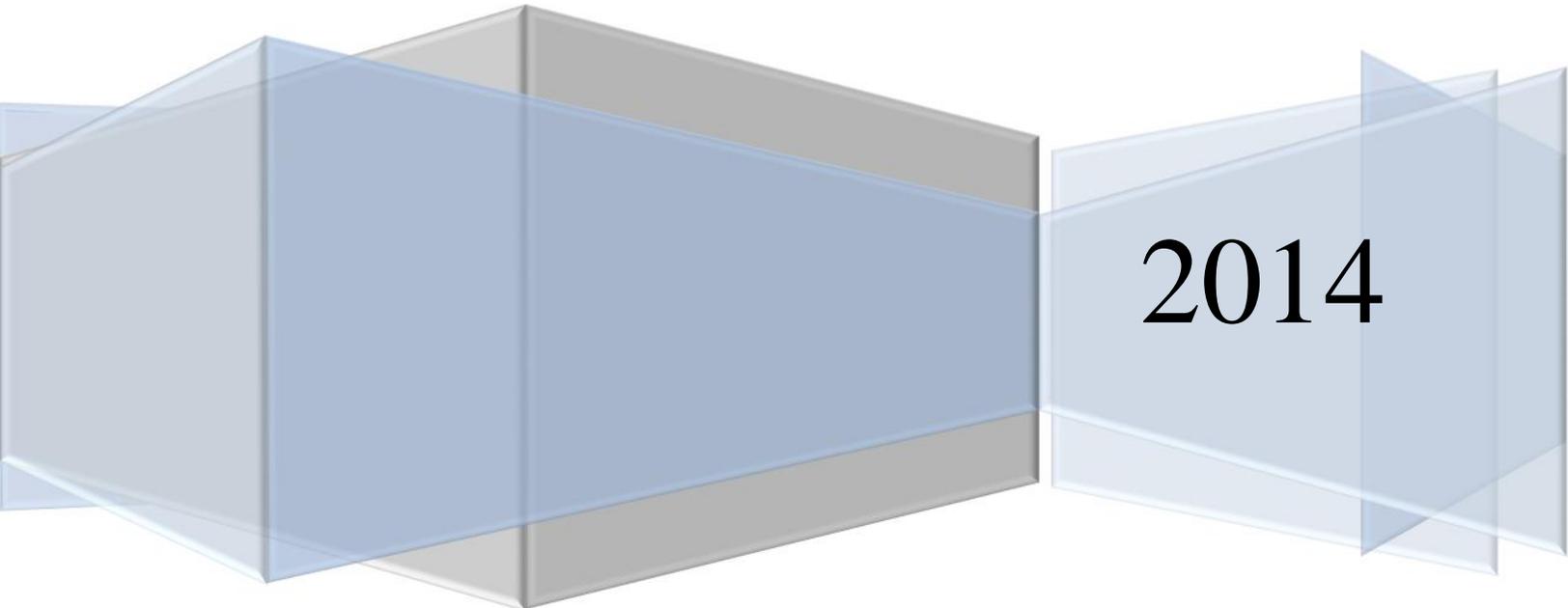


Lincoln Heights

Board Retreat

Hosted by the City of Charlotte at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus



2014

Lincoln Heights

2014 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, February 15, 2014, the board members of the Lincoln Heights participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Thelma Byers-Bailey
- Lucille Batts
- Sheryl Smith

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?
+ Neighborhood parties + Average 20 residents attend neighborhood meetings - Lack of support from residents or the board	+ Neighborhood amenities + Transit + Streetcar project + Schools nearby + Location + Public park under construction + Metro CMPD engaged with community - Street vendors - Absentee landlords - Lighting - Negative reputation - Loitering	+ Yard signs notifying residents of neighborhood meetings + Better communication with residents + Print newsletters in English and Spanish + Remove the negative stigma

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 attendees did not want to change their current vision statement. The following items are vision elements)

- Full community engagement
- Clean streets
- Well maintained homes and yards
- Law abiding citizens
- Crime and drug free community
- Children are valued
- Newcomers are welcome

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:

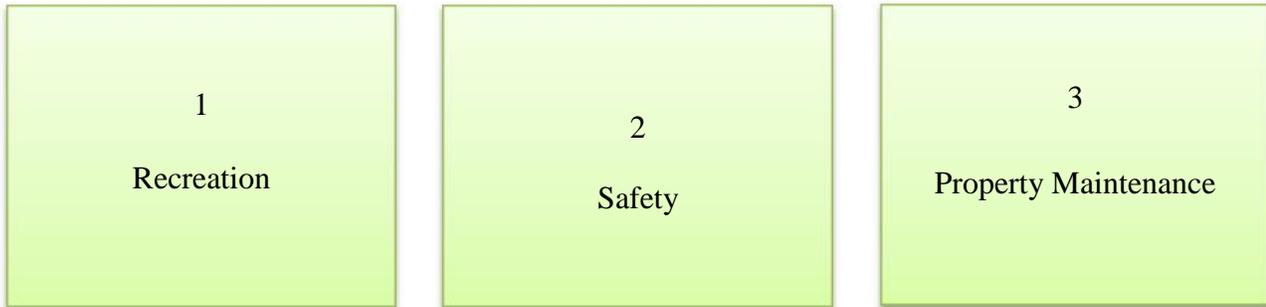
- Grab some sticky notes from the table. Keeping the vision statement in mind, write down as many of the following as you can think of, one per sticky note:
 - Current action items getting you closer to our vision.
 - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.
- Place the sticky 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:

- Safety (Set up a neighborhood watch program, request more sidewalks, work with partners to provide free wi-fi for improved communication with CMPD and residents, request upgrade of street lights, work with partners to improve child safety).
- Home Maintenance (Develop a list of homeowners, work with housing partners to provide home maintenance training for existing and future homeowners, develop a communication plan with homeowners and landlords).
- Community Engagement (Work with Park and Recreation to develop programs for the community, engage residents with the planning of festivals and other events).

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

Lincoln Heights

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

1

Communication

2

Engagement

3

Safety

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

1

Update list of property owners and update the newsletter.

2

Encourage the board to become more involved in projects.

3

Use the park opening to communicate vision and recruit volunteers.

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 Update list of property owners and update newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an online newsletter 	Nextdoor: Create a private social network for your neighborhood https://nextdoor.com/about us/ Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator www.mailchimp.com
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use POLARIS to identify property owners in community 	Real Estate Look-up http://meckcama.co.mecklenburg.nc.us/relookup/
Project #2 Use the park opening to communicate vision and recruit volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get support from Park and Rec for event 	Recruit volunteers through Mecklenburg County Park and Rec. http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Pages/Volunteer.aspx Partners for Parks is a non-profit that raises additional funds for Mecklenburg County parks. http://www.partnersforparks.org/
Project #3 Encourage the board to become more involved in projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about how to maximize your board members' potential 	Board source provides helpful tips and suggestions to develop board members. BoardSource https://boardsource.org/eweb/

