



NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



August 20, 2022

Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Association

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services

Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Association

2022 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, August 20, 2022, members of the **Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Association** participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat hosted by the City of Charlotte at Central Piedmont Community College. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

- Thelma Byers Bailey
- Yasmin Benton
- Margaret Peggy Lumes
- Desiree Worth
- Deborah Williams
- Trilby Meeks
- Joyce Leake-Allison
- Betty Dewalt

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 the quality of life in the neighborhood
- Outline a direction for the future of the neighborhood that represents the needs and desires of current and future residents
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)

By participating in the retreat, the board earned up to \$1,500 toward volunteer hours required for the Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects listed below.

To receive this credit, neighborhood organizations will submit a copy of the Developing Your Ideas worksheet with their NMG request. This credit will expire following the March 1, 2024, NMG application deadline.

Process

The board retreat was conducted by trained facilitators tasked to keep conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to build on the organization's current strengths, identify opportunities, and create a short-term vision for the neighborhood. The focus was:

- Analyzing neighborhood trends and conditions
- Developing strategic priorities
- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Welcome & Overview
- Introductions
- Group Agreements
- SOAR Model (includes QoL review)
- Conducting a SOAR Analysis
- Lunch/Networking
- SMART Goals
- Developing Your Ideas
- Participant Survey
- Wrap-up/Next Steps

SOAR Analysis

The primary retreat activity was a group discussion using the SOAR analysis framework. The activity was intended to help participants reflect on:

- Their values
- The best things about the community and the people who live there
- Past successes
- Potentials and possibilities

Our discussion helped us to find commonalities in our conversations.

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thriving community garden and park• Great location and easy access to uptown• Long term homeownership• Strong relationship with CMPD Community Coordinators• Public spaces and green spaces have been added to neighborhood placemaking• Neighborhood elementary reopening• Programming partnership with NWSA and JCSU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase engagement with Latino community and residents to share the history of the neighborhood• Work with local businesses owners to enforce healthy business practices. (Connect to UrbanMain)• Engage and partner with neighboring communities to coalition build• Develop opportunity to partner with Project Lift and Allegra Westbrook Library to hood neighborhood meetings• Increase community outreach and attendance at BFR corridor meetings• Engage and recruit youth to serve on the neighborhood association board

After identifying the organization's strengths and opportunities, participants began to brainstorm aspirations for their neighborhood. These aspirations will serve as short-term goals for the organization. This is where participants began to define priorities for their neighborhood.

Participants generated a list of aspirations and then narrowed that list down to three priorities. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.

Aspirations	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Neighborhood Branding projects at BFR/LaSalle which include signage, sign toppers and t-shirts • Improve CATS bus stops by adding seating • Implement speed humps at Irma Street • Partner with neighborhood CMS high schools to recruit youth board participation • Create more community inclusion events • Work more closely with faith-based organizations • Install security cameras facing the community garden • Purchase and install the American flag at the LaSalle Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Neighborhood Branding Project will increase community pride by installing a monument sign, sign toppers and residents' t-shirts • Developing partnerships with neighborhood CMS high schools to recruit youth will allow the association to gather the Youth perspective for community engagement • CATS bus stop improvements will increase safety, provide protection from the elements, add needed cover and seating capacity Installing a security camera facing the community garden and park will enhance community safety for residents

Results

Three aspirations were agreed upon by the group. These aspirations will serve as the organization's strategic priorities for the next twelve months. Participants then identified a desired result for each priority that they felt would be most impactful.

Aspiration 1: Neighbor Branding Project

Desired Result: Increase neighborhood pride

Aspiration 2: Youth Partnership

Desired Result: Increase youth residents board member participation

Aspiration 3: CATS Bus Stop Improvements

Desired Result: Safe and protected bus stop shelters

The strategic priorities and activities are summarized on the following page.

2022 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Association

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

1

Neighborhood Branding

2

Youth Partnerships

3

Bus Stop Improvements

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR ASPIRATIONS:

Apply for a NMG by March 2023 to begin design, construct and install a community entrance sign by April 2024

Invite the CE MYEP team to the January 2023 board meeting to share information about available youth programming

Invite CATS and CDOT staff to the October 2022 board meeting to discuss planned bus stop improvements



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
<p><i>Neighborhood Branding</i> Apply for a NMG by March 2023 to begin design, construct and install a community entrance sign by April 2024</p> <p>Lead(s): Trilby Meeks, Team Leader</p>	<p>Neighborhood Matching Grant</p>
<p><i>Youth Partnership</i> Invite the CE MYEP team to the January 2023 board meeting to share information about available youth programming</p> <p>Lead(s): Yasmin Benton, Team Leader</p>	<p>Youth Programs</p>
<p><i>Bus Stop Improvements</i> Invite CATS and CDOT staff to the October 2022 board meeting to discuss planned bus stop improvements</p> <p>Lead(s): Peggy Lumas, Team Leader</p>	<p>CATS</p>

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

Randy Harris, Service Area Community Engagement Manager

randy.harris@charlottenc.gov (704-432-2433)

