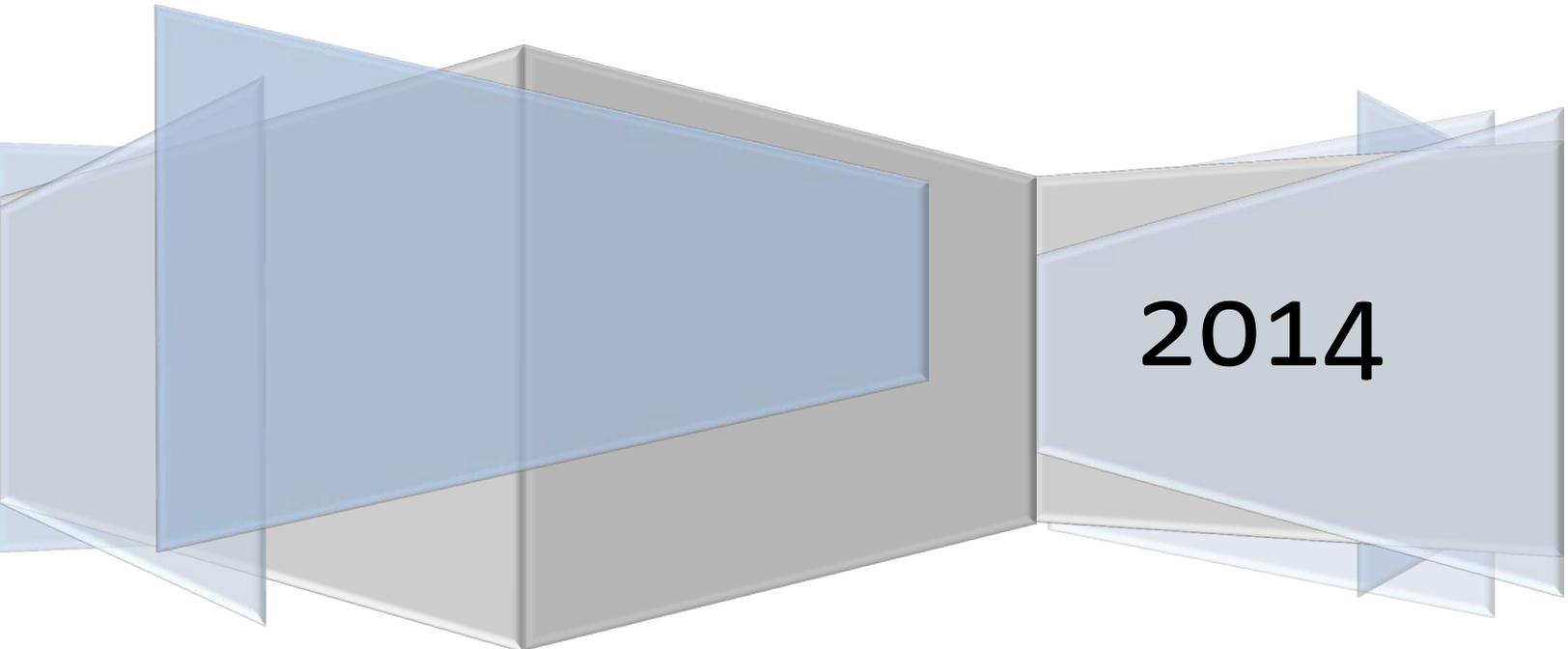# MontClair Park Subdivision

Board Retreat

Hosted by the City of Charlotte at UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus

2014

Background

On Saturday, July 19th 2014, the board members of the MontClair Park 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:

- Jennifer Reaves
- Paris James
- Felita James
- Kevin Poirier
- JoEllen Malveux
- Kris Bates
- Willi Eddy

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?
Friendliness Acceptance of all Residents Neighborhood Clean-Up Newsletter Good Attendance for HOA Meeting Speed Bumps Trash and Debris Foreclosure Close Knit	**Why Not** Appearance Disorganized (i.e. no active association) Trash and Debris Remote Tank Ton Empty Store Fronts **Why** Friendliness Close to major travel connections Remote	Community Engagement Communication Safety/Common Areas

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:** MontClair Park Subdivision is a friendly & highly engaged group of diverse residents who believe in organic neighborhood investment and sustaining and improving the quality of life for all community members.

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:

- Becoming an organized neighborhood
- Increase number of residents signed up for Next Door
- Door to Door Survey
- Neighborhood Clean-up

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:

1	2	3
Increase Community Involvement	Neighborhood Beautification	Safety
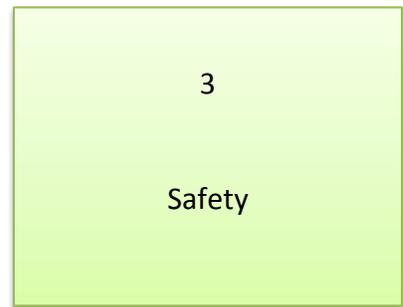
Action Items for 2014-2015

The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities are activities in 2014-2015 are:

1	2	3
Create Official Neighborhood Association with Board	Increase the Number of Residents Signed-up for Next Door	Parking

2014 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

MontClair Park Subdivision

OUR VISION: MontClair Park Subdivsion is a friendly & highly engaged group of diverse residents who believe in organic neighborhood investment and sustaining and improving the quality of life for all community members.

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

1 Increase Community Involvement	2 Communication	3 Safety

IN 2014-2015, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:

1 Create Official Neighborhood Association with Board	2 Increase the Number of Residents Signed-up for Next Door	3 Parking

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 **Create official neighborhood association with board**	• Learn about effective ways to organize your neighborhood	Neighborhood association toolkit: https://www.providenceri.com/efile/101 Writing community bylaws: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/organizational-structure/write-bylaws/main
	• Apply for an organizational development grant	Neighborhood Matching Grants Program http://www.charmeck.org/city/charlotte/nbs/community engagement/nmg/Pages/default.aspx Atalie Zimmerman – NMG Program Coordinator azimmerman@charlottenc.gov 704-336-4594
Project #2 **Increase the residents signed-up for Next Door website**	• Think of ways to get residents excited to join	Giveaways for new participants: Four Rules for Social Media Contests/Giveaways http://mashable.com/2011/11/29/social-media-contest-sweepstakes/
Project #3 **Door-to-door survey**	• Consider an online survey for residents	Online survey tool: www.surveymonkey.com Sample neighborhood survey: http://www.santacruzneighbors.com/files/form_sampleneighborhoodsurvey.pdf