



February 08, 2020

Newell Place HOA

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services at

Goodwill Opportunity Campus

Newell Place HOA 2020 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, February 08, 2020, the board members of the Newell Place HOA participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at the Goodwill Opportunity Campus. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

• Robyn Lowery	• Debra Heuertz
• Charlene Price-Patterson	• Nick Zorn
• Dylan Savage	

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 match credit toward a Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects we identified.

To receive this credit, we'll submit a copy of the Developing Your Ideas worksheets from the Neighborhood Board Retreat Participant Workbook (pages 14 – 17) with our NMG request. This credit will expire following the June 1, 2021 NMG application deadline.

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"> • Loved cul-de-sacs; no cut-through traffic • Felt like rural oasis • Architectural variety in homes • Big lots with lots of trees • Convenience to UNCC, I-85, University City & downtown • Community was fairly engaged – but not everyone • Good price point for homes • Strong board • The neighborhood association helped get street lights installed • More children and kid-focused activities • Did Christmas decorations, Easter egg hunts, caroling • Very diverse • Concern about MLK Middle and Newell Elementary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLK and Newell elementary are still underperforming • Schools affect home value • Schools affect attracting new neighbors • Schools force some families into paying for private school • Crime rates are up in surrounding neighborhoods • Great aesthetics – trees, style • No cut-through traffic • Neighborhood association not as active • Good privacy • Good neighbors – good communication • Want to transform a privately-owned vacant lot • \$75 annual dues – 50% participation • One home with lots of cars • Have e-mail “blast” • Have a good directory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More neighborhood involvement • One annual meeting • Need to collect more dues • Help get corporate/CDC sponsorship in schools • Lower violent crime • Help resolve crime at the 7-Eleven specifically • Utilize the vacant lot on Pickering • Improve home maintenance • Use newsletter more effectively • Explore social media and building a website • Get more youth involvement • Send out info about city programs – NMG, rehab etc. • Stay vigilant on railroad activity – sitting on tracks and hazardous cargo

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: *Newell Place is where the city meets the country; an emerald oasis with diverse, caring neighbors striving to be a model for our surrounding community.*

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:

Fill in the categories (large Post-Its) and associated ideas/action items, adding and deleting bullet points as necessary.

- **Category 1: Neighborhood Involvement & Engagement**
 - Hold neighborhood meetings twice a year (spring & fall)
 - Conduct neighborhood survey on how to get neighbors involved
 - Go door-to-door to meet more neighbors
 - Develop welcoming committee & welcoming kit
 - Get more youth involvement – possibly with newsletter and social media
- **Category 2: Dues Collection**
 - Increase percentage of contributing residents
 - Create online payment system
 - Invoice neighbors for dues
- **Category 3: Communication**
 - Rekindle newsletter efforts – possibly monthly or maybe just twice a year
 - Print out code enforcement rules and regulations
 - Communicate more about why paying dues and being involved is important and beneficial
 - Get out info about lawn care
- **Category 4: Help Schools**
 - Organize volunteers for Newell Elementary and MLK Middle
 - Identify stakeholders and businesses and build relationships so they may sponsor schools
- **Category 5: Community Events**
 - Host some neighborhood events to make people feel connected
 - Spring and fall block party
 - Easter egg hunt
- **Category 6: Miscellaneous Projects**
 - Tree banding
 - Little Free Library
 - Find money to buy and do something with vacant lot on Pickering – possibly green space/park

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 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.



2020 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Newell Place HOA

OUR VISION: *Newell Place is where the city meets the country; an emerald oasis with diverse, caring neighbors striving to be a model for our surrounding community.*

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

1
Neighborhood
Engagement

2
Community Events

3
Communication

IN 2020-2021, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:

Develop welcoming committee and welcome kit by December 2020

Is this goal SMART? Yes

Have our first biannual community events/parties by Fall 2020

Is this goal SMART? Yes

Restart neighborhood newsletter by June 2020

Is this goal SMART? Yes

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
Develop welcoming committee and welcome kit by December 2020	Neighborhood Engagement
Have our first biannual community events/parties by Fall 2020	Community Events
Restart neighborhood newsletter by June 2020	Communication

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

Charlenea Duncan, Northeast Community Engagement Manager
csduncan@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-2173

