



CHARLOTTE™

2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



Northwoods Homeowners Association

Hosted by City of Charlotte Neighborhood & Business Services at CPCC Main Campus

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"> • Well attended association meetings/good participation. • Higher rate of home ownership. • More rural environment. • HOA had block captains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current appearance of the neighborhood is not where it should be. • Perception of who can participate in meetings is not clearly understood. • Participation rate by residents is low. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More involvement from residents/higher participation. • Welcome committee/welcome packages for new residents. • Longtime home owners.

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:

Northwoods is a beautiful community that seeks to foster neighborhood pride and social relationships.

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:

- Engagement – Newsletters, create committees for landscaping and beautification projects, solicit ideas for improving community safety, neighborhood walking groups, partner with Hawthorne Management, install pedestrian scale lighting.
- Social activities - 4th of July cookout, community yard sale, spring 2015.
- Event planning – Surveys, use social media to improve communication and gathering ideas.

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:



2015 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Northwood Home Owners Association

OUR VISION:

Northwoods is a beautiful community that seeks to foster neighborhood pride and social relationships.

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

1

Engagement

2

Social Activities

3

Event planning

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

Design and circulate the HOA newsletter.

Partner with businesses for advertisements and printing costs.

Organize committees for engagement

Apply for a matching grant for pedestrian scale lighting to improve safety.

Communicate the idea as a social activity to encourage participation.

Create online surveys to solicit ideas and volunteers. July 4th cookout, block parties, community yard sale.

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
<p>Project #1 Design and circulate the HOA newsletter. Partner with businesses for advertisements and printing costs. Organize committees for engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop newsletter content Create a weekly e-mail blast 	<p>Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator: www.mailchimp.com</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out what businesses are in your area. Help connect the business owners to resources that can improve their business 	<p>CPCC's Small Business Center: www.cpcc.edu/sbc Charlotte Business Resources Portal: http://charlottebusinessresources.com/befcor-top-10-reasons-to-use-504-loans-to-finance-businessexpansions/ Why businesses should partner with surrounding neighborhoods: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/174358</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a committee 	<p>How to organize a committee: http://www.mycommittee.com/BestPractice/Committees/Startingacommittee/tabid/244/Default.aspx Board development online resources: Board Source - https://boardsource.org/eweb/</p>
<p>Project #2 Apply for a matching grant for pedestrian scale lighting to improve safety. Communicate the idea as a <u>social activity</u> to encourage participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider applying for a Neighborhood Matching Grant to purchase or improve street lights Free Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) from Duke Energy 	<p>Neighborhood Matching Grants provides grant funding to improve lighting and make your community safer: Contact Atalie Zimmerman at azimmerman@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-4594 or go to the Neighborhood Matching Grant website for more information http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/nbs/communityengagement/nmg/pages/default.aspx Request free CFL's from Duke Energy: http://www.duke-energy.com/freecfls/ or call 1-800-943-7585.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate information about ideas, events, and meetings in a variety of ways 	<p>Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator: www.mailchimp.com Set up a conference call option for meetings: www.freeconferencecall.com Nextdoor: Create a private social network for your neighborhood: https://nextdoor.com/about-us/ Make signs to announce meetings with FastSigns® Reusable Yard Signs: http://www.fastsigns.com/sg-yard-signs/Yard-Signs</p>

<p>Project #3 Create Online Surveys to Solicit Ideas and Volunteers for July 4th Cookout, Block Parties, & Community Yard Sale.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey residents about what type of communication platform they would prefer to use (newsletters, website, meetings, flyers, social media) 	<p>Online survey tool: www.surveymonkey.com Sample neighborhood survey: http://www.santacruzneighbors.com/files/form_sampleneighborhoodsurvey.pdf Types of neighborhood communication: http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_HOA_Communication Additional examples of communication: http://www.mrsc.org/subjects/governance/participation/comtechniques.asp</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with existing volunteer groups to recruit additional volunteers Participate in a workshop about volunteer recruitment 	<p>Hands On Charlotte matches volunteers with projects: www.handsoncharlotte.org Volunteer Match will post volunteer opportunities online: http://www.volunteermatch.org/ Habitat for Humanity Group Volunteers: http://www.habitatcharlotte.org/getinvolved/volunteer/groups MAVA- Metrolina Area Volunteer Administrators offers workshops on volunteer recruitment: http://mavanc.org/</p>
<p>Parking Lot</p> <p>For sidewalk repair, contact Scott Curry at CDOT Scott Curry Pedestrian Program Manager, CDOT spcurry@ci.charlotte.nc.us 704-432-4638</p> <p>For information about foreclosed property in your community, contact a local realtor www.realtor.org or look up the status of a property that may be foreclosed on Virtual Charlotte: http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/nbs/about/Pages/MappingApplication.aspx</p>		

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