



CHARLOTTE.

2016 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



Oaklawn Park Community Improvement Organization

Hosted by City of Charlotte Neighborhood & Business Services at Johnson C Smith University

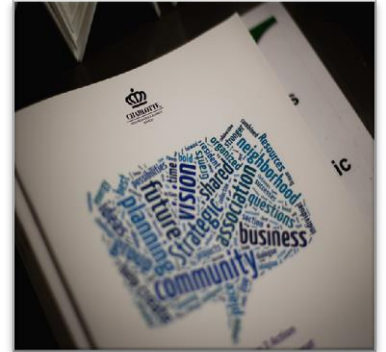
Oaklawn Park Community Improvement Organization

2016 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday March 19th, 2016, the board members of the Oaklawn Park neighborhood participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at Johnson C Smith University. The following board members participated in the retreat:

William Hughes Myrtle Miller
Tiffany Hughes Anne Roddey
Shirley Chiles



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 our completed Vision to Action Idea Development Plan Workbook with our NMG request. This credit will expire following the June 1, 2017 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"> • More community involvement (e.g. yearly picnics) • Park was beautiful (in better shape) • More children in neighborhood running around and engaged with adults • Traffic was bad (because of no speed humps) • Drugs were bad in area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to Uptown • Central Location that is affordable • Great tree canopy • Access to transit • Homes are not kept up • Schools are not great • Lack of parent involvement • Perception of neighborhood is bad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater engagement (schools, parents, community) • Pride in ownership (home ownership, nice entrance sign, other beautification efforts) • Better connections to park and other assets (e.g. greenways, gold line, businesses) <p>*** All would enhance perception of area as positive and safe</p>

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:

Oaklawn is a community of families working together to preserve its historic legacy while engaging the surrounding community to build a better future.

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

- Holiday decorating
- Neighborhood parks
- Promotion of little (free) library
- Goal is to work together in the community
- Working together in agreement
- Having events that include the whole community (picnic)

Beautification

- Butterfly highway
- Entrance sign
- Park improvement
- Engage and educate through nature initiatives (ex. Gardening, certifications to meet habitat criteria)

Organizational Structure and Development

- Ask neighbors questions as to what they would like to see where the neighborhood is headed
- Street captains more involved
- Involvement of NMG projects
- Create more committees to tackle projects concerning community

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:

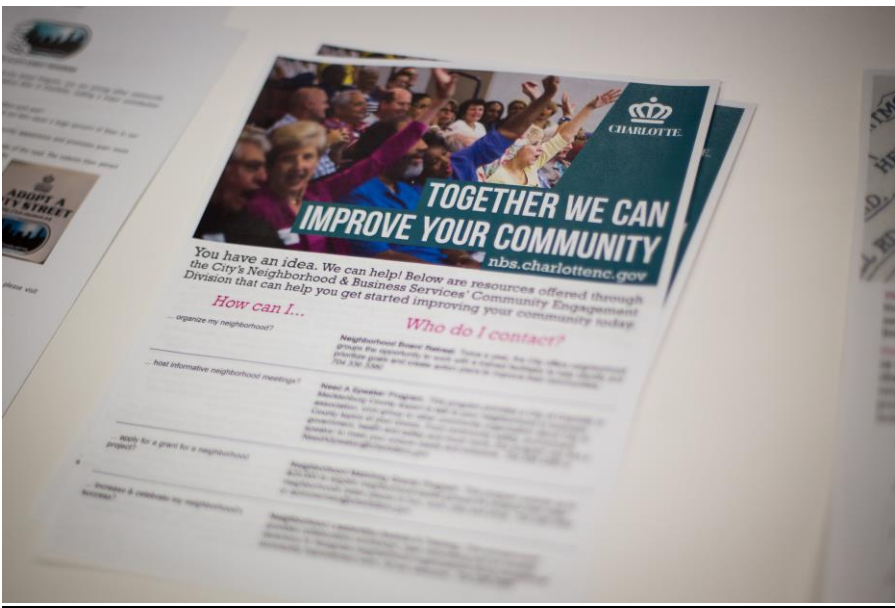


Action Items for 2016-2017 The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities are activities in 2015-2016 are:

COMMUNITY
PICNIC

NEIGHBORHOOD
QUESTIONNAIRE

ENTRANCE SIGN
PHASE 1 &
MAUSOLEUM
CLEAN



2016 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

OAKLAWN PARK COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT ORGANIZATION

OUR VISION:

Oaklawn is a community of families working together to preserve its historic legacy while engaging the surrounding community to build a better future.

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

1
Engagement

2
Communication

3
Beautification

IN 2015-2016, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:

COMMUNITY
PICNIC

NEIGHBORHOOD
QUESTIONNAIRE

ENTRANCE SIGN
PHASE 1 &
MAUSOLEUM
CLEAN

Resources to Get Started- You've rolled up your sleeves and established your vision. The following resources may assist your organization in achieving your goals. Links and contact information are provided for information only and are subject to change.

Please list any parking lot issues or items here:

- Kim Barnes William Hughes examples of questionnaire and examples of entrance signs (complete)



Project	Getting Started	Resources
<p>Project #1</p> <p>Community picnic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan a great picnic for residents 	<p>Neighborhood Block Party Planning Toolkit: http://bit.ly/1TSlaZl</p> <p>Temporary Street Closure Procedures and Approval: Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/Pages/Home.aspx</p> <p>Noise/Sound Permit Information: CMPD http://bit.ly/1OSUOdQ or call 311</p> <p>National Night Out: Nationwide event held each August, find details and resources at natw.org</p> <hr/> <p>Consider free social media opportunities to promote community events (Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter, Instagram)</p> <p>Online survey tool: www.surveymonkey.com</p> <p>Types of neighborhood communication:</p> <p>http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_HOA_Communication</p> <p>Additional examples of communication:</p> <p>http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Citizen-Participation-and-Engagement/Communication-and-Citizen-Participation-Techniques.aspx</p> <p>Nextdoor: Create a private social network for your neighborhood: https://nextdoor.com/about_us/</p> <p>Local Resources for Neighborhoods: http://digitalcharlotte.org/</p> <p>Knight School of Communication at Queens University:</p> <p>http://www.queens.edu/Academics-and-Schools/Schools-and-Colleges/Knight-School-of-Communication/Spotlight-Stories/How-Do-Neighborhoods-Communicate.html</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore funding options 	<p>Neighborhood Matching Grants (NMG) Program: Charlotte’s NMG Program can provide grants of up to \$10k to eligible neighborhood organizations for community events. To determine eligibility or learn program details please visit charlottenc.gov/nmg or call 704-336-4594</p> <p>Keep Charlotte Beautiful- offers an annual beautification grant. Visit http://kcb.charmeck.org or call 704-353-1235</p>
<p>Project #2</p> <p>Neighborhood questionnaire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop survey 	<p>Online survey tool: www.surveymonkey.com</p> <p><i>See communication tools noted above.</i></p>
<p>Project #3</p> <p>Entrance sign phase 1 & mausoleum clean</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate volunteers 	<p>The Foundation for the Carolinas provides Front Porch Grants to build a sense of community in neighborhoods: http://www.ffc.org/page.aspx?pid=663</p> <p>Neighborhood Matching Grants (NMG) Program: Charlotte’s NMG Program can provide grants of up to \$25k to eligible neighborhood organizations for community projects. To determine eligibility or learn program details please visit http://charlottenc.gov/nmg or call 704-336-3380</p> <p>CDOT Street Lighting offers lighting upgrades:</p> <p>http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/Transportation/signs_signal_lights/Pages/Neighborhood%20Street%20Lights.aspx</p> <p>Charlotte Community ToolBank is a great place to borrow tools for projects:</p> <p>http://charlotte.toolbank.org/</p> <p>Home Depot provides grants to communities:</p> <p>https://corporate.homedepot.com/community</p>