CHARLOTTE

2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT

Prosperity Village

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

Background

On Saturday, February 7th 2015, the board members of Prosperity Hucks participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at CPCC's Main Campus. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Sarah Zdeb
- Stephen Waldner

- Theresa Rosa-Corey
- Chris Martin

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 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?

• Identity
• Community organization
• Traffic
• Schools
• Crisis/Chaos
• Lack of education within community
	• Identity
	• Community Organization
	• Appearance/identity
	• Accessibility
	• Area plan not complete
	• 485 coming to area
	• Affordability and stability
		• Brand/Identity
		• Diverse village centers:
		  - Walkability/bike-friendly
		  - Mix retail and office space
		• Formal, engaged land use committee
		• Green space
		• Community space
		• Communication

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:
>
> Prosperity Village is a vibrant village that creates prosperous opportunities through friendly people and thriving businesses

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:

Partnerships with Surrounding Neighborhoods
- Be added to neighborhood list
- Area (not neighborhood) association
- Gather diverse pool of participants for association
- Get buy-in from community
- Obtain rep from each HOA
- Educate interested people on Virtual Charlotte
- Meet with HOAs on what is happening
- Formalize official neighborhood organization
- Understand communication gaps

Area Plan
- Direct contact with City planners and developers to be on same page
- Establish relationships with developers
- Establish Relationship with Planning
- Planners/Developers to go through association prior to submittal of rezoning
- Attend Council/Planning meetings
- Finish/approve area plan
- "Smart" area planning to allow more office, retail
- Planning to incorporate pedestrian/bicycle friendly activity centers

- Traffic/Access: easy in/out for residents, businesses, visitors
- Regular reviews of rezoning.org
- Community space
- Talk to Steele Creek, Dilworth Associations for guidance on land-use

Community Identity
- Visibility (first impression, litter volunteer projects
- Create PV website
- Commission a logo for PV
- Identity: name, signage, welcome
- T-shirt campaign
- Sponsorships for official site

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
Partnerships with Surrounding Neighborhoods	Secure Land Use Development	Community Identity

Action Items for 2014-2015

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

Develop partnerships with surrounding neighborhoods and create an area association

Advocate for the approval of the current land use plan for Prosperity Village

Create a community branding initiative (may include website, logo design, signage)
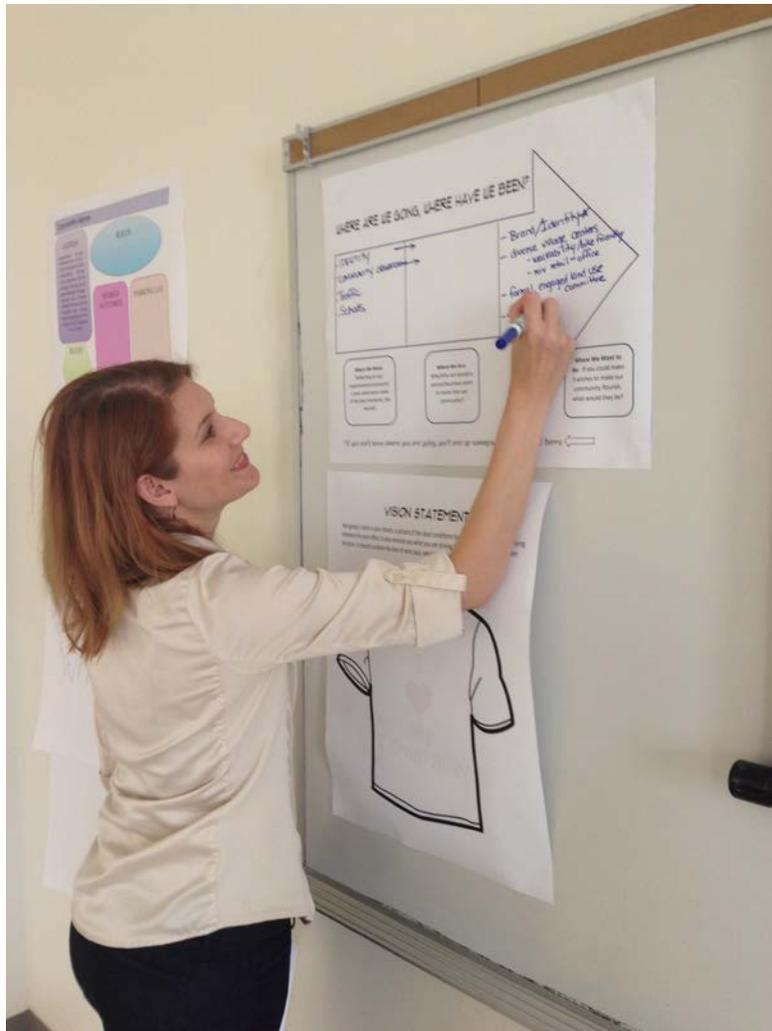
Prosperity Village

OUR VISION:

Prosperity Village is a vibrant village that creates prosperous opportunities through friendly people and thriving businesses

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

1	2	3
Partnerships with Surrounding Neighborhoods	Secure Land Use Development	Community Identity

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

Develop partnerships with surrounding neighborhoods and create an area association

Advocate for the approval of the current land use plan for Prosperity Village

Create a community branding initiative (may include website, logo design, signage)

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 Develop partnerships with surrounding neighborhoods and create an area association	• Reach out to other neighborhoods who created similar associations	**Southwest Area Neighborhood Coalition** http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/SW_Area_Neighborhood_Coalition/info **Charlotte E.A.S.T.:** http://www.charlotteeast.com/ **FreeMoreWest:** http://www.freemorewest.com/About-FMW
	• Tips for building a collaboration	**How collaborations work:** http://www.worc.org/userfiles/file/Publications/Work_in_Coalitions.pdf **Tips for building collaborations:** http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/promotion-strategies/start-a-coaltion/main **Additional resources:** http://coalitionswork.com/resources/
Project # 2 Advocate for the approval of the current land use plan for Prosperity Village	• Keep in contact with City Planning Department • If your group wants to speak at a City Council meeting, you must register with the City Clerk	**Kent Main** Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department 600 East Fourth Street (8th Floor) Charlotte, North Carolina 28202 (704)-336-5721
		City Clerk's page: http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/CityClerk/Pages/default.aspx
	• Subscribe to Citygram for alerts about upcoming meetings	**Citygram sign-up:** www.citygram.org
	• Stay up-to-date with upcoming meetings about area plan	**Prosperity Hucks Area Plan:** http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/planning/AreaPlanning/Plans/Pages/ProsperityHucks.aspx

Project #3 Create a community branding initiative (may include website, logo design, signage)	• Understand how community branding initiatives work	**How to Brand Your Neighborhood:** http://www.communityprogress.net/tool-3--marketing-the-neighborhood-pages-278.php **More Neighborhood Branding Tips:** http://www.stablecommunities.org/sites/all/files/documents/Branding%20and%20Marketing%20Presentation%20CS%20Forum%2012_11_12.pdf **More Branding Information:** http://www.neighborhoodnotes.com/news/tag/neighborhood_branding/ **How to design your neighborhood/community logo:** http://www.neighborhoodnotes.com/news/2012/07/how_to_create_a_neighborhood_logo/
	• Learn more digital tools for neighborhood communication	**Local Resources for Neighborhoods:** http://digitalcharlotte.org/ **Knight School of Communication at Queens University:** http://www.queens.edu/Academics-and-Schools/Schools-and-Colleges/Knight-School-of-Communication/Spotlight-Stories/How-Do-Neighborhoods-Communicate.html

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