July 13, 2019

Rocky River Village Homeowners Association

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services at
Goodwill Opportunity Campus
Background

On Saturday, July 13, 2019, the board members of the Rocky River Village Homeowners Association 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:

Rachel Lloyd  
Delores Cox  
Michelle Pighet  
Edmund Walker

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 September 1, 2020 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where We Were: Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?</th>
<th>Where We Are: Why would or wouldn’t a person/business want to move into our community?</th>
<th>Where We Want to Be: If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEST</strong></td>
<td><strong>WHY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- We had an active Board</td>
<td>- We are a smaller &amp; more controlled environment – the first phase of this community somewhat became a close-knit / intimate sized community within a community</td>
<td>- We want less crime – most of which is not stemming from our neighborhood</td>
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<td>- The Economy/Market was HOT – we had / shared more favorable times</td>
<td>- We have more passion for our neighborhood now</td>
<td>- More control over our environment regarding:</td>
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<td>- We had plenty of community engagement – the shared feeling was that <em>our community was the place to be</em></td>
<td>- We have a developed environment with:</td>
<td>- Less cut through traffic</td>
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<td>- There were: cookouts / community BBQs featuring Fire Trucks for kids (lots of involvement – by all)</td>
<td>- Sidewalks</td>
<td>- Less outside / unwanted activity coming in (from neighboring traffic / neighborhoods)</td>
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<td>- Less rentals - more of our neighbors were responsible / proud homeowners</td>
<td>- Community Park</td>
<td>- We want to become more family friendly</td>
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<td>- Less traffic flowed through the neighborhood / cut-throughs were uncommon / little to none speeding through our streets (endangering the children)</td>
<td>- Location:</td>
<td>- We want to revive more regular community involvement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Easy access to I-85</td>
<td>- Get outside / spend more time outside with one another (neighbors in community)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Easy access to Light Rail</td>
<td>- Get activities started to get our community outside together</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Lots of things to do near by</td>
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<td><strong>WORST</strong></td>
<td><strong>WHY NOT</strong></td>
<td><strong>We want to give folks something to look forward to – get back to plenty of community engagement AND the shared feeling that ’our community IS the place to be’</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Obtain grants and work towards much needed items to enhance our community</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • Market Crash  
  o Liens on Homes  
  o No one to talk with (regarding these issues)  
  o Affected community engagement – people became reserved  
  Uncertainty kicked in as people lost jobs, homes, etc. | • Less / lack of community involvement / engagement  
• We lack certain amenities others may offer: pool, club house, etc.  
• Not the best kept secret (no privacy) – our neighborhood is being used by many as a cut-through  
People not knowing the good our neighborhood does offer | |

**Where We Were:** Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?

- Market Crash
  - Liens on Homes
  - No one to talk with (regarding these issues)
  - Affected community engagement – people became reserved
  - Uncertainty kicked in as people lost jobs, homes, etc.

**Where We Are:** Why would or wouldn’t a person/business want to move into our community?

- Less / lack of community involvement / engagement
- We lack certain amenities others may offer: pool, club house, etc.
- Not the best kept secret (no privacy) – our neighborhood is being used by many as a cut-through
- People not knowing the good our neighborhood does offer

**Where We Want to Be:** If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?

- We want to give folks something to look forward to – get back to plenty of community engagement AND the shared feeling that ‘our community IS the place to be’
- Obtain grants and work towards much needed items to enhance our community
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:

We want to live where neighbors feel a sense of community in a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment.

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:

- **Category 1 (Outreach Program)**
  - Gather emails – all owners
  - Gather renter info – via sign in sheets at cookouts / etc.
  - Newsletters / Social Media / events / flyers / website - Wordpress, SignUp Genius, etc.

- **Category 2 (SPEED BUMPS)**
  - Investigate ‘No Parking’ and/or ‘Slow Down’ signage / options
  - Meet with Community Coordinator CMPD, Phillip Freeman, CDOT – discuss our resources available
  - Invite city agencies to meetings – get to know each other

- **Category 3 (Restore Community Area)**
  - Restore / maintain our aesthetically pleasing environment
  - Learn of and pursue various grants that may aid in our restoration / maintenance of our community
    - Neighborhood Matching Grants: [https://charlottenc.gov/HNS/CE/NMG/Pages/default.aspx](https://charlottenc.gov/HNS/CE/NMG/Pages/default.aspx)
  - Enlist more volunteers within the neighbor to assist with restoration / upkeep and maintenance

- **Category 4 (Parking Lot - issue)**
  - Grant Writer!

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. 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.
2019 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Rocky River Village

OUR VISION:

Rocky River Village is a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment where neighbors feel a sense of community. #RockyRiverVillage

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

1. OUTREACH PROGRAM / COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
2. SAFETY
3. AESTHETICALLY PLEASING

IN 2019-2020, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

- Implement Block Captain program by end of year (December 2019)
- Discuss traffic calming measures with CDOT by January 2020.
- Restore Community Area before September 2020.
Please list any parking lot items or additional activities beyond the initial 3 here.

Speed Bumps: learn more about traffic calming options for City streets here: https://charlottenc.gov/Transportation/Programs/Pages/TrafficCalming.aspx

Grants / Grant Writer: explore resources for grant seekers here: https://www.cmlibrary.org/resource/foundation-center

More attendees for 2020 Neighborhood Board Retreat: sign up to learn about future Neighborhood Board Retreats here: https://charlottenc.seamlessdocs.com/f/NBRinterest

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Potential Resource Categories of Interest</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implement Block Captain program by end of year (December 2019)</td>
<td>Public Safety; Welcoming &amp; Engaging Neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss traffic calming measures with CDOT by January 2020.</td>
<td>Public Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore Community Area before September 2020.</td>
<td>Beautification; Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Liaison

csduncan@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-2173

John Short, Northeast Community Engagement Manager

jshort@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-3862