NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT

July 13, 2019

Shannon Park Neighborhood Association

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

On Saturday, July 13, 2019, the board members of the Shannon Park Neighborhood 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:

- Steve Carter
- Brenda Harris
- Trish Carter
- Richard Thomas
- Madie Moore

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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best:</strong> Community involvement</td>
<td><strong>Positive aspects:</strong> Clean</td>
<td>More amenities (community garden, pet park)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Best:</strong> Communication (newsletter)</td>
<td><strong>Positive aspects:</strong> Environment (great tree canopy)</td>
<td>Address negative activities in timely fashion (better coordination with CMPD)</td>
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<td><strong>Best:</strong> Wildlife rescue (owls)</td>
<td><strong>Positive aspects:</strong> Great neighbors</td>
<td>Greater participation in neighborhood association, both by Board and residents</td>
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<td><strong>Best:</strong> Events (National Night Out)</td>
<td><strong>Negative aspects:</strong> Lack of communication between neighbors (no newsletter)</td>
<td>Traffic control</td>
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<td><strong>Best:</strong> Neighbor recognition (strong leadership)</td>
<td><strong>Negative aspects:</strong> Lack of participation and community involvement</td>
<td>Vision elements</td>
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<td><strong>Worst:</strong> Crime (burglaries)</td>
<td><strong>Negative aspects:</strong> Crime (gunshots)</td>
<td>Unity (circles)</td>
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<td><strong>Worst:</strong> Property damages (car crashes)</td>
<td><strong>Negative aspects:</strong> Parking issues (traffic congestion, especially during swim meets)</td>
<td>Environment (trees, gardens, wildlife)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Negative aspects:</strong> High rental population</td>
<td>Beauty</td>
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<td>Cleanliness</td>
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<td>Great neighbors</td>
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<td>Family</td>
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<td>Inclusion</td>
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<td>Diversity</td>
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<td>Engagement</td>
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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:
Engaged, connected, family, trees and circles, unity, holding hands, inclusive

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:

- **Amenities**
  - Pet park
  - Community garden
  - Walking trail
  - Garden at entry to neighborhood

- **Engagement**
  - Neighborhood garage sale/flea market
  - Youth social (i.e. annual ice cream social)

- **Data and communications**
  - Re-activate newsletter
  - Poll (youth and local ownership data)

- **Neighborhood character**
  - Maintaining some houses with unpainted brick
  - Reducing displacement
  - Community flowers

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.
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;

**2019 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary**

Shannon Park Neighborhood Association

**OUR VISION:**

*Engaged, connected, family, trees and circles, unity, holding hands, inclusive*

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

1. **Amenities**

2. **Engagement**

3. **Data & communications**

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

- Build a pet park by December 2020.
- Hold a community garage sale or flea market by August 2020.
- Re-activate the neighborhood newsletter by July 2020.
Please list any parking lot items or additional activities beyond the initial 3 here.

Project Idea 1: Pet Park

- What is the purpose of this project?
  - Keep the neighborhood clean.
  - Create a safe environment for pets to play.
  - Create a social environment for pet owners.
- Are there similar projects within the community that could provide synergy, partnership potential, or lessons learned?
  - Community garden
- What would be a successful outcome of completing this project? How will we measure success?
  - Tracking usage (cleanup bags)
  - Survey of residents
  - Monitor receptacles
- What are the benefits to the community?
  - Cleaner streets
  - Social gathering place
  - Safe environment
- What are your strategies, first steps, and what resources do we need to make it happen? (in-kind donations, grants, partnering organizations, volunteers, technical expertise)
  - Gauge support
  - Grant funding (Neighborhood Matching Grants), tracking hours, matching money
    - Learn more about the NMG program here:
      - https://charlottenc.gov/HNS/CE/NMG/Pages/default.aspx
  - Fence, trash receptacles, benches, waste bags, signage
    - How many people would use if available?
  - Contact county about land, City about trash pickup, Parks and Rec for recommendations
  - Resource: City Storm Water Services just started a dog park—lessons learned

Project Idea 2: Garage Sale

- What is the purpose of this project?
  - Enhance community engagement
  - Foster interaction between neighbors
  - Provide opportunity to generate value from used goods
- Are there similar projects within the community that could provide synergy, partnership potential, or lessons learned?
  - Past events such as ice cream social
  - Newsletter
- What would be a successful outcome of completing this project? How will we measure success?
  - Survey- information on meeting neighbors, interest in joining association
  - Track visitors through handouts
  - Measures:
    - # of people attending
    - # of people who join the association as result of the event
• What are the benefits to the community?
  o Connections to neighbors
  o Decluttering homes
  o Generating income
  o Increase association membership
• What are your strategies, first steps, and what resources do we need to make it happen? (in-kind donations, grants, partnering organizations, volunteers, technical expertise)
  o Put up street signage
  o Advertise in newspaper, newsletter, on social media, or with yard signs
  o Add question when people join association of how they connected
  o Permission from County
  o Permit from City
    ▪ Apply for a license at
      https://www.mecknc.gov/TaxCollections/BusinessTaxes/Pages/YardSaleLicense.aspx
  o Neighborhood Matching Grants
  o Potentially have near community garden or greenway?

Project Idea 3: Newsletter

• What is the purpose of this project?
  o Enhance communication with neighbors
  o Advertise for the association
• Are there similar projects within the community that could provide synergy, partnership potential, or lessons learned?
  o People who worked on past newsletters – i.e. 2017-2018 newsletter
• What would be a successful outcome of completing this project? How will we measure success?
  o Survey on joining association- how many people heard?
• What are the benefits to the community?
  o Increase neighborhood association membership
  o Advertising opportunities
  o More connected neighbors
  o Let new residents know about events and opportunity for involvement
  o Welcoming feature for new residents
• What are your strategies, first steps, and what resources do we need to make it happen? (in-kind donations, grants, partnering organizations, volunteers, technical expertise)
  o Survey at event: How do people prefer to receive information?
  o Develop distribution plan
  o Ask Charlenea for contact in another neighborhood
  o Youth group to distribute?
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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build a pet park by December 2020.</td>
<td>Beautification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold a community garage sale or flea market by August 2020.</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-activate the neighborhood newsletter by July 2020.</td>
<td>Communication; Welcoming &amp; Engaging Neighbors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charlenea Duncan, Northeast Community Engagement Liaison</th>
<th>John Short, Northeast Community Engagement Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:csduncan@charlottenc.gov">csduncan@charlottenc.gov</a> or 704-336-2173</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jshort@charlottenc.gov">jshort@charlottenc.gov</a> or 704-336-3862</td>
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