



CHARLOTTE

2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



Spring Park

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

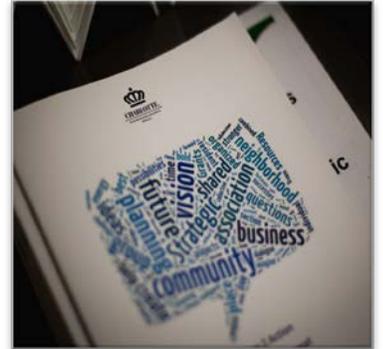
Spring Park

2015 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, February 7th 2015, the board members of the Spring Park Neighborhood 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:

- Charlotte Thompson
- Sue Bishop
- Kameela Mason
- Heather Woodward
- Ivy Dunn



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?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No wellness group • No senior programs • Fewer social events • No access to parks/nature preserves • All homes are built out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing block captains for Neighborhood Watch • Restarting newsletter • Little Free Library • Increase in seasonal mischief • Speeding/lack of traffic enforcement • Lack of involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue organizing block captains • Community garden • Get involved/partner with elementary school to raise the grade of the school • Involve students in upkeep and maintenance of community entrance

Key Words You Identified that Describe your Neighborhood

Fun
Social
Friendly
Clean
Walkable
Active/Healthy
Engaged
Safe
Friendly
Diverse
Invested in and committed to the 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:
Spring Park: Diverse Families Growing Together as a
Community

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:

- Neighborhood Beautification
 - Cleaner parks and yards
 - Neighborhood clean up
 - Adopt a city street
 - Plant trees
- Safety
 - Developing an increased safety committee and block captains
 - Window watchers
 - Increase safety
- Communication
 - Have more neighborhood meetings
 - Connect past and present state of community
 - Restart newsletter both paper and email versions
 - Put vision statement on T-shirts for Walk-a-thon
- Engagement
 - Reach more residents to become more involved
 - Get more folks volunteering
 - Mentorship program with neighboring elementary school
 - More community involvement with social committee
- Health
 - Increase attendees at walking group
 - Wellness programs
 - Have a community wellness day
 - 28 day soda challenge
 - Walk-a-thon
- Activities
 - Friendlier community block parties
 - Talent show: Spring Parks Got Talent
 - Basketball court for teens
 - Community garden
 - Have special interest groups: book, young moms and culinary club

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
Neighborhood
Beautification

2
Safety

3
Communication

Action Items for 2014-2015

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

Establish a neighborhood Park and Pond clean-up event that occurs the first Saturday of each month.

Sign up 24 Block Captains by 2016

Publish a quarterly newsletter in both electronic and paper format.

2015 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Spring Park

OUR VISION

Spring Park: Diverse Families Growing Together as a Community

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

1

Neighborhood
Beautification

2

Safety

3

Communication

IN 2014-2015, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

Establish a neighborhood Park and Pond clean-up event that occurs the first Saturday of each month.

Sign up 24 Block Captains by 2016

Publish a quarterly newsletter in both electronic and paper format.

We will rely on these sources to support our activities:

- Davis lake Chic-fil-a
- Recruit from established groups
- Keep Charlotte Beautiful for tools
- Stormwater for supplies
- Safety Committee
- "Window Watcher" List
- CMPD Community Liaison
- Trainings
- Other N.A. Newsletters
- Newsletter workshop
- Church on Eastfield to help with translating to Spanish
- Email database

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 Establish a Neighborhood Park and Pond Clean-Up Event That Occurs the First Saturday of Each Month.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check out other neighborhood parks to get new ideas • DIY websites for ideas 	<p style="text-align: center;">Get DIY Ideas on Pinterest: www.pinterest.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DIY Inspired for videos and ideas: http://www.diyinspired.com/</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for a grant 	<p style="text-align: center;">Lowe's has small grants available for neighborhoods: http://www.lowes.com/cd_charitable+and+educational+foundation_936258779</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Neighborhood Matching Grants Program: http://www.charmeck.org/city/charlotte/nbs/communityengagement/nmg/Pages/default.aspx</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Atalie Zimmerman – NMG Program Coordinator azimmerman@charlottenc.gov 704-336-4594</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize a community cleanup 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tips for Organizing a Community Cleanup: http://lancaster.unl.edu/community/articles/organizecleanup.shtml</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Charlotte Beautiful has grants and volunteers for cleanups: www.keepcharlottebeautiful.org http://www.lowes.com/cd_How+To+Library_615580068</p>
Project #2 Sign Up 24 Block Captains By 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your neighbors to determine safety concerns • Request a CPTED assessment 	<p style="text-align: center;">USA On Watch Program: http://www.usaonwatch.org/</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Study by CMPD to assess safety of community: crimepreventionunit@cmpd.org</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a neighborhood watch • Recruit more block captains 	<p style="text-align: center;">How to Start a Neighborhood Watch Program: http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Community/Neighborhood_Watch_How_To_Start</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CMPD: Neighborhood Watch Program: http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cmpd/safety/neighborhoodwatch/Pages/default.aspx</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tips for organizing block captains and other volunteers: http://www.decaturalabamausa.com/departments/policedept/community</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Example of block captain guidebook: http://www.ci.neenah.wi.us/assets/files/police/crimeprevention/Block%20Captain%20Guide.pdf</p>

Project #3 Publish a Quarterly Newsletter in Both Electronic and Paper Format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop newsletter content • Create a weekly e-mail blast 	Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator: www.mailchimp.com
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate information about events and meetings in a variety of ways 	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

Parking Lot

Keep Charlotte Beautiful can provide tools kcb@charlottenc.gov or kcb.charmeck.org

Receiving information on car identification stickers (like Madison Park has) Email Matt Magnasco for contact information: mmagnasco@charlottenc.gov

Park and Recreation Contacts re: Clarks Creek Nature Preserve and Future Community Garden

Peter Cook peter.cook@mecklenburgcountync.gov (Community Garden)

Lee Jones lee.jones@mecklenburgcountync.gov (Capital Planning)

Knight School of Communication provides resources and training to neighborhoods on social media and other digital platforms: <http://www.queens.edu/Academics-and-Schools/Schools-and-Colleges/Knight-School-of-Communication/Digital-and-Media-Literacy.html>

City of Charlotte Northeast Service Area Contacts:

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