

**Greensboro Neighborhood Congress (GNC)**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**Saturday, July 14, 2012**



**GNC Co-Chairperson Donald Blackstock** convened the July GNC meeting at the Greensboro Central Public Library beginning with our traditional introduction of all participants and presentations by a guest speaker.

**Guest speaker:**

**Russ Clegg of the City Planning & Community Development Department** reminded us that the City of Greensboro annually administers a **Neighborhood Small Projects Program** in which neighborhoods may compete for up to \$20K funding for a **physical project on city property** such as in a city park or on city right-of-way. Examples include signage, lighting, trash receptacles, plantings, etc. The total City expenditure for this Program is \$100K/year, with \$20K/year of that allotted equally within each of the five (5) City Council Districts. Imperative criteria for a successful funding request include: the benefit to your neighborhood, strong evidence of your neighborhood's support, neighborhood need for the project, evidence of your neighborhood's partnering and leveraging additional available resources, and evidence of low maintenance needs if the project were chosen. If a sign is request, you'll must obtain a City sign permit, have it designed by an engineer/architect, complete a right-of-way encroachment document, and acknowledge that long term maintenance is accepted by your neighborhood.

Clegg answered questions and participants offered suggestions for potential improvements in this **Neighborhood Small Projects Program** such as: quantitative and qualitative feedback from the City with benchmarks reporting progress for approved projects, feedback to neighborhoods about projects that were not approved yet could be improved for resubmission the following year, later review of successful projects to evaluate their longer-term effects/success, and a request for City Parks & Recreation staff to attend a future GNC meeting to answer additional questions about how communications can be improved when progress on approved projects is slow. Overall the City **Neighborhood Small Projects Program** is appreciated and timely communications offer even greater participation. Applications for annual City of Greensboro Neighborhood Small Projects program funding are available by visiting [www.greensboro-nc.gov](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov) or contacting Russ Clegg at [russ.clegg@greensboro-nc.gov](mailto:russ.clegg@greensboro-nc.gov) or 336-373-2211. Clegg can direct neighborhoods to City departments relevant to your proposed projects. Project proposals are due Friday, November 30, 2012. Projects are reviewed in January/February and notifications are announced by spring 2013.

**Committee Reports:**

**Membership - Peter Kauber** reported there currently are 48 GNC member associations advocating for 90 neighborhoods. To update your neighborhood's representatives or to encourage GNC meeting attendance, please contact Peter Kauber at 336-852-8791 or e-mail [pkauber@triad.rr.com](mailto:pkauber@triad.rr.com). At Kauber's invitation, **Bill Menius** described how his Westerwood neighborhood successfully requested and received a City **Neighborhood Small Projects Program** grant. The City installed a new median on Hill Street between Smith Street and Mendenhall Street into which a few small trees and dozens of flowering perennials and evergreen plants were planted and serves to help calm traffic entering and exiting the Westerwood neighborhood. Although neighborhood support was shown, there was some vandalism of plants. Overall the reaction has been positive. Through experience it was learned that a 5' shorter median would have made turning easier for large trucks. The neighborhood worked with the Greensboro Department of Transportation (GDOT) to allow this project in the City right-of-way. Neighbors provided weeding and watering. Do not underestimate future maintenance of projects you request! Ensure neighbors are reminded of the project's benefit so their enthusiasm continues.

**Announcements:**

- **Sadie Blue reported the Elwell and Textile** neighborhoods received a grant for their You Only Live Once (YOLO) community cookout to remind youth ages 8-18, their families, and neighborhoods of the value of positive youth decision-making, August 10, 2012, Peeler Center, 1300 Sykes Ave., 6-9 p.m. Everyone is invited to bring neighborhood youth for fun, food, and fellowship yet please contact Sadie Blue at 336-988-5009 or [spoyldsadie@yahoo.com](mailto:spoyldsadie@yahoo.com) if you plan to attend which will aid their planning.

- **Ann Stringfield reported the Fisher Park Neighborhood** received a Building Stronger Neighborhoods (BSN) grant to hire a UNCG Library School student to organize collected documents into a neighborhood archives. The neighborhood originated in 1902 yet officially organized in 1978 and established a local Historic District in 1984 after recognition that, without neighborhood activism, redevelopment pressures would eventually decimate the neighborhood. Neighborhood controversies, activism, losses and and celebrations are evidenced through gathered newsletters, newspaper articles, board agendas/minutes, photographs, and audio-recordings. As the archives are organized, Ann will share archives “lessons learned” with other neighborhoods.
- **Andry Berlowitz of the Glenwood Neighborhood** reminded GNC members to introduce neighbors to a small yet growing Greensboro Tenant Association. Berlowitz will speak with neighborhoods on request. Currently they are working on describing how and why tenants should fully document the condition of rental properties before and after occupancy to confirm security deposit understandings. She is networking with members of the Greensboro Housing Coalition and anticipates teaching tenant's rights and responsibilities.
- **Art Davis of the Old Asheboro Neighborhood** reminded GNC members to visit <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/index.aspx?page=151> to learn about environmental sustainability information and grants available to those hoping to upgrade their home's energy efficiency.

Next meeting is **Thursday, August 9, 7-9 p.m. in the Nussbaum Room of the Central Public Library**. The speaker will be Steve Sumerford, Assistant Director of the Greensboro Public Library, discussing Building Compassionate Communities.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Stringfield of the Fisher Park Neighborhood, July 24, 2012.