

Greensboro Neighborhood Congress (GNC)
Meeting Notes
Saturday, March 10, 2012



GNC Co-Chairperson Donald Blackstock convened the January GNC meeting at the Central Public Library beginning with our traditional introduction of all participants and presentations by guest speakers.

Guest speakers:

Speakers from the **Fund for Democratic Communities** encourage the City of Greensboro to form a task force to adopt **Participatory Budgeting (PB)**, a process by which allocation of 1% of our city budget would be discussed openly and its use determined by public decision-making within each City Council district well before the City budget is approved each year. So far, City Council supports the concept. GNC members are asked to sign postcards supporting the PB process and mail them to Mayor Perkins, to invite the PB group to provide a 1-hour presentation for your neighborhood or civic organization, and to join the PB group if interested. The City Neighborhood Small Project Program is similar in that neighborhoods annually compete for up to \$20K allotted per City Council District. Several members expressed support for increased community participation in budgeting because it involves everyone's tax dollars. <http://f4dc.org/2011/06/june-14-our-money-our-city/>

Donna Newton is Co Chair of the Community Engagement Committee of the City Council appointed Task Force to study the feasibility of building a new **Greensboro Performing Arts Center (GPAC)** downtown and requests a broad-based discussion on its economic feasibility. For updates and details visit www.gpac2012.com. Consultants will compose a community-wide survey which also will be posted to the GNC listserv. Everyone is encouraged to attend community forums:

- March 29, 11:30am-1:30pm and 6:00-7:30pm at the Regency Room
- April 21, 12:00pm-1:30pm and 3:30-5:00 pm at Holy Trinity Haywood – Duke Romm
- May 24, 7:30am-9:00am and 12:00pm-1:30pm and 6:00pm-7:30pm at the Regency Room.

Committee Reports:

Membership - Peter Kauber introduced two neighborhoods applying for GNC membership. 1) **Textile Park Community** has ~150 residences with Linda Bennett as community leader and 2) **Elwell Community & Surrounding Neighbors** has ~200 residences with Sadie Blue as community leader. Both neighborhoods are near Sikes Road. Bennett and Blue briefly described their neighborhoods and initial activities. A motion passed unanimously to accept these two new GNC neighborhood memberships. Kauber reminds all participants to **sign in when attending GNC meetings**. That record of attendance determines your GNC voting privileges. To update your neighborhood's representatives or to help get former GNC members to return to GNC meetings please contact Peter at 336-852-8791 or e-mail pkauber@triad.rr.com. Kauber also asks everyone to encourage previous GNC participants to renew their participation, an initiative that he also will pursue.

Treasurer – Jack Zimmerman reports the GNC has \$585.31 in savings and \$49.53 in checking for a total balance of \$634.84 as of February 29, 2012. At Zimmerman's request, his meticulous records have been reviewed/audited by Donna Newton and Cindy Hayworth and found to be accurate and precise.

Issues & Bylaws –Michael Pendergraft is diligently researching options to reinstate aggressive proactive rental housing inspections since Greensboro's Rental Unit Certificate of Occupancy (RUCO) ordinance was overruled at the state level. A motion passed unanimously "reaffirming GNC support for as vigorous rental housing inspections as possible". This committee led by Marsh Prause also continues to discuss how the City could provide incentives for businesses to occupy underutilized or empty commercial property before rezoning residential property for commercial use, to reduce commercial infiltration into residential neighborhoods.

Building Stronger Neighborhoods Stories

Marie Stamey shared that her neighborhood has successfully used BSN grants for a door-to-door survey of neighborhood interests, a fall festival for children, a Christmas dinner, community signage, and for a youth tutoring program. There are two additional BSN grant application opportunities in 2012.

http://www.cfgg.org/receive/grant_stronger_neighborhoods

Announcements –

- Occupy Greensboro presents speakers for **Save Our Community: Fight Foreclosure!** at the Carolina Theatre March 14, 7:00 p.m., free admittance, and a film “Let’s Lose Our House!” Speakers are experts on foreclosure procedures, local government officials fighting fraudulent foreclosures, and individual stories on local foreclosures. Visit <http://kck.st/FightForeclosures>
- **Laura Jackson** suggests a GNC program on the local homelessness situation. Donna Newton indicated “Partners Ending Homelessness” will present a GNC program in 2012.
- **Bill Menius** asked those with neighborhood newsletters to discuss sharing consistent GNC news through neighborhood newsletters.

Our next GNC meeting is Thursday, April 12, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro. The Central Public Library meeting room is **not** available for our April 2012 GNC meeting. Presentations about Partners Ending Homelessness and the Greensboro Aquatic Center are anticipated.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Stringfield of the Fisher Park Neighborhood, March 12, 2012