

# Greensboro Neighborhood Congress (GNC)

## Meeting Notes

### Saturday, May 14, 2016



GNC Co-Chairperson **Susan Taaffe** convened the **May 2016** GNC meeting at the Central Public Library, beginning with our traditional introduction of all participants.

**Guest speakers** -- City of Greensboro Neighborhood Development Director **Barbara Harris** [Barbara.Harris@greensboro-nc.gov](mailto:Barbara.Harris@greensboro-nc.gov) 336-373-2509, and Code Compliance Manager **Beth Benton** <mailto:Elizabeth.Benton@greensboro-nc.gov>, 336-373-2208, reviewed primary City codes for housing, nuisances, code compliance, and how those intend to support safe, healthy neighborhoods.

Their department manages federal affordable housing funds and has oversight for many housing grants and home loans to serve median to low income rentals and home owners. Examples include housing rehabilitation grants for individuals with incomes below 80% of local median income (example: \$46K for a family of 4), up to \$5K down payment assistance for 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers, and matching multi-housing improvement loans up to \$20K/unit.

Code Compliance is significantly improved thanks to more consistent City rules and enforcement. Civil penalties for non-compliance are now \$200 plus \$10/day with 30-day extensions allowed when significant progress is evident. Most non-compliant cases are in multi-family buildings. Our City retains the right to perform housing repairs then place a lien on a non-compliant property, or if necessary to foreclose on a property. Code compliance improvements in recent years include: reduced time to complaint closure, reduced backlog, repairs encouraged vs. demolition, positive outreach to elderly, disabled, and low income residents, translators for non-English speakers, lists of pending demolitions available to investors interested in rehabilitating properties, and other cooperative efforts. Over 15 churches and civic groups volunteer to help mow and perform minor repairs. Only about 2% of housing code violators now fail to comply, a major improvement in code compliance city-wide.

Code Compliance remains complaint-driven so never hesitate to report complaints to 373-2111 or <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/index.aspx?page=1594>. If 5 minor complaints or 1 major complaint is registered, the City can obtain a warrant to enter and inspect a property. Please educate your neighbors about housing codes, programs available to help, and attend minimum housing commission meetings when seeking a complaint resolution. Also, at [www.SeeClickFix.com](http://www.SeeClickFix.com) anyone may enter a complaint and track progress, even anonymously.

#### **Committee Reports:**

**Treasurer** – Jack Zimmerman reported \$177.31 in GNC checking, \$260.26 in GNC savings, for a total of \$437.57 in GNC accounts as of April 30, 2016.

**Membership** – Chairperson **Gerry Alfano** reminded us to sign-in at all GNC monthly meetings.

**Issues & Bylaws** – No report

#### **Announcements/News:**

- If your neighborhood would like to offer non-partisan **voter registration** during your neighborhood events, such as at your National Night Out event, contact **Sue Stinson** [suestinson1968@yahoo.com](mailto:suestinson1968@yahoo.com) 336-202-8427, a member of the League of Women Voters.
- A recent **Yes Weekly** publication included an article about local water fluoridation that may be of interest.

The next GNC meeting is **Thursday, June 9, 2016, 7-9 p. m.** at City Council Chambers in the Melvin Municipal Office Building, 300 West Washington Street, **not** at the Public Library. Participants may bring a topic of their own interest to *role play* giving a civic presentation. Parking at that time is free in the Eugene Street parking lot.

Visit the GNC website at [www.GreensboroNeighborhoodCongress.org](http://www.GreensboroNeighborhoodCongress.org) for information about the GNC and notes from previous monthly GNC meetings.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Stringfield of the Fisher Park Neighborhood, May 19, 2016.