

## OVERVIEW

Breakout Group B was tasked with (1) discussing the structure of MoRA, including issues relating to bylaws, policies, and committees. It was also charged with (2) how to build community through events and placemaking. The following are some general recommendations:

- ❖ The board needs to define a plan for a set period of time (a year or two), with a short-term plan for implementation of milestones the group wants to meet.
- ❖ Role of the board is to support the mission.
- ❖ Strategic planning by the board to be handled annually at a retreat. How do we sustain the strategic plan?
- ❖ The board, and committees, will each ideally be made of people who are Thinkers, Doers, and Documenters.
- ❖ Board Thinkers communicate and delegate plans to the committees to meet the goals of the mission. Doers put the goals into action. Documenters make sure reports get back to the board as well as to stakeholders; results are captured so that no future board or committee must reinvent the wheel.
- ❖ Committees define an action plan with achievable results. How will it be funded?
- ❖ Committee CHAIRS are individuals who are committed to building a team to complete the tasks at hand. They define an action plan to achieve results, as well as describe who they need on the team and assign responsibilities. Committee chairs manage the team, define outcomes, strategies, processes and accountabilities. [LIAISONS are individuals who accept the responsibility of completing the task with or without assistance - can build teams or committees if desired - report directly to the board. Important that each liaison/committee be responsible for documenting intent, processes and outcomes - a permanent template (through website?) would make this easy - so each board member can pass on experiences to the next group of board members and avoid the need to reinvent the wheel.]
- ❖ Committees should be made up of other community members.
- ❖ The best way to get people involved is to have fun events. Focus mainly on those who want to be involved, because we don't have the bandwidth to court the folks who aren't interested right now.
- ❖ Streamline board agendas to accommodate monthly committee reports. It's important to get people to commit by giving them an action plan to follow.

## Committees

Our current and future work revolves around the following five areas:

- 1) Government and community relations
- 2) Arts, culture and education
- 3) Communication and social media
- 4) Membership and neighborhood outreach
- 5) Sponsorships and fundraising

### 1) Government and community relations

(seek out Breakout A's information here)

- Meet with government officials for advocacy/issues
- Invite government officials to events
- City services involvement
- Being aware of decisions being made in city circles for which we need to be at the table
- Attending hearings if possible
- Making sure we are on the radar of government liaisons
- Check with CMS about MoRA becoming a partnership group (to avoid a lot of the Community Use of Schools red tape)—this might be something for the government committee

**Note as to business engagement:** A top priority for MoRA is to attract high quality businesses to the MoRA area. However, rather than having an outreach effort directed specifically toward seeking out and engaging new business interests, we believe that – initially at least – by strengthening MoRA through our outreach and activities it will have the desirable effect of creating a place where businesses will want to locate. Then, in future years, we may choose to do strategic business recruiting.

Existing corridor businesses are to be contacted and engaged by the Membership and Neighborhood Outreach committee.

## 2) Arts, culture and education

MANDATE: The ACE Committee is tasked with identifying, designing, and hosting events and engagement opportunities that enhance the artistic, cultural and educational experiences of the MoRA community and support the overall mission and goals of MoRA.

- Organize events, but reach out to and depend on support from other committees as appropriate.
- Define goals and deadlines (short-term and long-term).
- Events that we want to continue: (1) community block party, (2) tree lighting (including other holidays for diversity), (3) town hall/annual meeting, (4) government open house/workshop (we invited government representatives from 13 different agencies from city, state and county government [libraries, parks and rec, DOT, CATS, etc.] to be stationed at tables for attendees to visit, get information and ask questions; afterward, perhaps a workshop on relevant issues).
- The success of Meridian Place is important to the growth of the area right now BUT we should try to move a little away from Meridian Place/M Station with events so that MoRA stands on its own. Roy offered two years' use of space for Foodie Court. Foodie Court has an 18-month timeline with certain events built into it. Ask Roy if that option to use a portion of undeveloped space for MoRA events is something we can count on, regardless of whether Foodie Court gets the grant.
- Be sure **all** events are focused on or have an element that responds to attracting new businesses.
- We need to continue our momentum with one MoRA signature event per quarter. More than three months without an event is too long. Have some economical pop-up events (community-wide picnic at the park with music, for example) for engagement—committee to define.
- Consider the event planning more carefully, especially in terms of accessibility and safety. Create a checklist for each event. Develop a re-usable template. Consider MoRA's advertising for the event as well.
- Fewer but more-focused events better.

- May Day event would be good—something inexpensive but engaging. Have a maypole somewhere, since May Day is on the weekend.
- Use the fire pit for Pop Up events and concerts
- Foodie Court narrative and timeline will inspire other ideas.
- Report out at Board meetings.

□ **Ideas for new events**

- Oldsters prom or Parents’ prom (event for parents while kids are at prom)
- Parents’ coffees as part of Foodie Court or otherwise (while children are taking ACT/SAT sessions)
- Picnic in the park
- Gardening event - take advantage of GreenTeachers Network: Edna Chirico has offered \$5000 for a gardening workshop related to Foodie Court. Consider doing this within the next 12 months? Don’t squander this or other successful outreach efforts!
- Tailgate farmer’s market. Note that anything related to food should be labeled “Foodie Court” to demonstrate we are committed to doing what we have said we would!
- Community yard-sale in EM parking or bus lot (\$5 per table)
  - Could invite ONE food truck to come without special permitting
  - Perhaps during ACT or SAT to encourage parents to wander over
- Idea of poster or art ‘competition’/visioning/challenge (see Kathy for details!)
- Are there events at other schools or the library that we can join or enhance?

□ **Discuss the connection between Foodie Court and how it underscores the desire for business recruitment.**

- Food trucks lead to restaurants for Meridian Place or the area.
- The Government and Community Relations committee could identify potential new restaurants, breweries, bakeries, etc. to pass to Foodie Court team to find opportunities for engagement (i.e. samplings, catering MoRA events, etc. – in other words, not just food trucks).
- Ask local existing and potential new restaurants to sponsor an event.
- Foodie Court could be a vehicle to get people from other areas of Charlotte to look at this area, because people don’t tend to look in this direction. FC events could also be a vehicle to engage realtors.
- Don’t want to take on more than we can handle but we also want events to be done credibly, with enough “meat” for them.
- (If we don’t get the grant for Foodie Court, should we still move forward with it? A lot of planning legwork has already been done in FC timeline and budget

□ **How can we most effectively advocate for the Public Art and Foodie Court projects?**

- Advocacy means a strong mandate from the board. The board votes to adopt the intention to create public art opportunities and move forward on a Foodie Court plan for implementation, with or without the big grant. It is necessary for MoRA to decide to make Foodie Court happen and rally behind the concept with conviction and intent to succeed.
- The board or a committee should review the timeline and budget of the FC proposal and extrapolate what is doable/most desirable without a big grant and redraft a new timeline and action plan. Get a board vote and move forward with the idea to begin and continue to submit for big funding at the end of 2016. (Leslie's recommendation is to be ready to launch no later than May 1.)
- A community poll (blackboards or formal survey) should be part of the launch to gather input on exactly what food resources are desired. That info should inform focus of FC going forward.
- Could involve writing grants for funding

### 3) Communication and social media

- Create a precise action plan on how often to communicate (for example, put out one Facebook post per week, soliciting from area groups for content)
  - Define goals and deadlines (short-term and long-term)
  - Report out at Board meetings
  - Chair should be an assigned Board position (defined by grant consultant)
- **How can we publicize existing events to build MoRA community without adding to our own plate (eg schools' events, pottery sale, McAlpine Greenway events, etc.)?**
- Publicize on the website that we are a vehicle for events
  - Can we moderate the Facebook group?
  - Put a form on the website for submission; but someone would still have to moderate it, like the communication committee? Then communication committee can share the calendar via Facebook, Twitter, etc.
  - Only public events would go on the calendar. Create guidelines for submission. Do items respond to MoRA's mission and responsibility to the community?
  - Can the website have an algorithm for checking the events? Have groups register for an account for posting a community event?
  - Perhaps for the first year let anyone submit, but it's moderated. Then after the first year consider if we need to do something different.
  - Check with WFAE or WDAV to see how they post to the calendar.
  - How do we get on other people's calendars? WFAE, Creative Loafing, etc.; put into Communications Chair job description
  - Might need to consider how people in the area get their information. Do a quick survey...including the option "I don't have a place I regularly go to get the info."
- **Where and how to seek free and social media for events?**
- Creative Loafing, Charlotte Agenda, CharlotteFive
  - Need a stable of writers who keep an eye on us and write about us
  - Find people in the community who have strong connections with us
  - Include key folks in the blogosphere, Twitterverse, etc.
  - Reach out to Realtors, and commercial real estate folks as well
  - Communications should solicit a group of neighbors and teens to repost and retweet on a regular basis!
  - Arts & Culture Team should work closely with Communications to be sure and keep flow of information in a timeline manner. Communications will need to advise on deadlines for publishing. EMHS newspaper students could be a good source of writing.

#### 4) Membership and neighborhood outreach (to include existing Corridor businesses)

##### Memberships

- Reach out to neighborhoods and existing businesses
- How do you handle neighborhoods who don't want to be involved?
- Eliminate the neighborhood affiliation so that you take away the idea of power and go with individuals
- Individuals: \$5 or \$10 per family
- Give you a MoRA sticker or car magnet in return.
- **What's the purpose of membership?** Vote at the annual meeting about the strategic plan for MoRA. Make the Town Hall an Annual Meeting.
- Anyone who attends the town Hall/annual meeting can vote, but if you want to show your support via a label or a t-shirt, pay \$10 and become a member.
- At the town hall/annual meeting the board shares what we've done and where we're going. Call to action to be a volunteer, on a committee, or on the board of directors.
- Create a survey to find out (1) priorities that people in the area want to focus on; (2) revisit naming the area? (or other topics); (3) results in a metric for comparing attitudes toward the area from year to year. This allows us to tally; gives people some control and gives MoRA legitimacy.
- Do we set a membership goal? If we have 2000 homes, do we aim for 10% membership the first year? Increase the goal a little every year?
- What (if anything) comes with membership? Consider the idea of WDAV-style membership—we want to advocate, but need operating expenses to do so.
- Remember that membership is more about participation; getting people we can rally to engage, or call upon to help out. (Sign-up to help take down the tree, for example.)
- Need colorful t-shirts to give or sell to members/community members/volunteers. Also need t-shirts for board members, can be same design but use a different colored shirt.
- Create a page on the website of supporters.
- Since we're selling t-shirts and decals, we don't need to worry about tax deductions.
- But we're working on the 501(c)3 nonetheless
- Note that schools and libraries will not be able to contribute.

## Neighborhood outreach

- Define goals and deadlines (short-term and long-term)
- Report out at Board meetings
- 
- Create a form letter about MoRA.
- Make contacts between MoRA and existing businesses
- 
- 
- 
- 

## 5) Sponsorships and fundraising

### Fundraising

- Define goals and deadlines (short-term and long-term)
- Report out at Board meetings
- Fundraising Chair should have a clear mandate to continue to look for funding for FC, with clear guidelines on when and how much funding is needed.
- Paid events?
- Merchandise sales: for instance at Town Hall (and other events), t-shirts, buttons and decals give an opportunity to “show” allegiance/support/enthusiasm.
- What’s the line between encouraging -- vs endorsing – businesses
- An invitation (to participate, sponsor, or collaborate with MoRA or a MoRA-hosted event) made to prospective businesses should also be extended to existing neighborhood businesses to avoid misperceptions.

### Sponsorships

- Solicit sponsorships from businesses, both inside and outside area?
- Need someone on the board dedicated to this who is experienced in sales/sponsorships.
- Can this position be written into a grant?
- Advertisers/sponsors for the website and for events? Both are tangible to advertisers.
- Could have community/neighbor sponsors