

## **SECOND SESSION August 11, 2011**

During the second session with approximately 18 people in attendance, the group loosely discussed the mission and impact statement, with a fair amount of dialogue on the focus of the organization, internal pride versus external promotion. Two-thirds of the group would place more emphasis on activities that increase internal pride--cleaning up, gatherings, welcoming neighbors--while almost one third of the group wanted to focus on promoting Maywood outside our borders to achieve more economic stability and growth. The group discussed Berwyn's advertising as an example of opportunities our town is missing to spur positive draw to our community.

The group added to the list of activities and ideas that was started during the first meeting, and then placed dot-votes (limited to 3 per person) on the lists when asked to answer the question: "What activity or idea would not be done, or done half so well, if NoMCO did not do it?" The items are listed in order of ranking below:

- 7 - Election Forum
- 7 - Clean up community/beautification
- 5 - Market Maywood externally
- 3 - Housewalk
- 4 - Informing neighbors and providing a distribution channel
- 3 - Christmas caroling at seniors homes
- 2 - Welcoming newcomers and their "new energy" to the community
- 2 - Seeding historic homes designations
- 2 - Coordinating a voice to the Village/Advocating to Village for change
- 2 - Generally responding to needs and supporting new initiatives
- 1 - Christmas Parties
- 1 - Vacant houses..."control our destiny"

The corporate and nonprofit status of the organization was raised during this meeting relevant to what types of activities can be conducted and what type of fund raising is allowed. There was general desire for increasing income generation in order to increase capacity for activities. Collaboration with other organizations was discussed as well, and a general acknowledgement that NoMCO would have to work intentionally to do this well since it was difficult to quickly identify organizations, beyond a small handful, who we would like to collaborate with.

### **Emerging Themes (learning so far in strategic planning process):**

- Desire to focus both inward, building community pride, and outward, promoting Maywood to the outside community.
- Need for being more inclusive and strategic in developing membership and forming collaborations. As well as need to educate ourselves in this area.
- Need to make the board leadership, committee structures and meetings more effective.

## Burning Questions (to date)

- How can we do justice to the community-wide model we have embraced by expanding our borders?
- How do we respond to the declining property values, vacant homes and general economic decline which is hurting community pride and threatening our external promotion?
- How can we address an aging population of NoMCO leaders and build membership for greater sustainability and impact in the community?
- How do we find the right balance between inside-out and outside-in strategies?
- What kind of corporate structure (501c etc) is most appropriate for the strategies and activities we choose?
- How can we become more sustainable in our business model--fundraising or earned income, membership and volunteer development?