

THE GREENSBORO NEIGHBORHOOD CONGRESS, INC.
· BYLAWS ·

ARTICLE I
NAME AND MEMBERSHIP

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 12, 2004
AMENDED NOVEMBER 13, 2004

- 1.1 The name of this North Carolina non-profit corporation shall be The Greensboro Neighborhood Congress, Inc. (“the GNC”).
- 1.2 The GNC shall be a nondiscriminatory and nonprofit corporation.
- 1.3 Any person may be a participant in the GNC, meaning that any person is entitled to attend GNC meetings and address the GNC. Membership in the GNC, however, shall be limited to neighborhoods that are located entirely within the municipal limits of the City of Greensboro, that have been recognized with distinct geographic boundaries by the GNC, and that have had at least one representative (or alternate) in attendance at 50% of the meetings of the GNC over the last three months. Member neighborhoods recognized by the GNC shall be entitled to vote at GNC meetings through individual representatives designated by neighborhood organizations recognized by the GNC, as described below. Therefore, the GNC’s activities shall involve (1) participants (any individual who wants to participate); (2) members (recognized neighborhoods); (3) neighborhood organizations (recognized by the GNC as corresponding to member neighborhoods); and (4) representatives (individuals entitled to vote as the designees of recognized neighborhood organizations).
- 1.4 Consistent with section 1.3, above, the GNC shall follow the following procedures for recognizing (1) neighborhoods; (2) neighborhood organizations (including homeowners associations, community groups, and crime watch groups), and (3) representatives of neighborhoods.
 - 1.4.1 **Recognition of Neighborhoods:** The GNC shall recognize neighborhoods within the municipal limits of the City of Greensboro. (The GNC shall not recognize any neighborhoods outside of the municipal limits of the City of Greensboro.) Each neighborhood that the GNC recognizes shall be recognized in terms of explicitly specified geographic boundaries. For the GNC’s purposes, no geographical area shall be considered to simultaneously comprise part of more than a single recognized neighborhood. In other words, no single property shall be deemed by the GNC to be within or part of more than one recognized neighborhood. In determining the boundaries to recognize for a neighborhood, the GNC shall use the procedures set out below:
 - A. The Executive Committee of the GNC shall meet from time to time, either upon its own initiative or at the request of a member of the GNC, to formulate a recommendation to the GNC, consistent with the terms of this section 1.4.1, concerning which neighborhoods the GNC should recognize. In formulating such recommendations, the Executive Committee shall consider the following factors:

1. The recommendation of the Greensboro Neighborhood Information Center, which has historically maintained a list of neighborhoods in the City;
2. The boundaries recognized by a neighborhood organization that the GNC has recognized (if any) pursuant to the provisions of subsection 1.4.2, below, as representing the interests of all or a portion of the geographic area(s) at issue;
3. Recognition by the City of Greensboro, including the map of neighborhood boundaries maintained by the Planning Department on its website, neighborhood boundaries used by the Department of Housing and Community Development to conduct studies and surveys, boundaries used for HUD funding or redevelopment projects; and the approach of other City departments toward an area.
4. Because plat maps defining the initial boundaries of a subdivision are determined by the happenstance of which developer owned the real property at the time it was initially developed, and because neighborhood boundaries often evolve significantly and meaningfully over time beyond subdivision boundaries on plat maps, plat maps shall (subject to the exception noted in the next sentence) be given limited weight relative to the other criteria listed above in determining neighborhood boundaries, particularly in circumstances where many years have passed since the area(s) at issue were initially platted. However, if the platted area is a subdivision with legal covenants mandating membership in and payment of dues to a homeowner's association by all property owners in the subdivision, then the boundaries shown on the plat map for the subdivision shall be given heavy weight relative to the other criteria listed above in determining neighborhood boundaries.

B. The Executive Committee's recommendation concerning which neighborhoods the GNC should recognize shall be presented to the GNC on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis for adoption by a majority vote of the GNC.

1.4.2 **Recognition of Neighborhood Organizations:** The GNC shall recognize neighborhood organizations in terms of the boundaries of the geographic area each such organization is deemed to represent.

1.4.2.1 Pursuant to the procedures established by this subsection 1.4.2, the GNC shall consider recognizing a neighborhood organization upon receipt by the GNC of a written request for recognition from a neighborhood organization that claims to represent the interests of a specified geographic area that lies entirely within the municipal limits of the City of Greensboro.

1.4.2.2 In order to avoid disproportionate representation, the GNC believes that it is critical that there shall be only one neighborhood organization recognized by the GNC within any distinct geographic area.

- 1.4.2.3 If only one neighborhood organization seeks to obtain/retain recognition from the GNC as representing a particular parcel or parcels of property, then the GNC shall deem that neighborhood organization to be the recognized neighborhood organization for the geographic area at issue, as long as it either (i) is a homeowners association for a subdivision that has legal covenants mandating membership in and payment of dues to the homeowners association by all property owners in the subdivision, or (ii) meets all of the following criteria for minimal organization: (a) it has consistently articulated a geographic area with specified boundaries that it claims to represent; (b) it convenes a meeting/activity at least one time per year; (c) it has consistently identified itself with a name; (d) it possesses a defined governance structure (i.e., someone is “in charge” of the organization and/or serves as a “contact person”); (e) more than two people who reside within the geographic area at issue are involved in the organization’s efforts; and (f) it has presented itself as an organization during the last twelve months in some written form at least once, including through organizational documents (mission statement, bylaws, articles of incorporation, minutes of meetings, etc.), a newsletter, a website, invitations to events and/or activities, or correspondence.
- 1.4.2.4 If more than one neighborhood organization seeks to obtain/retain recognition from the GNC as representing a particular parcel or parcels of property (including circumstances where a second neighborhood organization seeks such recognition after a different neighborhood organization has already obtained it from the GNC), the GNC shall make a decision concerning which one of the neighborhood organizations seeking recognition for that parcel or parcels of property shall be recognized by the GNC. To make such a decision, the GNC shall follow the procedures described below:
- A. The Executive Committee shall meet to formulate a recommendation to the GNC concerning which one of the neighborhood organizations seeking recognition from the GNC for the geographic area at issue shall be recognized by the GNC. If only one of the neighborhood organizations would satisfy the criteria for minimal organization pursuant to section 1.4.2.3 above, the Executive Committee shall recommend recognition for that neighborhood organization. Otherwise, in formulating the recommendation, the Executive Committee shall consider the following factors:
1. Which of the organizations has the longest tradition or history of meaningful involvement within the geographic area at issue;
 2. Which of the organizations has a more developed organizational structure, including legal status, financial/tax status, bylaws, and governance structure;
 3. Which of the organizations has achieved the greatest breadth and depth of accomplishments for the geographic area at issue and its residents;

4. Which of the organizations is and has been the most inclusive and open in representing the interests of the residents of the geographic area at issue, including the convening of pre-announced, open meetings and regular, pre-announced organizational elections;
5. Which of the organizations is and has been most active in reaching out to and involving residents of the geographic area at issue, including through meetings, activities, newsletters, and electronic media (e.g., website); and
6. Which of the organizations (if any) is a homeowners association for a subdivision that has legal covenants mandating membership in and payment of dues to the homeowners association by all property owners in the subdivision.

B. Following a presentation to the GNC of the Executive Committee's recommendation concerning which one of the neighborhood organizations seeking recognition from the GNC for the geographic area at issue should be recognized by the GNC, the GNC shall vote by majority vote concerning which one of the neighborhood organizations is recognized, based on consideration of the six factors specified in section 1.4.2.4(A), above.

1.4.3 **Recognized Representatives to the Congress and Voting Membership:** Each neighborhood recognized by the GNC pursuant to subsection 1.4.1 shall have at least one and not more than three votes on any issue put to a vote of the GNC as a whole (as opposed to the Committees of the GNC). The number of votes a neighborhood receives shall be determined by the number of dwelling units in that neighborhood. Neighborhoods with 400 or fewer dwelling units within their geographic boundaries shall have one vote. Neighborhoods with 401 to 800 dwelling units within their geographic boundaries shall have two votes. Neighborhoods with 801 or more dwelling units within their geographic boundaries shall have three votes. These votes shall be cast by the recognized representative(s) (or alternate(s) substituting for the recognized representative(s)) of the neighborhood organization recognized by the GNC pursuant to subsection 1.4.2 for that particular neighborhood. The recognized representatives of all of the neighborhood organizations recognized by the GNC shall constitute the voting membership of the GNC.

1.4.3.1 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for determining how many dwelling units are located within each neighborhood recognized by the GNC using census data, input from a neighborhood or community organization recognized as representing all or part of the community or neighborhood at issue, and information from other sources. In doing so, the Executive Committee shall use the definition of "dwelling unit" found in the Code of Ordinances for the City of Greensboro. The Executive Committee's determinations concerning how many dwelling units are located within each neighborhood or community recognized by the GNC shall be subject to ratification by majority vote of the GNC. If the number of dwelling units in a neighborhood is not near the significant thresholds of 400 dwelling units or 800 dwelling units, a rough approximation shall suffice.

- 1.4.3.2 The Executive Committee shall recognize a representative of a particular member neighborhood upon receipt of a written request from the neighborhood organization recognized by the GNC for that neighborhood asking the GNC to recognize a specified individual resident of the member neighborhood as a representative of that neighborhood. Each neighborhood recognized by the GNC must have at least one recognized representative to the GNC and may have as many recognized representatives to the GNC as it has votes (i.e., two representatives for 401 to 800 dwelling units and three representatives for 801 or more dwelling units). Member neighborhoods may follow the same procedure to designate alternates for their recognized representatives. Each representative recognized by the GNC shall serve on at least one committee of the GNC.
- 1.4.3.3 If a particular neighborhood recognized by the GNC is entitled to more than one vote on an issue before the GNC pursuant to subsection 1.4.3 (because there are more than 400 dwelling units located within that neighborhood's geographic boundaries), the votes that particular neighborhood is entitled to cast shall be cast by that neighborhood's representatives (or their recognized alternates), but each individual representative (or alternate) of the neighborhood may cast only a single vote.
- 1.4.4 Subject to the oversight of the Executive Committee, the Membership/Recruitment Committee shall be responsible for maintaining lists identifying (1) the neighborhoods recognized by the GNC pursuant to subsection 1.4.1; (2) the neighborhood organizations recognized by the GNC pursuant to subsection 1.4.2; and (3) the GNC's voting membership (the individuals recognized by the GNC as representatives of member neighborhoods pursuant to subsection 1.4.3). The Membership/Recruitment Committee also shall, upon request, assist any neighborhood or organization seeking recognition from the GNC.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSES

ADOPTED JULY 10, 2004

- 2.1 The purposes of the GNC shall be: To create and foster a City-wide alliance of neighborhoods with the objective of improving the quality of life within the City of Greensboro by addressing issues of City-wide importance and by empowering neighborhoods to resolve neighborhood-specific concerns.

In endeavoring to achieve these purposes, the GNC shall adhere to the following principles:

- 2.1.1 The promotion of safe, crime-free neighborhoods Citywide.
- 2.1.2 The enhancement, maintenance, and preservation of property values in neighborhoods Citywide.
- 2.1.3 The encouragement of neighborhood residents to become acquainted with their neighbors.
- 2.1.4 The selection of members of an Executive Committee that shall take such actions as may be deemed appropriate to advance the GNC's purpose consistent with its principles.
- 2.1.5 The encouragement of neighborhoods to become active in the GNC by participating through representation in the GNC, its committees, and activities.

ARTICLE III
FINANCES AND FISCAL YEAR

ADOPTED JULY 10, 2004

- 3.1 The revenue of the GNC shall be derived from donations, grants, fundraising projects, program and activity fees, and other sources approved by the Executive Committee, including any voluntary membership contributions approved by the Executive Committee. The GNC shall not accept any donation of money, goods, or services reasonably valued in excess of \$1000 per calendar year without prior approval of the Executive Committee.
- 3.2 The fiscal year for the GNC shall be the calendar year.
- 3.3 No person shall make nor be reimbursed for any purchase of goods or services on behalf of the GNC without prior approval from the Treasurer or one of the Co-Chairs for expenditures of up to \$50, or without prior written approval from a majority of the Executive Committee for expenditures of more than \$50.
- 3.4 All GNC checks, regardless of amount, shall be signed by the Treasurer and one of the Co-Chairs.
- 3.5 The GNC shall accept no donations from declared political candidates.

ARTICLE IV
ESTABLISHMENT, ELECTION, AND DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(AS IT RELATES TO THE CONGRESS AS A WHOLE)

ADOPTED NOVEMBER 13, 2004

- 4.1 The GNC's Executive Committee (with as many as 13 members) is to be composed of the officers of the GNC (two Co-Chairs, a Secretary, and a Treasurer), the chairpersons of the five standing GNC committees (Finance, Membership, Communications, Summit Planning, and Issues & Bylaws), and four "at large" representatives. Each "at large" representative shall reside in a separate geographic quadrant of Greensboro (using Market and Elm Streets as quadrant axes) and shall be a GNC representative who does not hold any of the other positions identified above.
- 4.2 The Executive Committee guides the GNC's activities and is the GNC's primary implementation body. The Executive Committee brings all decisions regarding broad policy issues and positions on potentially controversial issues to a vote of the GNC's representatives, although the Executive Committee may make non-binding recommendations to the GNC. Decisions of the Executive Committee may be overruled by a 2/3 majority vote of GNC representatives.
- 4.3 The Executive Committee shall make all decisions by majority vote (unless otherwise specified). In case of a tie, the matter being voted on is defeated but may be voted on again at any time. No representative shall have more than one vote on the Executive Committee at any given time.
- 4.4 All positions listed above have terms of roughly two-years. To stagger terms, elections are held at the GNC's first meeting during each calendar year as follows:
- 4.4.1 In even calendar years (e.g., 2006, 2008, etc.), the positions open for election are: one of the two GNC Co-Chairs; the Treasurer; the Chairpersons of the Summit Planning and Issues & Bylaws committees; and the "at large" positions for the northwest and southeast quadrants.
- 4.4.2 In odd calendar years (e.g., 2005, 2007, etc.), the positions open for election are: the GNC Co-Chair not open for election in even calendar years; the Secretary; the Chairpersons of the Membership, Finance, and Communications committees; and the "at large" positions for the northeast and southwest quadrants.
- 4.5 Annual elections at the first GNC meeting each calendar year are conducted by the Co-Chair not up for election that year, who requests nominations for open positions. Any representative in attendance may nominate another representative in attendance or self-nominate. Once nominations are complete, each nominee has two minutes to address the GNC concerning their candidacy. After nominee addresses, each attending representative may submit an anonymous written ballot indicating their choice among the nominees for each open position. The candidate for each position receiving the most votes is elected to fill that position.
- 4.6 The Executive Committee's duties include:
- 4.6.1 Voting on potential actions of the GNC and communication of such votes to the GNC;
- 4.6.2 Overseeing the content of any publication or other media to be distributed by the GNC;

- 4.6.3 Serving as the principal liaison between the GNC and other organizations, including governmental entities;
 - 4.6.4 Overseeing the activities of all committees of the GNC;
 - 4.6.5 Establishing, overseeing, utilizing, and disbanding special committees of the GNC;
 - 4.6.6 Meeting as convened by the GNC Co-Chairs (who also serve as Executive Committee Co-Chairs);
 - 4.6.7 Setting and communicating the agenda for each GNC meeting; and
 - 4.6.8 Maintaining and promoting the GNC's credibility by advancing the purposes and principles set forth in GNC Bylaws Article II.
- 4.7 When an Executive Committee position becomes vacant before a routine GNC annual election, a special election to fill the vacancy is announced at the next regular meeting of the GNC, and at the next regular GNC meeting following that announcement, the GNC Co-Chairs conduct a special election to fill that position for the remainder of the applicable term. Procedures for nominations and voting at a special GNC election are the same as for routine GNC annual elections.