

**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
Pinellas County
February 2, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (as created by the Florida Statutes, Section 420.9076(2) and Pinellas County Ordinance 93-30, as amended) met in regular session in the Clerk's Fourth Floor Conference Room at the Pinellas County Courthouse, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Steven Beal, Housing Finance Authority (HFA) Member, Low-Income Advocate
Robyn Fiel, HFA Member, Mortgage/Real Estate Professional
Pat Gerard, County Commissioner, Elected Official
Kristina Kovarik, HFA Member
Frances M. Pheeny, Not-for-Profit Provider of Affordable Housing
Kim Wagner, HFA Member, For-Profit Provider of Affordable Housing

Not Present

Paul Burroughs, HFA Member, Banking Industry
Denise M. Deja, Low-Income Advocate
Sean King, Not-for-Profit Developer of Affordable Housing
Shannon L. Love, Resident of Jurisdiction
Darren D. Lydting, Banking Industry

Others Present

Sheri Harris, Pinellas County Section Manager
Daphne Johnson-McCluster, Pinellas County Community Planning Specialist
Blake Lyon, Pinellas County Building and Development Review Services Director
Glenn Bailey, Pinellas County Zoning Manager
Teresa Ribble, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk
Other interested individuals

All documents provided to the Clerk's Office have been made a part of the record.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Harris called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM and requested that those in attendance introduce themselves.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointing of Officers

Ms. Harris requested that the Committee appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the coming year. Following brief discussion, Ms. Kovarik nominated Robyn Fiel to serve as Chairman, and the nomination was seconded by Ms. Pheeny; whereupon, Ms. Fiel nominated Ms. Kovarik to serve as Vice-Chairman, and the nomination was seconded by Mr. Beal. No objections were noted, and Ms. Harris thanked Mses. Fiel and Kovarik for agreeing to serve in the positions.

Project Management Overview

Following introductory comments by Ms. Harris, Mr. Lyon provided a brief summary of the functions of the Building and Development Review Services (BDRS) Department and indicated that, for the past two years, a consultant has been reviewing and evaluating the Department's processes and service delivery models; whereupon, he explained that a project management component has been implemented in order to assist applicants with navigation through the development and regulatory processes. He noted that while the project management element will continue to be refined, three levels of project managers have been hired; and that the program is being developed to provide applicants with a single point of contact to act as an internal facilitator on their behalf.

Review of Expediting Permitting Incentive

Mr. Lyon briefly discussed the categories which qualify for expedited permitting and how simultaneous priority submittals are handled; whereupon, he provided the following information related to the affordable housing projects and the expedited permitting process:

- Process for designation as an affordable housing project
- Two-week target goal for expedited review
- Current timeframe, issues, and statistics related to the expedited review process
- Evaluation of methodology for applying incentives contained in the Land Development Code

Responding to a query by Mr. Beal, Mr. Lyon indicated that the timeframe for project approval is currently 25 to 30 days; that property and site factors contribute to complicating the approval process; and that the development of the project management element and the procurement of consulting staff augments the ability to decrease the length of the approval process. Expanding on his response, Mr. Lyon discussed efforts to normalize operations related to effects of the pandemic and challenges and opportunities that developers encounter related to affordable housing projects.

Review of Density Bonus

Ms. Harris noted that the Committee is responsible for reviewing affordable housing incentives; and that a review of density bonuses is part of a requirement that is submitted in a report to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) and is tied to state funding; whereupon, Mr. Bailey discussed the following topics relative to density bonuses and affordable housing projects:

- Components of the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan, including the allowance of a 50% density bonus based upon a site's land use category
- Percentage requirements for affordable housing units and density bonus incentive
- Density bonus consideration based upon preferred location criteria specified in the Comprehensive Plan, such as proximity to places of employment and transit opportunities
- Evaluation for site compatibility with surrounding development pattern

In response to a query by Ms. Wagner, Mr. Bailey, with input by Mr. Lyon, indicated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency updates maps related to Coastal High Hazard Areas; and that the Comprehensive Plan contains the overarching policies, direction, and vision, so that staff can review each development proposal and apply the policies, including in the areas of sea level rise and storm inundation.

Responding to additional queries by Ms. Wagner, Mr. Lyon explained that properties in the County, with the exception of any which are not zoned, have a zoning designation; that the zoning designation establishes development parameters, including height limitations; and that he believes that Florida Building Code requires the installation of an elevator in buildings which are three stories and above; whereupon, he provided information regarding discussions during the current legislative session, which may lead to adoption of required milestone safety inspections for buildings three stories and above and with more frequency for buildings within three miles of a coastline.

Mr. Bailey noted that zoning districts also establish the type of housing which can be constructed; and that affordable housing projects are afforded additional incentive opportunities, such as reduced lot sizes, decreased setback requirements, and fewer parking spaces.

In response to a query by Mr. Beal, Mr. Lyon explained that buildings constructed in a Coastal High Hazard Area would be bound to certain standards, including the use of non-

habitable components, such as garage and/or storage space, in order to get to a base elevation level.

OTHER BUSINESS

Referencing the *2022 Draft AHAC Workplan* document provided at today's meeting, Ms. Harris related that it contains a proposed schedule to allow the members the opportunity to analyze the affordable housing incentives; and that the incentives will be contained in the report required by Florida Housing. She explained that the goal is to have the review completed by October 2022; that the Board of County Commissioners will need to provide approval of the report prior to its submittal to Florida Housing; and that the report must be submitted before the close of 2022 in order to continue receiving State Housing Initiative Partnership funding; whereupon, she requested that the members provide feedback regarding additional items for the review.

Chair Fiel noted that Yom Kippur falls on October 5; whereupon, Ms. Harris indicated that she would research alternative dates for the public hearing in October.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 PM.