

**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee  
Pinellas County  
March 6, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) (as created by Florida Statute 420.9076(2) and Pinellas County Ordinance 93-30, as amended) met in regular session at 4:10 PM on this date in the Palm Room at the Pinellas County Communications Building, 333 Chestnut Street, Clearwater, Florida

**Present**

Robyn Fiel, Chairman, Housing Finance Authority (HFA) Member, Mortgage/Real Estate Professional  
Steve Baumann, HFA Member, Resident of Jurisdiction  
René Flowers, County Commissioner, Elected Official  
Elise Minkoff, Low-Income Housing Advocate  
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  
Sean King, Not-for-Profit Developer of Affordable Housing  
Shannon L. Love, Resident of Jurisdiction  
Tammy Hicks, Provider of Affordable Housing

**Others Present**

Sheri Harris, Pinellas County Housing Section Manager  
Derrill McAteer, Pinellas County Senior Assistant County Attorney  
Franchesca DiNapoli, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk  
Other interested individuals

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Fiel called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM. At her request, those in attendance introduced themselves.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Pheeny moved that the minutes of the regular meeting held on October 11, 2023, be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Minkoff and carried unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Following an introduction by Ms. Pheeny, City of St. Petersburg AHAC Chairman Scott Macdonald indicated that members of the St. Petersburg AHAC have had conversations regarding some overlap with particular items and asked him to bring them forward for discussion with the County's AHAC.

### Shelter Mitigation Fee for Development in the Coastal High Hazard Zone

Mr. Macdonald indicated that in 2020, the City of St. Petersburg approved some changes to development in the Coastal High Hazard Area, which included provisions for increased density. He related that the increased density approval included a required shelter mitigation fee to be paid to the County; that it is his understanding that nothing has moved forward since the approval; and that, as a result, no increased density has occurred.

Responding to a query by Ms. Wagner, Mr. Macdonald explained that increased density in the Coastal High Hazard Area of the City cannot be approved until a program is created for utilization of the shelter mitigation fees; whereupon, he related that City Councilmember Brandi Gabbard, whose district is significantly impacted by the Coastal High Hazard Area, requested that it be discussed with the County's AHAC with the hope of spurring movement at the County level.

Commissioner Flowers provided insight regarding the County's use of Pinellas County Schools as shelters during storm events.

### Multi-Modal Impact Fee Waiver Discussion

Referring to the multi-modal impact fee, Mr. Macdonald indicated that there currently exists a partial waiver for affordable housing; and that the St. Petersburg AHAC would like to determine if the County's AHAC would be open to making a recommendation to Forward Pinellas for the possibility of a full waiver.

### The Local Option Tax Exemption Under Live Local

Referencing Senate Bill 102, Mr. Macdonald indicated that it includes provisions to allow an ad valorem tax exemption for workforce housing, excluding developments with a Florida Housing Finance Corporation Land Use Restrictive Agreement and those which

have received Florida Housing funding; whereupon, he noted that the aforementioned developments become fully tax exempt after 15 years through a Florida statute.

Mr. Macdonald related that a local exemption has been put into place for the City's portion of the millage rate; and that the St. Petersburg AHAC would like for the County's AHAC to consider making a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for implementation of an exemption for County taxes.

Responding to a query by Commissioner Flowers, Mr. Macdonald indicated that the statute only provides for the ad valorem tax exemption as long as household income is less than 80% of area median income; that the normal term of affordability for Florida Housing Finance Corporation developments is 50 years; and that the new local option provides counties and cities the ability to institute an exemption for the first 15 years.

In response to a query by Ms. Harris, Mr. Macdonald indicated that the City has already implemented the local option and is receiving applications for a 2024 exemption; whereupon, Mr. Macdonald thanked the members for allowing him to attend today's meeting and expressed hope that the two groups can work together to increase affordability in Pinellas County.

Commissioner Flowers provided brief comments regarding the potential fiscal impact of fee waivers and the length of affordability; whereupon, Chairman Fiel noted that the Housing Finance Authority just voted to increase its affordability period from 30 to 50 years.

## **DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM COMPARISON DISCUSSION**

Ms. Harris provided a handout and indicated that its contents pertain to a discussion from the October AHAC meeting, at which she committed to conducting a comparison of other jurisdictions' homeownership and purchase price limit programs; whereupon, she provided an overview of purchase price maximums for the jurisdictions listed, and a lengthy discussion ensued.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Harris indicated that she plans to invite guests to the next meeting to discuss a few topics; whereupon, Ms. Wagner and Commissioner Flowers provided brief comments regarding the Live Local Act.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 PM.