

MINUTES

**County of Volusia
Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
Wednesday, January 21, 2016 3:00pm
TCK Administration Building, GRM – DRC Conference Room 2018
123 W. Indiana Avenue
DeLand, Florida 32720**

Committee Members Present	Committee Members Absent	Staff Present
Tadd Kasbeer, Chair	Shannon McLeish	Diana Phillips, Manager, Housing and Grants Administration
Janet Hamer, Vice Chair	Gerard Smith	Paula Szabo, Housing & Grants Planner
Sandra Murphy	Derek Triplett	Susan Jackson, Senior Planning Manager
Carl Persis		
Rosemary Walker		

The meeting of the Volusia County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Tadd Kasbeer. Paula Szabo called the roll and it was determined that a quorum was not present. The members present agreed to remain for a general discussion of the incentive strategies on the meeting agenda, although no official action would be taken.

Public Participation. There were no members of the public that requested to participate.

Item 1 – Minutes

The approval of minutes of the meeting held on January 13, 2016 was tabled until the public hearing due to lack of quorum, and the late distribution of the minutes provided insufficient review time.

Item 2 – Discussion of previously recommended affordable housing incentive strategies adopted and review of actions taken by Volusia County – Strategy F, G, H, J and K

Discussion of Incentive Strategy F: “The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing”

The Chair reviewed Incentive Strategy F, including the one recommendation that was approved by the AHAC in 2012. The Chair explained this strategy was part of the prior AHAC’s intention to promote cluster and mixed-use zoning as a strategy for affordable housing development. Susan Jackson noted that the county’s growth & resource management (GRM) department has not moved forward with completing a mixed-use zoning category or an affordable housing ordinance. There is some mixed use zoning in place around the planned Deland rail station. Sandra Murphy asked how close are the planned unit development (PUD) requirements to the setback model proposed by the AHAC. A discussion followed on the process used to obtain a planned unit development (PUD) which involves a negotiation with county staff and the county council, and the desirability of a process that avoided the need for re-zoning.

Further discussion followed regarding the need for the county to enforce incentives that are awarded to a developer to create affordable housing. Susan Jackson stated that the enforcement mechanism has been a concern for the county. Janet Hamer added that it has

been difficult for local government to enforce these incentives, as it requires ongoing monitoring. Tadd Kasbeer noted that purchasers of affordable housing units should not be penalized by limiting resale options. Paula Szabo mentioned that the community land trust (CLT) model had been used by many communities over the years to ensure continued affordability for homeowner housing developments. Janet Hamer reported that CLTs are not working well in Florida, and very few are still operating in the state, except for very high priced areas, such as Key West. A general consensus was reached to continue support for the recommendation as drafted.

Discussion of Incentive G – “The allowance of flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line configurations for affordable housing”

The Chair reviewed this strategy, and Recommendation 1 which continues the support of the prior AHAC’s to consider affordable housing clustering as a approach separate from the PUD permitted under the county’s Comprehensive Plan.

The remainder of the discussion under this strategy focused on Recommendation 2 – discontinuing the practice of administratively combining non-conforming lots that have common ownership if the owner self-certifies that the lots will be developed for affordable housing. Rosemary Walker explained that the practice of requiring lot combinations by the county, and the cities, creates a hardship for her organization, Southeast Volusia Habitat for Humanity. In many cases each of the non-conforming lots already has a residence on the lot. Many times these small lots are a family’s only significant asset. Habitat has had to become creative and develop only one lot at a time so that they do not own adjoining lots at the same time, and be forced to combine into one lot.

Susan Jackson explained that the practice of administratively combining non-conforming lots is a long standing planning tool for local governments. The intention of the rule is to bring the lots up to the development pattern that is currently being used. She further explained that GRM is cognizant of these concerns and is exploring four areas in the county, two on the beachside, to recommend that the county administratively re-zone as a tool to promote lot flexibility. She gave an example of a subdivision that was platted many years ago as 25 foot wide lots for mobile homes, and over the years most owners have purchased several lots and developed larger homes. She stated that grandfathering is allowed to replace a single house on a non-conforming lot.

A general consensus was reached to continue support for the recommendation as drafted.

Discussion of Incentive H – “The modification of street requirements for affordable housing”

The Chair commenced the discussion by reviewing the strategy, and the one recommendation proposed by the AHAC in 2012. He noted that this recommendation was also tied into the concept of using clustering subdivision for affordable housing. In general because of safety concerns with allowing on-street parking, the prior recommendation was quite limited. It was noted that on-street parking remains prohibited per section 72-612 of the county’s land development code. A waiver provision exists that allows consideration of such a proposal, but the public safety concerns would usually override. Rosemary Walker recalled that in her opinion that the AHAC was kind of stretching it to make this recommendation in 2012. Janet Hamer further added that subdivision designs can also go a long way to destroying the look of a subdivision. Tadd Kasbeer noted that on-street parking can also have the effect of slowing down traffic. A general consensus was not reached regarding continuing support for this recommendation.

Discussion of Incentive J – “The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public land suitable for affordable housing”

The Chair commenced the discussion by reviewing the strategy, and stating that the AHAC had not made any recommendations regarding this strategy in 2012. Susan Jackson provided an update of the current status of the county’s inventory of locally owned land. Staff has recently been tasked by upper management with updating the inventory of county owned land. The bulk of county-owned vacant land is being held for conservancy and recreational purposes. Paula Szabo noted that in accordance with state statute the county periodically updates its inventory of county-owned lands that are suitable for affordable housing. She has in the past provided the inventory to area housing non-profit organizations for their review and consideration. She stated that this printed inventory would be linked on their website in the future to make more available to its intended users.

Janet Hamer questioned whether the county maintains a vacant property registry. Many local governments use such a registry to be notified of ownership (especially helpful during the foreclosure boom) as a tool to enforce maintenance of the property. Carl Persis noted that this issue had been discussed by county council and recommended asking county legal if such a registry was in use. A general consensus was reached to continue that no recommendation be made.

Discussion of Incentive K – “The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-use developments”

The Chair commenced the discussion by reviewing the strategy, and stating that the AHAC had made four recommendations regarding this strategy in 2012. Susan Jackson provided an update of the current status. She stated that the city of DeBary is looking into a transit oriented development (TOD) around the DeBary commuter train station. The county has a mixed-use development overlay in place for the area around the planned DeLand train station. However, most of the transportation hubs are within municipal boundaries where the county does not have policy influence. The unincorporated areas along the I-4 corridor are not necessarily conducive to the development of affordable housing.

Recommendation 1 – Tadd Kasbeer suggested a re-wording of this recommendation to focus on future planned transportation hubs as follows: “County should consider if infrastructure is available in future planned transportation hubs (e.g., adjacent to planned commuter rail stations) that would be necessary to support and encourage the development of affordable housing.”

Recommendation 2 – Tadd Kasbeer noted that the impact fees are being studied by the county, with a focus on transportation impact fees. Susan Jackson stated that she will report back on traffic impact fees to the committee. A discussion followed on employment centers within the county, and it was agreed that most employment centers are within municipal boundaries.

Recommendation 3 – A brief discussion of this recommendation followed. It was generally agreed that this recommendation is redundant, and could be deleted.

Recommendation 4 – A brief discussion of this recommendation followed. It was generally agreed that this recommendation is redundant, and could be deleted.

Discussion by committee members of matters not on the agenda.

There were no items of discussion by committee members not on the agenda.

Items for staff discussion. Diana Phillips reported that Susan Jackson has amended the GRM Development Application that was reviewed at last week's meeting to provided information and a link regarding Affordable Housing Development as was recommended by the AHAC. The GRM and community assistance division's website pages are being updated as well. Susan Jackson also reported that an internal form used by GRM staff as an aid in meeting with developers of proposed developments has been revised to include a prompt for staff to consider whether affordable housing is being considered.

Paula Szabo reviewed that the public hearing is set as follows:

- **AHAC public hearing – Wednesday, February 3, 2016 3:00 pm – Volusia County Health Department, Conference Room 516B**

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Attachments to the Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of January 13, 2016