



## **Land Development Regulations Affinity Group – Meeting #1 - January 19, 2022**

### **Attendees:**

Phyllis Allen  
Jessica Gow  
Tracey Barlow  
Joanna Maldonado  
Bob Williams

D.J. Lebo  
Karen Delisle  
Randy Jenkins  
Sara Lee Morrissey  
Scott Banta

Trinity Kutschinski attended the meeting virtually.

D.J. Lebo, introduced herself as the Committee Chair, and welcomed the Land Development Regulations (LDR) committee members for volunteering. A vote was taken to allow Trinity to participate in the meeting remotely. The committee members introduced themselves and shared their experience and desires for participating.

Tom Cisco, Emergency Management, briefed attendees on facilities within the building and exits in case of emergency.

Andrea Kerr, Volusia County Legal Department, explained the principles of the Florida Sunshine Law, and communication by committee members while conducting committee business, is subject to public view. Public records shall include all handouts, emails, notices, and texts, related to the meetings. She also explained electronic communication protocol when responding to staff, to include the avoidance of responding "to all." Discussions among board members outside of meetings was acceptable, as long committee matters are not discussed.

Ms. Lebo asked who would be interested to serve as committee vice-chair, of which Jessica Gow and Saralee Morrissey expressed their interests. Following a first and second motion, by Scott Banta and Tracey Barlow, with no one opposed, Saralee Morrissey will serve as the committee's vice-chair.

Ms. Lebo explained the concept of visualizing action plan items as buckets and limiting them to no more than three. A slide presentation was shown, which explained the benefits of working quickly, maintaining the big picture, and the benefits of reviewing the Affordable Housing Webinars presented in 2021 by Community Assistance, which are located at <https://www.volusia.org/services/community-services/affordable-housing-initiative/>.

Clay Ervin, Growth and Resource Management Director, presented the Land Development Regulation presentation with an overview of land development, zoning, planning, and impact fees. Topics included the definition and purpose for zoning regulations, impacts of plans, codes and fees, where we currently are, and what we need to do moving forward. Further discussion ensued regarding the Comprehensive Plan, future land use and the housing element.

Topics discussed throughout the presentation included: the shortage of skilled trades and labor; increased material costs, and impact fee revenue of single, versus multi-family units.

Understanding the concept that building is a “business”, and “what can be done” to assist those who produce housing. Possible assistance to builders including landscape and parking waivers, expedited plans review, linkage and impact fees, and density bonuses. Discussion ensued on overcoming the stigma associated with the term “affordable housing”, as well as integration of affordable housing among traditional housing in the same neighborhoods.

Timelines were discussed. The LDR Affinity Group meetings are scheduled for a February 16 and March 23, followed by staff compiling Draft Final Reports from the LDR, Funding, and Community Land Trust Affinity Groups. April 13, 2022, AHAC will review the Draft Report and makes recommendations. A tentative County Council date of June 2022 to approve the Action Plan is anticipated.

Trish Smith, Growth and Resource Management Planner III, explained the homework assignments and committee binders, with Tab 9 of the binders reviewed by the next meeting. An overview of the maps were also discussed, including areas in the east and west, location of employees, cities, transit, and comparisons of similarly sized municipalities. Committee members were directed to bring the binders back to each meeting as staff will provide additional information to be added to the binders.

Discussion ensued on the contributions of the cities in this endeavor, inclusionary zoning, offering of additional density and credits, and making the builders whole in their project investments. Ms. Lebo stated that our focus and reach is within the unincorporated areas of Volusia County. All 16 cities were invited to participate, and all results will be shared, although the cities’ ability to discount fees may be limited. We are striving for constant quality improvement.

Ms. Gow discussed inclusionary zones, as well as proportional impact, and density bonuses.

Mr. Williams commented that none of the committee members resided in unincorporated Volusia County.

Dona Butler, Community Services Director, added that once the project is done, the information would be provided to the municipalities to see if they would be willing to partner with us. She emphasized that since money is short, it is necessary to strive to be creative. Further discussion ensued that this concept needs to be taken back to the cities, where value can be protected, and neighbors are considered in the decisions.

Mr. Williams commented that zoning ordinances were put into place for a reason, and when user-based fees are reduced, someone still has to pay them. The concern is that no one wants to lose value in their homes, and the thought that density is wrong, needs to be changed. The strategy of changing policy and zoning, for instance, by adding flexibility with accessory dwelling units, could assist workforce, student and senior housing challenges, among various other groups.

Ms. Allen shared her observation that Deltona has numerous areas with homes of various sizes mixed throughout neighborhoods. She added that success can be achieved through the use of mixed communities and differing land uses. The example of the successful Miami Garden subdivision, as well as container homes and more lenient limitations put into place, were discussed.

Mr. Banta shared the need for zoning and density bonuses and noted that expedited permitting and water management may not help, from a development standpoint. Small homes, 6 – 7 units per acre, the density bonuses may help with multi-family housing.

Mr. Barlow discussed the need to put financial savings to a time continuum. He added that the findings of the committees will roll out and trickle to the cities. The County could become a role model for others. He recommended striving for lowest hanging fruit, which he believed to be construction costs.

Discussion ensued regarding the costs associated with water/sewer fees. The possible solution of utilizing general funds to pay these impact fees was quashed, when Attorney Soria explained that in Florida, waivers for sewer and water could not be granted. Further discussion included the belief that multi-family housing requires less plumbing and fixtures, thus resulting in a cost savings, although the cost savings between the two were debated.

Mr. Banta discussed reducing the minimum home sizes from 400 sq. ft. to a possible 200-300, noting this will be a part of the discussion occurring in Seminole county, as they are currently designing new regulations in relation to the building of tiny homes.

Ms. Gow shared the need to show a correlation on how affordable housing results in lower impacts on fees, as well as creating a tie in to the County. She added that in lieu of expedited permitting, we need to provide time certain permitting. Further investigation needed to be done in relation to thoroughfare and road impact fees.

Ms. Lebo reviewed two possible buckets that included:

1. Timing or process (permitting)
2. Zoning classification/density/integration

Mr. Williams suggested looking into tiny homes. It was explained that tiny homes as a focus may be too narrow a topic and would need to be framed in a different manner.

Ms. Allen suggested “real” affordable homes and looking at multi-generational homes, where children, parents, in-laws and grandparents are living together. The definition of “what is affordable” needed to be established, as well as the target market being sought.

Ms. Lebo directed the discussion on how to identify reduced costs of homeownership. Ms. Butler suggested reviewing the April 2019 presentation found online and that staff would also email the links following the meeting. She added that the presentation included findings from other groups on how to not only afford homeownership, but also the various different types of housing.

Ms. Morrissey suggested looking into “paired villas” and single-family zoning districts. She noted that this type of housing could function as single-family homes, but also discussed the challenges against this being done. The buckets would be density versus lot size. The Koch affordable housing project in Orlando was discussed as being a successful example of this concept.

Mr. Ervin interjected that density requirements and minimum lot sizes are prescribed by the comp plans. Obstacles to change involve the public perception of affordable housing and house sizes.

Mr. Banta shared that “cottage homes” can use odd sized lots and an acre can accommodate 10 to 12 units. He offered that looking at the land and establishing the number of homes that can be placed on it, may generate affordability.

Ms. Lebo requested that the committee view the webinars available online as well as information derived from the Affordable Housing Summit before the next scheduled meeting.

Ms. Gow shared her bucket ideas to include funding, time, and permitting.

Mr. Ervin suggested integration in a fashion that works.

Mr. Barlow shared the thought process regarding the reduction of fees and how density could be reduced.

Mr. Banta mentioned that the land trust group and longevity of savings was going to be integral, but added that this committee should focus on locations and zoning.

Mr. Ervin congratulated everyone on the good debates and encouraged them to watch the webinars and to come into the next meeting prepared to discuss the items of importance. He then explained that the third meeting will be working toward finalizing the report. Instructions were discussed for the assignments to be emailed to Briana Peterson, and when replying to not “reply all” as per the Sunshine law. Ms. Peterson will collect the assignments and compile the information to send out to each committee member.

The meeting was adjourned.