



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**Approved**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**FIRE STATION #2, 528 NW 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33311**  
**MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2023 – 9:00 A.M.**

**Cumulative**

<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Margi Nothard, Chair	A	8	2
Leann Barber, Vice Chair	P	10	0
Vice Mayor Dr. Pamela Beasley-Pittman	P	10	0
Pablo Calvo	A	4	1
William Condon	P	9	1
Willie McKay	P	3	1
Sister Robin Merrill	P	3	2
Susan Spragg	P	10	0
Ryan Wipplinger (arr. 9:05)	P	8	2

**Staff**

Avis Wilkinson, Assistant Housing and Community Development Manager / SHIP Administrator / Staff Liaison  
Carla Blair, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communication to the City Commission**

None.

**I. ROLL CALL / DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Vice Chair Barber called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Caroline Cozzi, representing Habitat for Humanity of Broward, was present as a guest at the meeting.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 11, 2023**

Vice Mayor Dr. Beasley-Pittman requested that the September 11, 2023 minutes reflect that she was late to the meeting due to her attendance at the City’s 9/11 memorial service.

**Motion** made by Ms. Spragg, seconded by Mr. Condon, to approve as amended. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

- **Affordable Housing Trust Fund Update**

Ms. Wilkinson advised that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund balance remains \$0.

Vice Chair Barber commented that she had spoken with a real estate attorney based in Fort Lauderdale who had provided some information on how the Affordable Housing Trust Fund is expected to evolve in the future with regard to payments in lieu. She suggested that the Committee may wish to schedule a presentation with a real estate attorney who may be knowledgeable about this issue.

Ms. Spragg asked if it is possible to see what projects are currently in the pipeline for the City, which could be used to make a projection of what may be received as payment in lieu in the near future. Ms. Wilkinson replied that the Committee can ask a representative of Urban Design and Planning who will speak at a subsequent meeting to provide more information. It was clarified that there have been no payments made by developers into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund thus far.

- **Habitat Update**

Caroline Cozzi, representing Habitat for Humanity of Broward, reported that groundbreaking was recently held at the BBI Village location in Fort Lauderdale. Ms. Wilkinson noted that BBI Village will include 20 units, for which the homeowners have already been chosen.

### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- **Public Hearing for Affordable Housing Incentive Plan**

Ms. Wilkinson explained that today's public hearing represents final review of the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan. The Plan will go before the City Commission at their October 17, 2023 meeting. The Committee members have been provided with a final copy of the document, which included their most recent comments.

Ms. Wilkinson continued that once the City Commission has voted on acceptance of the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan, they will issue a Resolution stating that they have accepted the document. The Commission will then decide whether or not they wish to implement any of the recommendations made in the Plan. Once the document has been accepted, Ms. Wilkinson will send it, along with notice of today's public hearing, the meeting minutes, and the Commission Resolution, to the state.

Ms. Wilkinson advised that at the November 13, 2023 meeting, Adam Schnell of Urban Design and Planning and Al Battle of the Department of Sustainable Development will be present to discuss items related to affordable housing.

Vice Chair Barber asked if the Commission is expected to accept the Plan or make changes to it. Ms. Wilkinson replied that if the Commission sees any suggestions in the Plan with which they would like the Committee to move forward, they will make a recommendation at that time.

Ms. Wilkinson continued that the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan has undergone no substantive changes since it was reviewed in depth by the members at a previous meeting. Notice of today's public hearing was posted in the *Sun-Sentinel*, but no public comments were received by her office.

The Committee members briefly reviewed the Plan once again, noting minor corrections to the document.

**Motion** made by Mr. Wipplinger, seconded by Ms. Spragg, to accept. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Wilkinson stated that any Committee members who wish to attend the October 17, 2023 City Commission meeting may do so in person or may stream the meeting online. The Committee will have a separate joint meeting with the Commission on the same date, beginning at 12 p.m.

Sister Merrill asked if the Committee plans to hold a public workshop in the future. Ms. Wilkinson requested clarification of what the Committee would wish to do at a public workshop. Sister Merrill stated that she would defer to the Vice Mayor on this issue. Vice Mayor Dr. Beasley-Pittman advised that a public workshop would provide an opportunity for the public to discuss affordable housing issues in greater depth.

Ms. Wilkinson advised that a request for a public workshop would need to go to the City Manager. It would also need to be advertised, and may need to be held at a different location from the regular meeting in order to better accommodate the public. She recommended that an outline for the proposed workshop be developed so she can present it to the City Manager.

Vice Mayor Dr. Beasley-Pittman commented that she would like greater transparency on what the City is facing with regard to affordable housing, as well as what the Committee is charged with doing. The workshop would also provide an opportunity for members of the public to provide information on what they have experienced.

Sister Merrill added that members of the public who care about affordable housing issues could hear discussion from the City about its plan of action. A public workshop could also introduce the Committee to the public. She felt feedback from the public should be collected.

Ms. Wilkinson pointed out that an annual planning meeting is held each year with regard to Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds. A survey is available at this meeting which allows attendees to write down concerns they would like the City to address. The surveys are grouped together and prioritized. She advised that she will inform the Committee members when this meeting has been scheduled.

Ms. Wilkinson continued that there may be an opportunity for a workshop to present everything the City does which deals with housing, including HOME funds as well as Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA), CDBG, State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP), and other funding programs. A variety of programs are used to preserve, develop, and construct affordable housing.

Vice Chair Barber observed that Broward County maintains statistics on affordable housing across multiple websites. She felt this would be a good starting point to help the public understand the magnitude of the issue. She also noted that there are different groups of people with different needs who can be helped to different extents by various programs.

Vice Mayor Dr. Beasley-Pittman requested that Ms. Wilkinson provide a recap of what would be discussed at the proposed joint workshop. Ms. Wilkinson noted that this includes the following:

- Provide transparency on the City's processes
- Discuss the purpose and responsibilities of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) and introduce its members
- Provide an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on affordable housing needs
- Include either a response to the public at that time or in the future

Sister Merrill stated that there is frustration in the community due to the perception that elected officials continue to approve luxury housing while not acknowledging the lack of affordable housing. She emphasized that one critical goal of a public workshop should be to have elected officials present to listen and learn about these issues from the public, concluding that the attendance of these officials should be mandatory. Ms. Wilkinson reiterated that permission for a public workshop would need to be requested from the City Manager and approved by both that Manager and the City Commission.

Vice Chair Barber noted that an affordable housing workshop is scheduled in Broward County on November 1, 2023 at the Ann Cole Nature Center. A symposium on homeless issues will also be held by the Salvation Army on November 8, 2023 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

## **V. AGENDA TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING**

Ms. Wilkinson stated again that representatives of the Department of Sustainable Development and Urban Planning and Design will be present at the next scheduled meeting.

Ms. Wilkinson also addressed the Committee's joint meeting with the City Commission on October 17, 2023, stating that an individual will be in charge of introductions at this meeting. The meeting will then proceed based on the following outline:

- Committee presentations by members and City Staff
- Discussion with the Commission about the issues presented

Ms. Wilkinson emphasized that the intent of the joint meeting is to present the Commissioners with information and provide them with the opportunity to ask questions. This may include discussion of how various types of funds can be used to assist with affordable housing programs and households with differing income levels. She reviewed the different categories for which SHIP dollars can be used as an example, pointing out that the Commissioners may not be aware of these requirements. She noted that Ms. Spragg will provide a brief presentation on SHIP at the joint meeting.

Vice Chair Barber advised that she will present statistics on the current supply and demand for affordable housing in Fort Lauderdale, as well as how this affects the homeless population and additional steps that can be taken. This will include potential solutions, such as a discussion of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and what is being done in other Florida cities.

Sister Merrill recalled that the Committee had previously discussed a concierge concept for the City to fast-track plans for affordable housing, and recommended that this potential solution be discussed as well. Vice Mayor Dr. Beasley-Pittman recommended that as each Committee member is asked for their individual input at the joint meeting, they present specific comments or suggestions at that time. After the Committee members have provided input on their specific concerns, the Commissioners may ask additional questions based on the information they have received.

Mr. Condon asked if the Committee will review the recommendations in the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan with the Commissioners. Ms. Wilkinson replied that this will not be part of the joint meeting.

Sister Merrill commented that some months ago, Chair Nothard had requested that the City Manager and City Attorney's Office provide a response regarding implementation of the Live Local Act. Ms. Wilkinson confirmed that the members may ask this at the joint meeting; she noted, however, that Urban Planning and Design will be heavily involved with local implementation of this legislation, and can provide more

feedback when representatives of this Department present at the next Committee meeting.

Ms. Wilkinson concluded that the Committee members will need to make decisions in the future regarding viable outputs for affordable housing, and emphasized the importance of each member's commitment. She noted that at the December 2023 meeting, the Committee will begin working on its Action Plan, and emphasized the importance of reading these materials before they are discussed at meetings.

Vice Chair Barber showed a PowerPoint presentation intended to increase context around the policy and funding decisions made by the City of Fort Lauderdale. Issues include the demand for home ownership at the low and moderate income levels, as well as severe affordability issues in rental categories. A surplus of units exists for higher income levels.

Vice Chair Barber continued that the majority of new jobs are low-wage jobs, which exacerbates the problem by increasing the low-income population at the same time that available housing for households with these income levels is disappearing. There is an annual loss of 15,000 affordable owner units and nearly 10,000 affordable rental units due to ongoing market appreciation.

The 2022 Broward County Affordable Housing Needs Assessment, which was prepared by Florida International University (FIU), shows that affordability issues continue to grow, along with economic and quality of life concerns. Affordable housing needs require immediate focus on the preservation and production of affordable rental units, which should be a top policy priority and requires substantial public and private capital investment.

Vice Chair Barber explained that a Broward County community analysis of the continuum of care for the homeless population shows that there are different classes of homeless individuals: some may have been evicted but hold full-time jobs, while others are chronically homeless and cannot work or have limited ability to earn income. Rapid re-housing may be a suitable answer for an individual who was evicted, but less suitable for a chronically homeless individual with no income or health care.

Vice Chair Barber noted that Fort Lauderdale has a budget of roughly \$11 million to \$12 million to provide housing assistance. The issue is who should receive assistance, as there are aging and dilapidated homes in need of repair, renters who have been evicted, full-time working households, elderly individuals, disabled veterans, and other specific communities. A household earning up to 120% of area median income (AMI) can receive government assistance through certain programs. There may also be minimum income levels for assistance: a family seeking subsidized housing must earn a minimum amount in order to qualify for a tax credit.

The Committee discussed the breakdown of affordable units provided at different income levels, which typically differ from one development to the next. They also addressed the length of time for which tax credits are applied to affordable units.

Vice Chair Barber continued that at present, there are three different groups of people who are provided with different types of assistance. Sister Merrill pointed out that there are no taxpayer dollars in the City's budget for affordable housing. Ms. Wilkinson confirmed this, clarifying that these funds come from state and federal grants. The City manages these grant funds.

Ms. Spragg advised that the Committee proposes a dedicated line item for affordable housing, which will run through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. This would allow for funds to be disbursed without the constraints of existing state and federal programs.

Vice Chair Barber noted that another suggestion is expedited permitting and concierge service for affordable housing developers. She added that other Florida counties have made their incentive plans available online, and emphasized the importance of setting goals for the City with regard to home ownership, rental unit preservation and creation, rehabilitation, and other priorities.

Sister Merrill requested clarification of the percentage of AMI earned by workforce housing. Ms. Wilkinson explained that this definition differs from one group to another, but typically starts with households earning 80% or more of AMI and can extend to households earning 120% or 140% of AMI.

Vice Chair Barber also addressed ADUs, noting that this solution could help both owners and renters, as owners would receive additional income from these units and renters could access housing. She reviewed solutions used by other Florida cities and counties.

Vice Chair Barber emphasized the value of the recent affordable housing conference she and Ms. Spragg had attended. She encouraged other members to attend the following year if funds are made available for this use.

Ms. Wilkinson advised that each municipality has its own specific needs and must evaluate these needs on a case-by-case basis. She also noted that more funds are available to address affordable housing properly. It may be possible in the future for the Committee to send a communication to the City Commission to request additional meetings on specific topics in the future. She briefly reviewed the procedure once again by which the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan will be presented to the Commission for acceptance on October 17.

## **VI. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

None.

**VII. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE – 11-13-23**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]