



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

Approved
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
914 SISTRUNK BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33311
MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2024 – 9:00 A.M.

Cumulative

AHAC Committee Members	2024 Attendance	Present	Absent
Susan Spragg, Vice Chair (via Zoom)	P	12	0
Commissioner Dr. Pamela Beasley-Pittman	P	9	3
William Condon	P	10	2
Rich Degirolamo	P	1	0
Mindy Figueroa <i>(10/24 absence excused)</i>	P	7	3
Shantel Jairam (via Zoom)	P	1	0
Willie McKay <i>(10/24 absence excused)</i>	P	9	3
Roderick Newkirk <i>(10/24 absence excused)</i>	P	8	4

Staff

Avis Wilkinson, Assistant Housing and Community Development Manager/Staff Liaison
Angela Walsh, Administrative Assistant, Housing and Community Development
K. Cruitt, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

Motion made by Mr. Condon, seconded by Ms. McKay, requesting a joint workshop with the Fort Lauderdale City Commission to discuss priorities and recommendations for the 2025 Affordable Housing Incentive Plan. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (8-0).

I. ROLL CALL / DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

New Board members Rich Degirolamo and Shantel Jairam introduced themselves at this time.

Ms. Wilkinson noted that members participating by Zoom are not permitted to vote on action items.

The Board members determined that Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman would serve as Acting Chair (A/Chair) for today’s meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Condon, seconded by Ms. McKay, that we allow our Zoom attendees to join us. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (8-0).

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **November 18, 2024**

Motion made by Ms. Figueroa, seconded by Mr. Condon, to approve the minutes. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (8-0).

III. OLD BUSINESS

- **Affordable Housing Trust Fund Balance update**

Ms. Wilkinson reported that the balance of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund remains \$0 at this time. No payment in lieu funds have been placed in this account thus far.

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman asked if any rules have been established thus far regarding a timeline on which funds must be provided by developers. Ms. Wilkinson replied that no deadlines have been set.

- **Habitat's BBI Village Update**

Ms. Wilkinson advised that BBI Village is a Habitat for Humanity of Broward project which will consist of 20 town homes for households with extremely low to moderate incomes. The City recently amended its documentation to provide additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. A restrictive covenant for the properties will also be submitted to the City's Legal Department for review.

Once the updated documents are signed and the deed restriction approved, there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for the project, which will use Home Investment Partnerships and State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) funds in addition to CDBG dollars.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- **Communication to City Commission from AHAC to request a Joint Workshop with Commission regarding 2024 AHAC Incentive Plan Recommendations**

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman explained that joint workshops with the City Commission are typically two-hour events. Ms. Wilkinson clarified that the Committee would use this workshop opportunity to request direction from the City Commission regarding which specific items in the 2024 Affordable Housing Incentive Plan they would

like the Committee to focus upon. The Commission will also direct City Staff to assist in some capacity.

Ms. Figueroa advised that she would like to better understand the Committee's key goals in addressing affordable housing. She suggested the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) to show the impacts of what the Committee has proposed thus far and how the Commission sees them from an accountability perspective.

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman recalled that when the Committee and the Commission held a joint workshop earlier in 2024, the workshop took a direction toward discussing homelessness rather than affordable housing. She recommended that in 2025, the Committee direct the Commission's attention to specific items in the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan on which they would like the Commission to focus.

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman continued that the 11 items in the Incentive Plan are not listed in prioritized order. She recommended that the Committee call the Commission's attention to specific individual items and explain why they wished to emphasize these items.

Vice Chair Spragg commented that in addition to the 11 items in the Incentive Plan, there are other issues to which the Committee may want to call the Commission's attention, such as education, identification of funding sources, collaboration, and other priorities.

Ms. Wilkinson briefly clarified that while the Committee had held a joint meeting with the City's Homeless Advisory Committee (HAC) in November 2024, the two advisory bodies' missions are not the same and the AHAC and HAC have different priorities. She reminded the members that the AHAC is mandated by SHIP.

Ms. Figueroa emphasized the importance of continued conversations with other individuals and organizations concerned with affordable housing, such as United Way, the Chamber of Commerce, and others. She suggested inviting representatives of these entities to attend Committee meetings and discuss potential alignments between them and the Committee. She concluded, however, that she has not yet seen the impact of the AHAC's efforts.

Ms. Wilkinson recalled that in previous years, representatives of United Way, the Florida Housing Coalition, and Broward County have spoken to the Committee to discuss affordable housing. She pointed out that there will be time to continue scheduling speakers in early 2025, and encouraged the members to provide her with suggestions.

Mr. Newkirk observed that the prices of some affordable units may be outside the range that many households with even moderate incomes may earn. He emphasized the importance of the Committee speaking up on this issue.

Mr. Condon recalled that the previous joint workshop with the City Commission had not included significant direction. He pointed out that the Committee members do not have to wait for a joint meeting to hear the Commission's opinions, but may reach out to their appointing Commissioners to discuss aspects of affordable housing.

Ms. Wilkinson stated that the Florida Housing Coalition has created a working group to discuss the potential use of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) for affordable housing. She added that she would keep the Committee informed of what this working group accomplishes.

Ms. Wilkinson recommended that the Committee draft a communication to the City Commission and inform the Commission of what they would like to discuss, requesting direction on specific items identified in the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan.

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman asked if the Committee has a timeline in mind in which to request the joint workshop. Ms. Wilkinson replied that the Commission would give the Committee a timeline. She added that this would be a good time to bring forward the Committee's priorities, as the Commission has expressed interest in addressing affordable housing in their 2025 Action Plan. The Committee will have an opportunity in the joint meeting to align their priorities with the Commission's.

Motion made by Mr. Condon, seconded by Ms. McKay, requesting a joint workshop with the Fort Lauderdale City Commission to discuss priorities and recommendations for the 2025 Affordable Housing Incentive Plan. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (8-0).

- **2025- 2028 SHIP Local Housing Assistance Plan**

Ms. Wilkinson explained that the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) is a mandated three-year plan that the City must provide, based on the SHIP guidelines administered by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. She serves as the City's official SHIP Administrator.

SHIP dollars provide greater flexibility than any other funding source. The LHAP is a three-year plan which outlines different strategies that can be used to create affordable housing. Some SHIP funds can also be used toward other priorities such as homelessness.

SHIP's intent is to work in partnership with other entities to create affordable housing. Ms. Wilkinson emphasized that SHIP funds come with mandates, which include:

- 65% of SHIP funds must go toward home ownership
- Recipients have three years in which to spend their SHIP funds
- 75% of total SHIP distribution must go toward construction
- 60% of SHIP must be used to assist households earning between extremely low and low incomes, with low incomes defined as households earning up to 80% of

area median income (AMI); funds may also be used to assist households earning up to 140% of AMI, which is considered moderate income

Ms. Wilkinson strongly emphasized the importance of meeting these set-aside requirements, as the City must provide an annual report to SHIP declaring how the money is spent. Failure to meet these requirements would result in a loss of future funding.

Mr. Degirolamo requested clarification of the approval and implementation processes for SHIP. Ms. Wilkinson explained that each year the City receives SHIP dollars, she sends the City Commission an agenda item listing the strategies on which the City will use these funds.

Ms. Wilkinson provided the Committee members with copies of the strategies she will include in the LHAP, which include:

- Owner-occupied rehabilitation (\$85,000): these funds go toward home repairs and are awarded to households that need to address Code violations, safety issues, and repairs on items such as roofs, plumbing, and windows; participants may not have any outstanding liens; applicants must meet income requirements and other qualifications; the City places a 15-year lien on the property
- Emergency housing repair (\$75,000): this grant program makes emergency repairs to properties; recipients of this grant may not request other funds through SHIP for two to three years
- Purchase assistance without rehabilitation (\$90,000): the City provides down payment assistance to households with very low, low, and moderate incomes; recipients may not use funding toward rehabilitation of the property; the City inspects the home and determines whether or not there are illegal additions, a need for substantial repairs, Code violations, or unpermitted work, all of which are prohibited; recipients may not apply for additional SHIP funds for the next five years
- Rental assistance for the elderly (\$150,000): this program assists elderly residents with low incomes and/or financial problems; recipients must be age 62 or older, must demonstrate a hardship, and must meet income requirements; the City may assist a recipient for up to six months or a maximum of \$15,000
- Demolition/reconstruction: this category is included in case a need is demonstrated; there have been some issues with this program in the past
- Rental development: SHIP funds are awarded to both for-profit and nonprofit agencies including certified Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs); these organizations are created by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines and receive 15% of HOME funds; CHDOs may also submit unsolicited proposals which are not subject to the request for proposal (RFP) process
- New construction rental units/rehabilitation of existing rental units: funds are awarded for new construction development that is financed through state or federal housing programs as gap financing; rehabilitation of existing rental units will be provided upon verification by City inspection; the entity developing the new units

must have other funding sources in addition to the City; the maximum awards are \$200,000 per unit and \$1 million per development

- New construction for home ownership: these funds can be provided to any developer, including CHDOs; the maximum award available to developers is \$200,000 per unit
- Disaster repair: this program can only be implemented in the event of a disaster declared by the Governor of Florida or the President of the United States; the maximum amount of this grant is \$15,000
- Rapid re-housing: households must be referred to this program through Broward County's Continuum of Care or must be or include an individual with special needs; the program provides first/last month's rent or a security deposit and is administered by the City's Neighborhood Support Department; these dollars are not included in set-aside amounts and must come from program income
- Homeowners insurance/homeowners association (HOA)/arrears for utilities: this is a catchall category included in case it is needed
- Rent subsidies: this is a new program under SHIP to assist renters who are experiencing difficulties; this is available only to households with very low incomes
- Foreclosure prevention: this category requires the recipient to demonstrate their ability to make future payments, which has been difficult for most participants; the program does not apply to HOA fees, properties with existing liens in addition to a mortgage, or reverse mortgages
- Rental eviction prevention: this program assists renters who have received final notices to vacate

The total funding allocated to SHIP programs can vary from one cycle to the next. For fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025, the City was allocated \$1.4 million. Not all strategies presented to the City Commission for approval may need funds at a particular time. The breakdown of funds is listed on a City Commission Agenda Memo (CAM). Ms. Wilkinson advised that a copy of the most recent CAM will be presented to the Committee members for informational purposes.

Ms. Figueroa asked who is responsible for determining the recipients in these programs. Ms. Wilkinson replied that Housing and Community Development makes recommendations to the City Commission, which makes the final decisions.

Ms. Figueroa requested clarification of how many residents participate in SHIP programs. Ms. Wilkinson cited the example of 26 recipients of the rental assistance to the elderly program.

Ms. Figueroa also asked how many applications were received for that program, as well as clarification of who is responsible for selecting the participants and how and why they are selected. Ms. Wilkinson explained that the City advertises the program on a "first ready, first served" basis. Housing and Community Development recommends approval of applicants to the City Commission, which makes the final decision on approval of the applications.

Mr. Degirolamo requested information on the implementation of the program once an application has been submitted, including the entity making recommendations for approval. Ms. Wilkinson replied that an intake specialist reviews applications to ensure that they meet requirements. The City estimates how many applicants can be assisted by an individual program based on the funding allocated to that program.

Ms. Figueroa asked if the funding is available throughout the City or County, as well as whether or not the program is advertised in different languages. Ms. Wilkinson stated that the advertisement is done by the City's Strategic Communications Department. The ad is placed in a newspaper and includes information on how many individuals can be helped by each program, as well as the length of the application period. It is also advertised on the City's website.

Ms. Figueroa expressed concern that individuals going to the City's website may not know where they can find this information, and asked how the City can ensure that word is spread to the prospective recipients who really need it. Ms. Wilkinson replied that advertisements are also placed on billboards and fliers and are shared in various languages, including English, Spanish, and Creole.

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman also emphasized the challenge posed by advertising to a large and diverse population, and noted that there may be better ways to share this information. She pointed out that a lack of internet connectivity affects some Commission districts more than others, which means information must be shared through different means.

Ms. Wilkinson pointed out that some other municipalities use telephone blasts, although Fort Lauderdale has not opted to use this method. Ms. Walsh also cited the example of outreach to landlords to determine whether they have elderly tenants who have fallen behind on their rent and could benefit from the programs. This allows information to be sent directly to some residents.

Mr. Newkirk expressed concern that units may be described as affordable but may be rented at a rate too high for households with low incomes. Mr. Degirolamo explained that there may be different income levels accommodated within the same building, some of which may earn as much as 140% of AMI, which is still considered affordable housing. Ms. Wilkinson emphasized that any developments receiving SHIP funds must meet the City's requirements for affordability. Other funding sources, such as the City's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), may have different requirements.

Ms. Figueroa requested additional information on pallet shelters. Ms. Wilkinson advised that while the City had attempted to help fund a non-congregate shelter using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, no responses were submitted to that proposal. The conditions associated with the use of HUD funds have been provided to Neighborhood Support, which may use these funds for a pallet shelter if the conditions can be met.

Mr. Degirolamo asked what available funding source is the largest for affordable housing. Ms. Wilkinson replied that the City uses SHIP, HOME, and CDBG funds, but does not provide any funding itself. The program with the largest amount of available funds is Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA), which receives over \$8 million in funding but is restricted to households in which a member has HIV/AIDS.

Ms. Wilkinson advised that she would provide the members with notice of the City's upcoming Annual Planning Meeting, which is scheduled in January 2025 and will be advertised to the public as well as to organizations that may wish to participate in City programs. Vice Chair Spragg stated that she was working to develop a spreadsheet for tracking potential payments in lieu and would provide it soon.

Ms. Wilkinson also reviewed the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, in which developers' payment in lieu fees will be placed. Mr. Degirolamo asked if a list of pending developments that will contribute to this fund is available, with construction start and end dates. Ms. Wilkinson stated that she would reach out to the Urban Planning and Design Department to determine if a list exists, but pointed out that the payment in lieu program has only recently taken effect. Developers are required to pay \$10,000 per market-rate unit into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Mr. Degirolamo added that it would also be useful to have a list of all projects relevant to the Committee, including construction of ADUs.

Ms. Figueroa asked if the City manages the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Ms. Wilkinson explained that while she is in favor of having the Committee oversee this fund, this has not come to fruition. She advised that it would be necessary to rewrite some of the documentation associated with the Trust Fund to make this change. This would prevent the use of Trust Fund dollars for items not directly related to affordable housing, which has happened in the past.

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman stated that in the past, Trust Fund dollars have been used for other projects because they are considered unattached. She also emphasized the need to make changes to the Trust Fund's documentation to ensure this cannot be done again in the future.

Mr. Newkirk asked how much funding is provided by the City. Ms. Wilkinson replied that the City does not allocate any funds. Mr. Degirolamo suggested that this could be discussed with the City Commission during the requested joint workshop. Ms. Wilkinson encouraged the members to look at what other cities may be doing so they can show the Commission that the City can participate.

Ms. Wilkinson added that another potential topic for the workshop is the need for additional sources of revenue that contribute to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The

Trust Fund's uses could also be expanded so it can assist individuals in emergency housing situations.

A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman suggested that the Committee consider holding additional meetings, as there is a great deal of history and information to be discussed.

Mr. Degirolamo asked how often the AHAC meets with stakeholders, including developers, nonprofit agencies, and other entities with an interest in affordable housing. A/Chair Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman recalled that during her early tenure on the Committee, there were more opportunities of this nature. Ms. Wilkinson encouraged the members to let her know if there are specific stakeholders who are available to present to the Committee, but reminded them that time must also be allocated to the upcoming Affordable Housing Incentive Plan, which is now an annual requirement.

Ms. Figueroa suggested that the Committee hold a working session to put together the information they would like to present to the Commission at the joint workshop, based on the 11 incentives in the Incentive Plan. She noted that stakeholders can help inform the Committee's direction as well.

Ms. Figueroa cited the example of the City's hospitality tax, suggesting that the Committee request a portion of this revenue be placed into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Mr. Degirolamo recommended a balance of subsidies for households in need and incentives for developers to build affordable housing, and requested a document listing all affordable projects currently underway in the City. Ms. Wilkinson explained again that she would need to ask for this document from the Urban Planning and Design Department.

V. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE – January 13, 2025

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 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.]