



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

DRAFT
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
914 SISTRUNK BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33311
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2025 – 9:00 A.M.

Cumulative

AHAC Committee Members	2025 Attendance	Present	Absent
Susan Spragg, Chair	P	5	0
Shantel Jairam, Vice Chair	P	4	1
Commissioner Dr. Pamela Beasley-Pittman <i>(via Zoom)</i>	P	5	0
William Condon	P	4	1
Rich Degirolamo	P	5	0
Mindy Figueroa	P	3	2
Willie McKay	P	5	0
Roderick Newkirk (arr. 9:08) <i>(1/25 absence excused)</i>	P	4	1
Agustina Sklar	P	4	0
Amanda Wilson	P	5	0

Staff

Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager
Adam Schnell, Interim Liaison/Planner II
Jim Hetzel, Urban Design and Planning
Angella Walsh, Administrative Assistant
J. Opperee, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

Also Present

Felicia Newkirk

Communication to the City Commission

Motion made by Vice Chair Jairam, seconded by Ms. Wilson, to request an AHAC presentation to the Budget Advisory Board in the fourth quarter '25 or first quarter '26. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

1. ROLL CALL / DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (6)

Chair Spragg called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Motion made by Ms. McKay, seconded by Mr. Condon, to admit Commissioner Beasley-Pittman via Zoom to this meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

2. WELCOME INTRODUCTION

Jim Hetzel, representing Urban Design and Planning, introduced himself at this time.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – April 14, 2025

Motion made by Mr. Condon, seconded by Vice Chair Jairam, to approve the minutes from the April 14 AHAC meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

4. UPDATES FROM CHAIR, DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair Spragg recalled that the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) had not met in May 2025 due to a lack of quorum.

5. OLD BUSINESS

I. Update on Affordable Housing Trust Fund Balance

Ms. Williams advised that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund balance remains \$831,280.27, the same as reported at the April 2025 meeting; however, \$600,000 of this amount has been committed to an upcoming affordable housing project through the City's Real Estate Office. She added that more details regarding this project will be available by the next meeting.

Chair Spragg asked if the City has provided a report of all detailed activity in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund since September 2022. Ms. Williams replied that Staff is working to provide this information.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

III. Finalize Draft Affordable Housing Trust Fund Policy and Procedures

Chair Spragg noted that the most recent date of this document is May 12, 2025. That draft reflects the removal of Section 9. It was clarified that all proposed changes submitted by Committee members were incorporated into the Policy.

Mr. Newkirk arrived at 9:08 a.m.

Mr. Schnell advised that Jim Hetzel of Urban Design and Planning was in attendance at today's meeting in order to make a presentation; however, the presentation had been left off the Agenda due to a miscommunication. It was determined that Mr. Hetzel would make the presentation at the July 14, 2025 meeting.

Motion made by Ms. Wilson, seconded by Ms. Sklar, to accept. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 9-0 (Mr. Newkirk not present for vote).

II. Finalize Topics for June 30, 2025 AHAC-City Commission Joint Workshop

Chair Spragg recalled that the members received an email requesting their input on the three strategies proposed for discussion at the June 30, 2025 joint workshop between the AHAC and the City Commission. These strategies included:

- Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- Reservation of infrastructure capacity
- Establishment and reporting of goals for affordable housing units over the next three years

Chair Spragg noted that there were three responses to the email from Committee members, and advised that these would be considered at today's meeting so a presentation can be prepared.

The members discussed the proposed topics, with Mr. Condon pointing out that the City has developed an Accessory Dwelling Unit Action Plan. Ms. Williams clarified that this document was prepared by a working group which included herself, Mr. Schnell, and two other City Staff members with the intent of communicating the City's ADU policy to the public. The Action Plan includes steps intended to encourage the public to take advantage of this policy.

Chair Spragg explained that she would present the three selected strategies to the Commission at the workshop, and any Committee members who have additional expertise on those strategies would provide additional input. The intent is to solicit Commission support for the strategies, including the ADU Action Plan.

Mr. Condon recommended that language be included to prevent ADUs from being built as Airbnb units instead of affordable units. Mr. Schnell explained that if City funds are dedicated toward a project, its use can be restricted in this manner; if an ADU is funded privately, however, the Florida Legislature has preempted municipalities from restricting their use.

Mr. Schnell continued that the intent of the Action Plan is to ensure that residents are aware policy exists regarding the development of ADUs. Almost all of the City's residential neighborhoods allow these units, and eight of the City's 12 zoning districts permit them.

Another aspect of the Action Plan is pre-approval of ADU plans. Staff is working to determine whether funding opportunities exist to identify a firm that can draft pre-approved ADU plans. If City funds or incentives are used, there is the possibility that the units could be restricted to affordable use.

A third proposal is for a tracking component for ADUs which would be undertaken in conjunction with the City's Building Department. Because ADUs are not reviewed by Urban Design and Planning, the Building Department would track them.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman requested additional information regarding the possible expansion of ADUs into areas of the City which have large lots. Mr. Schnell stated that many of these were annexed from other parts of the County and are still operating under County Code, which does not permit ADUs despite the size of the lots.

Another consideration is prefabricated units. Mr. Schnell explained that the ADU Action Plan is intended to help residents understand what is or is not permitted on properties. Prefabricated units, such as containers, are permitted as long as they can adequately withstand wind load and meet Building Code requirements. Units with wheels, such as trailer homes, are not permitted.

Mr. Newkirk asked if the Committee's presentation will include references to where ADUs are currently permitted. Mr. Schnell replied that the Committee could be provided with a map of where these units are allowed, reiterating that they are permitted within a majority of Fort Lauderdale. Some areas, such as Regional Activity Centers (RACs), do not allow ADUs because they already permit multi-family development.

Mr. Schnell continued that Code does not currently include restrictions on income levels in relation to ADUs; however, if financial incentives to ADU construction are provided, some type of restriction may be possible. Income level restrictions may also depend upon the funding source, such as federal, state, or municipal dollars.

Mr. Newkirk asked if ADUs would be used for temporary housing. Ms. Williams clarified that the units would not serve as transitional housing.

Ms. Wilson asked when, if units are restricted to affordability, property owners might receive funds toward ADU construction. Mr. Schnell replied that this type of policy would need to be built out. Mr. Condon observed that many homeowners may not want to accept City funds if they come with restrictions on how the units may be used. Vice Chair Jairam commented that the more ADUs are constructed, the more affordable they are likely to be.

Chair Spragg moved on to the second strategy, which addresses reservation of infrastructure capacity. The City currently has no policy giving priority of capacity reservation to affordable housing projects; however, Chair Spragg noted that the Committee made a number of sub-recommendations in last year's Affordable Housing Incentive Strategy, which included the following:

- Establishing a funding source for affordable housing developers to offset costs related to infrastructure improvements
- Making units for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households a priority in underserved neighborhoods

- Waiving or reducing the filing fees associated with affordable development costs and/or creating a funding source to offset those costs

Mr. Condon pointed out that the cost of water, sewer, and electrical hookups can add a significant burden to affordable projects, and suggested that providing infrastructure incentives could help advance these projects.

Mr. Schnell explained that when a development is proposed, reservation is provided on a first come, first served basis: the first project approved for a given area is allocated infrastructure capacity in that area. He acknowledged that there are state regulations which can also affect the allocation of capacity.

Chair Spragg asked if there are potential incentives related to the allocation of capacity. Mr. Schnell replied that the approval process for affordable housing projects is already expedited. These projects are prioritized for approval when received, and once approved, capacity is allocated to them. He also pointed out that without sufficient capacity, a project would not be brought before either the Planning and Zoning Board or the City Commission for approval.

Mr. Degirolamo commented that this may be a less critical issue for the Committee to present to the City Commission, as affordable housing projects are already prioritized. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman observed that perhaps the approval process could be better streamlined for these projects.

Chair Spragg concluded that reservation of capacity did not appear to be a strong item to present to the City Commission at the joint workshop.

The third proposed strategy was to establish and report goals for new affordable housing units over the next three years. Chair Spragg asked if there was Committee consensus to move forward with this proposal, pointing out that there are currently no identified goals, targets, or projections by which affordable housing is tracked or reported.

Mr. Schnell advised that the City is working to implement a software system, Neighborly, which has better capacity to track affordable housing projects at all levels, including the Development Review Committee (DRC) and Building Department processes. There is no City-wide goal for affordable housing on record.

Mr. Degirolamo spoke in favor of encouraging the development of a goal, although he acknowledged that there may be little to which the City Commission can actually commit. Ms. Figueroa agreed that there is no narrative from a communications perspective, noting that the Commission has not set any goals based on the Committee's recommendations thus far, such as a number of affordable units or funds committed toward affordable housing. She emphasized the importance of transparency for the public.

Mr. Degirolamo suggested that the Committee's joint workshop with the Commission could discuss this type of goal, as well as clarification of whether funding, affordable units, or another metric could be used to track affordable housing. Subsequent joint meetings could be scheduled to review the City's progress. He added that if the Commission declines to commit to a public goal, the Committee may wish to consider establishing and tracking progress toward its own goals.

Chair Spragg noted that there is no single source of information at the City level regarding affordable housing, and asked if different Departments that address aspects of affordable housing meet to discuss issues. Mr. Schnell confirmed that Departments work together to gather information, but do not necessarily meet for further discussion.

Ms. Williams further explained that Neighborly is a nationally recognized software brand provided by a vendor. It is used primarily in conjunction with entitlement funding or federally funded housing projects. She noted that an individual would need to be identified to capture and track data on affordable projects with this software, either on a part-time or a full-time basis. The Department of Sustainable Development's fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025 budget requested an Affordable Housing Liaison who would function as an intermediary and provide updates.

Chair Spragg advised that related goals to discuss with the Commission may include:

- Establishing goals and reporting
- Selecting an Affordable Housing Liaison who is regularly in touch with other City Departments
- Ensuring that a Staff member tracks affordable projects and goals using the Neighborly software

There was Committee consensus to include these proposals in their presentation to the Commission.

Ms. Williams clarified the discussion points planned for the joint workshop:

- Addressing ADUs
- Establishing affordable housing goals and a reporting system

Mr. Condon pointed out that it is likely to be difficult to find sufficient funding to add new Staff, and suggested that the emphasis be on clarifying the functions of an Affordable Housing Liaison, as well as identifying whether or not there may be existing resources to fund this proposed role.

Felicia Newkirk, member of the public, asked if the Committee wished to consider the use of energy-efficient materials or appliances in ADUs. Mr. Schnell replied that the City has no energy-efficiency mandates as long as ADUs are constructed to Florida Building Code requirements.

Chair Spragg requested additional clarity from Ms. Williams regarding staffing needs to monitor tracking through Neighborly software. Ms. Williams stated that once the functions of an Affordable Housing Liaison are identified, the City can analyze current staffing to determine if those functions can be added to an existing Staff member. Mr. Degirolamo suggested reviewing Staff's 2024-2025 request for this position. Mr. Schnell and Ms. Williams advised that they will work together to clarify what the position could entail.

IV. Affordable Housing Incentives Strategy Report – member assignments and process overview

Mr. Condon recalled that in 2024, each of the Committee members randomly selected one of the 11 incentives to address. He also noted that not all of the 11 incentives require updates. Chair Spragg suggested that members who have experience with or interest in specific incentives volunteer to take on that item or items.

The members discussed the individual incentives and made selections from the list. It was clarified that they would review the items to determine whether policies are already in place, which would clarify whether or not updates, rewording, or other changes are needed.

Chair Spragg asked if Staff can advise whether or not any new measures have been implemented since the submittal of the 2024 Incentive Report. Ms. Williams confirmed that she would look into this. Chair Spragg also recommended review of other municipalities' and counties' affordable housing advisory committee reports to see how they are addressing specific items.

Chair Spragg requested that the members email any additional suggestions to Ms. Walsh by July 11, 2025 so they can be reviewed at the July 14 meeting along with the chosen incentives. A notice of public hearing will be provided before the September 8 meeting, and any changes resulting from that hearing will be made before the Affordable Housing Incentive Report is sent to the City Commission.

6. NEW BUSINESS

I. Update from Adam Schnell – Affordable Housing Unit

Mr. Schnell explained that the City has not had many longtime programs in place in support of affordable housing, which meant most developments were undertaken using low-income housing tax credits or alternative means such as public-private partnerships. In more recent years, both Broward County and Fort Lauderdale have implemented programs that can be tracked using a spreadsheet. He reviewed this spreadsheet, which included the following:

- Low-income housing tax credits
- State Housing Initiative Partnerships (SHIP) funding programs
- City-incentivized affordable housing initiatives

- Payments in lieu

Mr. Schnell continued that Broward County's Geller Amendment is an incentive that offers a payment in lieu option instead of actual construction of affordable units. These funds are paid at the time of permitting. Thus far, Fort Lauderdale has not had any payment in lieu projects requesting permits, which is why the City has not received any of these funds. He estimated that it can take from one to three years for the submittal of permit applications once a project has been approved. Due to market issues, there is currently no way to predict when projects will move forward.

Chair Spragg observed that the spreadsheet does not include updated information on the development of affordable units within the City's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), nor is there information on projects with fewer than four units that have been submitted to the Building Department. She commented that securing this information would be one of the responsibilities of an Affordable Housing Liaison if this position is created.

Mr. Schnell added that under the Fair Housing Act, the City may not treat affordable housing projects differently from other projects, which means they may not be aware that a project plans to include affordable units unless they are informed. He reiterated that there is no way to know when a private developer plans to submit permit applications.

Mr. Condon added that payments in lieu will be divided equally between the municipality and Broward County.

II. Update from Richard Degirolamo on future speaker – Developer

Mr. Degirolamo recalled that Mr. Newkirk had also addressed the possibility of bringing in a future speaker. Mr. Newkirk stated that he has spoken with a member of the development community and will follow up with that individual.

It was determined by consensus that no speaker would be scheduled for the July meeting.

Chair Spragg suggested that the Committee also consider scheduling a larger developer who works in the affordable field. Ms. Williams recalled that the Committee previously approved funding for a developer whose project is currently in progress in the FAT Village neighborhood. Mr. Condon added that a representative of the Related Group may also be a possibility.

Ms. Williams advised that Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman had left the meeting, but had proposed the Committee also consider a specific future speaker who had worked toward the development of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. There was additional discussion of potential speakers at future meetings.

III. Agenda Items for the next meeting

These items were previously discussed.

IV. Communication with the City Commission

Chair Spragg recalled that she had met with the Acting City Manager earlier in the year and asked if anyone on Staff could assist her in developing a payment in lieu forecast; however, there has been no response regarding this effort since that time. She asked if the Committee felt it would be appropriate to request a follow-up payment in lieu forecast report via communication to the City Commission.

Mr. Schnell advised that he tracks the City's projects, and requested clarification of what information the Committee wished to see. He explained that he could not forecast which projects will be in the pipeline, but can only report what has been submitted thus far.

Chair Spragg stated that her most recent version of the forecast included roughly 20 projects, most of which were either approved by DRC or going through the review process. Her document has not been updated in the last couple of months. Ms. Williams reiterated that it will be difficult to forecast incoming payment in lieu revenues from projects because payments in lieu are not made until permits are requested and construction is ready to begin.

Chair Spragg suggested the Committee may wish to send a communication asking for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Report from September 2022 to present. Ms. Williams stated that Staff is working internally with the Finance Department to prepare this document.

Chair Spragg also asked if the Committee wished to consider a communication requesting a joint meeting with the City's Budget Advisory Board (BAB). Mr. Degirolamo pointed out that the BAB is currently in its busiest phase, but noted that they typically do not meet in the last two months of the calendar year. Ms. Williams recommended requesting a joint meeting in the first quarter.

The Committee reviewed options for a joint meeting or limited presentation between the two advisory bodies to discuss some of the Committee's funding recommendations.

Motion made by Vice Chair Jairam, seconded by Ms. Wilson, to request an AHAC presentation to Budget Advisory Board fourth quarter '25 or first quarter '26. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

7. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Ms. Sklar reported that the League of Women Voters will hold a workshop in partnership with the Coalition to End Homelessness addressing homelessness and affordable

housing in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties on September 6, 2025. She stated she would provide more information as it becomes available.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE – July 14, 2025

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 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.]