



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
914 SISTRUNK BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33311
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2025 – 9:00 A.M.**

Cumulative

AHAC Committee Members	2025 Attendance	Present	Absent
Susan Spragg, Chair	P	10	0
Shantel Jairam, Vice Chair	P	8	2
Commissioner Dr. Pamela Beasley-Pittman	P	10	0
William Condon	P	9	1
Rich Degirolamo (via Zoom; dep. 10:00)	P	9	1
Mindy Figueroa (via Zoom)	P	7	3
Willie McKay	P	9	1
Agustina Sklar	P	8	1
Amanda Wilson	P	10	0

Staff

Rachel Williams, Housing Manager
Olivette Carter, Assistant Manager, Housing and Community Development/Committee Liaison
Angella Walsh, Administrative Assistant, Housing and Community Development
J. Opperee, Recording Clerk, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

1. ROLL CALL / DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (5)

Chair Spragg called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

It was noted that a motion was required to permit Mr. Degirolamo and Ms. Figueroa to participate in the meeting via Zoom.

Motion made by Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman, seconded by Ms. Sklar, to admit Mindy and Richard. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

2. WELCOME INTRODUCTION

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – October 20th, 2025

Motion made by Mr. Condon, seconded by Vice Chair Jairam, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. McKay requested an opportunity to make a suggestion regarding excused absences, which could be transmitted to the City Commission if approved by the Committee. Chair Spragg replied that this could be addressed under New Business.

4. PUBLIC HEARING: Approve Affordable Housing Incentives Strategy Report 2025

Chair Spragg asked if any public comments had been received regarding the 2025 Affordable Housing Incentives Strategy Report. Ms. Carter replied that no public comments were received.

Chair Spragg asked if any of the Committee members wished to add, change, or discuss any of the items included in the Incentives Strategy Report. She noted that she would like to add an item from the 2024 Report that had been previously removed, which was a recommendation to set aside a percentage of incremental property tax growth attributed to new development units in order to provide a dedicated and sustainable revenue source for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The percentage would be determined by the City Commission. There was Committee consensus to add this item back into the Report.

At this time Chair Spragg opened the public hearing, which she closed upon receiving no input.

Motion made by Ms. Wilson, seconded by Ms. Sklar, to include that new part into the Incentives Report. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Williams assured the Committee members that the Incentives Strategy Report is already in the queue for Commission approval now that the public hearing process is complete.

The following Items were taken out of order on the Agenda.

6. OLD BUSINESS

V. Guest Speaker November 10th at 10:00 a.m. – Related Group Developer – Long Ha

Long Ha, representing the Related Group, explained that affordable housing is one of his responsibilities as Financial Operations Director. The Related Group was founded in 1979 and has been involved in affordable housing since its inception. They have a heavy presence in Florida as well as Arizona, Georgia, and other states. Community partners in Florida include Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, Miami-Dade County, and Palm Beach.

Mr. Ha advised that public housing is operated by governmental agencies such as counties or municipalities. Some projects are owned by the government, while others are

converted to public-private partnerships. The Related Group's projects are concentrated in Miami-Dade County, although they have some projects in Broward County as well.

Mr. Ha noted that one priority reflected in the AHAC's Agenda was the identification of City- or County-owned sites, which he characterized as a good first step. There are also new programs passed by the state of Florida which allow favorable real estate tax agreements when municipalities lease government-owned properties to developers.

Mr. Ha advised that one of the Related Group's first public-private partnerships was the Gallery at FAT Village, which involved cooperation from Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, and Fort Lauderdale's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The project is a true mixed-income development, with 53 units set aside for households making 50% area median income (AMI). 97 units are considered workforce units, which means they are available to households earning 120% of AMI. The remaining units in the project are rented at market rate.

Units are set aside at certain percentages, such as 50% of AMI, in order to satisfy some tax code requirements. The 97 units of workforce housing were included at the recommendation of the City and County. The units at various rates are mixed together throughout the development.

Projects of this type are typically funded using tax credits, as well as bonds issued by the Housing Finance Authority. Units are audited to ensure they are rented at the appropriate affordable rates, and the building undergoes regular inspections by a third party. Ms. Williams further clarified that the reporting is based on how the contract is written. The City provided \$600,000 in funding and will monitor a portion of the 53 affordable and 97 workforce units for compliance. This monitoring involves regular sampling to ensure rents are calculated correctly and the units remain affordable for a 30-year period. Some projects have longer terms of affordability.

Mr. Ha reviewed additional affordable Related Group projects in other Florida municipalities, noting that many communities realize the benefits of providing affordable housing. These included Section 8-funded properties as well as public-private partnerships and tax-credit-funded properties.

Mr. Ha explained that the state of Florida receives an allocation of tax credits from the federal government each year. Different counties use different agencies to issue these tax credits, such as the Housing Finance and Community Development Division of Broward County. The Related Group works closely with these entities to understand what is available in those counties in any given year.

Chair Spragg requested additional information on the application process for prospective residents. Mr. Ha replied that standard applications for affordable units advise applicants that they must qualify under the appropriate program by disclosing information about their

incomes, assets, and more. Most of the affordable units at FAT Village are filled, although some workforce units remain available.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman asked if the availability of affordable units was announced to the community before the application period began. She explained that some developments allow members of the community the first opportunities to apply before opening the applications to a broader range. Mr. Ha advised that before a project begins, the Related Group's management team has worked to ensure affordable units are open to the community, although he noted that they are also required to follow Fair Housing requirements. He did not have details available on how this is done. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman emphasized the importance of making affordable units available to residents of the community, particularly if CRA funds are allocated toward the development.

Ms. Wilson noted that the Related Group also develops luxury housing, and requested feedback on payments in lieu, which allow developers to make payments toward affordable housing rather than including affordable units in a development. Mr. Ha advised that he did not have direct knowledge of this program.

A question was asked regarding affordable housing development opportunities and what may be holding them back. Mr. Ha replied that in recent years, interest rates and insurance and construction costs have made some affordable projects infeasible. He pointed out that these factors delayed the completion of the FAT Village project. Inflationary pressures are also a factor. While tax-exempt bonds are always an option, they are also subject to interest rate fluctuations, which make affordable development more challenging.

Mr. Ha continued that for a tax credit-funded affordable project, a contingency of 5% hard costs is typically built into the project's price. For a renovation project, this could be 10% to 15%. Contingencies can also be applied to soft costs, such as legal and permitting expenses. These are typically 5% as well.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Spragg stated that Ms. McKay had suggested the Committee's governing Ordinance be amended to make allowances for a limited number of excused absences in each calendar year. City Commission approval would be required for a policy change.

It was clarified that advisory body members are already permitted up to four absences in one year or three consecutive absences without losing their membership on a board or committee. There is no language addressing excused or unexcused absences within this policy.

5. Updates from Chair, General Discussion and Comments by Committee Members

Chair Spragg requested an update from Ms. Williams on the federal shutdown's effect on the City. Ms. Williams stated that the most immediate impact of the federal shutdown has been a delay in the execution of agreements. There has been no reduction in funding thus far; all items that have submitted reimbursement requests have been reimbursed.

6. OLD BUSINESS

I. Affordable Housing Trust Fund Balance update

The current Affordable Housing Trust Fund balance is \$546,967.26. Ms. Williams advised that she has spoken with the City's Office of Budget and Finance to ensure there is a clear understanding regarding these funds. At last review, the Trust Fund balance was approximately \$896,000; since that time, \$350,000 has been encumbered, leaving the current balance.

Ms. Williams continued that copies of the Trust Fund balance will be sent to the Committee members via email, and reviewed how the members can understand the document and its categories. Revenue line items included interest, gain/loss on sale of surplus lands, repayment of small business loans, and affordable housing. She clarified that the affordable housing line item referred to payment in lieu fees.

II. Affordable Housing Trust Fund Policy and Procedures status

Ms. Williams advised that an incorrect version of this policy was sent to members and this item would be tabled to a later date.

III. Update on Communications to City Commission:

a. February 18 and June 30 Joint workshops with City Commission

Chair Spragg asked how the Committee might best be able to leverage Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman's membership as a pipeline to the City Commission. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman explained that while her advocacy on behalf of the Committee is constrained by the Sunshine Law, she will do her best to ensure the Committee's concerns are heard by the Commission at large. She emphasized the importance of hearing and bringing new ideas to future joint workshops and other settings. The Committee members are permitted to advocate individually to their appointing Commissioners. She commended the direction the Committee has taken in recent years.

Ms. Williams observed that the Committee members should make sure any requests are clearly defined, as this will result in more specific responses. Vice Chair Jairam suggested that these items be clarified during the Committee's discussions so they can be included accurately in the minutes. Chair Spragg proposed that this discussion also include clarification of actual tasks and who is responsible for them.

It was determined that Summary of Action Items could be added as a separate Agenda Item. This would allow members to summarize what they would like to discuss at the next meeting, as well as any items they wished Staff or the City Commission to review and/or consider.

Ms. Williams recalled that the City Commission's position as expressed during the February 18 and June 30, 2025 workshops was well-defined, and requested clarification of what additional outcome or follow-up activity the Committee wished to see. Chair Spragg stated that the minutes of the workshops indicated that Staff would review fees. She also recalled that Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman had requested that the Commission direct Staff to review the 11 recommendations included in the Affordable Housing Incentives Strategy Report. There had also been discussion of a possible zero parking requirement for affordable projects, to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

It was clarified that the Committee was awaiting a status report on those items discussed during the workshops.

b. Request for joint meeting with Homeless Committee

Ms. Carter explained that she had reached out to the Staff liaison for the City's Homeless Advisory Committee, but there were no current requests from that Committee to meet with the AHAC. The Homeless Advisory Committee will meet later in the week and discuss the possibility of a joint meeting in the future.

It was noted that any member of the AHAC may attend a Homeless Advisory Committee meeting, as all meetings are open to the public.

IV. City Commission Joint Workshop:

Chair Spragg stated that it was her understanding the PowerPoint presentation for the next Committee workshop with the City Commission would be presented by Staff. Ms. Williams confirmed that the presentation would be made in a similar manner to the last joint workshop. Following the presentation, any Committee members who wished to present additional information would have time to do so.

a. Public awareness and education

Chair Spragg recalled that the Affordable Housing Incentives Strategy Report had included a recommendation to seek partnerships to provide workshops for first-time home buyers and residents seeking affordable housing. There was consensus to add this recommendation to the planned presentation.

Ms. Williams requested clarification of what could be added with respect to rental housing. Chair Spragg suggested including the concern that City residents were not hearing about

opportunities to rent or purchase new affordable units that are being made available. Opportunities to increase knowledge and financial readiness could provide a mutual benefit.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman explained that her concern was that potential applicants for affordable units may not be aware of the documentation they would need to present when applying for those units. They would be more likely to be ready to apply when application periods are opened if they have this information in advance. Ms. Williams confirmed that Staff would be able to identify these requirements and make that information available to the public to improve tenant readiness.

b. Discussion of using City-owned properties for affordable housing

Chair Spragg recalled that the Committee previously discussed reviewing the City's process for determining the use of its properties, as well as expanding this consideration to include former commercial and/or industrial properties and modifying City zoning regulations to allow for smaller lot sizes. She also noted that during the October 2025 meeting, Mr. Degirolamo had suggested consideration of public-private partnerships (P3s) for affordable housing. She requested Committee feedback on whether or not to add P3s as an option.

Ms. Williams advised that there are guidelines from the state regarding the process the City must use to identify suitable lots for affordable housing, such as proximity to transit. There was consensus to mention P3s as a possibility when reviewing City-owned properties for the development of affordable housing.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman recommended caution when considering P3s, as they can be less beneficial than intended. P3s are typically brought forward by entities which offer them to the City, and not all P3s have been fully successful in the past.

Ms. Williams noted that the City's Charter does not allow the Commission to give away City-owned lands. One way the City has proceeded with smaller affordable housing projects in the past has been to deed surplus properties over to the CRA, which can seek nonprofit organizations to develop these lots. She suggested that mixed-income developments may have a better likelihood of success, including a percentage of units for households earning below 50% of AMI as well as a percentage of units at workforce housing rates.

The Committee discussed the possibility of further refining the language used by the City Commission to review City-owned properties, including percentages of units at different levels of affordability. It was determined that the Committee's recommendation would be to consider 15% to 20% of units for households earning 50% of AMI or lower, as this category is often left behind.

Ms. Williams reviewed the City's processes for providing affordable housing in the past, which had included the identification of City-owned residential lots. Several smaller lots were conveyed to the CRA, which subsequently issued a request for proposal (RFP) for infill affordable housing for home ownership. Several vendors responded and each developer was provided with a number of lots on which they would build. The sale prices of the proposed homes were capped and the developers were required to sell the homes to households with lower incomes. This process is currently ongoing and some developers are still building the homes.

c. Study of Public and Private employees who earn Low and mid-range area median income (AMI)

Ms. Sklar asked if a study of this type has been conducted in the past. Chair Spragg replied that she was not aware of any previous affordable housing needs assessments at the City or County level, although some larger studies for the entire region could provide some data.

Ms. Williams recalled that the Committee has made previous requests for an affordable housing needs assessment for Fort Lauderdale. She suggested that this study of income levels could be a component of a larger affordable housing needs assessment.

Chair Spragg observed that the Committee's 2024 recommendations included items that would have a cost to the City, including an Affordable Housing Master Plan, a housing market study for Fort Lauderdale to identify existing and future needs, and a study of privately owned underused or vacant properties that could be adapted for affordable housing, in addition to the proposed study of public and private employees earning low- and mid-range salaries.

It was determined that the Committee would propose an Affordable Housing Master Plan with an affordable housing needs assessment as one component of that plan. The study of public and private employees at lower income levels would be proposed as a component of the assessment as well.

Ms. Williams continued that the fiscal year (FY) 2025-2026 budget season has ended. The Commission will need to determine whether or not the proposed Master Plan and needs assessment will be part of the next year's proposed budget. She emphasized that if the plans are not funded in FY 2026-2027, this does not mean they will never be funded in the future; the Committee will need to persist in their recommendation.

Chair Spragg asked if the Committee would meet with the City's Budget Advisory Committee in the future. Ms. Williams replied that if the Committee wishes to propose items for funding, the items would need to be accompanied by decision packages prepared by Staff.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- I. **Guest speaker December 8th at 9:30 a.m.: Sandra Veszi Einhorn**
- II. **Guest speaker December 8th at 9:45 a.m.: Adam Schnell**
- III. **Guest speaker January 12, 2026, at 10:15 a.m.: City Manager Rickelle Williams**
- IV. **Agenda Items for the next meeting**

The following action items were identified by the Committee:

- Ms. Williams will send the Committee members copies of the previous affordable housing needs assessment
- Ms. Figueroa will reach out to a representative of the Broward County Economic and Small Business Development Department with regard to a business survey
- Add a bullet point to the Incentives Report as discussed earlier
- Follow-up on speaker Roosevelt Walters' recommendations from the October 2025 meeting, and request his feedback on the Incentives Report
- Additional detail on Affordable Housing Trust Fund activity
- Status report on activity following the Committee's February and June joint Commission workshops
- Update on Trust Fund policies and procedures
- Provide members with state guidelines for City-owned properties considered appropriate for affordable housing
- Review final PowerPoint presentation in advance of the December 2025 joint Commission workshop

V. Good of the order

None.

VI. Public Comments

None.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE: December 8, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

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