

**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee  
St. Johns County, Florida  
Regular Meeting**

**June 19, 2019  
Minutes**

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee of St. Johns County met at 3:00 pm in the Kingfisher Conference Room at the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Building – Housing Department, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida 32084.

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm by Steve Ladrido, Vice-Chair.

**Members Present:**

Tracy Hayes  
Jay Kalter  
Steve Ladrido  
Alex Mansur  
Harry Maxwell  
Karl Vierck  
Herbie Wiles

**Members Absent:**

Bill Lazar  
Jon Woodard

**Guests Present:**

Joseph Cone, Housing & Community Services Manager  
Michelle Lawlor, Housing Support Staff  
Mary Garcia, Social Services Support Staff

Notices regarding the meeting were sent to all members. No press was in attendance.

- 1) Introduction of AHAC Members and SJC Staff: Committee members were acknowledged. Quorum was present.
- 2) Approval of Minutes: **Motion** made by Karl Vierck to approve minutes of May, 2019 meeting; motion seconded by Jay Kalter. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- 3) Triennial Report: Joe Cone stated the Triennial Report is due to the State in December, 2019, so the report must be completed by September or October to allow for a month in order to get the matter on the County Commission's agenda. Mr. Cone also stated a public meeting must be held in October or November, as part of statutory requirements associated with this report. Mr. Cone said the report template has changed for the first time in nearly 10 years and he said he went through the last report's recommendations and highlighted items he believes should also be included in this year's report. Mr. Cone said part of the preparation of the report requires the AHAC to review and discuss all of the recommendations and he said minutes of the meetings must reflect this discussion and indicate whether or

not the Committee would like for these items to remain on the report, as written or with edits, and there should also be discussion regarding any new items the AHAC members would like added to the report. Mr. Cone said Jay Kalter has approached him and suggested the addition of an item stating commercial developers should be required to make a contribution to affordable housing. Mr. Kalter said new businesses should be obligated to assist in the solution to a problem they are helping to create with their staffing needs. Mr. Cone said the Board of County Commissioners has tasked staff with bringing to them some suggestions for changes in land use code, such as accessory dwelling units, which was in last year's report and must be part of the AHAC discussion. Mr. Cone said that before having that discussion, he would like to ask Joe Cearley, project manager at the County's Growth Development Department, to come in and speak to the group. Mr. Cone went on to say that many of the recommendations in the current report could be captured with a rezoning change

Mr. Cone began to review his notes on the current report. Discussion ensued with regard to the modification of impact fees (Incentive B on current report) and Mr. Cone said he would prefer for Mr. Cearley to address this item at the next AHAC meeting. Mr. Cone then brought the Committee's attention to the generic recommendations following Incentive K on the current report and there was discussion regarding foreclosures on dilapidated properties. It was determined this recommendation may be removed from the report. Mr. Cone stated the recommendation that followed regarding blight should also be considered further since, he stated, blight can be very subjective. The Committee agreed this should be discussed further. Mr. Cone addressed the next item as it relates to deed restriction for keeping properties affordable and he offered the opinion that this item should remain in the report but perhaps be more specific as to how a property should remain affordable and for what period of time. Mr. Cone said the Commissioners had a lot of varying opinions on this topic and he said they all expressed some concern with regard to how long a person would be tied to a home by a mechanism that ensures it remain affordable. Mr. Vierck said there seems to be too much attention placed on pushing people into buying single family homes and he said he believes more energy should be focused on building a stabilized and affordable rental pool in the County. Mr. Ladrado agreed and said a parallel focus is essential and some of these recommendations could enable builds that will be used as rental properties. Mr. Ladrado advocated for a divide and conquer mentality and suggested Committee members concentrate on and vet any recommendations they feel strongly about. Mr. Ladrado said the Committee would look to Joe Cone to provide insight into how the County Commissioners feel about the various incentives and recommendations for affordable housing.

Mr. Cone began to review his draft of incentives that will be part of this year's report and began with the item "Expedited Permitting". Mr. Cone said the County instituted the Development Review Committee in 1993 and he stated the housing department has become involved with that committee in the past several years. Mr. Cone said that while he hasn't necessarily been at every DRC meeting, he has been present at meetings with developers wishing to propose particular projects. Mr. Cone said this incentive is particularly helpful to non-profit organizations that

need to close on a property quickly and he believes Bill Lazar, with the St. Johns Housing Partnership, will be asking for expedited review on several future projects. Mr. Cone stated there has also been a “point of contact” designated at the County’s Growth Management Department. Mr. Cone said the contact is Joe Cearley and they have been meeting together bi-weekly to discuss affordable housing issues. The next item under this heading is the use of the income and rent guideline chart provided by Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC). Mr. Cone believes the original intent of this recommendation was to ensure everyone in the community was using the same guidelines when talking about low to moderate income levels. Mr. Cone said this became more difficult when St. Johns County became an entitlement community through HUD, which uses different guidelines. In addition, Mr. Cone said that St. Johns County is grouped under Jacksonville’s Metropolitan Statistical Area or MSA, which is unfortunate. Discussion ensued with regard to SHIP/HUD income limits and the recommended percentage of income to be used for housing.

Mr. Cone moved on to the item titled “Reservation of Infrastructure Capacity”. Mr. Cone said it is his understanding that the City and County still don’t work as closely as they might toward affordable development efforts to reduce costs. Mr. Cone said he will ask that Bill Lazar expound on this item at the next AHAC meeting, since he has a better understanding of the issues. Mr. Kalter asked if the County has a five year plan and, if so, must all improvements must be on that plan before being done. Mr. Cone said he knows the County has a Capital Improvement Plan and he is unaware if there is a statutory requirement but he will look into the matter. Mr. Cone said he would like to keep the item that refers to shared water retention and facilities, as well as the last item under this heading, which refers to financing lift stations. The AHAC members agreed.

Mr. Cone referred to the item titled “Affordable Accessory Residential Units” and said Joe Cearley would talk about this at the next AHAC meeting. Mr. Cone did say the County Commissioners seemed quite receptive to this item. Mr. Cone said he has been researching what other communities are doing in this regard and he said some cities are giving low interest loans to individuals that want to build a rental unit in their back yard, provided they agree to rent to people at a certain income level. Discussion ensued with regard to vacation rentals and property rights but the consensus was this item should remain on the report, especially considering the County Commissioners willingness to address this issue.

Mr. Cone moved onto the item titled “Process of Ongoing Review” and he explained it simply refers to the AHAC continuing to meet monthly since 2016, rather than being dormant until the Housing Incentives Plan was due to the State.

Mr. Cone reviewed the item titled “Public Land Inventory” and said this has been in the County’s code for many years but refers primarily to leasing or purchasing land. Mr. Cone said there are a lot of properties in the affordable inventory and there has been much discussion regarding how to distribute these properties. Mr. Cone said there have recently been discussions with the Disaster Relief team with regard to housing and what they are allowed to do with the funds they receive from HUD. Mr.

Cone stated there are approximately 120 properties and probably only 10 of those have the infrastructure necessary to be developed. Mr. Cone said there is other County-owned land that might be used for affordable housing and he has been working with Growth Management to see how that might be reviewed. Additionally, Mr. Cone said he has been working with the County's GIS Department to identify FPL owned properties that might be used for affordable housing. Steve Ladrado asked if the best properties had been identified and Mr. Cone said that they had. Mr. Ladrado asked Mr. Cone to send him that list of properties and perhaps they could discuss them at the next AHAC meeting.

With regard to the items "Affordable Green Building" and "Inclusionary Zoning", Mr. Cone said he would have to look into them further to see if they are required on this report. With regard to inclusionary zoning, Mr. Cone believes there has been a push by the State to get rid of certain zoning requirements that require a certain number of affordable housing units.

Mr. Cone said of the last item, "Support of Development near Transportation Hubs and Major Employment Centers and Mixed-Use Developments", it is obviously best to put affordable housing near goods and services and transportation options. The AHAC members agreed this should remain in the report.

Motion made by Karl Vierck to accept Joe Cone's five recommendations for the SHIP Affordable Housing Incentive Strategies report; motion seconded by Steve Ladrado. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Cone said there will be discussion regarding the remaining incentives at the next AHAC meeting and Joe Cearley will be in attendance to address those items.

- 4) Vacancy/Recommendation: Mary Garcia reported the recommendation for the Essential Services Provider seat is waiting for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners. Ms. Garcia has not been notified with regard to the date that item will be on the agenda. The vacancy for a residential home builder has not been filled and it is currently being advertised on the County website.

- 5) Public Comments: None.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 pm.

**Next Meeting**: The next meeting will be held on July 17, 2019. Notices will be sent.