

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

September 15, 2021  
Minutes

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) of St. Johns County met at 3:00 pm at the Health & Human Services Center, in the Kingfisher Conference room, at 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida 32084.

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 pm by Chair, Bill Lazar

Members Present:

Jay Braxton - St. Johns County Resident  
Steven Ladrido - Citizen representing employers within St. Johns County  
Bill Lazar - Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing  
Michael O'Donnell - HFA Chair/ Citizen actively engaged as an advocate for low-income persons  
Alex Mansur - Citizen actively engaged in areas of labor in home building  
Dr. William McCormick - Citizen actively serving on Local Planning Agency  
Brittany Coronado - Citizen representing Essential Services personnel  
Karl Vierck- Citizen actively engaged as a Real Estate Professional

Members Absent:

Tracy Hayes - Citizen engaged in banking or mortgage banking industry  
Harry Maxwell - Citizen actively engaged as a for-profit provider of affordable housing  
Henry Dean - Locally elected official

Guests Present:

Malinda Everson, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity, St. Johns (via Zoom)  
Cathy Morrow, Homeowner Services Manager, Habitat for Humanity, St. Johns (via Zoom)  
Debi Redding, Executive Director, Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition (via Zoom)  
Roberto Ortiz, Manager, SJC Housing & Community Development  
Michelle Lawlor, SJC Housing & Community Development support staff  
Mary Garcia, SJC Social Services support staff

Notices regarding the meeting were sent to all members. No press attended.

- 1) Introduction of AHAC Members and SJC Staff: Committee members and County staff were acknowledged and quorum was present.
- 2) Approval of Minutes: **Motion** made by Karl Vierck to approve minutes of August, 2021 meeting; motion seconded by Alex Mansur. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- 3) Administrators Report: Roberto Ortiz presented a brief PowerPoint, detailing the planning and timeline of the AHAC annual report. Mr. Ortiz suggested the Committee begin discussions at today's meeting targeting which affordable housing incentives they wish to concentrate on in this year's annual report. Mr. Ortiz's presentation included a slide with the items that must be covered as set by state statute. Mr. Ortiz asked that Committee members review the report draft, which was distributed at this meeting, and email any changes or suggestions to County staff prior to the October 20th meeting. Remaining deadlines for the report were discussed, as well as three incentives recognized as high priority to the Committee. Bill Lazar requested a draft of the report be sent to the Housing Finance Authority (HFA) for their input and asked that the final report be shared with local nonprofit agencies that deal with housing and homelessness.
- 4) AHAC Annual Report 2021 Draft Review: Mary Garcia explained that the first three incentives listed in the draft were the items that the Committee identified as top priority through a survey last year. Bill Lazar suggested all of the incentives listed in the report should be retained as he stated they all still apply and should be reported on yearly. Bill Lazar stated the biggest issue is how to get the top three incentives, which he listed as modification of impact fees, support of development near transportation

hubs, and flexible densities, incorporated into the discussions of developing affordable housing within the County. Roberto Ortiz suggested that the report follow the format used in 2019, with the addition of this year's discussions and AHAC recommendations to each incentive.

- 5) American Recovery Act Plan: On May 10, 2021, the U.S. Department of the Treasury announced the launch of the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). On August 9, 2021, St. Johns County received the first appropriation of ARPA funding for \$25,704,716.50, with a second appropriation to be available in May, 2022. Bill Lazar stated he understands the deadline for the money to be spent is December, 2026, and recommendations on how to spend the money can be made up until 2024. Mr. Lazar suggested this Committee should meet with the HFA and others to discuss how the money might be used toward new affordable housing projects. Mr. Lazar stated he wanted to bring the ARPA funding to the Committee's attention and said he would like to continue to have discussions about this topic in future AHAC meetings. Mr. Lazar also raised the possibility of organizing a workshop to discuss how a portion of this money could influence affordable housing in the County.
- 6) Current Vacancy: Ms. Garcia stated there is still one vacancy and it is that of the citizen engaged in the residential home building industry. Mr. Lazar asked that is any Committee member knows anyone that may be interested, to please have that individual apply via the County website or contact County staff for more information.
- 7) Public Comment: No public comment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06p.m.