

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

June 15, 2022
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 3:03 pm by Chair, Steve Ladrado

Members Present:

Sarah Arnold - Locally elected official
Jay Braxton - St. Johns County Resident
Greg Burke - Citizen engaged in residential home building industry
Steve Ladrado- Citizens representing employers within St. Johns County
Alex Mansur - Citizen actively engaged in areas of labor in home building
Harry Maxwell - Citizen actively engaged as a for-profit provider of affordable housing
Michael O'Donnell - HFA Chair/ Citizen actively engaged as an advocate for low-income persons
Lindsey Rodea - Essential Services Personnel
Karl Vierck- Citizen actively engaged as Real Estate Professional

Members Absent:

Tracy Hayes - Citizen engaged in banking or mortgage banking industry
Bill Lazar - Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing
Dr. William McCormick - Citizen actively serving on Local Planning Agency

Guests Present:

Ashanti Austin - Assistant to Deputy and Assistant County Administrators
Joe Cone - Assistant Director, Health and Human Services
Mary Garcia - Support Staff, Social Services
Michelle Lawlor – Support Staff, Housing & Community Development
Roberto Ortiz – Manager, Housing and Community Development
Vicki Pepper - Resident
Frank Williams - Resident

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

- 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 Alex Mansur to approve minutes of April, 2022, meeting; motion seconded by Karl Vierck. **Motion passed unanimously.** **Motion** made by Alex Mansur to approve minutes of May, 2022, workshop; motion seconded by Harry Maxwell. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- 3) Administrators Report: Roberto Ortiz provided an update on the progress of the two affordable multi-family developments located on SR 207, San Marcos Heights and Victoria Crossing. Mr. Ortiz reported that construction at Victoria Crossing is running on schedule and a pre-leasing phone number has been set up for any questions regarding the leasing process. Mr. Ortiz stated San Marcos Heights will be moving residents in to the first finished building during the month of July and the next building is expected to be complete and ready for occupancy by early August, 2022. According to Joe Cone, there was a slight delay in construction due to supply issues. Mr. Ortiz said a waiting list has been started for one-bedroom units at San Marco Heights and they are still accepting applications for the two and three bedroom units. Jay Braxton asked for a breakdown of the total number of one, two, and three bedroom units and Mr. Ortiz said he will provide that information, along with the number of units still available for lease. Michael O'Donnell, Chair of the HFA, stated the Authority has been invited to the ribbon cutting ceremony at San Marcos and he suggested the AHAC join them for that event. Mr. Ortiz said he would speak to the developer to see about including a tour of the property on that date, as well.
- 4) AHAC Annual Report 2022 Review: Roberto Ortiz reviewed the report preparation timeline. Steve Ladrado summarized discussions to date and reminded the Committee that in March, 2022, the consensus was to focus primarily on the top three incentives; modification of impact fees, support of development near transportation hubs, and flexible densities. Discussion ensued with regard to the best way to move forward, with the focus on these three priority incentives. At his request, Mary Garcia spoke on Bill Lazar's behalf stating Mr. Lazar has requested a representative from the County's transportation department attend a meeting to engage in discussion with the Committee. Joe Cone suggested a better option might be to request that a planner from the Sunshine Bus Company attend the July or August meeting. The Committee was amenable to this and they also requested a guest speaker with expertise in impact fees and flexible densities. Joe Cone stated he or Mr. Ortiz will contact Growth Management to request a representative attend the July meeting to engage in discussion regarding multiple incentives, with the emphasis on impact fees. Joe Cone stated he will also invite Tracy Dillon, Social Services manager, to attend the August meeting to discuss how that division of Health & Human Services assists clients with their transportation needs. Mr. Ladrado suggested that all members read through last year's annual report in preparation for further discussion and for the planning of the 2022 report. Mr. Ladrado also suggested evaluating last year's report to see what progress has been made on incentives. Mr. Cone reminded the Committee of the two public hearings required as part of the annual plan preparation and he stated this process is designed to ensure there is ample opportunity for community input.
- 5) Public Housing Authority Discussion: Steve Ladrado thanked everyone for their participation in the AHAC/HFA public housing authority (PHA) workshop and he said he felt it was very well received by the community. Mr. Ladrado stated a resolution was prepared for his signature and he asked for a vote so that if all were in favor, this resolution could be presented to the BCC to show the AHAC's support of a PHA in St. Johns County. Mr. O'Donnell inquired as to how the HFA might proceed in order to show their support. Mr. Cone advised Mr. O'Donnell the attorney for the HFA would provide guidance at their next scheduled meeting. A **motion** was made by Karl Vierck to send the signed resolution in support of a PHA in St. Johns County to the BCC; motion seconded by Harry Maxwell. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- 6) Public Comment: Resident Frank Williams stated the first step to creation of a PHA is the filing of a petition signed by 25 residents of the County asserting that there is need for it. Mr. Williams

stated he is circulating such a petition and encouraged those present to consider signing it. Discussion ensued and Karl Vierck suggested Frank Williams seek out other members of the community to sign as the AHAC members have already shown their support through the workshop and the resolution signed by Chair Ladrado. Frank Williams stated that should a PHA be created in St Johns County, Dan Ackerman, presenter at the workshop and current director of Salt Lake City Housing Authority, should be considered as an executive director.

Steve Ladrado mentioned the Hometown Heroes program and said it is a great down payment and closing cost assistance program for eligible frontline community workers, including fire fighters, teachers, police officers, and healthcare workers. Mr. Ladrado said it is his understanding that there is approximately \$100 million available for Florida residents. Mr. Ladrado promised to send information regarding the program out to staff for disbursement to Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:47p.m.