

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

November 17, 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 3:00 pm by Chair, Bill Lazar

Members Present:

Jay Braxton- St. Johns County Resident  
Henry Dean- Locally elected official  
Steven Ladrado- Citizen representing employers within St. Johns County  
Bill Lazar- Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing  
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  
Dr. William McCormick- Citizen actively serving on Local Planning Agency  
Michael O'Donnell- HFA Chair/ Citizen actively engaged as an advocate for low-income persons  
Karl Vierck- Citizen actively engaged as a Real Estate Professional

Members Absent:

Tracy Hayes- Citizen engaged in banking or mortgage banking industry

Guests Present:

Joe McAnarney, County resident  
Caleena Shirley, St Johns Housing Partnership  
Joe Cone, Assistant Director, Health and Human Services  
Roberto Ortiz, Manager, Housing & Community Development  
Julie Voorhees, Housing & Community Development Support Staff  
Mary Garcia, Social Services Support Staff  
Michael Roberson, Interim Director, St Johns County Growth Management

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 Harry Maxwell to approve minutes of October, 2021 meeting; motion seconded by Michael O'Donnell. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- 3) Administrators Report: Roberto Ortiz reminded the Committee there will be no AHAC meeting in December and he said that the AHAC annual report will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), at their December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. Mr. Ortiz said he hoped Committee members would attend and show their support on this date. Mr. Ortiz also stated

he is preparing a Power Point presentation of the Victoria Crossing and San Marco Heights developments to be shared at the January, 2022, AHAC meeting.

- 4) AHAC Annual Report 2021- Review: Bill Lazar provided a copy of the AHAC annual report for review, as well as a draft of the presentation that he and Mr. Ortiz plan to present to the BOCC. Mr. Lazar explained this was a draft of the report and he asked for input from the Committee. Joe Cone requested information about the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program, and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program be included in this presentation. Mr. Cone noted both of these programs are vital to keeping residents in their homes. Discussion ensued regarding the top three incentives that the AHAC made their primary focus in 2021, and these were confirmed to be modification of impact fees, support of development near transportation hubs, and flexible densities. Bill Lazar asked if any of the SHIP allocation for the community could help off-set the cost of impact fees for non-profits, such as Habitat for Humanity. Joe Cone stated staff is currently looking at the additional SHIP funds that are available to see if they might be used to assist our community partners. Steve Ladrido asked if some of the AHAC's successes might be added to the planning and incentive slide. Steve Ladrido stated emphasis should be placed on the progress, the County has made toward affordable housing. As this discussion ended, Joe Cone thanked the Committee for giving of their personal time and for lending their expertise to help solve the problem of a lack of affordable housing in the community. A **motion** was made by Harry Maxwell to accept the AHAC report; motion seconded by Karl Vierck. **Motion passed unanimously**
  
- 5) Current Vacancies and Recommendations: Mary Garcia advised there is still one vacancy and it is for the "Citizen representing essential services personnel". Ms. Garcia said the posting will be closed by the January, 2022 AHAC meeting and recommendations can be made at that time. Ms. Garcia advised the recommendation letter for the "Citizen engaged in residential home building industry" was sent to the BCC for approval and the item will be placed on the agenda soon. Ms. Garcia stated it was time for officer elections. After some discussion, a **motion** was made by Harry Maxwell to nominate Steve Ladrido as Chair and Bill Lazar as Vice Chair; no further nominations were made; motion seconded by Karl Vierck. **Motion passed unanimously.**
  
- 6) Public Comment: Caleena Shirley stressed her belief that the community must come together as a whole and address the lack of affordable/workforce housing. Ms. Shirley thanked the AHAC for doing their part and putting a voice to this topic. Joe McAnarney also thanked the Committee and asked that everyone take time to write to their county commissioners and take the opportunity to make a stand on the importance of affordable housing to this community. Mr. McAnarney also spoke in favor of the Stokes Landing development, and said he was very happy to see it was scheduled to go before the PZA on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. McAnarney did express concern that the apartments would be built 35 feet from US1, as he said he considers this a safety risk for children living there. Mr. McAnarney asked about 200 parcels of land being gifted by the Hudson Corporation in the Armstrong area and discussion ensued with regard to what might be built there. Caleena Shirley asked about the San Marco Heights and Victoria Crossing developments and Roberto Ortiz gave a progress update.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59p.m.