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THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AFFORDABLE/WORKFORCE HOUSING

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February 1, 2007

PUBLIC WORKSHOP OF
THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AFFORDABLE/WORKFORCE HOUSING
FEBRUARY 1, 2007

The Board of County Commissioners of Indian River County, Florida, met in a Public Workshop at the County Commission Chambers, 1840 25th Street, Vero Beach, Florida, on Thursday, February 1, 2007, at 1:00 p.m. to discuss Affordable/Workforce Housing. Present were Chairman Gary C. Wheeler (entered at 1:13 p.m.), Vice Chair Sandra L. Bowden, Commissioners Wesley S. Davis, Joseph E. Flescher, and Peter D. O’Bryan. Also present were County Administrator Joseph A. Baird, County Attorney William G. Collins II, and Deputy Clerk Maria I. Suesz.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Bowden called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Sandra L. Bowden led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

4. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Vice Chair Bowden introduced Bill Odel from the Schimberg Center.

5. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS OF NEW INNOVATIVE HOUSING STRATEGIES

Community Development Director Bob Keating announce that there have been other affordable housing workshops in the past, one in 1997 and another in 2001. He also announced that he would not be a presenter at today's Workshop but he had knowledgeable people who would bring great resources, not only to identify affordable housing issues, but also some identify strategies for solving those problems. He introduced the speakers who were from the Florida Housing Coalition and the Schimberg Center for Affordable Housing.

5.A. COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS

Bill Odel, from the Schimberg Center for Affordable Housing, gave a brief overview of what the Center produced in the way of affordable housing needs assessments. He used a PowerPoint Presentation (copy on file) to define affordable housing and "cost burden", and to examine affordable housing needs estimates and projections for the region. He briefly looked at the impact of special population groups, identified assisted supply and discussed preservation. He displayed a graph showing how the rising prices have reduced the availability of affordable housing from the year 2000 through 2005. In the rental market, he reported that for a household to afford a two-bedroom apartment at a Fair Market Rent (FMR) of \$706.00 per month; they would have to earn a housing wage of \$13.58 per hour.

(Clerk's Note: Chairman Wheeler joined the meeting at 1:13 p.m.)

Stan Fitterman, of the Florida Housing Coalition, continued the PowerPoint presentation defining the Community Land Trust Appraisal Methodology (copy on file), pointing

out the issues that are leading people to look at the Community Land Trust. He responded to questions posed by the Commissioners and explained that Community Land Trust neighborhood restricts the price of sales, and as the neighborhood gets redeveloped, the prices do not skyrocket. Community Land Trusts work best when the choices are to rent, or to leave the community. Understanding the market is extremely important in making the decision to develop a Land Trust. He pointed out that the challenges facing Florida are the economic demands coming from outside of the State. He mentioned that St. Francis Manor is a Community Land Trust development. He gave an example of how the process works, and answered questions regarding maintenance, resale, and borrowing equity.

5.B. INCLUSIONARY HOUSING

Gladys Schneider, Florida Housing Coalition, using a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file) presented inclusionary housing (zoning). She stated that the main thing the County has to do is show the public that “good” is actually “being harmed” by the lack of affordable housing to achieve inclusionary housing. She reviewed the decision-making process and how it works. She mentioned how important it is to provide some type of incentive to keep the community whole and the best way to do that is through density. She disclosed that the inclusionary policy would be the right policy in a robust real estate market, large-scale developments, and new urbanism developments.

The Chairman called for a recess at 2:27 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 2:39 p.m. with all members present.

5.C. EMPLOYER ASSISTED HOUSING

Stan Fitterman spoke briefly about employer assisted housing in Pennsylvania, and Chicago. Overall, it is large employers working to keep their employees, offering a benefit other

employers are not, and it is a recruitment and retainage tool. He restated some employees have to stay at least 5 years to receive those incentives. It is similar to Community Land Trusts except when they sell the house they payback the amount borrowed plus 50% of the appreciation, and the employer feels that is enough to help the next employee buy a house.

5.D. LINKAGE FEES

Gladys Schneider defined linkage fees as a type of impact or mitigation fee based on the premise that the development demands additional employees who will need affordable housing. To provide a better understanding to the Board she described the process that Collier County (a County similar to Indian River) went through to do the linkage study. In summary, the Board would need to establish these types of findings: impacts and fees, a Trust Fund, administrative requirements, affordable projects, and an alternative fee calculation, if no nexus-use of land resource can be shown.

5.E. PRIVATE/PUBLIC HOUSING TRUST FUNDS

5.F. OTHER STRATEGIES

6. REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON AFFORDABLE/WORKFORCE HOUSING

Greg Vaday, Vero Beach and Treasure Coast Planning Council, used a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file) to talk about workforce housing, and providing solutions from a regional perspective. He stated that the problem as existing when wages are not moving inline with housing prices. He explained the cycle of housing connection to the economy stating that a tight workforce housing market hurts the economy. He talked about some policy implications

that the Board might want to consider if they were going to consider developing attainable programs in the community. He pointed out the need for the Board to consider programs and policies, promote public-private partnerships, and stated that there really is no single solution. They need to think about what is the appropriate role for the public sector to play in partnership with the private sector. He stressed the importance in considering an array of approaches. He explained the Treasure Coast Region's Workforce Housing toolkit, and how it tries to get to the leading policies and programs that can be used to preserve and promote workforce housing, serves as a resource document and a guide to workforce housing policy creation.

7. PRESENTATION BY COALITION FOR ATTAINABLE HOMES

Jim Goldsmith, President of the Coalition for Attainable Homes, asked the members of the Coalition to stand and be recognized. He introduced **Connie Poppell**, a Coalition Board Member, who read the following recommended strategies, and gave definitions using a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file):

1. Invest in a Tri-Annual Study of Housing Needs
2. Develop Housing Goals and review annually
3. Encourage greater regional cooperation
4. Create a Community Land Trust
5. Create a Housing Trust Fund
6. Create a Community Development Corporation
7. Pass Inclusionary Zoning Ordinances
8. Alter Zoning Regulations
9. Index Impact Fees
10. Support New Construction Technologies
11. Consider the Impact of the Urban Service Boundary

Richard Stark, Chairman of the Treasure Coast Homeless Society, said the Society thinks the eleven recommendations are a viable approach. They saw a need for more workshops in specific areas depending on the direction taken by the Board. In conclusion, they realized, as Greg Vaday pointed out, there is no magical solution

8. WRAP-UP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Geraldine White, 363 West Key Lime Square SW, talked about the 800 homeless people in our County. She asked the Board what were they going to do to plan, and when are they going to initiate help for the homeless.

Peter Foster, 9999 Street, Sebastian, asked the Board to look at The Beachcove, a land-use community of manufactured homes, as an alternative type of housing.

Marylou Gutierrez, Housing Manager for USDA (for single-family housing) commended the SHIP staff and asked if the SHIP funding could be increased. She asked the Board to setup a mechanism to bail out USDA loans.

Jeff Wiltzius, Professor at IRC Community College, told the Board to direct the Property Appraiser to take extra steps to make sure the current values are reflected, take the speculators out of the market by “sticking to their guns”, and not change zoning. He suggested rolling back the millage rates.

Chairman Wheeler said they do not have the right to direct the Property Appraiser, but his point was well taken.

Commissioner Davis responded that they recently modified the small lots ordinance to allow only affordable housing in a small lot subdivision.

Nancy Offutt, President of the Treasure Coast Builders' Association, said the builders did not feel inclusionary housing zoning was the answer. She disclosed that they felt it targets one aspect of the community providing for new construction to be used for affordable housing and they would like to debate that at a separate forum if that is possible. They would like to see full funding of the Sadowsky Act, more subsidizing for SHIP, and integrated development between commercial and residential.

Sumner Charmin, Sebastian, spoke about communities up north trying to get Piper Aircraft to move there. He thought the Board could do a lot to help this situation. His theory was some of the County land could be used for affordable housing. He thought some of the new methods in building could be incorporated to reduce the cost of building; also, the impact fees could be used down the road.

Spencer Simmons, Simmons Homes, said we are always looking at bringing the housing prices down, instead of bringing the income up. They need to start looking at industries to come here and provide better high paying jobs.

Geraldine White, asked if there was anything that could be done during the slump, and if they could do anything in the neighborhoods where there are blocks of vacancies.

Commissioner O'Bryan commented that there are a number of homes listed at \$150,000 or less. He liked the suggestion of recreating the housing committee, and maybe the affordable housing coalition committee. He felt they needed to do something to keep the momentum going. He wanted to see the Board give staff some direction to take these ideas and start working through some of these options.

Vice Chair Bowden agreed.

Chairman Wheeler closed the workshop giving direction to staff to explain what is the cost and revenue source. He wanted to know what are we going to raise in taxes and what are we going to cut in services to provide these benefits. He said when he gets that information then he could make decisions that are reasonable.

9. ADJOURNMENT

ALL BACKUP DOCUMENTATION, RESOLUTIONS, AND ORDINANCES ARE ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK TO THE BOARD AND ARE HEREBY MADE A PART OF THESE MINUTES

There being no further business, on Motion duly made, seconded and carried, the Board adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jeffrey K. Barton, Clerk

Gary C. Wheeler, Chairman

Minutes Approved: _____

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