



MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 23, 2022

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee held in the Indian River County Administration Building B, Conference Room B1-501 Vero Beach, FL at
9:00 AM ON FEBRUARY 23, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair David Myers called the February 23, 2022 meeting of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee to order at 9:02 AM.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present

Sam Carroll, Town of Indian River Shores
David Myers II, Vice Chair
Linda Morgan, Member at Large
Curtis Carpenter, Planning & Zoning Appointee
Mark Mathes, City of Fellsmere
Christopher Nunn, City of Sebastian
Jeff Francisco, Non-Profit Affordable Housing
Julianne Price, Advocate for Low Income
Chip Landers, Real Estate Professional
Commissioner Susan Adams, Voting Member

Members Absent

Robbie Brackett, City of Vero Beach

QUORUM WAS MET.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- a. Chair - *Susan Adams made a motion to appoint Julianne Price as Chair of the Indian River County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee. Chip Landers seconded the motion which passed unanimously.*
- b. Vice Chair - *Chip Landers made a motion to appoint David Myers as Vice Chair of the Indian River County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee. Susan Adams seconded the motion which passed unanimously.*

At this time, David Myers passed the gavel to Julianne Price, Chair.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Minutes of October 27, 2021 – *Chip Landers made a motion, seconded by Christopher Nunn to approve the Minutes of October 27, 2021 Regular Meeting as amended. The motion passed unanimously.*
- b. Minutes of November 10, 2021 – *Christopher Nunn made a motion, seconded by Susan Adams to approve the Minutes of November 10, 2021 Special Call Meeting as amended. The motion passed unanimously.*

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a. Region 6 AHAC Update – Commissioner Susan Adams.

Commissioner Adams attended the workshop for elected officials on February 16, 2022 which was held by zoom. There was a lot of input from other municipalities in the region regarding the highlights for their AHAC annual reports: Martin County working on fee waivers, Boynton Beach is working on affordable housing land inventory, West Palm Beach is looking at a citywide land trust, and, Port St. Lucie is looking at parking and set back requirements. Some good ideas were shared. The Florida Housing Coalition provided a presentation on housing policy and funding, land use planning for affordable housing including tools and incentives. There was also an update on HB1339 (2020) land use flexibility for affordable housing.

Phil Matson commented that it is beneficial to hear and see what surrounding communities are doing to see if there is something we can learn from or improve.

The committee continued the discussion which included bringing viable options to elected officials including the County Commission. The discussion included simplifying the approval processes for affordable housing at the staff level. Julianne added that we have done expedited permit processing but perhaps the entire process can be reviewed.

b. CHIP Housing Action Plan 2022 – 2026 – Julianne Price

Julianne Price discussed the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP 2022-2026 Priority Area 2 – Housing). Two key points within the plan that Julianne pointed out were Objective 2a2, Conduct an assessment on Community Land Trust feasibility and provider interest in Indian River County. This item is also in the AHAC recommendations. Ms. Ellen Kendall spoke briefly regarding Community Land Trusts and raising the profiles to preserve affordability for the long term. A key action is to create a focus group containing non-profit and county members by 2026. Currently, Commissioner Moss has been working with Ellen Kendall and other individuals to learn about all aspects of a community land trust.

The second key point Julianne Price wanted to bring forth is Objective 2a1, to increase the number of parcels added to the Indian River county Urban Service Area to increase available land for affordable-workforce housing units. The key action would be to conduct an urban service area education campaign; and to collaborate with the MPO in the visioning process to evaluate and promote appropriate urban service area expansion.

Phil Matson said that in addition to the affordable housing crisis, we have an “ag” crisis. The former citrus industry land is looking for something else to do. Phil also discussed that a review of what can be developed out west is underway – more ag-industry. Creating more jobs is the fundamental driver of affordability. There is a lot of merit to moving the urban service line but that is only one tool of many. The cost of materials and skilled labor is also affecting the affordable housing market, its not just land supply.

Commissioner Adams added that what might be helpful in the urban service boundary conversation is if we are going to be providing infrastructure and utilities and services in more westerly areas than we have in the past, then we are going to have to go through some of these areas outside of the urban service boundary to get to areas inside. In other words, if we are going through the area, why not provide the service there. We need to address this problem before our workforce moves out of the County because they are who makes a community a community.

Discussion continued with the committee and members of the audience that included addressing various issues that contribute to the affordable housing crisis including slumlords. Assistant County Attorney Susan Prada was present and advised the committee that the Code Enforcement Board is moving forward with foreclosures on slumlords who fail to bring their properties into compliance. Phil Matson added that code enforcement officers are aggressively enforcing the law. Ellen Kendall discussed “Adaptive Re-use” of properties and zoning under HB1339. Mr. George Gibson discussed that municipal workers, teachers, police and firefighters cannot afford to live in Indian River County because the wages are not keeping up with the rising cost of housing.

The Crisis Stabilization Manager from United Against Poverty was present and commented that there are families who live in tents even though they hold two jobs or are double and tripled up

in hotel rooms. Teachers, nurses, and other workers are having their homes sold out from under them and they have no idea where they are going to go or what they are going to do. This is at a critical-high level.

David Myers stressed that if people are not earning a livable wage, no one can afford the home that will be built.

c. Gifford Gardens Update – John Stoll

John Stoll provided an update on the RFP for the Gifford Gardens project from the beginning. When the RFP was issued, only one bid was received by the submission deadline. The proposed sales price for a single-family home starting at 1800 square feet was between \$311,000.00 and \$377,000.00. The selection committee is concerned that this is not affordable housing. The committee met several times with the developer to discuss the proposed price point and possible solutions for reducing the cost. The selection committee would like to move forward with direction from AHAC and BCC. Some options may include providing additional incentives, work with developer to provide a cheaper construction solution including townhomes rather than single family homes, reduce the high-end features, or increase density, or wait for the construction market to stabilize and resubmit the RFP.

Discussion continued among the committee regarding the construction costs and features.

Chris Nunn made a motion to reject the current bid and direct staff to workshop the details with the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee and put the request for proposal out again with strict guidelines and revised perimeters. Julianne Price seconded the motion. Discussion continued.

County Administrator Jason Brown suggested that a workshop to review the perimeters of the RFP should happen before putting the RFP out again. Phil Matson agreed that the guidelines and perimeters need to be revised.

Hearing no more discussion a vote was called. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business or discussion, Julianne Price adjourned the meeting at 10:52 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Maura Stokes
Recording Secretary