

**APPROVED**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE EXECUTIVE AIRPORT**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE – MULTIPURPOSE ROOM**  
**6000 NW 21<sup>ST</sup> AVENUE**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE, FL**  
**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2008 – 6:30 P.M.**

Board Members	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance 9/08 through 8/09	
		Present	Absent
Chair Peter Henn	P	4	0
Vice Chair Rebecca Jo Walter	P	4	0
Margie Alexander	P	3	1
Tam English	P	2	2
William Isenberg	P	3	1
Carolyn Jones	A	0	4
Jonathan Jordan	A	3	1
Rene Lepine [7:05]	P	2	2
Janet Riley	A	2	2
Greg Stuart	P	3	2

**City Staff**

Margarette Hayes, Manager, Community Development Division  
 Susan Batchelder, Assistant Manager, Community Development Division  
 Miriam Carrillo, Housing Program Supervisor  
 Angela Mahecha, Administrative Aide  
 Laura Maldonado, Senior Accounting Clerk  
 Wayne Jessup, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning  
 J. Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Call to Order**

Chair Henn called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and roll was taken.

**2. Introductions**

**3. Approval of Minutes**

## **October 6 and October 20, 2008**

Board members and staff noted corrections to the October 6 and 20 minutes.

**Motion** made by Ms. Walter, seconded by Mr. Isenberg, to approve the minutes of the Board's October 6, 2008 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, Board unanimously approved.

**Motion** made by Ms. Walter, seconded by Mr. Stuart, to approve the minutes of the Board's October 20, 2008 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, Board unanimously approved.

### **4. Presentations - Wayne Jessup, Deputy Director Planning & Zoning**

Ms. Hayes stated the Board had asked Mr. Jessup to attend this evening to provide his insight and input on their recommendations. After this meeting, the Board would finalize their recommendations and staff would provide a draft report by November 17. Chair Henn clarified that the Board's 13 recommendations were still a work in progress. He asked Mr. Jessup to comment on the practicality of the recommendations.

Mr. Jessup and the Board discussed the 13 possible recommendations:

#### **1. Continued Expedited Permitting**

Mr. Jessup said Planning Department and Building Department staff had met regarding this, and set up a more defined procedure. This included identifying staff in each department who would perform intake of the projects so developers knew where to go. In addition, affordable housing projects would be flagged and promoted to the top of the pile, and backup staff would ensure the projects were handled properly when the designated staff members were not available.

Mr. Jessup explained that the projects must still undergo the entire review process; the City would just ensure that affordable housing projects would begin each step of this process as soon as they were submitted.

Chair Henn said ideally, there would be a timeline for how long the approval process would take, and a staff member would monitor each project's progress to ensure it moved in a timely manner.

Mr. English remarked that whether or not a developer was from Fort Lauderdale, he or she needed builders and construction people who knew how to work the

Fort Lauderdale process. He said, "If you don't know the folks, you're going to have trouble getting things expedited; you've got to know who to call." Chair Henn hoped staff was working to enable out of town developers to follow the rules and know which staff members to contact. Mr. Jessup said the intent was to make it work for everyone.

## **2. Impact Fee Modifications**

Mr. Jessup confirmed that there were currently programs that could provide up to \$7,500 for impact fee mitigation. There was also the potential for State assistance. Chair Henn said the Board had considered using the same approach used by Collier County, which was a deferment. In this program, when a home was sold or refinanced, the fee would go back to the general fund with interest.

## **3. Flexible Lot Configurations**

Ms. Hayes explained that this related to modifying setbacks to allow building on smaller lots.

Mr. Jessup informed the Board that the City had recently hired a consultant to examine the residential code, to define the character of individual neighborhoods and to develop code language to facilitate neighborhoods' achieving that character. Regarding affordable housing, he suggested the Board could recommend appropriate development patterns; staff could include this in their review and identify where and how to implement it.

Ms. Walters said the Board could make a broad recommendation such as: Mixed use, mixed income, high-density development should be located near transit corridors and centers of employment.

## **4. Density Bonuses**

Mr. Jessup stated this was a land use issue. Chair Henn remembered that Michael Wohl had made a good point at their previous meeting: density bonuses must be accompanied by parking requirement reductions. Chair Henn noted that Fort Lauderdale was not yet a sufficiently dense community to make this workable, and Mr. Stuart remarked that in Miami Dade, this type of high-density development was typically constructed near transit corridors.

Mr. Lepine arrived at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. English recommended exercising caution regarding high density for affordable and lower-income housing. He noted that when densities were “kicked through the roof” this could “create a monster.” Mr. English stated in neighborhoods where affordable housing was located, “the higher you kick the density up, the worse your crime problems are, the worse your social problems are.”

Chair Henn asked Mr. Jessup what developments might occur in the next 3 to 10 years regarding light rail being constructed along an east/west corridor in the City, which would provide the opportunity for higher density development. Mr. Jessup felt downtown light rail was more likely to be built sooner, and the east/west rail was probably 10 years away. Mr. English pointed out that light rail discussions had been going on for 25 years and the City had yet to dedicate “the first square foot of right-of-way.”

Ms. Hayes advised Chair Henn that she would bring a draft report to the Board’s next meeting. After their next meeting, she would create the final report. Chair Henn asked if the Board should remove items from the report now or wait until their next meeting. Ms. Hayes suggested that if the Board agreed, they should remove items at this meeting.

Mr. English said it was not desirable to increase the density in affordable and lower-income housing because of the social issues in that community that were primarily driven by drugs and economics.

Ms. Hayes reminded the Board that City staff had a mandate from the City Commission to concentrate on single-family ownership because the City wanted to encourage pride of ownership.

Ms. Alexander took exception to Mr. English’s remark that “the more poor people living in an area, socially will not be getting along” because she had been raised in Dixie Court and there had been no incidents. Mr. English noted that Dixie Court was not a super-dense site, but he believed that over increasing density in some of the lower income neighborhoods would result in problems.

Ms. Walter suggested they could use language similar to that used by Hollywood, which was very general and provided staff flexibility for affordable housing on a case-by-case basis. It also ensured that density would not have a negative impact on the affordable housing development or on the surrounding environment.

## **5. Land Bank Inventory**

Ms. Hayes explained that the City had a current inventory of land it was outsourcing. This suggestion related to allowing the City to continue this process. She stated a few City administrations ago, the Community Development Department was told they needed to acquire all of the vacant lots, especially in the northwest quadrant of the City, so they could have control over what happened with this land. Ms. Hayes said this must be done with a HUD-approved national objective.

Ms. Walter pointed out that the Florida Housing Coalition required land banking to be included in the Board's report.

## **6. Parking and Setback Requirements [Similar to the Beach's Buydown]**

Mr. Jessup said the City was concerned that the current dearth of parking in residential areas had resulted in residents parking their cars in swales in the northwest area of the City. This negatively affected the aesthetics and character of neighborhoods and could also affect the swales' ability to function properly for drainage. He wondered if a parking reduction would make sense.

Ms. Walter said the Board intended to recommend that parking reductions be considered on a case-by-case basis in affordable housing development, especially if it was located in the downtown area or near transit. Mr. Jessup agreed this must be integrated with other strategies, such as transit development or shared parking.

Mr. Lepine said according to statistics, 55% of Americans now lived alone, but parking requirements were not compatible with this figure. Mr. Jessup noted that parking reductions were considered for larger scale developments, such as Flagler Point, which catered to seniors, was located near a transit corridor and had available on-street parking. Mr. Lepine felt that a developer should not need to go through the parking reduction process if a project already met certain criteria. He thought that the costs of "jumping through the hoops" adversely affected affordability.

Mr. English felt the process could possibly be expedited, but stated the City had buildings that were constructed years ago with half the parking they needed today, including Kennedy Homes and Dixie Court.

Mr. Jessup agreed it might be possible to better codify some criteria that would warrant a parking reduction. Mr. English added that the process to qualify for a parking reduction was sometimes confusing.

### **7. Using TIF Funds to Float Bonds**

Ms. Hayes said Mr. Jordan had recommended this; he suggested that TIF funds could be used to float bonds, and the bonds could be used to create affordable housing. Mr. Stuart said Mr. Jordan intended for this to occur outside the CRA, anywhere in the City. Mr. English remarked that this proposal would be a “hard sell.”

Ms. Walter said she would support a dedicated source of funding for affordable housing, but in this economy, in this City, that would not happen, and she suggested this be removed from the Board’s recommendations. Mr. English agreed that until Broward County identified a source of funds, this would not be viable. Mr. Stuart wanted to encourage the City to urge the County to continue working with the legislature to get a Doc Stamp, like Miami Dade County.

### **8. City Becomes Developer**

Chair Henn felt the Mayor had made a good argument at their previous meeting that non-profits and the Housing Authority were better suited to serve in this capacity rather than creating another government agency. Mr. Jessup added that this would present a resource issue at the City. The Board agreed to remove this item from their recommendations.

### **9. City Supports Broward County Linkage Fee Program**

Chair Henn explained that the County had decided to table the linkage fee for now, so it seemed logical to remove this item from the Board’s recommendations.

### **10. Development of Affordable Housing Near Major Transportation Corridors**

The Board agreed they should include this item in their recommendations. Ms. Walter said this recommendation was specific to one of the Florida Housing Coalition’s categories.

### **11. Use of and Increase Capacity of Non-profits as Affordable Housing Developers**

Ms. Hayes said this had been suggested by Ms. Riley. Mr. Stuart explained the intent was to help organizations to make their applications properly, in order to increase their chances of obtaining funds. Mr. English pointed out that there was a limited amount of funding.

Chair Henn referred to the handout of an article from Florida Trend that indicated there was a lot of affordable housing being built in Florida, but most of it was for the highest income levels, not the lower. Chair Henn felt anything they could do to help non-profit developers succeed should be high priority.

### **12. Non-profit and For-profit Partners**

Ms. Hayes stated they did not want to leave the for-profit developers out of their efforts to build affordable housing. Ms. Walter thought that in suggesting this, Ms. Riley was referring to the creation of public/private partnerships.

Mr. Jessup said it would be interesting to invite for-profit developers to create a model that made sense for them.

The Board discussed the feasibility of density bonuses and other incentives. Mr. Isenberg remarked that the issues came down to three main topics: parking, density and incentives.

Chair Henn suggested that if the community did not want the City's general fund to be used for affordable housing, they should be willing to accept higher density. In return for increased density, developers could pay into a fund to create affordable housing.

### **13. Develop Greater Public Participation at All Income Levels**

Ms. Hayes thought this suggestion had come from Ms. Riley, and she wanted to be sure that they did not leave out people at lower income levels. Ms. Walter was unsure if this should be a separate recommendation from the Board; she felt it was a point to consider within all of the recommendations.

Ms. Hayes informed Chair Henn that the SHIP statutory requirements specified 30% of the City's assistance must be for very low income housing and 30% must be for low income housing. She explained that in Fort Lauderdale, over 28% of

the population were at 25% of median income and below. Under the federal programs, they were assisting those at 80% of median income and below.

Chair Henn referred to the estimate of 50 affordable homes that would be built within two years, and asked Ms. Hayes where those homes would come from: non-profit developers, for-profit developers creating very low income housing, or subsidized housing. Ms. Hayes believed it would be a combination of all of these. She stated they had their current programs, and \$3.7 million for the NSP program that would make foreclosed units available for ownership.

In summary, Mr. Jessup felt the Board had covered many aspects of the issue, and said the City would pay attention to the Board's recommendations.

Mr. Lepine informed Mr. Jessup that the "killer" was not the permit process but the development review process. He stated the process had become "absurd" and "out of control" and could cost \$200,000 to \$500,000, depending on the size of the project. Mr. Lepine said the change had occurred during Marc LaFerrier's tenure as Director of Planning and Zoning.

Mr. English explained that it had taken six months, with Commission intervention, to get the first phase of his Dixie Courts project through the DRC process. It had taken the second phase weeks, not months, because staff people were working together. Mr. Lepine felt additional reform of the DRC process was necessary.

Mr. Jessup described the pre-DRC process. He noted that if a developer made use of this, the actual DRC process was largely perfunctory.

Chair Henn wanted the Board to consider making a recommendation regarding permitted heights. He felt that if code allowed a 100-foot building in a zone, a developer should be permitted to build to 100 feet; neighborhood compatibility or other criteria should not be a consideration. Chair Henn thought the Board could recommend that if a developer was processing an affordable housing project, he should be entitled to the maximum height and density allowed under the code. Mr. Jessup said he would allow the City Commission to make this determination.

## **5. Review of Documentation**

Ms. Hayes said they had already covered this item.



## **6. Discussion of Initiatives/Strategies**

Ms. Hayes announced that staff would have a draft report for the Board to review at their November 17 meeting and they intended to present the report to the City Commission at its conference meeting on December 2. The final draft would be presented to the City Commission on December 16.

## **7. Other Business**

Ms. Walter had provided the Board with an announcement regarding a conference addressing the negative impacts of foreclosures at the E. Pat Larkins Community Center in Pompano Beach on November 5. Board members also received flyers for a conference regarding workforce housing on November 12. Ms. Walter advised Board members to sign up for this conference on the Miami Chamber of Commerce website.

The Board confirmed that their next meeting would be on November 17 and would be held at the City Commission chambers. Their following meeting was scheduled for December 1.

The Board discussed their meeting dates and times. Chair Henn suggested that instead of meeting on December 1, they should meet on December 8 when they could finalize the report with comments the City Commission made in their conference meeting. They could perform their final edit on the report before presenting it to the Commission on December 16. Ms. Hayes agreed to check on available locations for a December 8 meeting and to notify the Board. The Board also wanted to meet at 6:00 instead of 6:30 on November 17, and Ms. Hayes agreed to determine if the meeting room was available and to notify Board members.

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting date: **November 17, 2008, 6:00 p.m.**, Fort Lauderdale City Hall first floor City Commission chambers at 100 North Andrews Avenue.

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Chair Peter Henn