

APPROVED
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MIZELL CENTER – 1409 NW 6 STREET
2ND FLOOR AUDITORIUM
MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2011 – 8:00 A.M.

Cumulative Attendance

Committee Members	Attendance	7/10 through 6/11	
		Present	Absent
Janet Riley, Chair	P	8	1
Jonathan Jordan, Vice Chair	P	8	1
Margie Alexander	P	8	1
Jason Crush	A	5	3
Bradley Deckelbaum (8:19)	P	6	3
Peter Henn	P	8	1
Edwin Parke	P	3	1
Brian Poulin	P	8	1
Amanda Spangler-Bartle (8:19)	P	6	2
Rebecca Jo Walter	A	5	4
Roosevelt Walters	P	9	0

Staff

Susan Batchelder, Liaison, Housing and Community Development
Angelia Basto, Administrative Aide, Housing and Community Development
Jonathan Brown, Housing and Community Development Manager
Angela Mahecha, Administrative Aide, Housing and Community Development
Barbara Hartmann, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

Motion made by Ms. Spangler-Bartle, seconded by Mr. Walters, to recommend that the City take action by sending a letter to the State to request that the Sadowski Act remain in effect. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Roll Call

Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Board / Staff Introductions

Ms. Batchelder introduced the Staff members present.

Approval of Minutes – March 21, 2011

Motion made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Mr. Jordan, to accept the minutes of the March 21, 2011 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Presentation on Existing Rental Programs

Jonathan Brown, Housing and Community Development Manager, advised that copies of the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP), from the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) funding source, had been emailed to the Committee members. He noted that the State legislature has not approved SHIP funding in a few years, which means there is currently no funding for the Plan.

The City-administered rental program within the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) has been approved by the City Commission and the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. The LHAP contains the only programs that may be administered with SHIP funds. While there is not always money available for every program, Mr. Brown said monies are placed in as many different programs as possible.

He noted that the multi-family rental program allows assistance to be provided to the developers of affordable rental housing that serves low-income and very low-income housing families only. Very low-income is classified as earning 30% or below of the median income, and low-income is classified as earning 50% or below. SHIP funds can be used for site acquisition, development, rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, impact fees, or construction-related costs.

The funds are provided directly to the developer, who uses them in the eligible ways they feel are most effective for the project. In return, the City expects that the developer will reduce the costs or set aside housing units for low- or very low-income applicants. Mr. Brown explained this could mean a multi-family project, for instance, would receive funds based on how many units the developer can set aside for low- to very low-income housing. The maximum dollar amount that could be given per single unit is \$20,000.

For nonprofit organizations, forgivable loans can be provided as part of the program. For-profit organizations can be given a 3% loan. The forgivable loan also stipulates a maximum of \$20,000 per unit. Nonprofits are expected to keep the units affordable for a 20-year period, and for-profits must keep them affordable for at least 15 years.

He concluded that the program operates in a similar fashion in most municipalities, with funds going directly to the developer, who then lowers the cost of the affordable housing unit. Funds must be encumbered within 12 months; once funds are received, the developer is given a maximum of 24 months in which to spend them and have the units occupied. He explained that this is because there are time frames attached to the SHIP dollars.

Mr. Walters asked if there is the prospect of future SHIP dollars for the program. Mr. Brown said the State legislature is in the process of trying to adjust the Sadowski Act; however, he noted that it “doesn’t look good.”

Ms. Spangler-Bartle explained that a trust fund was originally established so a portion of “doc stamps” from property purchases would go toward affordable housing. This put a portion of money from every real estate transaction into affordable housing. Over the past few years, however, the State felt some of the money could be taken from this fund and used for other purposes. A cap was placed on how much of the fund must be used for affordable housing, with the remainder to go into general revenue for other uses.

This year, it has been proposed that instead of setting a cap on how much of the trust fund must go toward affordable housing, all trust fund dollars would be diverted into general revenue. Several groups are contacting their State representatives and senators to ask that they repeal the bill containing this proposal. Ms. Spangler-Bartle concluded that as many cities as possible should ask their legislators to remove this provision from the bill. If it passes, the entire SHIP program will be wiped out, and the State would decide how much money to give each municipality each year for affordable housing.

Mr. Brown said in the past, Housing and Community Development had received between \$1.5 million and \$2 million each year in SHIP funds for a number of different programs.

Ms. Spangler-Bartle suggested that the Committee may want to send a letter to the State. Mr. Brown agreed that there has been a concerted effort by various municipalities: in 2010 the Florida Housing Coalition encouraged these municipalities to have their City Commissions approve resolutions to repeal the cap on the trust fund. The measure ultimately failed in the legislature, however.

Mr. Brown asked if the Committee members had any suggestions they would like to offer, as they work with and are aware of affordable housing in various capacities. He proposed that they might be able to make changes to the existing program and present it to the City Commission for approval.

Motion made by Ms. Spangler-Bartle that the Committee write a letter to the State and send it to local representatives as well as the State Senate President and Governor, stating that they are in support of the Sadowski Act and don’t want to see it removed and absorbed into General Revenue.

Ms. Batchelder advised that the **motion** could be made more effective by being sent as a communication to the City Commission. Mr. Walters said he was not certain the Committee could take the action described in the **motion**. Mr. Brown

said the members as individuals could reach out to their elected officials, or they could ask the City to do so. He recalled that the City had participated in similar action the previous year.

Mr. Walters said the Committee could communicate its wishes to the City Commission and ask that they send them to the State legislature.

Ms. Spangler-Bartle **amended** her **motion** as follows: the Committee recommends that the City take action and send a letter to the State to request that the Sadowski Act remain in effect. Mr. Walters **seconded** the **amended motion**.

Mr. Henn advised that it was unlikely the communication would go to the City Commission prior to their May 3 meeting, by which time the session in Tallahassee might be over. Ms. Spangler-Bartle explained it could make sense to go on record regarding this issue, and reiterated that the City may already be participating in similar action via the League of Cities or the Florida Housing Coalition. Mr. Deckelbaum suggested that it could be more effective for individual members to reach out to their State legislators with reference to the discussion at today's meeting.

Ms. Spangler-Bartle and Mr. Walters agreed that the recommendation would seem stronger if it came from the City's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee rather than from individuals. She said she would like the recommendation to be on record from the Committee. Mr. Walters said the Committee could also communicate this recommendation when they go before the City Commission with their Affordable Housing Plan.

Mr. Henn said the State legislature might not vote to maintain the Sadowski Act this year, but the recommendation could be made for the following year. Mr. Deckelbaum advised, however, that they make no further substantive amendments to the plan, so it can be approved at today's meeting and sent to the City Commission.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

The Committee agreed to bring this Item back on the following month's Agenda after further review of the Local Housing Assistance Plan, so they could offer suggestions at that time.

Final Draft Session on Affordable Housing Plan

Ms. Spangler-Bartle reviewed the changes to the draft Affordable Housing Plan, including the addition of a cover page describing the Committee's mission and a summary section listing specific recommendations.

The Committee members discussed changes and offered additional suggestions for and clarifications to the document. They determined that once the finalized Plan is sent to the City Commission, the Committee's next step would be to request that the Commission to approve their recommended policies and direct Staff to work with the Committee to find ways to implement them.

Ms. Batchelder pointed out that the Affordable Housing Plan is presently slated to appear as an Item on a Conference Agenda; if the City Commission was being asked to vote on the Plan, make directions to Staff, or otherwise take action, this would need to be changed to an Item on the Commission's regular meeting Agenda. Mr. Henn noted, however, that at times the City Commission will hear an Item on the Conference Agenda and then take it up for further discussion during the regular meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Deckelbaum, seconded by Mr. Poulin, to approve this as a final document, subject to final edits, and forward it on to the Commission. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Discussion on Goals and Work Plan

None.

Communications to City Commission

It was noted that the Committee's communication to the City Commission was made in an earlier Item.

Other Business

None.

Good of the Order

Ms. Batchelder advised the members that the Better Meetings Academy is scheduled for May 5 and November 3, 2011. She recommended that anyone who has not previously attended this meeting should make plans to attend.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m.