

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
COMMISSION ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING (CAH)
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

APRIL 7, 2021

**THURSDAY
10:30 A.M.**

**100 AUSTRALIAN AVENUE,
WEST PALM BEACH, FL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS:

Commissioner Mack Bernard– via Webex
John-Anthony Bogess – Absent
George “Adam” Campbell
Timothy Coppage – Absent
Corey O’Gorman
William Elliot Johnson – via Webex
Ezra M. Krieg
Amy Robbins
Aquanette Thomas- via Webex
Leonard “Len” A. Tylka

STAFF:

Jonathan Brown, Director, Housing and Economic Sustainability (HES)
Sherry Howard, Deputy Director, HES
Carlos Serrano, Director of Strategic Planning and Operations, HES
Dorina Jenkins-Gaskin, Mortgage and Housing Assistance Manager, HES

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

Yadzia Roa, Deputy Clerk, Clerk & Comptroller’s Office

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION to approve the agenda. Motion by Ezra Krieg, seconded by Adam Campbell, and carried 8-0. Timothy Coppage and John-Anthony Bogess absent.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

IV.a. Annual Incentives Review 2021

Carlos Serrano, Director of Strategic Planning and Operations, HES, said that:

- The CAH's major task was to review the Annual Incentives as a condition of the State Housing Initiatives Partners (SHIP) grant funds per Florida statutes.
- Incentives meant the policies or processes by which the County could facilitate or stimulate production and preservation of housing that was affordable to the local population.
- The CAH held meetings to discuss incentive areas that were identified, and the members prepared a draft report for public review and comment.
- A public hearing was held to adopt a final report by December 30, 2021 to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.
- After the CAH adopted the report the County had 60 days to amend the Local Housing Assistance Plan and incorporate the desired incentives.
- The 5 incentive areas to be discussed and identified by statute were:
 - Expedited development approval/permitting processes;
 - Affordable accessory residential units;
 - Transient-oriented development;
 - The ongoing regulatory review process; and
 - Modification of street requirements for affordable housing projects.

IV.a.1. Expedited Development Approvals Permitting

Discussion ensued, and the following points were made:

- There were 6,000-8,000 permit applications to process a month.
- There were programs that allowed expedited permitting, but it had to be claimed, because staff would not automatically know the application was expedited.
- There was insufficient staff to assign certain expedited projects.

- Staff was assigned to projects based on qualifications, and it was difficult to acquire staff qualified enough.

Ezra Krieg inquired if there was any sort of public education on how one could claim expedited status and how quickly was the process expedited.

Mr. Wise said that having an expedited process shortened the wait time significantly, but the total waiting depended on the request.

IV.a.2. The Allowance of Affordable Accessory Residential Units

Len Tylka said that:

- The owner should be on the property, and the accessory unit could only be used by a family member. An agreement existed to return the accessory unit to a non-dwelling unit when the family members passed or the owner moved.
- Suggested that changes needed to be done to base documents regarding the accessory residential units.

Mr. Krieg recommended that affordable accessory residential units become a priority for changes. He added that Lake Worth Beach had tried to address the accessory residential units and that documents were available to create templates.

Mr. Tylka said that addressing Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) restrictions regarding accessory residential units was a priority

Mr. Krieg added that ULDC changes also applied to the creation of new units.

Mr. Wise informed the members that the accessory residential units should have electricity fed through the primary residence.

IV.a.3. The Support of Development Near Transportation Hubs

Mr. Tylka stated development near transportation hubs was more ideal for multifamily units.

Mr. Serrano said that the County participated in numerous multifamily development projects, but the funding given was small and often the majority of the projects were financed by a Florida Housing Financing Corporation program.

IV.a.4. Ongoing Regulatory Review Process

Mr. Tylka said that:

- If there was no word from the zoning process by a certain date, then the application process can be assumed pushed back another 30 days.
- The affordable housing projects should have some flexibility during the review process.
- The regulatory review process needed to be revised because some projects needed special revisions.
- The Building Department was supplemented by the fees collected.

Mr. Tylka inquired if there was a possibility to make a recommendation to have county funding instead the building permit fees to supplement the department.

Mr. Wise said that:

- The recommendation would need statutory reforms.
- Additional staff could be acquired by adding apprenticeship programs.
- Applications could get the permit fee reduced if they used a pre-reviewed plan, private reviewer or an inspector.

Mr. Tylka said that the building industry lacked talent because most people entering the workforce were only book educated.

Mr. Krieg suggested that:

- The CAH should provide recommendations for incentives.
- Positions that served affordable housing could be created.
- A cross departmental person or 501-c3 could ease the review process.

William Elliot Johnson said that staff from a nonprofit that specifically facilitated the review process would be beneficial to the County.

Mr. Tylka agreed with recommending a single person that was identified in the county that worked with all the departments to assist staff.

IV.a.5. Modification of Street Requirements

Quazi Bari, Traffic Engineering Operations Manager, said that the traffic division provided 30% bonus on the roadway capacity to affordable housing projects.

IV.b. Meeting Schedule

Mr. Serrano said that the next CAH meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 5, 2021, at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Krieg requested an additional meeting to give the members an opportunity for discussion after the stakeholder's presentation.

Mr. Tylka suggested that the stakeholder's presentation could be scheduled on Wednesday, May 5, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with the meeting to continue with member discussion.

Mr. Serrano stated that the Wednesday, August 4, 2021, stakeholder meeting would be extended until 1:00 p.m. according to member requests.

V. NEW BUSINESS

VI. MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Krieg said that:

- The State would release \$200 million in Sadowski Trust Fund (Sadowski) money.
- \$250 million in Sadowski funds were vetoed last year, and it was difficult to regain those funds for allocation.
- \$450 million would be allocated for Sadowski.

Mr. Serrano said that before the veto, the County would have received \$12 million.

Sherry Howard, Division Director of Housing and Economic Sustainability, said if the budget compromise had gone through, the County would have received an estimated \$4 million.

Mr. Krieg said that he hoped Sadowski funding would continue in the future.

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Corey O’Gorman, seconded by Ezra Krieg, and carried 8-0. Timothy Coppage and John-Anthony Bogess absent.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:44 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:

Chair/Vice Chair