

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

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025

**THURSDAY
10:30 A.M**

**100 S. AUSTRALIAN AVE
WEST PALM BEACH, FL**

MEMBERS:

Nicholas Bixler
Brandon Cabrera
George "Adam" Campbell
Lynda Charles
Shirley Erazo
William "Elliott" Johnson
Ezra M. Krieg, Chair
Tim Kubrick
Commissioner Bobby Powell Jr.
Amy Robbins, Vice Chair
Ashley Whidby

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Jonathan Brown, Director II, Housing and Economic Development (HED)
Yvette Cueto, Community Development Programs Specialist, HED
Tammy Fields, Deputy County Administrator
Carlos Serrano, Deputy Director, HED
Malcolm Sommons, County Commission Assistant Chief of Staff I, County Commission

WEBEX ATTENDEES:

Suzanne Cabrera, Housing Leadership Council
Paulette Edwards, Community Development Programs Specialist, HED
Lesley George, Housing Liaison, HED
Joyce Grimm, Community Development Programs Specialist, HED
James Houston
Michael Howe, Senior Planner, Planning Zoning and Building
Elizabeth Jo Miller, Community Development Programs Manager, HED
Stefania Russell, Community Development Programs Coordinator, HED
Rommel Sankhi, Public Relations Specialist, HED

ALSO PRESENT:

Steven Figari, FIGARI Capital

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:

Jillian Zalewska, Deputy Clerk

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Shirley Erazo, Ezra Kreig, Tim Kubrick, and Amy Robbins

Absent: Nicholas Bixler, Adam Campbell, Tim Kubrick, Commissioner Powell, and Ashley Whidby

Present via Webex: Brandon Cabrera, Lynda Charles, and Elliott Johnson

(CLERK'S NOTE: Due to the absence of a quorum, no votes were taken.)

III. Approval of Remote Attendance

This item was not taken up.

IV. Approval of Agenda

This item was not taken up.

V. Approval of Minutes (August)

This item was not taken up.

VI. Old Business

There was no old business.

VII. New Business

Adaptive Reuse

Mr. Krieg introduced Mr. Figari, a real estate developer based in West Palm Beach, who was attending the meeting to discuss adaptive reuse.

Mr. Figari explained that adaptive reuse involved the repurposing of existing buildings to maximize value and find new uses for vacant, underperforming, or obsolete structures.

He delivered a slide presentation and highlighted the following topics:

- the benefits of adaptive reuse as a strategy for addressing the affordable housing shortage;
- the types of buildings suitable for conversion;
- potential challenges involving zoning regulations, building codes, financing, design, and community opposition;
- policies and incentives related to adaptive reuse, including the Live Local Act, federal and local programs, and public-private partnerships;
- the recommendation that acquisition efforts in Palm Beach County should emphasize extended-stay hotels, hotels with suites and oversized rooms, and hotel properties with the lowest-cost average daily rates;
- the cost differential in Palm Beach County between constructing new affordable housing and converting properties through adaptive reuse; and
- examples of adaptive reuse projects in the county.

(CLERK'S NOTE: During the presentation, Nicholas Bixler joined the meeting in person, and Commissioner Powell joined via Webex.)

Ms. Charles asked Mr. Figari to elaborate regarding strategies he had utilized to overcome obstacles related to zoning regulations.

Mr. Figari offered to provide additional information to the committee detailing the types of challenges he commonly encountered as well as strategies for addressing them.

Ms. Charles noted that Mr. Figari had mentioned several non-traditional financing strategies, which tended to be more costly. She asked how he was able to maintain affordability when utilizing more expensive funding sources.

Mr. Figari spoke about the use of project-based housing vouchers, which enabled developers to finance projects through government-backed mortgages. He also explained that developers typically partnered with local governments or nonprofit organizations to provide onsite wraparound services. In addition, Mr. Figari stated that real estate taxes and insurance were two of the major expenses confronting developers. He spoke about land leases as an option for mitigating the tax burden imposed on affordable developments.

Mr. Brown stated that possible upcoming changes in legislation at the state and federal levels could affect the viability of certain financing options.

Mr. Bixler said that he could assist with providing information regarding strategies for addressing barriers created by zoning regulations and building codes. He also inquired about the possibility of utilizing a waiver process for adaptive reuse projects.

Mr. Figari responded that there could be opportunities for flexibility with elements of a structure that did not conform to the current building code but did not compromise life safety requirements.

Mr. Bixler asked about the age of the buildings Mr. Figari had identified as potential candidates for conversion to housing.

Mr. Figari explained that the type of construction was more important than the age of a structure, with wood-framed buildings being more difficult to insure.

Mr. Krieg thanked Mr. Figari and said that he looked forward to reviewing the additional information Mr. Figari had agreed to provide.

VIII. Member Comments

Mr. Bixler spoke about an online platform called PadSplit that identified rooms for rent and matched individuals who needed rental housing. He suggested that the CAH discuss the service at a future meeting.

In response to a comment by Ms. Charles about the potential of adaptive reuse, Mr. Figari stated that he would provide additional information about the items he had discussed.

Mr. Krieg proposed that the CAH discuss property insurance issues at a meeting in January or February of 2026. He also stated that his schedule had changed, and he would be available to attend the October meeting.

Commissioner Powell stated that the discussion of property insurance should include a consideration of proposed changes regarding property taxes.

Mr. Krieg agreed and requested that Commissioner Powell contribute to the presentation on that agenda item.

STAFF DIRECTION:

Mr. Krieg requested that staff provide a summary of the information presented by the Department of Housing and Urban Development at a meeting that was held that morning.

IX. Adjourn

At 11:43 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.