

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

MAY 15, 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
Amy Robbins, Vice Chair
Ashley Whidby

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Yvette Cueto, Planner II, Housing and Economic Development (HED)
Carlos Serrano, Division Director II, HED

WEBEX ATTENDEES:

Diane Andre, County Commission Chief of Staff I
Purvi Bhogaita, Division Director IV, Property and Real Estate Management (PREM)
Carol Bowen, Carol Bowen Strategies
Jonathan Brown, Director II, HED
Sheila Brown, Community Development Programs Coordinator, HED
Suzanne Cabrera, President & CEO, Housing Leadership Council (HLC)
Paulette Edwards, Planner II, HED
Tammy Fields, Assistant County Administrator
Lesley George, Housing Liaison, HED
Joyce Grimm, Community Development Programs Specialist, HED
Francisco Martell, NRP Group
Elizabeth Jo Miller, Community Development Programs Manager, HED
Skip Miller, HLC
Stefania Russell, Community Development Programs Coordinator, HED
Shawn Wilt, Plaza Equity

ALSO PRESENT:

Tay Gaines, TBG

Joan Williamson, Elite Pros
Marc Wigder, City of Boca Raton

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 10:35 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Nicholas Bixler, Brandon Cabrera, Adam Campbell, Shirley Erazo, Ezra Krieg, Tim Kubrick, and Amy Robbins

Absent: Lynda Charles, Elliott Johnson, and Ashley Whidby

Via Teleconference: Commissioner Bobby Powell

III. Approval of Remote Attendance

MOTION to approve remote attendance. Motion by Adam Campbell, seconded by Amy Robbins, and carried 7-0.

IV. Approval of Agenda

MOTION to adopt the agenda. Motion by Brandon Cabrera, seconded by Shirley Erazo, and carried 8-0.

V. Approval of Minutes (April)

MOTION to approve the minutes. Motion by Shirley Erazo, seconded by Amy Robbins, and carried 8-0.

VI. Old Business

Mr. Serrano provided an update regarding the usage of federal and state funding to construct accessory dwelling units. He confirmed that both federal funds and state SHIP money could be used for that purpose.

Mr. Cabrera inquired about potential abuse of the program, and Mr. Serrano stated that any project would be subject to monitoring by the funding entity.

VII. New Business

a. County-Owned Real Estate

Mr. Krieg provided background information about the topic.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Commissioner Powell joined the meeting in person.)

Mr. Serrano introduced Ms. Bhogaita, the director of PREM.

Ms. Bhogaita explained that her role was to oversee the acquisition, disposition, leasing, and management of County-owned property. She stated that PREM was governed by the Florida Statutes and by the County's PREM ordinance.

Ms. Bhogaita discussed the competitive process, involving RFPs and bids, which was required for the leasing or disposition of County-owned parcels. She noted that exceptions were made for nonprofit entities. Regarding acquisition, Ms. Bhogaita explained that the County typically did not acquire a property unless a specific need or operation was identified.

After a review of more than 3,000 properties, PREM determined in September of 2023 that the only surplus parcel was located at 5461 Okeechobee Boulevard. The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) had directed staff to issue an RFP to either sell or lease the parcel for the purpose of developing senior affordable housing and/or workforce housing. The RFP had not yet been issued due to the prioritization of other projects. Ms. Bhogaita stated that smaller parcels occasionally came into the County's possession and would subsequently be reviewed in partnership with HED for development possibilities. Several parcels had been set aside through HED for the eventual development of single-family units. PREM had contracted with a design team to review the smaller parcels in phases of 10 to 15 each to determine if any were potentially developable. Ms. Bhogaita also stated that, in cases where properties could be utilized for housing, the County would partner with nonprofits such as Habitat for Humanity to facilitate construction.

Mr. Krieg solicited questions.

Mr. Bixler inquired about PREM's criteria for determining a parcel's future use.

Ms. Bhogaita stated that PREM typically acquired properties for the purpose of fulfilling an identified use. She noted that a department's operations could be jeopardized if a County-own site were utilized for a purpose other than its designated use.

Mr. Bixler asked if time frames were imposed on future-use designations, and Ms. Bhogaita responded that, while there was no expiration date on a designated use, PREM generally considered projected uses five to ten years in advance.

Mr. Bixler inquired if PREM reviewed County-owned properties to determine if any portion of a parcel could be utilized for housing in addition to its designated future use.

Ms. Bhogaita confirmed that PREM did consider whether parcels were being maximally utilized or if any portion could be used for housing. She noted that PREM included future

growth requirements and expansion in its plans, which might result in the appearance that a parcel was not being fully utilized.

In response to a question posed by Mr. Krieg, Ms. Bhogaita stated that PREM considered multiple housing options when reviewing a parcel for development potential. She explained that parcels issued to the County due to nonpayment of taxes were generally small and suitable for single-family housing.

Mr. Krieg asked if the public could view the projected uses of each of the County-owned properties. Ms. Bhogaita responded that a list of the properties could be found on PREM's website along with information about which department was utilizing each parcel. She also stated that the list was updated twice a year.

Mr. Krieg asked about PREM's process for reviewing the properties. Ms. Bhogaita explained that, if there were any questions about a parcel's use, PREM would communicate with the department to determine if the parcel was still needed.

Mr. Krieg inquired about the time frame for development of the Okeechobee Boulevard property, and Ms. Bhogaita responded that other projects in the area were currently being prioritized.

Mr. Krieg asked if a mechanism existed for the CAH and the public to provide input during the development stage of the RFP.

Ms. Bhogaita explained that direction from the BCC would inform the development of the RFP. She noted that the BCC had conducted community outreach with residents of Century Village, which was located near the subject property.

Discussion continued regarding public input during the RFP process. Ms. Bhogaita stated that members of the public could speak at BCC meetings. She also explained that, after the issuance of an RFP, a mandatory public pre-proposal meeting was held at which individuals could provide feedback.

Commissioner Powell spoke about legislation that allowed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to deed surplus land to municipalities. He inquired if the County had looked at any parcels that could potentially be declared surplus by FDOT and conveyed for the purpose of constructing affordable housing in the county.

Ms. Bhogaita responded that she believed the law applied only to municipalities. She said that she would investigate options for monitoring FDOT's surplus properties.

Commissioner Powell proposed that staff request a list of properties in the region from FDOT, and Ms. Bhogaita agreed to do so.

Mr. Krieg discussed concerns about the prioritization of future uses over immediate housing needs. He suggested establishing a process for consideration of land use priorities.

Commissioner Powell stated that the need for services increased along with the addition of housing units.

Mr. Brown stated that other departments might need to be consulted regarding their land use needs before a parcel could be utilized for housing. He also discussed challenges related to income and the cost of living.

Mr. Bixler spoke about the effect of the rising AMI.

Mr. Krieg stated that land use priorities should be considered in the context of a community-wide conversation.

Ms. Robbins proposed focusing on parcels with longer-term projected uses.

Discussion continued, and Mr. Bixler suggested conducting a biannual workshop at which stakeholders and members of the community could discuss options for development.

Mr. Widger spoke about adaptive reuse of existing properties in the City of Boca Raton. He suggested that the Facilities Development and Operations could look at the master plan to determine if any properties could be repurposed as housing.

STAFF DIRECTION:

The CAH directed staff to craft a recommendation based on PREM's analysis of vacant property owned by the County, excluding lands set aside for preservation, and a review of the location of the parcels and their designated land uses, and to incorporate consideration of surplus properties owned by FDOT that could be conveyed to municipalities.

Mr. Campbell expressed reservations about constructing housing on parcels with alternative designated uses, which could result in insufficient space to provide necessary services to residents.

Discussion continued.

Mr. Krieg stated that the CAH should determine how to share information regarding FDOT's surplus properties with the municipalities. He also recommended holding a biennial review to allow for community input regarding land use priorities.

Ms. Bhogaita stated that PREM was required by statute to review the inventory of County-owned property every three years. PREM then presented the findings to the BCC.

Mr. Campbell said that the public would have to be notified about the biennial discussion, and Mr. Serrano stated that it would likely take place at a BCC Workshop meeting or at a public workshop.

Ms. Bhogaita stated that the public could comment when PREM presented its review findings to the BCC every three years.

Mr. Brown noted that some properties were purchased with funding associated with specific use requirements.

Mr. Bixler proposed looking at buildings that were reaching the end of their life expectancy to determine if they could be repurposed as housing.

b. Reschedule June Meeting

Mr. Serrano stated that the June 19th meeting needed to be rescheduled due to the federal holiday of Juneteenth.

Mr. Krieg said that the CAH had planned to discuss parking requirements at the June meeting.

Mr. Serrano stated that a representative from Planning, Zoning and Building (PZB) was going to discuss the parking item. He suggested that the CAH select a new date for the meeting, after which he would contact PZB.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION to reschedule the June 19th meeting for June 12th at 10:30 a.m. Motion by Adam Campbell, seconded by Amy Robbins, and carried 8-0.

c. August/September TBD Topics

The members discussed challenges related to rising development costs.

Mr. Krieg proposed inviting developers to the August meeting to discuss the use of alternative materials in housing development. He also suggested that the CAH dedicate the September meeting to discussing adaptive reuse of properties.

VIII. Member Comments

Mr. Krieg spoke about the Housing Heroes luncheon, at which Mr. Krieg and Ms. Erazo had received awards.

Mr. Serrano provided an update regarding information that had been requested by an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee member at the prior CAH meeting. He stated

that he had spoken with Zoning, and it was permissible to construct single-family housing on a 25-foot lot in the unincorporated area of Palm Beach County.

Mr. Krieg thanked staff for their work.

Mr. Brown informed the members that Sherry Howard had retired. He also congratulated Mr. Serrano, who had been appointed as the new Deputy Director of HED.

Mr. Krieg thanked Ms. Bhogaita for attending.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Commissioner Powell, seconded by Amy Robbins, and carried 8-0.

At 11:52 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.