

**APPROVED**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE CITY HALL –1<sup>st</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE, FL**  
**MONDAY, FEBUARY 15, 2010 – 6:00 P.M.**

<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Cumulative Attendance 7/09 through 6/10</b>	
		<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Rebecca Jo Walter, Chair	P	3	0
Janet Riley, Vice Chair	P	3	0
Margie Alexander	P	3	0
Tam English [6:20]	P	3	0
Peter Henn	P	3	0
William Isenberg	A	1	2
Jim Jordan	A	2	1
Jonathan Jordan	A	2	1
Greg Stuart	A	1	2
Roosevelt Walters	P	3	0

**Staff**

Susan Batchelder, Liaison, Community Development Division  
 Angelia Basto, Clerk/Typist II  
 Liz Davila, ProtoType Inc.

**Call to Order**

Chair Walter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Roll was called and it was determined that a quorum was not present.

**Communications to City Commission**

Ms. Batchelder will email the agenda for the March 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop to City Commission.

**Committee / Staff Introductions**

None.

**City Commission News**

None.

### **Approval of Minutes Summary – December 21, 2009**

[This item was taken out of order]

**Motion** made by Mr. Walters, seconded by Ms. Alexander, to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2009 meeting. In a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

### **City Commission Workshop**

Chair Walter indicated that on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Committee is scheduled to meet with the City Commission to talk about the future direction of the Committee.

Chair Walter then discussed what Commissioner Dubose would like accomplished during the workshop, as well as review the documents that Commissioner Dubose gave to the City Commissioners and the Mayor.

Commissioner Dubose prepared a binder for the City Commissioners that includes the following documents:

- SHIP Report from last year
- Original Workforce Housing Study prepared by the City in 2005
- Study from FIU Metro Center from 2009
- Nexus Study for Linkage Fees at Broward County

Since there is a lot of information in this binder, Chair Walter has met with each Commissioner individually to discuss these reports and highlight the items with which the Commissioners needed to be familiar. The feedback from the Commissioners has been positive.

Chair Walter received feedback from each Commissioner regarding items they want to be addressed at the March 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop. The following is a proposed outline for the Workshop agenda.

- Brief Introduction – by Chair Walter
- Update on what the Committee Accomplished last year – by Mr. Henn (as former Chair)
- Moving forward – Chair Walter has already indicated five primary areas for the Committee's focus. The Committee has requested guidance from the City Commission regarding implementation of the following items:

1. Expedited permitting – how to improve the existing process.

2. Dedicated sources of funding in lieu of impact fees (suggestion from Commissioner Dubose).
  3. Evaluating existing programs – exploring possible expansions.
  4. Building capacity and partnerships.
  5. Stock of inventory – looking at the “blue collar” workforce and low income, but not necessarily governmental subsidized housing.
- Chair Walter will ask the City Commission three questions:
    1. How often the City Commission wishes the Committee to meet;
    2. if on a monthly basis, what should be the Committee’s focus; and
    3. the “mechanism” the City Commission wants the Committee to use for communications, i.e., general information or an action plan; as well as the types of interaction between the Committee and City Commission.
  - Discussion

Chair Walter suggested the Committee members arrive no later than noon for the Workshop.

Ms. Riley said she would be prepared to speak about dedicated sources of funding. She added she will send her presentation to Ms. Batchelder for forwarding to the Committee.

Mr. Walters asked whether or not the City Commission agreed to adopt the plan sent to Tallahassee and was advised by Chair Walter that the plan had been adopted. Mr. Walters indicated there are several recommendations in the plan sent to Tallahassee and asked if the new City Commission intends on following through with the promises made by the last Commission. In 2009, Tallahassee did not give out SHIP money and Tallahassee is currently indicating they are not going to give out any in 2010. Mr. Walters inquired whether, if the City Commission plans to adopt the plan where the funding will come from. He indicated they need to find out if the plan is going to go ahead as planned, or if it will be amended, as it would be “useless for this Committee to go out and attempt to accomplish anything” without the City Commission’s support. Mr. Walters remarked that the City Commission needs to be clear and concise with their direction to the Committee.

Chair Walter explained that the plan had been adopted by the prior City Commission, and the Committee has committed to undertake in order to receive

funds, as a matter of policy. Chair Walter stated that feedback from the City Commissioners has been that the Committee take the “light matters” and “drill down into them.” For instance, the City has an expedited permitting process that does not work and as a Committee, it would be their job to find out why it is not working and make recommendations to fix the process.

Mr. Walters referenced page 8, sub-section b, under “review synopsis,” number 4, asking if the City has applied for any of the \$20M, in the event the State starts giving out money. Ms. Batchelder said she was not sure, but she would check and let them know at the next meeting.

Ms. Riley said she feels strongly that they should start seeking other sources of funding outside of governmental entities.

Mr. Walters agreed with Ms. Riley, but also stressed the fact that both private and governmental funding should be addressed as separate issues.

[Mr. English arrived at 6:20. A quorum was now present.]

Ms. Riley said the City Commission should hear from people who have actually worked with the expediting permit process. As Mr. English expressed his frustration with the expedited permitting process, Chair Walter asked that he and Mr. Henn speak to the Commission about their experiences with expedited permitting on March 2nd

Mr. English mentioned that reduced permitting fees do not exist. There are a couple of items in the Code that indicate the City will not reduce impact fees unless they are paid into the fund from another source. Mr. English recalled a situation with Dixie Court where the City Commission waived the park’s impact fee of \$50K, which was anticipated to be the entire park’s impact fee. Two months later, the City Commission adopted a new ordinance tripling the park’s impact fee and when this was brought to the City Commission’s attention, they indicated they had thought the fee for Dixie Court had already been paid. With no monies available to repay the sum, the Commission could not waive the fees.

Ms. Alexander brought up the issue of City contamination in her neighborhood and questioned the effect that contamination would have on construction any affordable housing in her neighborhood. Chair Walter indicated the subject of contamination can be placed with the stock of inventory and where that stock is placed.

Mr. Henn indicated if he were asked to summarize his first year on the Committee, he would address three items: 1) He had been told that housing demand was at 5,000 and with the best case scenario there is probably 500

homes in inventory; 2) at the last Committee meeting, Mr. Walters and Ms. Alexander spoke from their heart, expressing their frustration about how little has been done. Mr. Henn felt the City Commission needs to know that the Committee members are “coming from the heart” and things must get done.

Mr. Henn also stated, “I do respect Commissioner Dubose’s comment about calling it dedicated sources of funding, but at the same time, we should not avoid the word ‘impact fees,’ because if we don’t bring it up, then I don’t think we have the jurisdiction to look into it. I can tell you, if you’re going to discuss impact fees, it’s better to do it when no one is paying them because no one is building. If you try to adopt it three years from now, that’s when you are going to have the political push. I can tell you this from experience, I would not, not build a commercial facility because of impact fees.”

Chair Walter asked each member to keep their presentation brief at the Workshop so they can receive feedback from the City Commission.

Mr. English said the two biggest impact fees are for schools and parks. Although another impact fee for affordable housing could be placed in there, the problem is limited funds. Mr. English spoke about the how impact fees affect residential development. Mr. Henn clarified that his prior comments were directed towards impact fees on commercial properties and brought up the report that has been generated with the City’s inventory, further asking who would get access to that land. Chair Walter said she has had discussions about this report and it was not necessarily a direction the Committee should take right now.

Ms. Batchelder indicated she thinks the focus of the inventory was for the City to sell properties and build a tax base. There are 108 units which have been purchased with federal funds. The City Commission’s focus is to sell properties the City is not using to build up a tax base. Mr. English asked Ms. Batchelder if she knew a rough estimate of how many lots the City actually owns. Ms. Batchelder replied that the purpose of the report was to generate that information and she did not feel comfortable quoting a number.

Mr. English stated he understands the City Commission’s intent, but given the status of existing foreclosures and inventory, he estimates it will be three to five years before the City is going to be able to build substantial numbers of single family homes. In addition, there is not enough funding available in subsidies to allow for low-income housing.

Mr. Henn said, “It would be good if we leave the March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with one tangible, measurable goal we can accomplish in 2010.”

Mr. English believes that, if the Committee is going to address single family infill lots, the City should at least start coming up with a generic plan for these sites.

Chair Walter said she would draft the agenda for the workshop and send it through Ms. Batchelder.

The Committee members requested PDF versions of the studies given to the City Commissioners to have at the presentation.

There was discussion between the Committee members regarding the tangible goals they would like to walk away with from the workshop.

Chair Walter said if the City Commission gave the Committee one tangible goal to work on (i.e., improve the expedited permitting process) she would be pleased. She added the City Commission does not have to approve of every item presented, the Committee just wants guidance on their expectations.

Mr. Walters explained that he would like to see this Committee actually do something to build houses and not just speak about what has happened in the last six months. Mr. Walters wants the City Commission to tell the Committee how many units to build, not to just review reports and hope that homes will be built in the next three or four years.

Ms. Riley asserted that her job is to advocate affordable housing and she would like nothing more than for this Committee to be able to say that they helped over 100 houses be built, but given the current state of the economy, it is unrealistic to say that by the end of the year "x amount" of units will be built. Housing will eventually come out of the goals set by the Committee.

Mr. Walters asked about the accuracy of Mr. Henn's statement that housing demand is at 5,000 units per year and in a best-case scenario there are 500 units per year available in inventory. Mr. English explained that based on the reports he's seen, the City need ten times more units than are actually available.

Mr. Walters stressed that people are losing their homes and jobs and encouraged the Committee to create a mechanism to put low-to-moderate income families into housing. "We don't need anymore studies; we just need to get going on building, or advising somebody on how to build houses."

Mr. Henn responded and pointed out that theoretically, if the Mayor and the City Commission were to make a resolution to allow the Housing Authority take any sized parcel for \$1 per parcel and require the City issue a permit in 30 days, it would still be difficult to get funding build or even obtain the funds to pay an architect to draw up the plans.

Mr. English agreed that financing is the largest hurdle. There are bond programs and Recovery Act dollars, but those funds “do not come fast or consistent.” Even when applications are put in for those funds, the approval rate is less than 10%. There is too much risk for all the parties involved. The thought of the City contributing makes the process easier for the developer, but funding is the key. Application must be made and the City needs to create incentives to lower the risk.

### **Other Business**

Angelia Basto informed the Committee that William Isenberg is not attending the Workshop and she has not yet heard back from Jim Jordan.

### **Good of the Order**

None.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to bring before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by L. Davila, Prototype, Inc.]