

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

SEPTEMBER 7, 2022

**WEDNESDAY
10:30 A.M.**

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

MEMBERS:

Commissioner Mack Bernard
John-Anthony Boggess
George "Adam" Campbell
Lynda Charles
Timothy Coppage
Corey O'Gorman
William "Elliott" Johnson
Ezra M. Krieg, Vice Chair
Amy Robbins
Aquannette Thomas
Leonard "Len" A. Tylka, Chair

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Jonathan Brown, Director II, Housing and Economic Development (HED)
Sheila Brown, Planner II, HED (via teleconference)
Lesley George, Housing Liaison, HED (via teleconference)
Joyce Grimm, Planner II, HED (via teleconference)
Dorritt Miller, Assistant County Administrator (via teleconference)
Carlos Serrano, Division Director II, HED

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 10:34 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Adam Campbell, Elliott Johnson, Ezra Krieg, Corey O'Gorman, Amy Robbins, and Len Tylka

Absent: John-Anthony Boggess, Lynda Charles, and Timothy Coppage

Via Teleconference: Commissioner Bernard and Aquannette Thomas

III. Approval of Remote Attendance

MOTION to approve remote attendance. Motion by Ezra Krieg, seconded by Elliott Johnson, and carried 6-0. Commissioner Bernard and Aquannette Thomas abstained.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Item V was taken up at this time.)

V. Approval of Minutes

MOTION to approve the May 4, 2022, and June 1, 2022, meeting minutes. Motion by Corey O'Gorman, seconded by Amy Robbins, and carried 8-0.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Timothy Coppage joined the meeting at 10:36 a.m.)

IV. Approval of Agenda

MOTION to approve the agenda. Motion by Ezra Krieg, seconded by Elliott Johnson, and carried 9-0.

VI. Old Business

a. 2022 Incentives Review

HED Director II Carlos Serrano initiated a discussion of the commission's annual incentives review and recommendations report.

The members discussed the recommendation for expedited approval and permitting as well as the designation of an individual to guide applicants through the process.

Mr. Johnson suggested that the commission consider the percentage of affordable housing units that should be required for a project to qualify for expedited processing.

Discussion continued regarding the effectiveness of expediting as an incentive that would lead to the construction of more units.

HED Director II Jonathan Brown asked if any other incentives, such as density bonuses, were under consideration. He also noted that expediting all projects with a designated percentage of affordable housing could slow down the process for projects with even higher percentages of affordable units.

In response to a question from Mr. Coppage, Mr. Krieg stated that the City of West Palm Beach had implemented an expedited processing incentive.

Mr. Johnson agreed to speak with a representative the City of West Palm Beach and suggested contacting Planning, Zoning and Building (PZB) about the rationale for the proposed 65 percent threshold.

Mr. Brown said that PZB Director III Ramsay Bulkeley would be the contact person at PZB. He also explained that projects funded through the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP) were already being expedited.

Mr. Copping suggested considering best practices regarding the expediting process for SHIP-assisted projects as a basis for further discussion.

In response to a question from Ms. Robbins about the expediting process for SHIP projects, Mr. Serrano explained that building permits were expedited.

Mr. Johnson mentioned staffing shortages at PZB and suggested the commission recommend the 65 percent threshold that PZB had requested.

Mr. Krieg said that the commission might want to recommend the addition of a position at PZB dedicated to shepherding qualified applicants through the approval process.

Mr. Tylka agreed that the 65 percent threshold was a reasonable short-term recommendation.

The commission began a discussion of the recommendation that the County review its fee structure and consider fee waivers for the development of affordable housing.

Mr. O’Gorman said that the fee waiver was an important incentive.

Mr. Brown inquired if the fee waiver would lead to cost reductions or if it were solely an incentive for the developer.

Mr. Johnson said that the County was opposed to fee waivers and suggested that fees could be delayed until a triggering event such as a sale or the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

Mr. Tylka discussed the possibility of implementing a variable fee structure in which the amount of the fee was based on the type of unit.

Mr. O’Gorman said that a fee waiver could be justified for a project that served very low-income populations.

Mr. Johnson stated that delaying payment would incentivize developers.

Mr. Tylka suggested incorporating both fee deferral and a variable fee structure into the incentive.

In response to a question from Mr. Campbell, Mr. Serrano stated that the commission's report was due to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) by December 30, 2022.

Mr. Johnson suggested that the commission focus on finalizing language regarding accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and flexible lots. He discussed the following points:

- The County opposed allowing separate electrical service to ADUs.
- FHFC believed that ADUs could be a significant source of housing and should be utilized to serve individuals meeting certain income requirements.
- The commission should address the possibility that some ADUs might be used as short-term rentals.

Mr. Serrano discussed a workshop he had attended regarding ADUs. He said that the jurisdictions implementing revised regulations did not have affordability requirements and had found that modest numbers of ADUs were created.

Mr. Tylka said that the separate electric meter was a key part of the process.

The commission agreed to include language in the report recommending that separate electric meters be allowed for ADUs.

MOTION to include language in the report recommending that separate electric meters be allowed for ADUs. Motion by Elliott Johnson, seconded by Ezra Krieg, and carried 9-0.

The commission began a discussion of the recommendation regarding flexible zoning.

Mr. Johnson said that the recommendation should include language applicable to smaller builders.

The members agreed that the commission needed to consult a representative of PZB before moving forward with the recommendation.

In reference to the incentive regarding public land, Mr. Johnson said that a full list of County-owned properties suitable for workforce and affordable housing should be made available for review.

Mr. Krieg agreed that the information should be accessible to facilitate the development of ideas for creative land usage.

Mr. Tylka said that there was a need for collaboration between public and private entities.

Mr. Coppage stated that the County should be proactive in the development of public land.

In response to a comment by Mr. Brown, Mr. Krieg said that the recommendation was asking the County to provide information beyond what was required by FHFC.

Mr. Serrano confirmed that the commission was requesting a list of all County-owned properties and not just surplus properties.

Mr. Brown mentioned that some properties were donated to nonprofit organizations.

Mr. Krieg clarified that the commission was requesting a comprehensive list of all County-owned lands.

Mr. Brown stated that the County was already behaving proactively in its consideration of possible land uses.

VII. New Business

The members discussed the status of the proposed meeting with a representative of the School District of Palm Beach County, and Mr. Krieg suggested inviting a school board member to attend the December 7, 2022, meeting.

Ms. Robbins provided an update regarding the effects of rising interest rates on the housing market and the ability of prospective homebuyers to qualify for mortgages.

Mr. Brown said that most of the incentives under consideration targeted developers rather than end users.

Mr. Krieg said that issue could be addressed by changing threshold requirements.

Mr. Coppage stated that incentivizing development provided more housing stock for end users.

Mr. Brown explained that more restrictive thresholds could be implemented for County-assisted units.

VIII. Member Comments

There were no member comments.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Corey O’Gorman, seconded by Elliott Johnson, and carried 9-0.

At 11:59 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:

Chair/Vice Chair