

**NORTH MIAMI AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AHAC)**

**VIA ZOOM
OCTOBER 20, 2022 – 6:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

Committee Members	Present	Absent
Naomi Blemur		X
Ebonni Chrispin		X
Santra Denis		X
Marie-Frantz Jean-Pharuns	X	
Andrea McDonald	X	
Evan Shields	X	
Honorable Councilwoman Kassandra Timothe	X	
Michael McDearmaid	X	
Lola Capers	X	
Nikisha Williams		X
Member No. 11 - Vacant		

Staff present: Alberte Bazile, MBA, Housing & Social Services Director; Debbie Love, City Planner; Dianna Dacosta, Housing Coordinator.

Meeting Opening

The meeting was called to order at 6:12 p.m., and motion made to skip the pledge of allegiance. Motion carried. The meeting then continued with roll call. A quorum was present.

New Member Introduction

Lola Capers and Michael McDearmaid were formally introduced and welcomed to the committee.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Andrea McDonald and seconded by Councilwoman Timothe to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2022, meeting. Motion carried.

Old Business

Committee members agreed to have an informal discussion of the four (4) remaining Affordable Housing Incentive Strategies – Density flexibility, preservation of infrastructure, reduction of parking and setback requirements and expedited permitting approval.

INCENTIVES & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Density Flexibility**

- City Planner, Debbie Love reminded the committee that for this incentive strategy, the same opportunities were afforded to everyone, without the conditionality of affordable housing. The Chairman recommended that this item be tabled for next year's AHAC. Debbie agreed that this item should be tabled for revision at next year's AHAC. Michael indicated that the development of bonus units for

**NORTH MIAMI AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AHAC)**

developers doing affordable housing was a hot topic at a seminar he recently attended.

- **The chairman moved a motion that as the city considers its long-term planning for next year, it should consider a density flexibility program that features bonus units for affordable housing. Andrea seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

2. Preservation of Infrastructure

- The City of North Miami does not currently have this incentive strategy in place. Chairman Shields indicated that the state actually recommended that this be viewed from a non-urban area vs. urban area perspective. It was suggested that the committee revisits this topic next year and consider a public infrastructure fund, managed by the City. The State does not provide much, in terms of recommendations for the City. Debbie Love indicated that the city is currently finalizing its infrastructure study as part of the comprehensive plan update to see population projections to 2045 to see where infrastructure needs improvement. Therefore, this may not be the best time to introduce this incentive strategy. Next year the City will have a better handle on its infrastructure capacity and be able to look more deeply into this area.
- **Motion: Table any strong recommendations until after the conclusion of the city's review and report for infrastructure needs, given the development of the population – moved by Andrea; seconded by Mike. All were in favor.**

3. Reduction of Parking and Setback Requirements

- Parking restrictions are not specific to affordable housing. The Chairman indicated that it may be prudent to wait for the city to complete its long-term planning process and infrastructure analysis before making recommendations regarding parking and setback requirements.
- **Therefore, a motion was moved to make no recommendations on this incentive strategy – moved by Mike; seconded by Andrea. All were in favor.**

4. Expedited Permitting Approval

- The Chairman reiterated that all committee members agreed that this process was needed; however, the committee members needed to agree on the level of affordability required for developers to access the comprehensive permitting process. Committee members questioned whether a delineation between affordable and workforce housing should exist, in regard to the comprehensive permitting process. Michael indicated that at the recent FRA conference in Daytona Beach, this was one of the items discussed as a tactic to generate affordable housing. Given

**NORTH MIAMI AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AHAC)**

that this helps in improving developers cost efficiency, more affordable housing units will be available, as well. The committee largely accepted that a special window is needed with an expedited methodology in place to incentivize the development of affordable housing.

- The Chairman summarized the discussion from the previous meeting - Projects with 30% set aside for affordable housing should be considered for the comprehensive permitting process; projects with at least 50% set aside for workforce housing (60-80% AMI) should be considered for the comprehensive permitting process. The Chairman emphasized the lack of federal, state or county programs that help to finance the rents or deed restrict these types of units. He also indicated that it would be important to note how long the property would have to remain assigned to the affordable housing or workforce populations for developers to access the comprehensive permitting process. The committee then discussed that a 50% allocation set aside for affordable housing seemed too high. Michael indicated that in most counties, developers often times request additional funding from the county, and this normally comes with restrictive covenants that run for the lifetime of the developed units. Chairman Shields added that these restrictive covenants sometimes involve low-income tenants (<60% AMI). Debbie also added that when developers receive CRA funding, the developments are oftentimes deed restricted for 30 years; then another 10 years at minimum. Therefore, these properties become deed restricted for at least 40 years.
- If the committee proceeds with providing affordable housing incentives, for example, bonus units, it would be necessary for deed restrictions to travel with the property (not the owner). City Planner Debbie indicated that the Planning department has been seeing deed restrictions on mostly properties that house persons within the 80% - 140% AMI group (workforce housing). Building for lower income groups appears to be less cost effective, unless low-income tax credits and other incentives were being used, which is apparently a difficult task.
- In the previous meeting, it was recommended that for developers to access the comprehensive permitting process, a set aside 30% of their development as affordable housing would be encouraged; and 50% for workforce housing. Lola Capers countered that a 50% set aside for workforce housing would be untenable. Debbie agreed, indicating that a 50% set aside for workforce housing would make the projects infeasible. They stated that a 15% set aside may be more palatable, given the significant increase in construction costs. It was also suggested that there should be a certain threshold for the size of the development as well. That is, for a number of units (over 100), a certain percentage could be set aside for affordable or workforce housing. Lola indicated that the threshold for the number of units developed should be higher; maybe for developments with over 200 units, the set aside could be higher. Councilwoman Timothe asserted that for the CRA grants, provisions are being made to allow developers to go up to 40% set aside. Chairman Shields indicated that if a property is receiving subsidies such as CRA, then the development should be considered for the comprehensive permitting process. The average age of a construction worker is 42 years, which is another big issue, regarding costs. Lola suggested that affordable housing set asides be 15%, based on her experience in the construction field (with a cap on the number of units being

**NORTH MIAMI AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AHAC)**

developed). Marie chimed in agreement with Lola. Chairman Shields stated that there are not many incentives for workforce housing. There are no state or federal funding /subsidy for workforce housing. Notwithstanding that, Lola reiterated that incentivizing developers to produce affordable and workforce housing would require that the developments are also feasible. Requiring too many set aside units may have an unintended outcome, since developers may not be able to take advantage of the comprehensive permitting process, given the costs of construction. Chairman Shields indicated that the majority of units across the city are 60 years or older and as such, many developers may simply acquire and rehabilitate properties. Debbie cautioned that these rehab developers may not truly benefit from the comprehensive permitting process. Michael chimed in to remind the committee that it is imperative that affordable units are built quickly while maintaining quality. It was also stated that the idea to create a land trust may lead to the creation of additional workforce housing. Therefore, the conversation to incentivize workforce housing may be more informed once the land trust conversation gets underway.

- It was suggested that projects not receiving municipal funding with a minimum set aside of 20% affordable units and CRA or municipally funded projects be made eligible for the comprehensive permitting process. Committee members Marie and Lola, City Planner Debbie and Councilwoman Timothe all asserted that a 20% set aside was too high and would not be appealing for developers. The committee then reduced the required set aside to 15%. The committee then agreed that the discussion on workforce housing should be tabled until next year.
- **Motion: Projects that receive funding from the municipality or CRA and developments with at least 15% of their units set aside for affordable housing (60% AMI or lower) should be considered for the comprehensive permitting process. The motion was moved by Michael and seconded by Lola. All were in favor.**

New Business

None

➤ ***Tentative Target Dates (2022)***

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|--------------------|--|
| Nov. 15 | • Public Hearing for AHAC adoption; official voting by AHAC members on recommendations |
| Oct. 28 | • Draft report to members |
| Oct. 31 | • Submission of Ad for advertisement of public hearing on Sunday, Nov. 6, 2022 |
| Nov. 15 | • Public Hearing for AHAC adoption |
| Nov. 18 | • AHAC report to FHFC |
| Nov. 22 or Dec. 13 | • Adopted AHAC report to City Council |

Alberte committed to drafting the report. This will be shared ahead of the public hearing, to ensure that if there is disagreement among AHAC members, it will be remedied before the official voting session. The report can not be amended after the voting session. Therefore, Chairman Shields will discuss recommendations with committee members who were absent from the October 20 meeting.

In addition, Alberte shared that committee members will be voting on two (2) reports at the public hearing – the 2021 report and the 2022 report. These reports will be identical given that there are no anticipated

**NORTH MIAMI AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AHAC)**

changes between October and December 2022. Chairman Shields and Alberte agreed to discuss the way forward offline at a mutually agreed upon time.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting properly adjourned at 7:30 p.m. (motioned by Michael; seconded by Marie).

Prepared by:

*Dianna DaCosta
Housing Coordinator, Housing & Social Services Department
City of North Miami*

Submitted by:

Andrea McDonald, Committee Secretary

ATTEST:

Evan Shields, Chairperson