

ESCAMBIA-PENSACOLA AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

June 7, 2022

The Escambia-Pensacola Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) held a regularly scheduled meeting in the Hagler-Mason Conference Room, 2nd Floor of Pensacola City Hall, 222 West Main Street, Pensacola, Florida on June 07, 2022 at 9:00 AM.

Committee members present: Ed Brown, Pensacola City Council President Ann Hill, Deborah Mays, Escambia County Commissioner Lumon May, Paul Ritz, and Crystal Scott

Committee members absent: Laura Gilmore (excused), Brenton Goodman, Patricia Mackovic, and Maya Moss (excused)

Staff members present: Timothy Evans, Escambia County Neighborhood Enterprise Division (NED); Melissa Crews, NED; Tracy Pickens, City of Pensacola Housing; Meredith Reeves, City of Pensacola Housing; and Christine Crespo, City of Pensacola Housing

Call to Order, Welcome, and Roll Call

Chair Crystal Scott called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. She requested those present at the meeting table introduce themselves, after which she acknowledged that there was a quorum established.

Through the roll call it was pointed out that Laura Gilmore and Maya Moss each notified staff of their inability to attend and requested that their absence be excused. Paul Ritz made a motion to recognize those individuals as excused. Ed Brown seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Proof of Publication

Notice of the meeting was published in the *Escambia Sun Press*. Notice of the meeting was also published on the City & County respective websites.

Minutes

Since there was not a quorum established at the May meeting to transact Committee business, the minutes of the April meeting remained to be approved. Ann Hill made the motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 05, 2022. Paul Ritz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

As April's meeting was preceded by the Public Forum to review and approve the 2022-2023 LHAP, Ms. Hill also made a motion to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing. Paul Ritz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Old Business

Escambia County's Affordable Housing Incentive Plan: A topic covered at April's meeting (Incentive B – Impact Fees) raised questions which led to the invitation of a guest speaker to the Committee. Mr. Pete Kummar, Manager of Utility Development for Emerald Coast Utility Authority (ECUA) presented an overview of the standard fees associated with new development as well as infill construction. There is a

much greater burden for new development as the utility authority must assess the capacity of the development area's existing infrastructure. There is a \$500 fee for the review of a plan for development, and any required increase in infrastructure capacity is a cost to the developer. New developments are treated the same whether the development is targeting affordable housing or general market rate development, as the actual impact of the development will be the same. Mr. Kummar noted that some areas of the community are at capacity as far as the area's infrastructure. He stated that ECUA considers that there is an emerging issue regarding the scarcity of land to build which is supported by current infrastructure.

The other issue, infill development, is all handled through the Customer Service side of ECUA as opposed to Utility Development. The impact fees for infill development are based on the size of the meter serving the property. There may be additional fees involved if there is sewer service available to the lot, but no existing sewer service (former structure was built before sewer service was available and so was on a septic system). However there are financial assistance programs which can subsidize an income-qualified household to convert from septic to sewer. Ms. Hill mentioned that there is also current discussions regarding assisting with the costs to homeowners of repairs to aging infrastructure which is located on private property.

In final comments, Mr. Kummar noted that ECUA continues to pursue infrastructure expansion (primarily sewer) following an established Capital Improvement Plan. He will provide the current map which shows the anticipated future infrastructure development for distribution to the Committee. He stated the Capital Improvement Plan seeks to take advantage of the aspect of 'economy of scale' in addressing larger areas of unmet need as opposed to single lot development.

Following Mr. Kummar's presentation, and the ensuing question-and-answer period Tim Evans continued the review of the County's Incentives with Incentive H, covering street requirements for new development (sidewalks, curbs, gutters, etc.). Mr. Evans stated that there is a great degree of variation of requirement based upon the location of the parcel to be developed and the specific zoning where the parcel is situated. For instance, some areas of the county require sidewalks while other areas all but forbid them. It was mentioned that when the street components are required it is a significant increase to the cost of development which negatively impacts affordability.

Discussion followed regarding the intricacies of the County's zoning restrictions and future land use codes. Mr. May stated that the County underwent an extensive amendment process of the future land use and Comprehensive Plan five years ago in an attempt to provide both consistence as well as flexibility to community development efforts. As the zoning and land use issues impact several of the Incentives, the committee requested to have a staff from that Department of the County to present at a future meeting. The discussion also circled back to another topic which is impacted by the land development code, Incentive C (density flexibility). Through the discussion it became evident that the density requirements of most zoning code provides the opportunity for a builder to petition for a variance. Ms. Hill made a motion to represent the incentive on the plan as being a 'case-by-case' issue regarding density flexibility. Paul Ritz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

New Business

As time was running somewhat short, Ms. Hill asked to move on to new business. She made a presentation of information produced by the local inter-denominational coalition J.U.S.T. Pensacola.

The had a large convening in early May and had made direct requests of the City and the County leadership to support affordable housing development. One issue which Ms. Hill mentioned was the suggested creation of a local housing trust fund to support new affordable rental housing development. Ms. Hill suggested that perhaps the Committee can request J.U.S.T. Pensacola to provide a representative to present their work at a future meeting. The suggestion was well received and so Ms. Hill made it as a motion, which was then seconded by Ms. Mays. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Following this there was interest in having others also invited to speak to the Committee on other topics of Committee interest. Ms. Hill made a motion to request a speaker on the subject of Community Land Trusts. Ms. Mays seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Finally, Ms. Mays made a motion to have a representative of the Escambia County Area Transit (ECAT) provide a presentation to the Committee. Ms. Hill seconded the motion, which also passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Announcements/written communications

It was announced that the City has established a priority within Economic Development for support of affordable and obtainable housing, to include increasing housing inventory.

Chair Scott announced that June is National Home Ownership Month.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the AHAC will be July 05, 2022 at 9:00 am in the Hagler Mason Conference Room of Pensacola City Hall.

Adjournment:

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Respectfully submitted by: Timothy Evans