

Update of Local Housing Incentive Strategies

AHAC Meeting #2 | November 3, 2017 | 9:30 a.m.

City Hall, Room 222 (2nd Floor)



MEETING SUMMARY

The City of Clearwater requested that Wade Trim facilitate an update of the City's Local Housing Incentives Strategy (LHIS) report, which was last updated in 2014. An 11-member Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) representing various affordable housing interests was appointed by the City to evaluate and update the 2014 LHIS report. The second meeting with the AHAC was held on November 3, 2017 at City Hall, in Room 222 on the second floor of City Hall. Six (6) AHAC members, City staff and the City's consultant attended the meeting:

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|-----------------------|--|
| • Linda Kemp | AHAC Committee, NAHAB, Raymond James Bank (rep: Mortgage) |
| • Gaby Camacho | AHAC Committee, Habitat for Humanity (rep: Labor) |
| • Michael Boutzoukas | AHAC Committee, Community Development Board (rep: Planning) |
| • Haley Crum | AHAC Committee, NAHAB, FrankCrum (rep: Employers) |
| • Jacqueline Rivera | AHAC Committee, Clearwater Housing Auth. (rep: Essential Services) |
| • Peter Leach | AHAC Committee, Southport Financial (rep: For-Profit Provider) |
| • Joe Riddle | City of Clearwater, Housing Manager |
| • Terry Malcolm-Smith | City of Clearwater, Housing Coordinator |
| • Amanda Warner | Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant) |
| • Brad Cornelius | Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant) |

Five (5) AHAC members were not in attendance: Michael Potts (rep: Home Building), Kevin Chinault (rep: Non-Profit Provider), Peggy Cutkomp (rep: Real Estate), Lisa Hughes (rep: Advocate for Low-Income Persons), and Carmen Santiago (rep: Resident of Clearwater).

The purpose of this second AHAC meeting was to review the LHIS process and schedule, discuss the barriers to affordable housing previously identified by the committee at the first AHAC meeting on October 10, 2017, develop recommendations for incentives to address those barriers, and identify any other changes to the 2014 LHIS report resulting from the committee's review of the City's current practices regarding affordable housing.

Welcome and Introductions

The City's Consultant (Amanda Warner) welcomed the committee members and gave a brief summary of the agenda for the second AHAC meeting. The City Clerk asked if any members of the public were in attendance and would like to speak. No members of the public were in attendance.

Approval of October 10, 2017, AHAC Meeting Minutes

The AHAC reviewed the minutes of the last AHAC meeting, which was held on October 10, 2017, and approved the minutes by motion.

Summary of Presentation to AHAC

The Consultant reviewed the LHIS update process and schedule of events toward approval/submittal. This review was presented in Microsoft PowerPoint format. The schedule of events included:

- October 2017 – AHAC meets to update LHIS report; schedule and advertise public hearing
- November 2017 – AHAC holds public hearing to approve updated LHIS report; submit LHIS report to City Council

- December 2017 – City Council holds public hearing to accept updated LHS report
- March 2018 – City Council to adopt amendments to LHAP to incorporate LHS recommendations
- May 2018 – Submit amended LHAP with proof of City Council approval to FHFC

The Consultant then presented specific strategies and recommendations developed in response to the barriers to affordable housing identified at the first AHAC meeting on October 10, 2017, and in response to comments received from City staff regarding the City's current practices. Proposed changes to the existing recommendations within the 2014 LHS report, as well as new recommendations, were presented for committee discussion. If a committee-identified barrier to affordable housing and corresponding incentive was already addressed by an existing recommendation with the 2014 LHS report, then no change was presented.

Committee Discussion

During the meeting, the Consultant facilitated AHAC discussion of specific recommendations for inclusion in the 2017 LHS report. The discussion focused on strategies to address the affordable housing barriers identified by the AHAC during the first AHAC meeting on October 10, 2017, but also touched on City staff-initiated changes based on review of the City's policies and procedures. If a committee-identified barrier to affordable housing and corresponding incentive was already addressed by an existing recommendation with the 2014 LHS report, then no change was discussed. The following provides a summary of the committee's discussion of recommendations to incentivize the provision of affordable housing in the City of Clearwater:

Land Availability – New Recommendation

During the first AHAC meeting on October 10, 2017, the committee identified the limited supply of infill properties in the City of Clearwater as a barrier to affordable housing and discussed the need to identify blighted or code enforcement properties for potential rehabilitation, acquisition, or demolition to increase this supply. In response, the Consultant presented the following proposed new recommendation (shown in underline):

10.4 The Economic Development and Housing Department should coordinate with the Planning and Development Department to identify properties having repeat code violations that may be suitable for rehabilitation, acquisition or demolition for affordable housing.

The committee raised no concerns with the new recommendation as proposed and supported its inclusion in the 2017 LHS report.

Maintenance of Affordable Units – Modified Recommendation

During the first AHAC meeting on October 10, 2017, the committee identified ongoing maintenance risks for homeowners as a barrier to affordable housing and discussed homebuyer education and home warranties as two strategies to reduce unexpected maintenance costs. In response, the Consultant presented the following proposed additional language (shown in underline) under existing Recommendation 16.1 of the 2014 LHS report:

16.1 Develop public and private partnerships for the provision of affordable housing:
 . . .
Coordinate with the private sector and non-profits to provide homebuyer education, home warranties and other strategies that reduce the ongoing maintenance risk of homeownership.

The committee raised no concerns with the additional language as proposed and supported its inclusion in the 2017 LHS report.

Third-Party Barriers – Modified Recommendation

During the first AHAC meeting on October 10, 2017, the committee identified third party barriers to affordable housing, such as homeowner’s insurance and construction costs, and discussed the need to educate, incentivize, and partner with the private sector. In response, the Consultant presented the following proposed additional language (shown in underline) under existing Recommendation 16.1 of the 2014 LHS report:

16.1 Develop public and private partnerships for the provision of affordable housing:

...

Partner with the private sector and non-profits to address third-party barriers to affordable housing and to identify appropriate incentives to reduce labor and material costs for developers and maintenance and insurance costs for homeowners.

The committee raised no concerns with the additional language as proposed and supported its inclusion in the 2017 LHS report.

Other – Modified Recommendations

Proposed changes to several other existing recommendations from the 2014 LHS report were presented to the AHAC based on comments received from City staff regarding the City’s current practices. These changes serve to provide clarification, specificity, or to update obsolete references.

Staff Comments – Recommendation 1.2

The following staff comments (shown in strikethrough/underline) on existing Recommendation 1.2 of the 2014 LHS report were presented to the committee. These comments are to better align the recommendation with the City’s current practices, including use of the City’s new online ePermit system. These comments also eliminate redundant sub-bullets.

- 1.2 The Housing Manager and Development Service Center Manager should continue to be the primary and secondary points of contact when submitting affordable housing projects. Through close coordination, these two staff positions should:
- Create and oversee an affordable housing “One Stop Streamline Permitting Process.”
 - Act as a liaison between the developer and all departments involved in the review and permitting process.
 - Organize and participate in the pre-application meetings.
 - Provide necessary information and forms to the developer to avoid delays during the application and review process.
 - Create a process and project requirement checklist for ~~each type of~~ affordable housing projects for each level of review and stage of permitting (i.e., site and building review).
 - Create a definitive but feasible review timeline for affordable housing projects considering variables such as the type, size and impact in the community depending on the level of review and stage of permitting.
 - Release to the applicant and all City departments involved at once, written statements for additional requirements and project determinations.
 - ~~Determine a definitive time period for completion of reviews.~~
 - Track the review process through ~~specific forms and communications~~ the City’s online ePermit system.
 - Report to the developer the status of the application.

The committee discussed the modified language as proposed and suggested adding the word “definitive” prior to the phrase “project requirement checklist” in the fifth sub-bullet. The modified sub-bullet language reads as follows:

- Create a process and definitive project requirement checklist for each type of affordable housing projects for each level of review and stage of permitting (i.e., site and building review).

With this change, the committee supported the inclusion of the modified language for Recommendation 1.2 in the 2017 LHIS report.

Staff Comments – Recommendation 2.1

The following staff comments (shown in strikethrough/underline) on existing Recommendation 2.1 of the 2014 LHIS report were presented to the committee. These comments are to update existing Recommendation 2.1 to better reflect the current Pinellas County multi-modal impact fee process, which provides an opportunity for reduced rates if supporting data or studies demonstrate reduced trips for the project.

- 2.1 Coordinate with Pinellas County, as feasible, ~~to determine how the new multi-modal impact fee may~~ regarding data-based rate flexibility within the multi-modal impact fee to support the provision of affordable housing.

The committee raised no concerns with the modified language as proposed and supported its inclusion in the 2017 LHIS report.

Staff Comments – Recommendation 5.2

The following staff comments (shown in strikethrough/underline) on existing Recommendation 5.2 of the 2014 LHIS report were presented to the committee. The City's current Comprehensive Plan policies serve as barriers to affordable housing because the allowance for accessory dwelling units is dependent on adequate lot area, which effectively limits accessory dwelling units to lots that already support two units. These comments are to consider focusing the policies on specific criteria rather than lot area.

- 5.2 ~~Establish strict compliance standards in the Community Development Code to allow for accessory dwelling units in residential zoning districts consistent with Comprehensive Plan Policy C.1.1.2 and Policy C.1.1.8. Such standards could include: Revisit with City Council Comprehensive Plan Policy C.1.1.2 and Policy C.1.1.8 to consider allowing one accessory dwelling unit on a residential lot of any size provided that certain criteria are met. Such criteria may include:~~
- ~~Minimum lot size, m~~ Maximum unit size, parking standards, setback and height requirements to ensure neighborhood compatibility.
 - Occupancy/tenure requirements so that the principal dwelling unit remains owner-occupied, the accessory dwelling unit is not used for short-term rental, and the number of occupants is limited to that which is reasonable for the unit size.

The committee raised no concerns with the modified language as proposed and supported its inclusion in the 2017 LHIS report.

Staff Comments – Recommendation 11.1

The following staff comments (shown in strikethrough/underline) on existing Recommendation 11.1 of the 2014 LHIS report were presented to the committee. These comments are to update an obsolete Comprehensive Plan policy number reference (A.2.2.2) with the current policy number reference (A.2.2.7) resulting from a recent Comprehensive Plan amendment. No change was made to the policy language since 2014.

- 11.1 The City should maintain and enforce policies ~~A.2.2.2~~ A.2.2.7; A.6.8.7; and C.1.4.2 of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The committee raised no concerns with the modified language as proposed and supported its inclusion in the 2017 LHS report.

Staff Comments – Recommendation 12.1

The following staff comments (shown in strikethrough/underline) on existing Recommendation 12.1 of the 2014 LHS report were presented to the committee. These comments are to add clarification and specificity to the recommendation, since conversion to mixed-uses is allowed by the City, but only where permitted by zoning district.

- 12.1 Continue to allow “adaptive reuse” involving the conversion of surplus and/or outmoded buildings including old school buildings, hospitals, train stations, warehouses, factories, etc. to mixed uses where permitted by zoning district.

The committee raised no concerns with the modified language as proposed and supported its inclusion in the 2017 LHS report.

Staff Comments – Recommendation 13.1

The following staff comments (shown in strikethrough/underline) on existing Recommendation 13.1 of the 2014 LHS report were presented to the committee. These comments are to add clarification and specificity to the recommendation. Regarding CPTED, City staff conveyed that it is onerous for the City to maintain CPTED certification and staffing. Regarding handicap accessibility standards, City staff conveyed that Federal and State requirements (e.g. ADA, Florida Building Code, etc.) provide more specific criteria to be met.

- 13.1 Continue to encourage developers to address recommended design standards for affordable housing developments consistent with Sec. 3-920.A.3.c.i-iii. of the City of Clearwater Community Development Code. Other criteria could include but are not limited to:
- Provide direct and visual access to open space for residents
 - Consider play areas when developing family housing
 - Provide nighttime outdoor illumination for safety ~~from a variety of sources~~
 - Use landscape standards and buffers when required ~~needed~~ to screen ~~avoid~~ nuisances and to separate public and private areas
 - Centrally-located common facilities
 - ~~Use Crime Prevention Thru Environmental Design (CPTED)~~
 - Comply with Federal and State requirements for accessibility improvements ~~Use handicap accessibility standards (i.e., universal design)~~

The committee discussed the modified language as proposed and suggested retaining the CPTED sub-bullet and adding the phrase “when practical and financially feasible,” indicating that CPTED should be encouraged but not required. The modified sub-bullet language reads as follows:

- Use Crime Prevention Thru Environmental Design (CPTED) when practical and financially feasible

With this change, the committee supported the inclusion of the modified language for Recommendation 13.1 in the 2017 LHS report.

Other Comments

At the conclusion of the November 3, 2017, AHAC meeting, committee member Gaby Camacho provided written comments to City staff regarding the incentive areas by statute. These comments were as follows:

- Waive impact fees/lower permit fees

- Expedite homeowner qualification approval for down-payment assistance
- \$10K to affordable housing when housing unit is completed
- Monies that private developers pay (fees/fines) should go strictly to affordable housing instead of general operations
- Waive infrastructure capacities (sidewalks, sewers, power)
- Waive/modify tree replacement fees

These comments were accepted by City staff and noted herein.

Next Steps

City staff and the Consultant will refine the recommendations made at the November 3, 2017, AHAC meeting and present these recommendations and the updated 2017 LHS report at the joint AHAC/NAHAB public hearing on November 28, 2017, which will be publicly noticed. The AHAC will receive a draft of the updated 2017 LHS report prior to the public hearing for committee member review and comment. Once approved by the AHAC, the updated 2017 LHS report will be submitted to City Council.