

**Palm Beach County Housing Steering Committee**  
**Wednesday, December 8 9:00-10:30 am**

Attendance: Morris G. "Skip" Miller (Chair), Sammy Alzofon, Mary Lou Bedford, Jim Bell, David Brandt, Don Burgess, Charlotte Burnett, Phyllis Choy, Shereena Coleman, Caitlin Copeland, Tim Coppage, Tracy Caruso, Julia Dattolo, Jervonte Edmonds, Gionni Gallier, Craig Glover, Sam Goodstein, Stephanie Heidt, Michael Howe, Michele Jacobs, Annetta Jenkins, Dorina Jenkins-Gaskin, Elliott Johnson, Carol Jones-Gilbert, Felicia Goldstein, Ezra M. Krieg, Cindee LaCourse-Blum, Tom Lanahan, Tammy McDonald, Dorritt M. Miller, Willie A. Miller, Jr., Terri Murray, Tequisha Myles, Joan Oliva, Tatiana Pumphrey, Kevin Ratterree, Mercedes Rodas, Michael Rumpf, Patrick Rutter, Carlos R. Serrano, Caroline Shamsi, Joann Skaria, Katy Smith, Jennifer Thomason, Lori Vinikoor, Michael Weiner, John "Jack" F. Weir, Tim Wheat, Anna Yeskey. Staff: Suzanne Cabrera, Leslie Mandell, Eralda Agolli

**Introductions**

Skip Miller welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Review of and comments on Housing Plan components**

**Outline – Skip Miller**

Skip reported that the first draft of the Housing Plan is currently being finalized after receiving input from the Steering Committee, planning directors, etc. from throughout the community. Sections of the plan will be reviewed today, and comments and suggestions are welcomed.

**To Do: Elliott Johnson will draft the Introduction to the Housing Plan.**

**Recommendations are welcomed: Send comments and questions for distribution to those drafting the housing plan to Leslie Mandell: [Imandell@hlcpcb.org](mailto:Imandell@hlcpcb.org)**

**Community Redevelopment and Neighborhood Revitalization – Katy Smith**

- Further recommendations from sharing this first draft will be forthcoming.
- Katy reviewed the focus of the seven initiatives in the plan (listed below)
  1. How do we identify neighborhoods for neighborhood revitalization?
    - What criteria should be used in targeting our efforts?
    - The Office of Neighborhood Revitalization and Palm Beach County's Office may already have existing criteria
    - To Do: Suzanne Cabrera will follow up**
    - How can we continue to develop neighborhoods while also addressing issues such as food and Wi-Fi deserts, and providing green space?
    - What steps should be taken to accommodate businesses?
    - How do we attract commercial investment in these areas?
    - How do we encourage mixed use developments and link with existing pilot programs?
  2. How do we encourage the rehabilitation of existing unoccupied and rental stock?
    - Create incentives for rental rehabilitation
      - Include rehabilitation of rentals in LHAP
      - Collaborate with the county for ARP funds
  3. Provide code education (not code enforcement) to improve properties and encourage more owner input
  4. How do we broaden housing options across the county?
    - How do we build that knowledge across a community?
    - Everything that is done in this space should result in the broadening of housing options across the county and facilitating homeownership for everyone who wants it.
    - Recognize that homeownership is not the desired endpoint for everyone.

- How do we make sure that there is a diversity of housing stock and housing options? (Determine if this is under Initiative #1 or a GOAL)  
**To Do: Group input welcomed**
  - 5. Encourage the use of Community Land Trusts to reduce upfront costs  
**To Do: Suzanne Cabrera and Cindee LaCourse-Blum are working on this.**
  - 6. Build the capacity of housing authorities, land trusts and other mission-driven nonprofit developers to produce and preserve more workforce and affordable housing
  - 7. Continue links to Palm Beach County's Plan to End Homelessness
    - Ensure that we are all part of the spectrum of housing interventions
    - How do we ensure that we are intentionally and proactively linking with the existing county programs to end homelessness?
- Note: The Housing plan will not solve this problem.**

### Racial Equity – Katy Smith

- Racial Equity will be a separate category in the Housing Plan.
- The HLC Racial Equity Assessment will provide a picture of what racial inequities currently exist and how they came to exist.
  - Conclusions from the HLC Racial Equity Assessment will impact and apply to a lot of these initiatives to address racial equity
  - **Keep placeholders for information found in the assessment.**
- The Housing Plan will recommend how to alleviate the identified inequities.
- The entire Housing Plan will be viewed through a racial equity lens.
- FIU (Dr. Ned Murray) will take an advisory role for Racial Equity in lieu of a consultant.
- The Housing Plan will be reviewed by an independent, third party to identify any areas that are not being viewed through the racial equity lens.

### Next Steps:

- **Under each initiative, create specific action plans, criteria, etc. instead of just listing general recommendations.**
- **Continue to identify the items we want to address.**
- **Continue to offer comments on the housing plan.**
- **Volunteer to help draft the specifics of the plan.**
- **Identify items that may have been left out.**

### Comments/Suggestions

- Include financial literacy education to encourage self-sufficiency under Community Education.
- There is an opportunity in a lot of neighborhoods that are targeted for revitalization for homeownership and for smaller scale single family, duplex, and others, and “for sale” housing can play a role.
- Develop critical strategies to work with absentee and other landlords so that renters are not displaced as neighborhood improvements are made.
- Can CLTs or other organizations (i.e., Neighborhood Renaissance) take a role in neighborhood revitalization rehabs?
  - Can a CLT purchase the land under a home and pull that house into the CLT stock, and make necessary improvements to help with neighborhood revitalization?
- Can resources be found/developed (i.e., a revolving loan pool) to provide a source of capital for repairs to elderly homeowners who are trying to stay in their homes but are struggling to maintain their homes?
- Some landlords have the money but not the willingness to improve or repair their property. They are content to capture rents.
  - Add a distinction in the housing plan between helping homeowners vs. landlords repair their property.

- Research models around the country that use CLTs to assist minority homeowners in lower-income neighborhoods who are struggling to do needed capital improvements to maintain insurance on the units and other needed repairs. Properties are put into a Land Trust to provide those resources.
 

**Note:** The purpose of the Land Trust is not only to reduce upfront costs (there is no difference between that model and purchase or rehab assistance). That is not the end goal of the model; the model is a balance; it does bridge that gap and it makes it affordable for the person needing the rehab or purchase. It is also a balance of public interest; those assisted units become part of an affordable housing infrastructure that is available for multiple households vs just one.
- Make a distinction between “absentee” landlords and “local” landlords.
 

If someone lives in the neighborhood and buys a nearby residence and they need help rehabbing it or fixing it up, that is a different situation than someone who is an absentee landlord who has not maintained their property and is still content to profit from it.
- Develop strategies for rental properties to be physically upgraded without the increasing rents to the point where people feel like they are forced out.

### Planning and Regulatory – Elliott Johnson

- Reviewed objective: promote promoting policy and an action code to enable faster approvals and innovative land use to allow greater density and increase lower cost residential capacity for Palm Beach County.
- More than 6,000 housing units/year are needed to keep up with the natural demand; presently only 4,000 units/year are built.
- Need to address the problem of supply and demand.
- Private industry will make up the bulk of the construction.
- Ensure that we can structurally allow that type of that increase in volume to occur.

### Five initiatives to address this.

1. Accommodate for greater density through planning and zoning
2. Expand the developable footprint of Palm Beach County.
3. Incentivize the construction of affordable homes.
4. Increase the speed of processing development approvals
5. Increase access to housing for those who struggle

### Comments

- Cindee LaCourse-Blum: In Palm Beach County and in some municipalities, once property is platted, there are more stringent development regulations, meaning that there are lesser development requirements for multi-family development that does not need to be platted vs. single family. This is also a density issue due to a higher level of setbacks, right of way, and turn-arounds, resulting in being able to build less dense on the site. A property can look identical if it is fee simple. It may be just particular to land trusts, but a property can look identical as a multifamily vs single family, with the same number of people and bedrooms. This regulation should be reviewed because it impacts density and cost. More stringent development regulations mean a higher level of cost to develop the project and ends up being less dense.
- Determine where the setback piece is and what requirements are needed if it is buffered, so that provisions are included in the inclusionary zoning section that allows for reductions, buffers, etc.
- Re condominium development vs single family: some cities have inclusionary zoning that allows reductions and buffers, etc. and can be models for other cities. Find out where the setback piece is, where the requirements that come in, if it is buffered, etc.
  - Example#1: CLT is doing a 20-unit townhome development. Not platting because they are not selling the land. But if they had to re plat, they would need a cul de sac vs a key point turn-around, resulting in losing several units.
  - Example #2: A city that could take on the inclusionary zoning buffer. If the CLT were able to sell the land, they would have to replat and would not meet setback requirements.
  - Type of ownership (condominium vs single family) drastically changes the requirements.

- Research to find out whether there are efficiencies that can be gained that would allow quicker construction for less cost for the same unit and bedroom size.
- In the past, Palm Beach County has been more focused on suburban growth (mostly single-family homes). Cul de sacs are seen as being safer.
- Platting is all about trying to bring things up to standards, and that impacts the cost of the homes, the number of units, the amount available area, etc. But trying to meet all of those regulations impacts the affordability and the density issue. There is always a trade off.
- Research what is being built in infill-type areas, which provide greater barriers and problems. Are cities facing the same kind of challenges and do their codes have the same kind of themes?
- Think through life safety aspects vs buffers and things like that make a project better (look better, add more value).
- When discussing roads and access, consider life safety areas, some of which are not debatable points.
- Because municipalities have much tighter geographic boundaries than the county does, their planning and codes can address things more specifically than the county.
- Strategize to develop a tool to streamline planning and zoning, and also bring solutions that are a little bit more creative to specific areas where it is needed.
- Consider using modeling like we had with the urban redevelopment area.
- Consider not seeing the entire county as a homogeneous area. Not all neighborhoods should be able to use the same tools to deal with the same challenges.
- We want communities to have their own identities.
- Find specific solutions to these specific challenges similar to what was proposed with the urban redevelopment area. Consider building in new areas such as The Glades.
- Address a philosophical element of the planning and regulatory reform: These recommendations should apply to everyone and everywhere. *One of the reasons that there is such a lack of affordable and workforce housing is that supply is being outstripped by demand by such a massive amount.*
- The market is capable of answering a lot of these challenges.
- We need subsidies and some guided direction in order to ensure that we address a lot of communities that have historically been disenfranchised.
- The private development community can do a lot to assist with increasing production of units. We need to have higher density, smaller units with higher quality in mixed used developments. It is possible that if the amount of development is increased, the cost of housing will go down if it is scaled correctly.
- This is not a fixed target and as we bring solutions, the market is going to also adjust. The housing plan needs to have the flexibility to adjust to the increased demand that will come. If we are successful, we may need 8,000 units a year.
- There may be pushback if regulations are applied to the entire county.
- Acknowledge home rule, because one size does not fit all. To retain the uniqueness of each community neighborhoods should be able to define their own parameters regarding density, etc.
- Anna Yeskey: Will be meeting with IPARC on Friday, December 10th. Requesting guidance for the conversation with the planning directors.
- A developer who builds a 200-unit luxury apartment complex and charges \$3,000 a month for rent will encounter less NIMBYism and will have an easier time in getting the development approved. The excess of demand over supply is so severe that the units that will be developed through this program will significantly keep prices down at the level where they are going to be affordable.
- Jack Weir: The first objective is slowing the rate of rent increases. Part of this will subside as easy money starts to go away and the Fed raises interest rates, but part of it is more due to supply.
  - If renter price restrictions are linked to subsidies in order to create a broader pool of affordable housing stock, then the housing plan can make a difference by broadening the pool of deed restricted, rental and homeownership housing stocks.
- Housing should be deed restricted to take advantage of certain benefits. It would be an incentive-based structure to promote more supply. While this will not solve the problem, it will help address it in a meaningful way.

- Tom Lanahan (Treasure Coast): Recommend considering the “where” as well as the quantity. In addition to considering transportation costs when analyzing the cost of living and affordability, factor in the time needed to travel between a home and a job. Infill in existing urbanized areas is absolutely key. Sprawling housing out further away from where the jobs are just adds transportation costs, and just moves dollars from one place of outlay into a different one.
- While there are certainly significant impediments and baggage with some of these infill sites (stormwater drainage, water, and sewer), if those costs can be reduced, these sites can get built and provide some housing.
- Consider the importance of TOD (transport-oriented development).

**To Do: Review and provide feedback for Action Items.**

**Identify specific Initiatives and resources that will be necessary in order to accomplish these tasks.**

#### Administration and Implementation – Elliott Johnson

- Determine who will be responsible and accountable for specific action items and for administering the plan? How will we track our progress? How do we amend this plan? How do we change course as course corrections are needed? How do we allow the plan to grow and how do we involve other stakeholders who will come on board as the plan develops?
- Need input from the county as well as the forty county municipalities to determine who will oversee administration of the housing plan.
- Consider HLC as the plan administrator. HLC has relationships with municipalities, county departments and personnel and participation by professionals and volunteers throughout the county, as well as members of the private sector. That longitudinal perspective will serve us all well - in knowing what Palm Beach County affordable housing has been in the past, what is currently happening, and what is on the table for the future. In addition, there are many close relationships with housing market "players."
  - How do we track the progress?
  - How do we assign tasks?
  - To whom do we report?
- The objective of the Administration and Implementation: to implement a comprehensive process to identify solutions to the challenges that public and private organizations have in meeting the current and future housing needs of Palm Beach County; actively track and promote municipal and county or community participation in planning and growth of Palm Beach County.
  - Review the nine action items and six key results.

#### Comments

The county will determine how to spend the bond proceeds.

Review other recommendations:

- Is the number of units that we want to build a realistic number?
- If they are truly going to be affordable.
- Reach out to the municipalities and ask for their support.
- Assign people to carry the message to all the municipalities that we want to reach out to
- Determine how to follow up with the plan implementation once it is adopted.
- Jack Weir: The county will be responsible for the allocation of bond funds and measuring compliance with how those bond funds are used.
- The Administration section applies to appointing a watchdog to monitor how the housing plan is implemented, what is working or not working.
- Recommend that the Housing Leadership Council be the housing plan watchdog.
- Determine which plans, efforts and initiatives that are already in place are working.
- Determine how to better coordinate those plans to enhance their success
- Involve the community in the organizational structure
  - Board of County Commissioners: integrate the vision as a broad overview on what PBC needs to look like over the next five, ten, twenty years

- Enlist the county manager to oversee the construction of the additional 20,000 units to be built over the next ten years.
- Enlist the Planning and Zoning Board, Community Services, Dept of Housing and Economic Sustainability to oversee different initiatives of the housing plan.
- Enlist assistance from the other municipalities and the private sector.

#### Review Palm Beach County Housing Plan outline

- Includes the vision, the goal and the four initiatives
- TBD: How to incorporate the racial equity component into the Housing Plan
  - Is it enough to not have a separate racial equity component, but view the entire plan through a racial equity lens?
  - Specifically include a racial equity component into the Housing Plan (there are some specific recommendations that almost exclusively relate to racial equity)
- Review Recommendations
  - A \$200 million bond issue with the proceeds to be used primarily to provide gap financing for the production of affordable and workforce housing.
  - Identify other potential funding sources and determine how to use for affordable and workforce housing.
  - Impact fees waivers, and building permit fees deferrals and other upfront fees
  - Create a consortium of local banks to fund a money pool to pay cash for a home, then resell the house to those in need: first time homebuyers, persons with limited incomes, etc.
  - Planning and regulatory reform
    - Allow for more density where and when appropriate
    - Consider the idea of compatibility and making sure that when using permitted increased density, it is done in a way that is compatible to the surrounding areas.
    - Redefine the definition of compatibility
  - Review the combination of housing and transportation costs. If an employee work near his/her home, a car or mass transit will not be needed. Housing + transportation costs would be lower, so more could be spent on housing.
  - Racial Equity
    - What steps should be taken to promote racial equity?
    - Racial Equity will be a separate initiative as well as being an overlay to the housing plan
  - Administration and implementation
    - Metrics needed to define success
  - Reviewing recommendations from the county about the housing plan

#### Comments:

- The Fair Housing Act will be included in the Racial Equity section.
  - Reference the Fair Housing Act in the opening paragraph of the Racial Equity Initiative.
  - The FHA details how to address the inequities, appraisals, issues about criminal records, etc. and lays out a plan on how to enforce them.
  - HUD has policy guidance from the FHA on housing opportunities for people with criminal records.
- Racial Equity should be both a separate initiative and integrated into the housing plan.  
**Lean towards being overinclusive - an item can be listed in more than one initiative – we can pare down later.**

#### Timeline/Schedule

- The county would like to decide by March if they are going to put the bond issue on the ballot as a general obligation bond. They would like to do advertising and public outreach from May – November 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- A final version (or at least an almost-final draft) will need to be completed by mid-January.

**To Do: Michael Howe will check with either Patrick Rutter or Dorritt Miller regarding the date.**

- The housing plan draft will need to be circulated for input from designated people by mid-January so that comments and refinements can be incorporated into the plan by the end of February.
- The county will need time to post and circulate it internally.
- Anna Yeskey: A quartering meeting with the elected officials is scheduled for January 28th for the Issues Forum.
- The municipal people need to see the plan before sending it to the county, as **we want to get as many people as possible to buy-in before we present it to the county.**
- Participation by municipal officials and others was one of the primary reasons that the Steering Committee was created with a broad cross section of county professionals and volunteers, in order to keep the group informed of the focus areas, problems, needs, etc.
- The county would like to adopt the plan as “their own” in order to provide the maximum amount of flexibility with the use of bond proceeds.
- Consider scheduling a date for a BCC workshop to refine the plan for the bond issue before it goes to a public hearing. (January 28th might be an ideal date to make a presentation to the municipal elected officials.)
- “Don't let perfect stand in the way of better” – the plan can always be refined.
- Everyone on the call today is encouraged to help out in in any way that they can. (Tatiana Pumphrey, Gionni Gallier)

#### **Funding – Jack Weir – not addressed**

#### **Schedule and next steps – Skip Miller**

Steering Committee meeting	Wednesday, January 12	9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
Core Group Meeting	Wednesday, December 22	9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

#### **Meeting Adjournment**

Skip thanked everyone for putting in the time during the past few months to share suggestions and help draft the housing plan.

#### **Additional Information**

The 561 Plan, the transportation plan PBC is putting together, has been reinvigorated with the passage of the infrastructure bill. This definitely should be collaborated on that front with Transit Oriented Development and those can be higher density. The 561 Plan is a key to implementation at the County level by linking with transportation. Its focus on those key east to west and north to south corridors would be ideal for the nodes of density with convenient transportation as best practice.

**Note: The leadership transition at the TPA may impact the 561 plan. One of their advantages is that fifteen of the twenty-one board seats are municipality.**

Palm Beach TPA - Transportation Planning Agency (not a county dept)  
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West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
Main: 561.725.0800  
Fax: 561.475.2981  
Email: Info@PalmBeachTPA.org  
Melissa Murray: mmurray@palmbeachtpa.org  
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As of now, there is no set date yet for taking the bond to the BCC.

**To Do: Skip Miller will contact Verdenia Baker and Dorrit Miller regarding dates.**

## Comments:

- The Business Development Board Economic Development stakeholders meeting met last week. A lot of the discussion focused on workforce housing. Ray Liggins (Royal Palm Beach Village Manager) stated that if everyone (government and the private sector) is in this together, then business organizations should not be opposing a \$15 minimum wage.

**Consider adding into the plan the need to encourage private sector support and the private sector look into providing some sort of employee assistance regarding housing.** Encourage everyone, not only those who are receiving assistance. If the community is going to be involved in this, then this definitely is something that needs to be part of the conversation as we are going out and getting the private sector involved because there is a responsibility for all, not just the municipalities – the private sector needs to support this as well. It takes the entire group to achieve success.

One of the initiatives under planning and regulatory reform is to “require businesses that receive county tax incentive dollars to establish an employer Home Assistance purchase program to help fund their employees’ purchase of workforce housing and/or a program to assist employees in paying the rent for workforce housing.” **This needs to be expanded to apply to more than just those businesses.**

## **To Do: Bring this idea to the Business Forum.**

- 561 transportation idea: There are so many of the municipality representations on that board that that is going to engage them more. As we go through this process, we are being much more collaborative with everyone and making everyone take a piece of the pie.
- Note: The school district is going to ask for another half cent penny tax, we are asking for this bond for housing, and there is the potential for the environmental bond to come back. The business community is going to push back and say we need to look at this everything collectively rather than in a silo.
- Note: The linkage fee was removed from the planning and regulatory section because every time that comes up it is a lightning rod, just another impact fee, and it is an imperfect tool to accomplish what we want to accomplish.