

County of Sumter
Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
2008 Incentive Review and Recommendation Report

I. Background Information:

On May 13, 2008, eleven members and three alternates were appointed to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) by the Sumter County Board of County Commissioners. The members all meet Section 420.9076, Florida Statute requirements. The AHAC agreed to meet the second Thursday of each month to prepare recommendations to the Board of Sumter County Commissioners by December 30, 2008. The AHAC broke the statutorily mandated discussion items into groups to discuss at each month's AHAC meeting.

II. Public Hearing:

A public hearing was held on November 20, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 142 of the Sumter County Government Offices located at 910 North Main Street, Bushnell, FL, 33513. A legal ad was placed in the Villages Daily Sun newspaper on November 11, 2008 (copy attached) and was posted at the doorways to the Sumter County Historic Courthouse at 209 North Florida Street, Bushnell, FL, 33513 and the Sumter County Government Offices.

III. Incentives & Recommendations:

Incentive A: The processing of approvals of development orders or permits, as defined in Section 163.3164(7) and (8), Florida Statutes, for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects.

Review Synopsis: The Local Housing Assistance Plan states the normal time for residential permits is five days. Currently, all SHIP new construction is approved within two days. The Development Review Committee (DRC), Zoning and Adjustment Board (ZAB), and Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) must follow a legal process for advertising and notification.

Recommendation: The AHAC discussed this item at the August 14, 2008, meeting. Since every permit is issued within a reasonable time frame and Committee members have not incurred any problems with the current process, the AHAC voted unanimously to make no improvements or changes at this time.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive B: The modification of impact-fee requirements, including reduction or waiver of fees and alternative methods of fee payment for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: Sumter County Planning Manager, Brad Cornelius, gave a brief overview of the current impact fees, which are less than \$3,000.00 per residence. Hilary Cook of the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Rural Development provided information on impact fees within Lake County that are much higher and noted there is no real savings to the family related to impact fees. Mr. Cornelius stated Sumter County is preparing a revised road impact fee study with the major change from a project based road impact fee to a consumption based road impact fee.

Recommendation: The AHAC discussed this item at the July 10, 2008, meeting. After the overview and discussion, the AHAC unanimously approved a motion to recommend that affordable housing be considered as a part of the road impact fee review.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive C: The allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: Mr. Cornelius, discussed density bonus options on June 12, 2008. The current Sumter County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code provide for increased densities for provision of affordable housing only as part of the Master Planned Development zoning. The Sumter County Mixed Use land use and Planned Unit zoning allow up to a maximum of 8 dwelling units per acre. It was noted that the typical densities needed to support affordable housing is more suitable within the cities and requires the provision of central water and sewer services provided by the cities. In addition, the need to pre-plan areas of the county, whether in the city or unincorporated areas, to direct and accommodate increased densities and intensities of development was discussed.

Recommendation: The AHAC requests the Board of Sumter County Commissioners refer the decision to the Planning Department to consider the feasibility of amending the comprehensive plan and the land development code to allow more flexible densities to accommodate not only affordable housing but also employment and activity centers as part of the joint planning discussions currently underway with the County and cities. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive D: The reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.

Review Synopsis: On June 12, 2008, Mr. Cornelius stated this item is primarily related to the cities within Sumter County. One AHAC member stated it is not feasible for developers to build affordable housing without annexing into cities in order to acquire utilities. Mr. Cornelius stated there are current discussions between the County and the five cities to work together to identify a joint plan and procedure for workforce housing needs.

Recommendation: The AHAC voted unanimously to support the current work being done on interlocal agreements by County staff.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive E: The allowance of affordable accessory residential units in residential zoning districts.

Review Synopsis: On June 12, 2008, Mr. Cornelius explained the provision in the Sumter County Land Development Code for a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) for caregiver(s)/care receiver(s), but is only good for the length of time care is necessary, then the structure (either a mobile home or an RV) must be removed. The current Code also allows for a family accessory cottage subject to the following criteria; the unit must be similar to the primary structure, a minimum size of 600 square feet and maximum size of 40% of the main residence not to exceed 1,200 square feet. It can not be a townhouse or multi-family unit and must be occupied by a family member. Mr. Cornelius also stated the Code permits a lineal transfer property split, which allows the property to be split between parents, children, grandparents, and grandchildren exempt from subdivision requirements. The Code provides for limitations regarding the size, frequency, timing, and location for lineal transfers.

Recommendation: By a vote of 10 - 1, the AHAC passed a motion that no changes be made to the affordable accessory unit provision.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive F: The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: On August 14, 2008, the AHAC discussed that parking and setback issues are primarily within the cities and not with the County. There was a consensus this issue was not an obstacle for affordable housing.

Recommendation: A motion was made and unanimously approved by the AHAC that stated setbacks and parking requirements do not hinder affordable housing development in the County but the County should work with the cities through the interlocal agreement process to improve development review coordination and to consider establishing setback standards that are tailored to the specific character of an area.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive G: The allowance of flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line configurations, for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: The Sumter County Land Development Code allows for flexible lot configurations through the Residential Planned Unit Development

or Master Planned Development process. On July 10, 2008, there was a discussion regarding possible variations in lot configurations for small scale projects, decreased fees for affordable housing projects, the ability to bypass the Zoning and Adjustment Board for affordable housing projects meeting specific criteria, and density bonuses. Mr. Cornelius provided information on zoning and development fees and the development review application process.

Recommendation: A motion was made to leave this item as it is currently established. The motion passed by a vote of 6 – 2.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive H: The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: On August 14, 2008, Mr. Cornelius indicated the County Land Development Code requires road construction to meet Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Greenbook standards or alternative standards if approved by the County Engineer. Mr. Cornelius indicated the County has not incurred any problems with these standards related to affordable housing.

Recommendation: A motion was carried unanimously that no recommendation for modification was necessary at this time.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive I: The establishment of a process by which a local government considers, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, regulations, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing.

Review Synopsis: On July 10, 2008, Kathy Young, Housing Manager, discussed the process the Housing Department uses to review the agenda for the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting. If there are any items that may impact affordable housing, it is brought to the attention of the Division Director and Planning Manager prior to the meeting date for discussion and recommendation to the BOCC. The Planning and Housing Departments work closely on affordable housing issues including mitigation for developers.

Recommendation: After discussion, the AHAC agreed this item is not viewed as an impediment to affordable housing. The AHAC voted unanimously to leave the review process as is.

Board Action: Approved

Incentive J: The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.

Review Synopsis: On September 11, 2008, Ms. Young discussed how the Housing Department is working on a new list of County owned properties for the BOCC to review and determine if they are suitable for affordable housing.

Recommendation: The AHAC recommended that any land deemed suitable for affordable housing by the BOCC should go through the following process: Request an RFP (Request for Proposal) from realtors (elect one or a pool of realtors) to sell the property, with the realtor being responsible for all proper documentation and setting the minimum starting bid. First, proceeds from the sale go to reimburse the County for any funds expended acquiring and preparing the property for sale. Second, the realtor's agreed upon commission is paid and the remaining balance of the proceeds of the sale will go to support affordable housing. This will eliminate any liability on the part of the County. Another recommendation was made that the identification of county owned property be contracted out to an outside firm as identification of parcels eligible for affordable housing or sale with proceeds going to affordable housing is taking an inordinate amount of time. The AHAC voted unanimously to approve the above items.

Board Action: Not approved

Incentive K: The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-used developments.

Review Synopsis: On July 10, 2008, Mr. Cornelius displayed the Sumter County Future Land Use Map and described the different land use areas, annexations, urban areas and identified areas for the potential future development of transportation hubs, major employment centers, and mixed-use developments. Mr. Cornelius stated that identification of areas suitable for transportation hubs, major employment centers and mixed-use developments is one of the goals of the Sumter 2030 Visioning process. Future assistance from AHAC will be beneficial to help identify these areas.

Recommendation: The AHAC unanimously voted to encourage affordable housing development in the vicinity of transportation hubs, major employment centers, and mixed-use developments. Also the AHAC supports being a part of the affordable housing goals of the Sumter 2030 Visioning process to identify these areas.

Board Action: Approved

IV. Additional Recommendations:

The AHAC committee will continue to meet on a regular basis (at least quarterly) to decide the most constructive ways to expend funds received for Affordable Housing from properties sold by the county and from developers to meet mitigation issues.

Some of the ideas that have been discussed:

1. Education for new and existing homeowners including budgeting, water saving landscape and home maintenance.
2. Foreclosure prevention including 'work-outs' with lenders and possible refinancing.
3. Foreclosure assistance to keep families in their homes.