



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

Approved
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
914 SISTRUNK BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33311
MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024 – 9:00 A.M.

Cumulative

Committee Members	2024 Attendance	Present	Absent
Margi Nothard, Chair	P	4	0
Leann Barber, Vice Chair	P	4	0
Commissioner Dr. Pamela Beasley-Pittman	P	2	2
Pablo Calvo (arr. 9:40)	P	4	0
William Condon	P	2	2
Mindy Figueroa (via Zoom)	P	2	0
Willie McKay	P	4	0
Sister Robin Merrill	P	2	2
Roderick Newkirk	P	3	1
Susan Spragg	P	4	0
Ryan Wipplinger	A	0	4

Staff

Avis Wilkinson, Housing Programs Administrator / Staff Liaison
Rachel Williams, Housing Manager
Akilah Grant, Senior Administrative Assistant
D’Wayne Spence, Deputy City Attorney
Karen Cruitt, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

I. ROLL CALL / DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Chair Nothard called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Motion made, and duly seconded, to accept [Ms. Figueroa] in the Zoom meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 11, 2024

Deputy City Attorney D’Wayne Spence explained that he was asked by City management to review the Committee’s minutes from their February 12, 2024 and

March 11, 2024 meetings. He wished to ensure clarity of the action taken by the Committee, including their proposed communication and response to Vice Mayor Steven Glassman's letter dated February 7, 2024.

Attorney Spence requested clarification of the Committee's action taken at their March 11 meeting with regard to approval of the February 12 minutes. Chair Nothard replied that with the exception of the communication to the City Commission, the Committee had approved the February 11 minutes in March.

Sister Merrill recalled that she had been absent from the March 11 meeting, but had officially requested that she be allowed to attend by Zoom. City Clerk David Soloman had approved her request; however, she was not sent a Zoom link to that meeting. She stated that she had been shocked to learn the communication approved in February had been withdrawn.

Sister Merrill also requested clarification of why she had not been provided with a Zoom link to the March meeting, as she may be unable to attend other meetings in person but would like to participate.

Attorney Spence stated that Zoom attendance of meetings is not considered an everyday occurrence: a Resolution was adopted in 2014 which outlines the specific terms and circumstances in which members may attend remotely. The City Clerk's Office is aware of the Resolution as well. He recommended outreach to the City Clerk's Office to find out what may have happened. Ms. Williams added that she did not know what had happened regarding the Zoom link, as she did not recall seeing a request for that link.

Sister Merrill continued that she was not certain why the communication to the City Commission had not been sent to the Commission. Attorney Spence replied that a communication to the City Commission would not actually be transmitted to the Commission until the Committee had approved the minutes of the meeting at which the communication was stated.

Attorney Spence advised that he would also like to discuss the content of the February 11 communication. He explained that he had received a copy of Vice Mayor Glassman's letter to the Committee, which was submitted through the Committee Chair and Liaison. While he did not wish to address the appropriateness of the Vice Mayor's letter, its tone was intended to provide the Committee with notice that the Vice Mayor was uncomfortable with some of the actions taken by his nominee to the Committee, and was contemplating further action.

Attorney Spence continued that while he could not guide the Committee in their response to the Vice Mayor's letter, the business of the Committee is to make recommendations regarding affordable housing policy to the City Commission. He cautioned that spending a great deal of time on the communication to the Commission

could become a distraction from the Committee's purpose and intent, as reflected in the discussions of the February 11 and March 12 meetings.

Sister Merrill commented that she was shocked by the Deputy City Attorney's response to the communications, asserting that the Committee's civil rights were violated by the Vice Mayor's letter. She felt the letter had been inappropriate and also did not address affordable housing: it had been sent in response to a letter submitted by a Committee member under her First Amendment rights, which focused on homelessness rather than affordable housing.

Sister Merrill continued that the Vice Mayor appeared to be trying to subvert the Committee members' rights, both as individual citizens and as an advisory body, to express their opinions publicly. In her opinion, the action taken by the Vice Mayor was illegal.

Attorney Spence explained that the Vice Mayor's action was not illegal, as there was no violation of civil rights. The appropriateness of the letter, and how it made the Committee members feel, were other issues.

Sister Merrill asserted that the members have a legal right of communication to discuss how the Vice Mayor's official message to the Committee made them feel. Attorney Spence replied that while the Committee may communicate directly with the City Commission, or respond directly to the Vice Mayor's letter or to their own appointing Commissioners, the function of the Committee is to fulfill its purpose as outlined in State Statutes.

Sister Merrill stated that she understood one of her rights under this State Statute to be the right to put forward a communication about an official memo that was sent to the Board. She reiterated that she was shocked to see the Deputy City Attorney attempting to prevent the Committee from sending that communication. Attorney Spence explained that this was not his role or intent. As a provider of the City's Better Meetings workshop, he wanted the Committee to understand that their role is to act as an extension of the City Commission, which is why advisory body members are subject to Florida's Sunshine Law.

Attorney Spence continued that in their role as an extension of the Commission, the Committee is limited to the tasks and role with which it is charged. He added that there have been other incidents in the past where a City advisory body addressed issues that were unrelated to their charge because those issues were of concern to the members' individual communities and they wished to weigh in on them. He pointed out that this was also not appropriate action for those other advisory bodies to take, and he has advised them in those situations.

Attorney Spence acknowledged that it may be odd for a City Commissioner to send a message to an advisory body addressing the terms between him and his individual

appointee, as the Committee members do not have any disciplinary authority over one another. He noted that the message does not press the Committee to take any action. He reiterated that this does not rise to the level of a civil rights violation or harassment, and that an appropriate response may be for individual Committee members to reach out to the Commissioner to express their concerns.

Ms. Spragg asked if the Deputy City Attorney could provide any information on whether or not the Vice Mayor has taken any action. Attorney Spence replied that he was not aware of any action, although the Commission itself has discussed the fact that there is no formal process for action within Code. He added that this discussion was not directly related to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC), but had been a general discussion of implementing Ordinances which deal with advisory body conduct. The City Attorney's Office has been asked to look into this further, although they have not been asked to take any specific action.

Ms. Williams observed that the Deputy City Attorney has indicated that individual Committee members have the right to respond on an individual basis; however, the Committee, based on its function, is limited to discussion of affordable housing policy and may not use the Committee itself as a conduit for individual responses. Attorney Spence reiterated that the only authorized actions the Committee may take are actions related to its purpose. Any action outside those limitations would also be outside the authority granted to the Committee by the City Commission.

Attorney Spence continued that it is appropriate for the Committee to discuss the letter itself, as it was addressed to the Committee as a whole. He noted that the members expressed their feelings about the letter at the February and March meetings. These discussions are part of the public record. The Commissioners will receive copies of the February and March meeting minutes.

Ms. Spragg recalled that two motions were passed at the February meeting as communications to the City Commission, the second of which was a communication in support of Vice Chair Barber's continued role as Vice Chair of the Committee. Attorney Spence replied that he had not understood the intent of the motion/communication of support, as the Committee elects their Chair and Vice Chair with no involvement from the City Commission.

Chair Nothard advised that the Committee had felt strongly that they should express their support of Vice Chair Barber, and wished to communicate that support to the City Commission. Attorney Spence confirmed that the communication of support was within the scope of the Committee's purpose.

Sister Merrill stated that the purpose of the communication to the City Commission had fallen within the Committee's purview of addressing affordable housing. She explained that she believed the Committee's time to have been violated when they attended a joint workshop with the City Commission, at which the Commission had

conflated the issues of homelessness and affordable housing, although there is a separate City advisory body charged with addressing homelessness. She concluded that the Vice Mayor's action of sending the Committee an official memorandum on City stationery about the Vice Chair's individual comment also served to conflate the issues of homelessness and affordable housing.

Sister Merrill asserted that for this reason, the Committee's communication is important, and she did not feel the time involved in discussing the communication was excessive, as it addressed the members' rights as citizens. She concluded that she had been told that the communication could legally be sent, and she wanted the City Commission to see it.

Sister Merrill asked if the Deputy City Attorney's intent was to tell the Committee that they could not send the communication to the City Commission "as is." Attorney Spence stated again that he was present to answer any questions the Committee members may have regarding the communication. He had reviewed the communication itself and determined that, while he valued the Committee's authority to govern itself, the language of the communication was outside the Committee's purpose and was therefore not appropriate to be sent.

Attorney Spence again clarified that he did not feel the second communication, which indicated the Committee's support for its Vice Chair, violated the Committee's purpose.

Sister Merrill asked if the Committee has permission, at today's meeting, to advance both of the communications to the Commission, and that Attorney Spence was present only to provide his opinion. Attorney Spence explained that this was not correct: the role of the City Attorney's Office is to advise the City Commission and its advisory boards and committees in the role of legal counsel. The Committee may not exceed its own role as an extension or arm of the City Commission, and he has provided the members with legal advice indicating that their communication addressing the Vice Mayor's letter was outside their purpose and role. The communication in support of the Vice Chair is within the Committee's scope.

Sister Merrill asked if there would be any legal ramifications to the Committee if they decided to "push through" the communication. Attorney Spence replied that there would be no such ramifications.

Attorney Spence addressed the March 11, 2024 Committee meeting minutes, requesting clarification of the following statement on p.3: "Ms. Spragg **amended** her **motion** to discuss the item further until the next meeting to accommodate the new member. Ms. McKay **accepted** the **amendment**." He explained that he was not clear on what the amendment is intended to be. Chair Nothard stated that Ms. Spragg had withdrawn her amendment to the motion.

Attorney Spence requested clarification that this meant the February 12 meeting minutes were approved, absent the communication. Chair Nothard advised that this had been her understanding of the motion, and requested that Ms. Spragg elaborate further on the issue. Ms. Williams added that she had also understood Ms. Spragg to have withdrawn her motion, and the communication, pending further discussion, with approval of the remainder of the February 12 minutes.

Sister Merrill advised that she had not been present at the March 11 meeting, as she had not been sent a Zoom link allowing her to participate remotely. Chair Nothard pointed out that the Committee still took action on the Item.

Chair Nothard stated that there were two options before the Committee, one of which would be to accept the February 12 minutes. Attorney Spence clarified that the Committee has already taken this action, and that his intent had been to ensure the March 11 minutes are clear “on what was voted.”

Chair Nothard asked if the Committee members felt the March 11 minutes provided an accurate reflection of what was discussed at that meeting, or if any members would like to propose amendments.

Sister Merrill asked if the removal of the communication to the City Commission from the February 12 minutes was under discussion at today’s meeting. She pointed out that she did not see further discussion of the February 12 minutes as an Agenda Item. Chair Nothard observed that the Agenda includes the “For the Good of the City” section.

Sister Merrill asked if this meant further discussion of the communication “would be considered a new item.” Chair Nothard stated that the Committee may not amend the content of the minutes, but can determine whether or not they constitute an accurate reflection of what was done at the March 11 meeting.

Sister Merrill reiterated that the communication to the Commission was voted upon and approved at the February 12 meeting. Chair Nothard explained that at the March 11 meeting, the communication was withdrawn for further discussion. She further clarified that she had not withdrawn the communication herself: the Committee had withdrawn it.

Sister Merrill asked who had requested that the communication be reviewed. Chair Nothard explained that, as noted in the March 11 minutes, she had requested further discussion of the communication. Sister Merrill stated that she did not believe the Chair could take action, as *Robert’s Rules of Order* specify that reconsideration of a motion must be brought forward by an individual who had voted with the majority on that motion. Chair Nothard replied that she had asked if the person who had made the motion would be willing to discuss it further, and that member had indicated they were in favor of further discussion.

Sister Merrill asked if the communication “as voted on” could be brought back to today’s meeting without having to be voted upon again or changed. Attorney Spence replied that reconsideration of the communication would have to be voted upon, and that the draft communication is provided in the members’ backup materials as part of the February 12 minutes.

Sister Merrill explained that her intent was that the communication not be “nullified,” or that the actions taken by the Committee not be changed unless there is a vote to change them. Attorney Spence advised that action was taken on the communication at the March 11 meeting.

Attorney Spence reiterated that the communication was included in the first draft of the February 12 minutes, which were presented to the Committee for approval at their March 11 meeting. The Committee had reviewed the first draft of the February 12 minutes at the March 11 meeting and determined that they would not send the communication to the City Commission.

Ms. Williams further clarified that the first draft of the February 12 minutes had been electronically sent to all the committee members, who also had the opportunity to take home a physical copy of the draft if they were present at that meeting. Sister Merrill asked if there was a reason the Committee did not “have it in front of us.” Ms. Williams explained that this was because the Committee is asked to review only the previous month’s minutes, which at this time are the March 11 minutes. This is part of normal Committee procedure.

Ms. Williams continued that the Committee could not have posted the approved February 12 minutes with the communication because the Committee had instructed Staff, at the March 11 meeting, to “hold” the communication for further discussion. Both documents were brought back today to show that Staff followed the direction of the Committee by removing the communication from the February 12 meeting.

Sister Merrill stated that she would like to discuss the communication further at today’s meeting, and asked where that document could be found. Ms. Williams reiterated that every Committee member was sent an electronic copy of the document. Sister Merrill asserted that she would like to have “both of the communications” in front of them today for further discussion.

Attorney Spence pointed out that the members have the March 11 minutes before them, which reflect the action taken by the Committee at that meeting. He suggested that the Committee move forward with approval of the March 11 minutes if that is their desire and revisit the communication to the Commission later in the meeting.

Chair Nothard requested a motion to approve the March 11 minutes, pointing out that there can be further discussion of the document once the motion has been made and seconded.

Motion made by Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman, seconded by Ms. McKay, to approve.

Sister Merrill requested clarification that this would mean the February 12 minutes were approved at the March meeting. Attorney Spence replied that what is before the Committee, as part of the March 11 minutes, is the members' discussion of the Vice Mayor's letter and the exclusion of the communications to the City Commission.

Sister Merrill stated that she had understood the meeting minutes would reflect the communication even if it was not sent on to the Commission. Attorney Spence explained once more that the first draft of the February 12 minutes was provided to the Committee at their March 11 meeting for approval and/or any revision. At the March 11 meeting, the Committee had voted to approve the minutes with the removal of the communication to the Commission.

Attorney Spence continued that the March 11 minutes state the Committee voted to forward the February 12 minutes with the exclusion of the communications, per their discussion.

Sister Merrill observed that she would like more information on "the internals" of the Committee's decision, including upon whose instruction the February 12 minutes were amended. Attorney Spence reiterated once again that the March 11 minutes reflect the Committee's discussion of the communications in the February 12 meeting, and that this discussion includes the Committee's decision to remove the communications and send the minutes without them.

Sister Merrill asked if the Committee had understood this was what they would be doing when they voted upon the communication. Attorney Spence stated that this was not a relevant question, as the Committee had already taken that action. Chair Nothard added that what is at issue now is whether or not the Committee feels the March 11 minutes are accurate.

Mr. Condon indicated that he wished to abstain from voting on the March 11 minutes, as he had not been present at that meeting. Attorney Spence advised that Section 286.01-12 of Florida Statutes require that members of advisory bodies must vote on all actions unless they have a conflict.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 8-2 (Vice Chair Barber and Sister Merrill dissenting).

III. OLD BUSINESS

- **Affordable Housing Trust Fund Update**

Ms. Wilkinson reported that the balance of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund currently remains at \$0.

- **Finalize Affordable Housing Trust Policy**

Ms. Wilkinson advised that the policy document is not yet complete. She added that she wished to specify which members of City Staff will be responsible for any given task, including clarification of whether Housing and Community Development Staff, Development Services Staff, or Urban Planning Staff. All of these Departments will be involved in affordable housing. Once this has been done, she will bring the draft Affordable Housing Trust Policy back before the Committee.

Chair Nothard requested clarification of when the Policy must be completed. Ms. Wilkinson emphasized the need to complete this document quickly, but noted that the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan, by contrast, is a mandatory annual part of the Committee's charge. The Plan must be approved by December, and the Committee's goal is to have it sent to the City Commission by the end of August. She concluded that the Committee will discuss the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan further at their May 2024 meeting.

Ms. Wilkinson added that because there are 11 Affordable Housing Incentive Plan strategies and 11 Committee members, each member will be assigned, at the May meeting, one of the strategies to explore in greater depth.

- **Community engagement to be aware of local programs available**

Ms. Williams explained that she will review what the City is currently doing to make residents aware of local programs, and the Committee will be asked to contribute further suggestions.

At present, Staff sends notices via the City's website as well as through social media outlets. When construction specialists go door-to-door in the community, they also drop off fliers with community engagement information. This is primarily done in the City's Northwest region, as most of the City's low-income population is concentrated in that area.

The City also publishes all required notices in the *Sun-Sentinel*, including notice on activities and the funding available for them. Nonprofit entities with whom the City partners to provide services also share information through their platforms.

Ms. Williams recalled that at the March 11 meeting, Mr. Newkirk had expressed concern that residents are not aware of all the resources available to them. She

encouraged the Committee members to bring forward additional ideas on how the City can ensure this information is being seen by the target population at the right time.

Mr. Condon commented that there should be a clear understanding of which services the target population is already aware of and uses, such as food banks. He suggested that advertisements and fliers could be made available at those locations as well as at community events.

Ms. McKay advised that many residents attend local workshops in their neighborhoods, such as programs offered by the YMCA. Chair Nothard agreed, pointing out that residents from all parts of the City attend events at locations such as the YMCA, and it is important to ensure that information is shared outside residents' immediate communities. Ms. Williams cited the example of the African-American Research Library and Cultural Center, which is another of the City's community partners.

Mr. Newkirk emphasized the importance of sharing information at locations such as shelters. He also noted that there are companies which can send fliers directly through the mail within individual City districts and communities.

Ms. Figueroa stated that there are a number of key organizations that carry out grassroots efforts, such as the United Way or Hispanic Unity. She offered examples of services provided by these agencies, including free tax preparation for families earning less than \$60,000/year. These activities provide opportunities to disseminate information about affordable housing.

Ms. Figueroa continued that churches and community centers are also key locations within communities. She also noted that in addition to traditional media, digital media can be used to target specific zip codes in Broward County. Ms. Williams noted that the Committee is intended to serve Fort Lauderdale only and not other Broward municipalities.

Mr. Calvo commented that increasing the outreach done and information available for the limited number of units available in the City is the best possible approach in terms of ensuring greater equity among the households and individuals receiving help. He added that all affordable housing built by developers is accounted for months in advance of when a resident can move into it. The greatest challenge at present is occurring with vouchers for Section 8 and other housing programs, as many landlords do not want to work with those vouchers.

Mr. Calvo continued that the fairest system for determining housing is a lottery system; however, he emphasized again that there are no empty or unused affordable housing units at this time.

Mr. Newkirk expressed concern with the application process for affordable units, pointing out that some applications from people in need may be overlooked or delayed. Mr. Calvo stated that if this is the case, the best response is to file an equal rights discrimination inquiry. He also clarified that the only population for which fair housing units may legally be set aside is the senior population.

Mr. Calvo suggested that another strategy could be to provide assistance to families which may need help in preparing their applications and ensuring the proper documentation is attached. Ms. Wilkinson confirmed that units are made available on a “first ready, first served” basis, which means the first applicant to include correct paperwork will get the first unit. If an application is not filled out correctly, the applicant cannot move forward in the process.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman asked where organizations that can help individuals complete their applications can be identified. Aligning these organizations with individuals in need could help eliminate instances of applications not being properly submitted. Ms. Williams noted that one such organization is Hope Fair Housing, which is a free service for qualified residents in the City of Fort Lauderdale. Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman added that she would like a better understanding of what happens when an application is not submitted properly.

Mr. Calvo noted that Broward County has housing navigators whose role is to help locate affordable and available units for clients. These individuals work in a similar manner to case managers, assisting clients in ensuring their applications and documentation are correctly prepared.

Ms. Williams observed that the City also provides funding for housing navigators. She clarified that the City categorizes assistance to the homeless in a separate division in order to make services more accessible. Although the process is lengthy, going through the proper channels can make it less frustrating.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman advised that while the *Sun-Sentinel* is the City's largest newspaper, the Northwest section of the City also uses the *Westside Gazette*. She recommended that information be sent to that publication as well. She was also in favor of holding town hall-style meetings that incorporate workshop aspects so processes related to housing can be explained to and shared with the public.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman also addressed the door-to-door process, noting that she has not seen this in her own neighborhood. She recommended verification that this outreach is actually being done. She also suggested regular outreach at community events in neighborhoods and parks, and proposed that homeowners' and civic associations, which typically reach a limited population, be encouraged to distribute information outside their regular meetings.

Ms. Spragg recommended outreach through Fort Lauderdale's churches, schools, and hospitals, including engagement of social workers associated with those entities. Mr. Calvo added that preschools and early learning centers can provide targeted mailings to households in specific zip codes where there is a greater need for services.

Sister Merrill addressed visual aids as outreach, suggesting that current information can be distributed with an appropriate title or logo. This could be distributed on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis, and could include a list of housing opportunities and the status of their waiting lists. She recommended that the information be made available in pdf form so it can be printed by different organizations. She also proposed the use of social media, such as a QR code that can take users to the information they need.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman suggested that an automated system could be created so individuals in need could call in and get information. This could also be done using a mobile app. Sister Merrill emphasized the importance of ensuring this is done in a personable and encouraging manner, as the callers will be in need of support and assistance.

Vice Chair Barber stated that there should be greater transparency of both programs and their criteria. At present, it can be difficult to determine if an individual is qualified for assistance by a given program. She felt these qualifications should be made more visible so they are less likely to waste a potential client's time.

Vice Chair Barber continued that it would also be useful to track who is not qualified for a given program. She pointed out that households which do not earn a certain annual income cannot qualify for many existing programs, and emphasized the need for the City to assist this population.

Chair Nothard suggested that an educational component could be included in the application process: for example, an entity requesting funds must provide early outreach. There is also a need for funding to provide initial education for residents entering application processes.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman advised that nonprofit entities typically receive grant funding, but the City may never see the actual execution of their programs. She recommended bringing these organizations to the table to ensure they can help applicants through the processes.

Chair Nothard suggested that while the Committee is limited to making recommendations, they should have a follow-up conversation to discuss how to add an educational component to specific situations.

Ms. Figueroa proposed that resources related to career opportunities may be able to use grant funds to assist with outreach. Small businesses may also be a resource.

Ms. Wilkinson encouraged the members to review the 11 different incentives in the Affordable Housing Incentive Plan, stating that at the next meeting, each member will choose an incentive to address. In the case of mandated incentives, such as expedited permitting, the member will look at what the City is currently doing to ensure compliance, while other members will explore information on their chosen incentives, including what other cities may be doing and how Fort Lauderdale may be able to implement changes.

Chair Nothard stated that it will be helpful for the Committee members to know which incentives have already been adopted by Fort Lauderdale and which have not. Ms. Wilkinson emphasized that when the Incentive Plan is presented to the City Commission, the Commission will let the Committee know if they would like to see further action on a given incentive.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- **Accessory Dwelling Units**

Ms. Williams advised that at the next meeting, there will be a presentation on the City's current policy on accessory dwelling units (ADUs). At present, the City allows these units in certain areas. They may not exceed 600 gross sq. ft. in size and must be either efficiency or one-bedroom units.

Ms. Williams encouraged the members to consider how regulations already on the books can be used to meet affordable housing needs. She suggested that unless the City restricts the use of these units, they can be used for almost any purpose, including vacation rentals. Ms. Wilkinson added that it may be useful to look at models in other cities, including how property owners can be motivated to use ADUs for affordable housing.

Chair Nothard expressed concern with restricting the use of private property unless there is a funding component attached. She pointed out that one important factor of ADUs is their small size, which would keep the rent at a lower rate and therefore provide an opportunity for affordability. Ms. Wilkinson explained that if the City provides funding to help construct these units, there can be restrictions associated with the use of the ADUs, such as ensuring that they are affordable.

Mr. Calvo stated that some California municipalities have placed an additional tax incentive on the construction of ADUs for affordable housing. If the owner can demonstrate that the unit is being used by either a family member or for affordable housing, the unit can receive this incentive. This would also be a way to proceed without the City having to invest any funds. Ms. Wilkinson also noted that the units would need to be tracked to ensure compliance.

Commissioner Dr. Beasley-Pittman asked if this type of incentive is being implemented anywhere in Florida at present. Ms. Wilkinson replied that it will be necessary to research whether or not this is being done in-state.

Vice Chair Barber observed that it will be necessary to separate the facilitation of constructing ADUs and incentivizing ADUs through some sort of financial program, whether it is tax abatement or another type of incentive. She felt any additional housing that can be provided to the pool of affordable housing will reduce the pressure on existing housing stock; for this reason, the City should make it easier for households that want to generate additional income to construct ADUs.

Vice Chair Barber continued that households should not be discouraged from building ADUs which may be used for purposes other than affordable housing, as these units could help senior citizens who need to generate additional income.

Sister Merrill recalled that at a recent meeting which focused on Broward County's 10-year affordable housing plan, County Commissioner Steve Geller had mentioned that he championed the state of Florida's ADU policy. She suggested that the Committee may want to invite him to attend a meeting and provide additional information to the Committee. Ms. Wilkinson added that there is also information available from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

- **Affordable Housing Conference**

Ms. Williams advised that after she was sent an inquiry on an upcoming affordable housing conference, she had sent this information on to the City's Budget Office. At present, there are no funds built into the budget for attendance of the conference; however, Staff has funding for training opportunities, and may cede these opportunities to two Committee members if they wish, as was done in 2023. Members may also attend at their own expense. Information will be available online at the Florida Housing Coalition's website. The conference is scheduled for August 27-29, 2024.

V. AGENDA TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

Chair Nothard noted that the next meeting will include a presentation on ADUs, as well as a discussion of incentive strategies, as previously mentioned. There will also be discussion of finalizing the Affordable Housing Trust Policy.

VI. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Calvo requested that he be permitted to attend the May 2024 meeting remotely. Ms. Wilkinson asked that he send an email to this effect, including the reason he could not attend in person.

Chair Nothard advised that May 2024 will be her last meeting as a member of the Committee, which means there will need to be an election of new officers. Mr. Calvo added that his final meeting will be in June 2024. He thanked the members and Staff for their advocacy.

Sister Merrill stated that she would like to further discuss the communication to the Commission as addressed earlier in the meeting. She asserted that “an actual letter” was drafted and approved verbally, line by line, by the Committee, and she had requested a draft copy via email so she could review it.

Ms. Williams explained that communications to the City Commission are sent via the meeting minutes: Staff does not prepare a separate letter for that purpose.

Sister Merrill stated again that the Committee had drafted and approved a letter, which was repeated to them by Staff.

Attorney Spence advised that an advisory body provides communications to the City Commission which are transmitted as part of the meeting minutes: no advisory body sends a letter to the Commission. Communications to the Commission are placed on the Commission’s agenda. They are not immediately transmitted to the Commission so the body that sends them can review them to ensure accuracy.

Sister Merrill reiterated that the Committee had reviewed their communication “line by line.” Attorney Spence asked if the communication as recorded in the minutes captured the Committee’s intent. Sister Merrill stated that her actual language had addressed the difference between affordable housing and homelessness and the conflation of these two issues by the City Commission. She characterized the communication as a summary that did not adequately express the Committee’s intent.

Mr. Calvo recalled that the Committee had drafted, but had not sent, “a very specific communication,” and had voted against sending that communication, but had wished to receive a draft of it to review as a Committee. He added that the letter was the consensus of the Committee, and not an individual’s personal feeling, about the Vice Mayor.

Ms. Williams advised that because the Committee now indicated that they had intended the communication to be a more lengthy item, she would need to go back and listen to the recording to determine if anything was missing.

Sister Merrill asked if recorded meetings are available to members. Attorney Spence replied that the recordings are part of the public record.

Ms. Williams also noted that Staff sends meeting minutes to the members for review at least a few days in advance of each meeting so they can review the document and

note any corrections. The members are then asked to vote on whether or not they are satisfied with the minutes.

Attorney Spence also stated that while verbatim minutes are not taken, the Committee is responsible for reviewing the minutes to determine whether they capture what the Committee has said. He pointed out that while today's discussion suggests the members were not satisfied with the February 11 minutes, the members still voted to approve them. If the members feel the communication did not capture what was said, this should be noted before the minutes are approved.

Mr. Calvo stated that this was not what the Committee had understood: instead, they had agreed that they "requested a specific draft communication separate from the minutes," which they later decided not to send. He considered voting to approve the minutes to be a separate issue, and that the Committee had not been aware that they could not send a "one-page communication" addressed to the City Commission separately from the minutes.

Attorney Spence advised that he has provided training for City advisory bodies for 14 years and that his description of the procedure for communications was accurate. Mr. Calvo asserted that the Committee had not received this information. Chair Nothard noted, however, that the members have received this training.

Attorney Spence reiterated that when the Committee reviews meeting minutes for accuracy, they are asked to determine whether or not the minutes capture what they intended to communicate to the City Commission, as well as whether changes should be made.

Motion made by Sister Merrill, seconded by Mr. Calvo, to request for an extra five to ten minutes for this discussion. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Attorney Spence stated that he would also like an opportunity to review "the actual communication" and provide feedback on it. Sister Merrill commented that not only were nuances missing from the communication, but there were "big gaps" in the document. She recalled that one to two weeks after the meeting, she had asked to see the draft, and asserted that the Committee had felt a communication to the City Commission was completely separate from the minutes.

Attorney Spence requested that he be allowed to see "both of those communications" and bring them back for discussion at a subsequent meeting. Sister Merrill stated that she also wished to see the communication in writing, as the Committee had drafted it. Ms. Wilkinson advised that a link to the recorded meeting would be sent to the members.

Sister Merrill asked how it would be ensured that the communication would be discussed further at a later meeting. Attorney Spence replied that it would be an item brought back by the City Attorney's Office.

VII. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE – May 13, 2024

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]