

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Sumter County, FL

Meeting: October 13, 2011

Present: PJ Lewis - Lewis Bros. Construction; Richard Cole – Zoning & Adjustment Board; Brad Burris – Sumter County Fire Rescue; Matt Yoder - T & D Concrete; Virginia Watson – Watson Enterprises; Gary Schick - Citizens First Bank; Glenn Frazier-Rainbow Ventures, LLC; Jacqueline Smith - Homes in Partnership; Hilary Cook - USDA Annette McCullough - Community Bank & Trust; Diana Couillard - Dibarco Building Corporation; Darlene Ford – Southern Comfort Enterprises, Inc.

Public Attendees: Brad Cornelius – Director of Planning & Development; Denna Lafferty - Sumter County Housing Services.

A copy of the public notice for this meeting is on file.

Hand-outs to members: Affordable Housing Incentives from September 11, 2008; SHIP advertisement of 10/11 and 11/12 funds.

Call to Order. Gary Schick called the meeting to order promptly at 10:00 am.

First order of business: *Approval of minutes dated July 14, 2011.*

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Richard Cole and seconded by Diana Couillard. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business: *Introduction of new board member Darlene Ford.* Mr. Schick welcomed Ms. Ford and thanked her for being a part of the committee.

No action required

Second order of business: *Introduction of Citrus County Housing Staff.* Heidi Blanchette, Operations Manager, introduced herself to the committee and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to take over the Section 8 vouchers. Ms. Watson thanked staff for assisting Sumter County. Mrs. Blanchette also brought a Citrus County informational booklet for each committee member to help explain the services offered in their area. Also present was Janice Krainock, Occupancy Specialist for the Section 8 program. Mr. Schick thanked staff for their attendance.

No action required

Third order of business: *Re-election of officers:* Diana Couillard made a motion to keep the same officers unless there is an interest from other committee members. Mr. Schick thanked Mrs. Couillard for the nomination and complimented all the members for their participation stating he would like to give others the opportunity for the Chairmanship. After further discussion, the decision was made to continue with the same officers. The AHAC officers are Mr. Gary Schick, Chairman; Richard Cole, Vice-Chairman; Virginia Watson, Secretary.

A motion was made by Diana Couillard to keep the same officers for the next year. The motion was seconded by PJ Lewis and carried unanimously.

Fourth order of business: *2011 Review of the Affordable Housing Incentives to provide recommendations for the Board of Sumter County Commissioners:* Brad Cornelius provided a review and changes to each of the following incentives:

- A. *The expedited processing of approval of development orders or permits for affordable housing projects:* The permitting process has not changed and measures are still in place for affordable housing. Residential permits are being processed between one to two days after request is submitted. Sumter County now has electronic online permitting. Mrs. Lewis commented this is a great asset. Mr. Yoder stated the new process is amazing which has saved his company time and money. Mr. Schick made a suggestion to allow Mr. Cornelius to review all of the housing incentives before comment and making a motion on their recommendations. With everyone in agreement Mr. Cornelius continued.
- B. *The modification of impact-fee requirements, including reduction or waiver of fees and alternative methods of fee payment for affordable housing:* Brad Cornelius confirmed the road impact fee study has been completed. Staff considered, and used as a part of the analysis, the reduction of or eliminating the impact fees for affordable housing projects. However, the determination was made by the Board of Sumter County Commissioners (BOCC) not to provide a reduced rate for affordable housing projects. It was not adopted as a part of the county's impact fee ordinance. The impact fee ordinance is now a consumption-based ordinance with a unified rate throughout the county. A single family residential dwelling unit impact fee cost is \$2,600. The BOCC did approve the ability for a non-profit organization to obtain a waiver of impact fees with limitations. If the non-profit organization is developing a property with a maximum of 5,000 square feet; is the owner of the property; and will be using the property for a period of three years, the road and fire impact fees can be waived. The fees are paid by the general fund on behalf of the non-profit. This requires an agreement to be executed by the BOCC and the non-profit entity. The county is also moving forward with removing the traffic concurrence from the development process. Therefore, the requirement of a traffic study is eliminated which saves the developers money upfront as well as eliminates

mitigation. The county will continue maintaining the road impact fee program which allows the county to pay for roadway improvements. This will allow the county to work with developers through cooperative agreements since the roadways are important to the development projects. Jacqueline Smith commented about Orange, Marion and Lake Counties reducing or waiving the impact fees for new construction as a way to get affordable housing within their counties. Diana Couillard added she is looking at affordable housing for the working class individuals, not developers. Furthermore, the other counties have waived the impact fees for a limited time due to the economic crisis as this helps the homeowner come up with less money for down payment and closing costs. Mrs. Couillard stated she would like to see the county waive the impact fees for affordable housing, not just the projects under the Housing Department, but any new construction. Mrs. Couillard continued with stating the other counties were able to afford the reduction. Mr. Cornelius stated when comparison is used between Sumter and the other counties; you have to look at the difference between the counties and the road programs. Mr. Cornelius continued stating that according to the Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization, the region wide planning organization for Lake and Sumter counties, Sumter County is in a much better position than Lake County in terms of meeting the roadway network demands. Lake County is in a negative position related to those issues. Mrs. Couillard commented Lake County still lower the fees even under these circumstances. Mr. Cornelius replied lowering or waiving the fees does not help a development but it would help affordable housing as it lowers the cost of the construction. Diana Couillard stated the county is looking at this as a developer, which Brad Cornelius replied he has to look at the issue on a global level. Ms. Smith commented on the difference between Sumter and Lake's income guidelines. Ms. Watson questioned Mr. Cornelius on the Webster Homes In Partnership project, wondering if they fit the criteria for the general fund to pay the impact fees. However, Mr. Cornelius stated that project would not qualify for the funds to be waived as they sell the properties after construction instead of owning them for three years. Mr. Cole stated he attended the BOCC workshop when this issue was discussed and he doesn't think they are going to change their minds. Mr. Cole feels they gave a clear indication and unless the committee can show a change in circumstances the impact fees are not going to be reduced or waived. Brad Cornelius further stated the county would have to reimburse the fund if the fees were waived for affordable housing projects. The reimbursement would come from the general fund which is, as every county, extremely tight. Mrs. Couillard stated again she would like for the Commissioners to look at waiving these fees due to the length of the economic crisis. Mr. Cornelius responded by saying the Commissioners did discuss this issue recently and they decided the fees were not going to be waived. The current rates are \$2,600 for residential, \$397 for fire with no fee for schools, utility fees or libraries for the county. Each city can have additional fees over and above the county. Diana Couillard requested a motion to be

made for the impact fees to be waived. Mr. Schick suggested Brad Cornelius continue reviewing the incentives and make the motions for the recommendations at the end of the presentation.

- C. *The Allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing:* The maximum density within the unincorporated county is still 8 units per acre which is under the mixed land use for the zoning districts. However, the county has in place inter-local agreements with four of the five cities. The City of Coleman is the only one without an agreement. As part of these agreements, the county is encouraging development within the cities and within an area around the cities. There are boundaries around the cities that are future urban development or future annexation areas which vary by city. The county is promoting people to develop within those boundaries. It is those areas we can achieve urban densities. The City of Wildwood's comprehensive plan has 20 units per acre. The City of Bushnell also has higher densities than the unincorporated county under their newly adopted plan. Both of those cities are pushing for higher densities because they have utility plans in place or are moving forward to provide those utilities. The county is going forth with a program to promote those additional densities in cooperation with the cities. This issue will continue being assessed as the county updates the countywide comprehensive plan. The county will continue to review opportunities to provide for that flexibility. Therefore, the change has been; instead of joint plan decisions being underway, they are now in place.
- D. *The reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low income persons, low-income persons and moderate-income persons.* Mr. Cornelius stated this has not changed except the county now has inter-local agreements with four of the five cities. The county is not a utility provider; all of those services are provided by the cities or private utility companies. However, the BOCC is asking the legislative delegation for potential funding next year to do a feasibility study to bring sewer into Lake Panasoffkee starting with the commercial corridor and the second phase possibly moving into residential. The reason behind this decision is based on environmental protection and impacts to Lake Panasoffkee by protecting that investment made by the state and county. Mrs. Couillard added the septic tank situation in Lake Panasoffkee is not good.
- E. *The allowance of affordable accessory residential units in residential zoning districts.* There has been no change; the county still provides the opportunity for a temporary use permit for caregiver or care receivers as well as a family accessory cottages. There is also the lineal transfer provision for individuals providing land to family members. Under this provision, the existing land owner must have a minimum of two acres after the transfer for the agriculture area and one acre in the rural residential area.
- F. *The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.* The code provides the flexibility to allow for the administrative ability to deviate from the minimum standards for parking for any type of project. There is no flexibility

for the set back requirements based on a type of project. However, the county does have the ability to deviate based on the existing set-back lines already established within an area. Staff has reviewed changing how the county looks at set-backs from road type to zoning district type. This will continue to be reviewed as part of the comprehensive plan update.

- G. *The allowance for flexible lot configurations, including zero lot-line configurations for affordable housing.* An individual can voluntarily request these types of set-ups through the residential planning development process. The plan will be reviewed by the Zoning and Adjustment board as well as the BOCC for approval.
- H. *The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.* Street requirements are continuously reviewed by the county. The Public Works department has analyzed what the appropriate standards for roadways are within the county's network. There are no specific measures in place for affordable housing; however, there is an ability through the master plan development process to propose alternative street requirements. Currently, the county meets the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) standards.
- 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.* There has been no change. Staff does take housing into consideration when making future plans for the county. Housing staff reviews the agenda for the Board of County Commissioners' meetings. If there are any items that may impact affordable housing, it is brought to the attention of the Division Director prior to the meeting date for discussion and recommendations.
- J. *The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.* Mr. Cornelius informed the committee, the BOCC has a realtor/broker under contract to broker and sell properties that the BOCC takes ownership of, particularly properties related to code. When the BOCC forecloses on the code property, the county takes ownership, sells it and the net proceeds go into the Affordable Housing fund. Currently, there are quite a few code properties ready to go into foreclosure. Mr. Schick asked how long it the broker's contract expired. It was decided staff will research and provide Mr. Schick an answer after the meeting. The broker is Danny Smith with Smith, Smith Realty. Staff does keep a record of all properties owned by the county.
- K. *The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-use developments.* The county is encouraging and supports these developments by the inter-local agreements with the cities. Brad Cornelius began explaining the two primary economic corridors that the Board of County Commissioners has adopted and encouraging job creation in. The first corridor is SR 44 from I-75 to US 301. This is the primary job growth corridor that has been identified by the county and has been named the Florida Crossroads Industrial Activity Center. The corridor has been identified with the regional economic development plan, gone to the US economic

development administrative, been approved and is now identified through the federal government as a vital economic development project for the region. A formal designation through the federal government puts the corridor in place for grants and other funding assistance opportunities to make the plan a reality. The two major property owners within this corridor, Monarch Ranch and Sumter LLC Lee Capital, have industrial land use already in place for the property. Monarch Ranch has 3,000 acres with a potential of 16 million of square feet for industrial uses. The concept for that project which lies south of the turnpike between I-75 and the rail line is to develop an inland port. This will provide a facility that will tie to the CSX rail line which is a major rail line in the State of Florida. Ms. Couillard asked if there were wetlands located within the property. Mr. Cornelius stated there are quite a bit of wetlands; about a quarter of the property has been committed to be put in a conservation easement for the wetlands tied directly to Lake Panasoffkee. The other wetlands on the property will be mitigated through the normal process. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as well as the water management district has reviewed and agreed with this approach. The county is also working with DOT because part of the plan is to establish a new interchange at CR 514. Part of the developer's concept is to put an interchange at CR 514 and I-75, run a new parallel road to US 301 to the north and then connect to SR 44. Discussions were under way with DOT about the interchange; however, there are several studies that have to be done prior to approval. With no money, the county has approached the property owner to pay these costs. If the owner is willing to pay the costs the studies can possibly be completed over the next two years. Mrs. Couillard asked if the City of Coleman is aware of the proposed plans. Brad Cornelius replied that the city is aware of the plans as all of these road projects went through the MPO process which Coleman is a part of. Mr. Cornelius stated he was also aware the City of Coleman did a public records request to the MPO asking for the information. Mr. Cornelius continued with the second corridor located at CR 470 and I-75 to US 301. The county is promoting these corridors for job growth which ties to this incentive because it also promotes residential developments to support the job base. The BOCC has discussed Sumterville becoming more intensive in terms of this development by bringing more housing opportunities into the area. Mrs. Couillard added United Agriculture Services business in Lake Panasoffkee is just bursting at the seams. Mr. Cornelius stated he was surprised to learn this business was world wide. Ms. Watson asked what this business is. Mrs. Couillard explained United Agriculture produces organic natural fertilizer which is amazing. Mr. Cornelius informed the committee those are the updates on all the housing incentives which concluded this summarization. Mr. Schick thanked Mr. Cornelius for reviewing the incentives.

A motion was made by Richard Cole for Item A through K with the exception of B to approve and continue with the same recommendations made on September 11, 2008. The motion was seconded by Virginia Watson and carried unanimously.

A second motion was made by Richard Cole for Item B, due to continuing economic downturn the committee recommends the Board of County Commissioners revisit the impact fee issue in respect to affordable housing, at least on a temporary basis. The motion was seconded by Diana Coulliard and carried unanimously.

Old Business – First Item: Denna Lafferty informed the committee members that the Affordable Housing and SHIP waiting lists were opening on November 14, 2011. Mrs. Lafferty noted the closing date on the home rehabilitation strategy is December 9, 2011. Additionally, Mrs. Lafferty explained all assistance is in the form of a loan and due to this fact the housing office so far has received very few interested families. Staff will be working with code enforcement. Code staff will provide a list of families to determine if they will be eligible for any of the available programs to bring their property into compliance. Mr. Cole suggested running an article in the Sumter County Times and Sumter Express as the families that need this assistance does not read the legal ads; however maybe the families, their pastor, or neighbor may read an article. Mr. Cornelius stated we could prepare a press release for all the newspapers. Mrs. Couillard commented about the number of families which have approached her recently stating the housing department has moved out of Sumter County and Citrus County is now receiving all the money. Hilary Cook asked if there were funds set-aside for replacing mobile homes. Mrs. Lafferty replied there are Affordable Housing funds which can be used for replacements however SHIP funds can not be used due to the new bill language.

Second Item: Mr. Schick informed the committee members that he and Mr. Cole had prepared a letter of recommendation for Kathy Young because she had been a great asset to the committee and affordable housing. Mr. Schick told the members if they were interested in signing the letter he would leave it with Mrs. Lafferty after the meeting.

Public Input: None.

Items for next agenda:

- No items were discussed at this time.

Next Meeting:

- January 12, 2012 @ 10:00am in Room 142 (as published for public notice)

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Gary Schick at 11:05 and a second was provided by Richard Cole. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by: Virginia Watson
Virginia Watson, Secretary

Approved on the 12 day of JANUARY 2012.

By: 
Gary Schick, Chairperson