

# Chatham County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2021

**Committee members present:** Kyle Shipp, Linette Tyson, Richard Poole, Anita Badrock, Alirio Estevez, Susan Levy, Carolyn Huggins, Chip Price

**Committee members absent:** Bob Schmidt, Pamela Baldwin

**Others:** Erika Brown (TJCOG), Bryan Thompson (Chatham County), Tyson Smith (W&S), Sean Scoopmire, Ben Hitchings, Chance Mullis, Craig Richardson, Meg Nealon

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

### 2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

### 3. Adopt Meeting Minutes

Richard Poole suggested changes to the October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes. Carolyn Huggins motioned to approve the meeting minutes with changes, Kyle Shipp seconded. Richard did not vote since he was not present for the full meeting in October 2021. All others present approved.

### 4. Unified Development Ordinance Presentation

Chance Mullis and Tyson Smith from Wake and Smith (W&S) will serve as consultants for the Chatham County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) creation currently underway. Meg Nealon, Principal at Meg Nealon Planning, Craig Richardson with Clarion Associates, and Ben Hitchings will also serve on the consulting team for the project. The consultants attended the meeting to share information and updates about the project and solicit feedback on issues related to housing from the Advisory Committee.

- Stage 1: Project orientation: focus group listening sessions (already met with 5 focus groups)
- Stage 2: Assessment (including code audit, drafting blueprint with an annotated outline) and additional outreach session to make sure the draft is reflective of the public comment
- Stage 3: Drafting of the UDO
- Stage 4: Adoption of the document and final outreach sessions

Project management website is [RECODECHATHAMNC.ORG](http://RECODECHATHAMNC.ORG) where draft documents will be placed along with any updates on the project. The consultants shared background information, such as what a UDO means as well as the guiding principles which will be used for this project, also from Plan Chatham.

Richard Poole asked the consultants what is the difference between zoning versus building standards. The consultants will be looking at overlays, zoning districts, and building standards. Standards are more focused at the site that is being developed (setbacks, mass, etc.). Affordable housing is very much likely



to be discussed during zoning standards. Alirio Estevez asked whether there would be public meetings in Spanish. Consultants responded they would bring that request to the County to discuss.

The consultants requested feedback from AHAC regarding which issues they felt most affect affordable housing in Chatham County. Richard Poole stated that the County needs to create a benefit to developers that is significant enough to have them include affordable housing within their development, such as density. Alirio Estevez mentioned there is a big urgency in Siler City related to housing. Two families living in one house because there is not enough housing there. Alirio suggested promoting density around Siler City. He suggested an example in Chapel Hill having a density bonus in order to have affordable apartments within the development.

Richard Poole commented that we need to be careful to not have developers doing land donations or fee in lieu of development. The developers need to take it on from the beginning. Carolyn Huggins mentioned there is a lot of opposition near Governor's Club in Northeast Chatham. Carolyn Huggins noted that what works well is when you cannot tell the difference between affordable and market rate housing.

The consultants questioned what the group that would be the best type of housing to fill the gap of primarily single-family homes within the County. Susan Levy said that it seems like missing middle housing. Rather than a large apartment complex, having density in smaller scale housing and has more of a neighborhood feel. This has been discussed within AHAC, as well as having the inclusion of affordable units within the development is very important.

Alirio Estevez noted that there is a need for rental apartments because they cannot afford to purchase a home. Kyle Shipp also stated that we need to think about it by location – certain housing is best in certain areas. Transportation is a huge cost of living – so related to job centers or being able to live near walkable areas. Concentration of affordable housing should be encouraged in areas where there are mixed use walkable communities. Not concentrated just by themselves, but with mixed use zoning, as is discussed in Plan Chatham.

Housing quality is also an issue that AHAC has discussed. Chip Price is currently working on those types of projects in Siler City. Chip Price mentioned that there is a need for seniors. Alirio Estevez is mentioning that the area around Siler City (not the Town itself). Richard mentioned that we need code enforcement throughout the entire county.

Kyle Shipp mentioned we should discuss what is considered affordable as it may be difficult to come to a definition on, particularly in Chatham County. There is a huge disparity between Northeast and Southwest Chatham County – both the needs and income levels.

Tyson Smith asked what the group considers as affordable? 80% of Area Median Income or below. A mix of affordable housing at different income levels is important. Kyle Shipp mentioned that Pittsboro just added affordable housing incentives to their UDO and approved an agreement with Chatham Park Housing Element that does not include land donation or fee in lieu.

Alirio Estevez suggested that there is an issue with mobile homes/manufactured homes that are not healthy or safe to live in. At one point, Orange County/Chapel Hill – really helpful to have third party oversight of the affordable/subsidized rental property, rather than just having the developer provide the same type management for all the units. To get the density bonus, the developer did have to have an agreement with the developer to have a third party (Community Home Trust) manage the property.



Susan Levy asked for more information about the ways that we could require affordable housing within developments of a certain size (aside from inclusionary zoning). One tool that we have is conditional zoning to use the negotiating process – but both the County and applicant would have to agree to the conditions. This can give the local government a lot of options – it is considered a legislative process and allowed within state statutes. Using conditional zoning (when you have provisions within your comp plan), can be a basis when pursuing conditional zoning. This can be written into the UDO.

#### **5. Housing Trust Fund Application Recommended**

Richard Poole moved to approve Rebuilding Together of the Triangle and Habitat for Humanity. The group also determined not to fund Chatham Housing Authority at all. Overall, AHAC decided to recommend deferring funding for Wallick Communities, based on requiring more information. All approved unanimously (Chip Price, Alirio Estevez, Richard Poole, Linette Tyson, Anita Badrock, Susan Levy, John Foley, and Carolyn Huggins).

#### **6. Updates and Around the Table:**

Bryan Thompson provided an update regarding the Oak View project by Wallick Communities. They asked for funding as a backup in case the paper allocation for wastewater and could just build one lateral instead of four. This is what the funding would be used for, if necessary.

Wallick Communities have been instructed to submit plans to the town with one pipe but have not received an official confirmation of their capacity. Based on their submission dates – they’re submitting plans by Dec 20 and expect to do one more revision – they hope to have a formal answer in February at the latest because they will be closing on their tax credits/and other lending sources starting in February/March. I have requested that they submit clear description of their request in the scenario of one pipe vs. the scenario of four pipes, and how the funds would be used, as well as anticipated deadlines to be aware of.

AHAC was informed they could defer the decision about the funding for Wallick to the January or February meeting if they would like. The Town should know if they can approve the paper allocation once the tributary flow goes down.

Bryan Thompson updated the group that Vickers Bennett agreement was approved. There will not be a recognizable difference between affordable and market rate housing dispersed throughout the development. The developers will work with Community Home Trust and would use the payment in support of to reduce the purchase price to make it affordable to a lower AMI. Developer was very interested in incorporating affordable housing in the project. Compact Community so they received density bonus.

Kyle Shipp noted that Pittsboro Town Council approved the Chatham Park Housing Element. As part of the Element, they approved 7% affordable housing throughout the entire development, with income levels between 80-120% rather than 80% AMI or below. Susan Levy mentioned that this is challenging because the real need for affordable housing is at less than 80% AMI.

Motion to adjourn – Richard Poole moved, Susan Levy seconded. All approve. Adjourned at 7:40pm.

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