

Chatham County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 3, 2022 | 6:00pm-8:00pm | Via ZOOM

AHAC Members present: Susan Levy, Richard Poole, John Foley, Kyle Shipp, Carolyn Huggins, Chip Price, Pamela Baldwin, Alirio Estevez

Others: Katie Kenlan (Public), Sharon Hartwell (Public), Erika Brown (TJCOG), Bryan Thompson (Chatham County), Stephanie Watkins-Cruz (Chatham County)

1. Welcome and Ice Breaker

Susan Levy, Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

2. Public Comment

Two members of the public attended the meeting: Sharon Hartwell, a NCSU student, resident of Chatham County, and she brings with her a social work perspective. Additionally, Katie Kenlan, another resident of the County attended as she is interested in learning more about the issue and plans to run for County Commissioner.

3. Adopt Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes from the February 3rd meeting were reviewed. Richard Poole motioned to approve the minutes and John Foley seconded. The meeting minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

4. Data update from Strategy Toolbox

Erika Brown, TJCOG Housing Program Manager, presented an update on several data points related to affordable housing across Chatham County. Note that the data presented in the PowerPoint was from the most recent American Community Survey data (2015-2019 5 year estimates), unless otherwise specified.

Richard Poole asked how Area Median Income (AMI) is calculated. Area Median Income is calculated by taking the median income for a specified area (specified by HUD for purposes of affordable housing eligibility). In the case of Chatham County, this includes the entire metropolitan statistical area of Durham-Chapel Hill.

Richard made the comment that because housing prices are rising so fast, we will see a shrinkage in NOAH and in substandard housing. He inquired whether there was additional data on this specifically for Chatham County.

Erika invited members to be able to provide input on the presentation and data. If AHAC members or others would like to see other data points included in the update for the toolbox, please reach out to staff so your suggestions may be incorporated.

5. Revisit Looking Ahead Discussion

Stephanie Watkins-Cruz facilitated a discussion regarding subcommittees and next steps for AHAC looking forward. A lot of work has been done to address the affordable housing problem. Many of the responses from the February meeting indicated that existing members are interested in various topics related to affordable housing, such as homelessness, preservation of existing housing, new construction, working with developers, and the unified development ordinance update, among others.

In February, AHAC was asked a series of questions to help determine next steps for the group:

- General areas of interest,
- educational materials you are interested in receiving more information about,
- feedback on the housing trust fund process (and ways to improve),
- areas or project types that Housing Trust Fund and Article 46 should go to,
- whether there was an interest creating subcommittees, and
- which areas or working groups are you interested in specifically

Many expressed interest in several focus areas (UDO, inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination, emergency housing, preservation and quality of housing, supportive housing, senior housing, landlord engagement, incentives for housing, and revolving loans). The group is also interested in continuing to receive education around different topics of affordable housing from staff or otherwise. Finally, the group indicated that there is interest in restarting or creating subcommittees or working groups to focus on several strategies to address affordable housing.

Feedback-based Action Items

Stephanie Watkins-Cruz identified several action items related to determining next steps for the group, as shown in the table below:

- **Interest areas:** how AHAC will engage with various interest areas, such as hosting forums, community events, etc., subcommittees. Need to determine how to best focus on these topics.
- **Receiving education:** Staff will take responsibility for sharing information based on interest areas, though AHAC members should let staff know when it is appropriate to receive this information and what topics to focus on.
- **Subcommittees:** Identify existing efforts in order to align subcommittees with some momentum. Bring information back to the group to keep us all updated.

The group spent some time discussing the best way to structure subcommittees to be respectful of time, while also making sure subcommittees have enough time to focus on various strategies.

Next Steps:

Richard Poole suggested that it is important to have certain people assigned to a specific topic, rather than a full subcommittee on that topic. This could be the Chatham Housing Authority, Family Promise, Habitat for Humanity, etc. Individuals could volunteer to serve on those committees or attend meetings, or simply receive their e-mail updates and report back to AHAC every few months. Others agree that it

is the better idea than having several subcommittees, where one individual might be assigned to a specific topic to focus and/or report on.

Several specific topics were discussed in terms of whether a separate subcommittee was necessary to cover that topic. These include homelessness, aging, and community engagement. In terms of homelessness, staff mentioned that an informal task force has recently started. If one or two people were interested in this topic, let Stephanie know and she will add you to the e-mail listserv. If you can attend, you can report back to the group of any updates. Alirio Estevez and Carolyn Huggins expressed interest in this group as well as Erika Brown, from the staff perspective. Stephanie co-leads this group with Katie Childs from Chatham County United Way.

As for aging, the group discussed that the topic may be best included within the subcommittee focused on preservation, as aging in place is very important and many programs focused on preservation support aging adults.

Community engagement, while a previous subcommittee, may not need to be a standalone subcommittee at this time. There is currently a Chatham County Community Partners call where social service providers update each other on community happenings and resources. Those interested included Carolyn Huggins and staff member Erika Brown.

There was a general consensus that two subcommittees should exist: one for new construction and another focused on preservation. See below for those who volunteered to serve on topic specific areas or subcommittees. This may be updated at future meetings.

<i>Subcommittee/ Topic</i>	<i>Interest Area</i>	<i>Interested Individual(s)</i>
<i>New Construction</i>	<i>GENERAL</i>	<i>Kyle Shipp (lead) Susan Levy Richard Poole John Foley</i>
	<i>UDO</i>	<i>Richard Poole (lead) Susan Levy</i>
	<i>Developers</i>	<i>Susan Levy</i>
<i>Preservation</i>	<i>GENERAL</i>	<i>Pamela Baldwin Anita Badrock</i>
	<i>Aging</i>	<i>Richard Poole (if time allows)</i>
	<i>Homeshare</i>	<i>Richard Poole</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>Homelessness & Emergency Housing Services</i>	<i>Alirio Estevez Carolyn Huggins Erika Brown</i>
	<i>Community Engagement</i>	<i>Carolyn Huggins Erika Brown</i>
	<i>Pittsboro Task Force</i>	<i>Susan Levy</i>

Overall, AHAC discussed whether the time commitment would be overwhelming if subcommittees met outside of the regular AHAC meetings. The group seemed interested in using some time at monthly AHAC meetings to convene and/or report out on the various topics and committees.

Next steps for the various subcommittees will be to designate a topic for next month's meeting as part of your subcommittee group. Stephanie Watkins-Cruz will send emails to those who have volunteered for a specific subcommittee to assist with coordination.

Additionally, staff requested that AHAC members provide topics for which they would like additional information or education. Stephanie Watkins-Cruz shared a list of topics people are interested in, including but not limited to: UDO, inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination of policies, emergency housing, preservation and quality of housing, supportive housing, senior housing, landlord engagement, incentives for housing, revolving loans. Alirio Estevez suggested getting some examples of inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination of policies.

6. Updates

a. Towns

- i. Siler City – Chip Price shared that the Town continues to see an uptick in interest and activity in the CAM megasite for development.
- ii. Pittsboro – the Town passed the changes to the UDO where there are incentives for any number of affordable housing units, rather than only providing incentives if a developer met the threshold for providing affordable housing units, as it was originally presented. Kyle Shipp also mentioned that the Town is currently focused on revamping the Affordable Housing Task Force. AHAC agreed that it would be a good idea to have some level of engagement with the Task Force from AHAC.

b. Staff

- i. No updates.

7. Around the Table

No updates or comments were provided. Richard Poole motioned to adjourn the meeting; Carolyn Huggins seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

Next AHAC Meeting: April 7, 2022 – in person at Chatham Community Library

Staff Contacts:

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