

City of Jacksonville

*117 W. Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 22, 2024

12:00 PM

**Council Chamber 1st Floor,
City Hall**

Special Committee on Homelessness & Affordable Housing

Meeting convened: 12:01 pm

Meeting adjourned: 1:33 pm

Attendance: Council President Salem; Council Vice President White; and Council Members Joe Carlucci, Miller, Peluso and Arias

Excused: Council Member Amaro

Also: Phillip Peterson, Auditor's Office; Mary Staffopoulos, OGC; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Introduction & Opening Comments

Chair J. Carlucci convened the meeting and welcomed the group.

New Business Updates

Chair J. Carlucci said that this is the last meeting for the committee. Council President Salem extended appreciation for the work the committee did.

Presentations

Kristen Reed, Planning Department, gave a presentation about the in-house missing middle project scope. Ms. Reed explained the process and timeline. She said the objective for the project is to identify target areas within LDR land use category in the Urban and Urban Priority Areas to increase density to more than 7 units per acre. Ms. Reed described the steps of the project: data collection, analysis of existing conditions, identification of target areas and the final report/codification. Ms. Reed said the project will take about 5 months to complete. She mentioned including consideration of resiliency and proximity to transit.

Council Member Peluso asked about the length of time to get comp plan changes approved by the state. Ms. Reed said that takes about 6 months.

Motion/2nd move to direct the Planning Department to proceed with the missing middle project to update the Comprehensive Plan: Peluso/Miller. Approved unanimously.

Council Member Arias requested a mid-way update on the project to be reported to LUZ and NCSPHS.

Chris Crothers, DuPont Fund, and James Coggin, Community Foundation, gave a presentation about a proposed public private partnership for an affordable housing fund.

Mr. Crothers talked about attainable housing and innovative endeavors to increase supply. He spoke about flexible funding, gap funding, and CDFI (community development financial institutions) capital to support affordable housing development. He said Jacksonville lags behind the rest of the country and other Florida cities in CDFI financing and coordinating the public and private sectors. He talked about recommendations made by the CQLI special committee and the Mayor's transition committee regarding affordable housing.

Mr. Coggin talked about 4 and 9 percent low-income tax credits, the state apartment incentive loan program, and leveraging investments to attract new capital. He talked about leveraging the \$10 million proposed by the Mayor in the next budget with \$30 million in private and philanthropic dollars. The public/private partnership would unlock bond financing from the Jacksonville Housing Finance Authority and 4% Low-income Housing Tax Credit equity to catalyze the development of an estimated 500 – 1,000 units of affordable housing. He mentioned return on investments, but noted that the terms are still being negotiated. He spoke about Self Help Ventures Fund acting as the fund administrator. Mr. Coggin talked about 2 components of the housing fund, "Bridge Financing for Acquisition and Pre-Development" and "Gap Financing for Development."

Council Member Arias said he wants to hear the terms for this project when available, and he said he thinks the City should receive higher returns than the private sector. Mr. Crothers said it was unlikely that the City would gain more in returns than the private sector. Mr. Crothers emphasized the role of the City's investment as a catalyst for private/philanthropic dollars and he indicated that the terms would be available within a month or so.

Council Member Peluso spoke in support of the housing fund and gap funding for affordable housing.

Council President Salem asked about the \$10 million from the Mayor to be proposed in the next budget and whether it is a one time budget item. Mr. Crothers said yes.

Motion/2nd move to draft a resolution to encourage approval of this proposal to the Finance Committee during the budget review in August: Peluso/Arias.

Council Member Miller suggested encouraging consideration, not approval. Council Members Arias and J. Carlucci agreed.

Mary Staffopoulos, OGC, said that the consideration encouragement sentiment could be conveyed through the committee's final report.

Council Member Peluso withdrew his motion, and the committee agreed to convey the consideration encouragement for this proposal in the committee's final report.

Jason Teal, OGC, talked about HB 1365, recently signed by the governor, pertaining to homelessness and public camping/sleeping. The new Section 125.0231, Florida Statutes, prohibits the City from allowing public camping/sleeping on public property. Per the law, the City may designate a city owned property to be used for public camping for up to one year. Such property must be approved by DCF and have running water, restrooms, mental health/substance abuse services, security, and ban drugs/alcohol. Mr. Teal explained the implications for the City wherein on January 1, 2025, any resident or business owner, or the Attorney General, may bring civil action against the City for non-compliance. The City would also be responsible for the recovery of attorney fees and the costs of litigation.

Council Member Peluso asked about sites recommended by the Administration, if any. He asked about enforcement and the role of JSO in the camps. He shared his opposition to this "draconian" law and the mentioned the potential for civil rights violations and risk for public health issues.

Council President Salem mentioned a policy in St. Johns County where homeless individuals are given funds to leave and return to their hometown.

Mr. Teal talked about the Johnson v. Grants Pass (Oregon) oral arguments before the Supreme Court this week. He said the class action lawsuit, when decided, will clarify enforcement regulations for homelessness.

Discussion

Council Member J. Carlucci reviewed the work of the committee. He listed several of the committee's actions to be included in the final report: establishment of the Homeless Initiatives Commission with funding (\$1.4 million); partnership with JHFA with matching funds for gap funding; directive to the Planning Department implement a missing middle study to double density (7 to 15 units) for LDR, and increase MDR to 30 units per acre; and encourage consideration of the housing fund as presented by Mr. Crothers and Mr. Coggin.

Closing Remarks

Chair J. Carlucci extended appreciation to the Council President for creating the committee, and to the members and stakeholders for their participation.

Public Comment:

Ryan Hoover, Vestcor, in support of the affordable housing fund, did not speak.

Vanessa Dunn, JHA, about JHA policy regarding a homeless preference and referrals for housing vouchers. Ken Grady, about small real estate developers and issues with the civil review process.

Will Evans, Changing Homelessness, in support for the affordable housing fund.

Betty Harvey, New beginning New Horizon, about assistance and services for those suffering with addiction.

Tracy Grant, Preservation Firm, about supportive communities.

Shereline Redden, Preservation Firm, about supporting under-served communities and root causes of homelessness.

Tom Daly, Ability Housing, about the need for wraparound services for those receiving housing vouchers. Barney Smith, JHFA, in support of an affordable housing fund.

Dawn Lockhart, Nonprofit Center of NEFL, about the affordable housing summit recommendations.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Posted: 4.25.24 5:00 pm