

**City of Palm Bay, Florida**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting 2024-07**

Held on Wednesday, the 17 day of July 2024, at City Hall Council Chambers, 120 Malabar Road SE, Palm Bay, Florida.

This meeting was properly noticed pursuant to law; the minutes are on file in the Housing and Community Development Division Office, City Hall Annex, Palm Bay, Florida.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Thibert at approximately 6:03 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

<b>CHAIRPERSON:</b>	Rebecca Thibert	Present
<b>VICE-CHAIRPERSON:</b>	Dawn Bittar	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Alfred Agarie	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Vacant	
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Donny Felix	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Robert Good	Absent
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Jamie Hirzel	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Henry Morin	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Shenielle Walker	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Vacant	
<b>BOARD ATTORNEY:</b>	Rodney Edwards	Present

**STAFF MEMBERS:**

Ibis Berardi, Assistant Director of Community & Economic Development; John Pearson, Chief Building Official; Scott Stafford, Deputy Building Official; Lisa Frazier, Growth Management Director; Althea Jefferson, Assistant Growth Management Director; Rodney Edwards, Deputy City Attorney; Carmen Journey, Board Secretary.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS: (Non-agenda items only)**

There were no public comments.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. Affordable Housing Expedited Process Presentation by Community & Economic Development Department, Growth Management, Building Department**

Ms. Berardi provided a summary of the Board discussion at the May 15, 2024, CDAB regular meeting regarding expedited permitting. Agencies could apply for the Building Permit Fee Reduction Program for Affordable Housing Projects Certification on the City's website. Mr. Pearson addressed the Building Department's process of identifying projects that requested permits for affordable housing utilizing the City's Intuitive Municipal Solutions (IMS) system. Ms. Jefferson advised of the Growth Management Department's process.

Ms. Berardi said that, as part of the process, staff would provide the application for the Building Permit Fee Reduction Program for projects identified as 100% affordable housing units. Once staff received the contractor/developer application, the project would be recommended for funding to City Council.

Ms. Jefferson explained the Growth Management Department's process of identifying projects requesting permits for 100% affordable housing units and expediting the application process, including scoping meeting with the Community Economic Development Department (CED). In the meeting, staff would work through any issues encountered by the applicant or potential builder. Staff would offer the applicant information about site-to-site zoning regulations, and how the applicant would get through the development process, after which a Concierge Planner would be assigned to the project for the entire development from site plan application through the Certificate of Occupancy. A City Planner would be available to meet with the applicant/developer on a monthly or quarterly basis throughout the process. The applicant was required to apply for a pre-qualification meeting. The departments would fast track the applicants to the front of the line before all other applicants.

Ms. Bittar asked the meaning of "fast track". Ms. Jefferson explained that a pre-qualification meeting was required for any site plan or plat prior to the submission of a development application. As there were many meetings to be scheduled, staff would fast track the affordable housing project applications to the front of the line. If the application had been certified through the process, the waiting time was less than one week. Ms. Bittar asked what would occur if the project was not 100% for affordable housing. Ms. Berardi responded that the application would not be considered an affordable housing

project. Ms. Bittar asked if the department provided a checklist to the applicants. Ms. Jefferson confirmed same.

Messrs. Pearson and Stafford explained there were two categories for building permit applications: residential or commercial. The residential category included one and two units, and anything else was considered commercial. The Building Department would expedite the application process review for affordable housing that met the criteria within five (5) days. The timeline would start once the applicant paid the plan review application fee. Other departments would be involved in process of issuing a permit.

Ms. Bittar said there were complaints about inspectors not showing to perform inspections. Ms. Pearson explained that the plan review process was all prior to the permit being issued, which was reviewing the plans, and would be part of the process that would be expedited. The inspection process was after the permit was issued and construction had begun. Staff would complete the inspection even if the contractor was not ready and the inspector would provide a report with the issues found during the inspection. Ms. Bittar asked if the inspector made a note when the construction was not completed or ready for inspection. Mr. Pearson responded in the affirmative and said the policy stated that if the contractor failed or cancelled the inspection for any reason, the inspector would note the reason and cite the section from the Code of Ordinances that applied to the issue in case of disapproving the inspection.

Ms. Thibert asked if the Building Department was using electronic construction plan submittal and plan review. Mr. Pearson confirmed same. If a homeowner was unfamiliar with a computer, staff would assist in scanning the documents so that other departments could access the information.

Ms. Bittar asked if the application files for affordable housing projects were flagged in the system so that staff was aware. Mr. Pearson explained that the applicant would note on the permit description that it was for affordable housing and the staff would be able to identify and expedite the affordable housing project application. Ms. Bittar asked if staff had instructions to expedite the affordable housing project application. Mr. Pearson said staff had an internal policy that outlined the process.

Ms. Herzil suggested that staff have a yes or no question on the application to identify if the project was for affordable housing. Mr. Pearson said it could be added to the application.

Mr. Felix commented that applicants should submit the complete application and required documentation properly as it would help the departments to expedite the service. He mentioned that the City issued 15,000 permits in 2023.

Ms. Frazier shared that a project was coming to Palm Bay with a 65% affordable multifamily rental project under the Live Local Act, along with 35% commercial. The affordable multifamily project would be more workforce attainable. Staff made sure the project met all requirements including the affordable, attainable workforce definition by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and was deed restricted. Ms. Thibert asked if the City was abiding by the Live Local Act provisions. Ms. Frazier answered yes.

## **2. City of Palm Bay Community Development Block (CDBG) Annual Action Plan PY 2024**

Ms. Berardi provided a summary for Plan Year (PY) 2024. Staff anticipated receiving \$776,641 in CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) as a direct entitlement. The City received HOME funds from HUD as part of the Brevard County HOME Consortium, which was composed of the Cities of Cocoa, Melbourne, Palm Bay, Titusville, and Brevard County. The City's allocation of HOME grant funds was \$227,234.

The overall purpose of the CDBG Program was the development of viable urban communities by providing quality housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for persons of low- and moderate income. Eligible activities included public services, public facilities and improvements, housing, code enforcement, clearance and demolition, economic development, acquisition, and disposition. At least 70% of all CDBG funds must be expended on program activities benefiting low- and moderate-income persons. HOME Program funds could only be used for housing activities benefiting low- and moderate-income persons.

Based on priorities and goals identified in the PY 2022/2027 Consolidated Plan, the City developed a one-year Action Plan, which identified community development projects that shall be undertaken between October 1, 2024, and September 30, 2025.

As required by HUD and the City's Citizen Participation Plan, an ad was placed in the Florida Today newspaper summarizing the proposed projects and a 30-day public comment period. The 30-day public comment period began May 28, 2024, and ended on July 18, 2024. All comments received would be submitted to HUD.

PROPOSED FINAL STATEMENT OF CDBG PROJECTS FOR PY 2024

*PUBLIC SERVICES:*

Catholic Charities of Central Florida (Homeless Prevention)	\$33,250
Brevard Alzheimer’s Foundation, Inc., (Non-Emergency Transportation)	\$25,080
Greater Melbourne PAL (Youth Enrichment Mentoring, Palm Bay youth)	\$22,950
Conklin Davis Center for the Visually Impaired (Supportive Services for Blind and Visually Impaired)	\$28,916
Space Coast Area Transit (Bus Voucher Program)	\$ 6,300

*CDBG OTHER AND PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS:*

Palm Bay Parks & Facilities	
Liberty Park (Park Improvements)	\$ 83,480
Palm Bay Aquatic Center (Pool improvements)	\$ 50,710
Riviera Park (Park Improvements)	\$100,361
Public Works (Sidewalks Construction)	\$270,266

*ADMINISTRATION:*

CDBG Administration and Operational Funds	\$151,328
Fair Housing Education & Outreach	<u>\$ 4,000</u>
TOTAL CDBG FUNDS	\$776,641

*PROPOSED FINAL STATEMENT OF HOME PROJECTS FOR PY 2024*

HOUSING: CHDO Housing-Activity Acquisition and Rehab	\$204,510.66
HOME City Administration and Operational Funds	\$ 16,883.49
HOME County Administration	<u>\$ 5,839.92</u>
TOTAL HOME FUNDS:	\$227,234.07

Staff asked the Board to recommend the CDBG PY 2024 Annual Action Plan to City Council for adoption at its regular Council meeting on July 18, 2024.

Ms. Thibert asked if the total allocation of \$776,641 was the amount the City expected or if it was reduced. Ms. Berardi said it was more than the City expected.

Motion by Mr. Felix, seconded by Ms. Bittar, to recommend the CDBG PY2024 Action Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Affordable Housing Policies & Procedures Update**

Ms. Berardi provided an update. The City administered various state and federally funded housing grant programs to assist low- and moderate-income residents of Palm Bay with down payment assistance, owner-occupied rehabilitation, emergency repairs, utility hook up assistance, and rehabilitation/new construction of affordable housing. To effectively administer each housing program under state and federal requirements, it was necessary for the City's Housing Division to have a Standard Operating Procedures Manual that outlined these requirements. The Housing Program Standard Operating Procedures had been updated to reflect the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act (URA) policy, 24 CFR Part 42. Also, to include the Build America Buy America (BABA) 2 CFR 184, and Executive Order 14005 update HUD required for federally assisted projects. Finally, there was a minor update to the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP), which was recommended by the Board at its May 15, 2024, meeting, under the AHAC Priorities.

Staff recommended an update of the policies since the last time the housing policies were updated on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Some things changed at HUD, and staff wanted to make sure the policies were in line with the programs and the procedures. Staff requested the Board recommend to the City Council approval of the Housing Policies and Procedures update.

Ms. Thibert asked if staff internally reviewed Build America Buy America and Davis Bacon. Ms. Berardi responded in the affirmative.

Motion by Mr. Morin, seconded by Ms. Bittar, to recommend approval of the Housing Policies and Procedures update. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **OTHER BOARD BUSINESS:**

##### **1. Informational Staff Report**

Ms. Thibert commented that the SCAT bus voucher program was a great use of the CDBG funds.

Mr. Morin said the Staff report was a good refresher that encapsulated all the housing division projects.

City of Palm Bay, Florida  
Community Development Advisory Board  
Regular Meeting 2024-07  
Minutes – July 17, 2024  
Page 7 of 7

Ms. Bittar was very excited to see the money going towards the streetlights and sidewalks in the City.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

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Rebecca Thibert, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

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Carmen Journey, BOARD SECRETARY