



City Commission Work Session Minutes

April 28, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

City Hall, Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue | Winter Park, Florida

Present

Mayor Phil Anderson; Commissioners Marty Sullivan, Sheila DeCiccio, Kris Cruzada, and Todd Weaver; City Manager Randy Knight; and City Clerk Rene Cranis.

Also Present

Director of Planning & Zoning Jeff Briggs and Habitat for Humanity Winter Park President Hal George.

1) Call to Order

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

2) Discussion Item(s)

a. Discussion of Affordable Housing

Mayor Anderson stated that Commissioner Sullivan provided a document/agenda for the discussion. Commissioner Sullivan prefaced that the document is a list of questions and suggested addressing it as such while going through the discussion. Mayor Anderson suggested adding construction costs and rental versus ownership. He stated that the conversation should consider the city's role in the region and its goals.

Mr. Briggs gave a presentation on the city's efforts and actions to provide affordable housing and how the city wants to move forward. He spoke about the high cost of land in Winter Park, which is part of a national trend. He showed images of the CRA at its inception and now, which shows successes since the beginning of the CRA.

Mr. Briggs provided data on affordable houses and apartments and explained that funding has been provided by a linkage fee, which can only be imposed on non-residential properties and raises approximately \$100k per year. He reviewed projects by Affordable Housing and Habitat for Humanity and stated that the city has a continued agreement with Habitat to provide \$200k each year toward the purchase of lots. Mr. Briggs spoke about the partnership with Hannibal Square Land Trust and the Housing Authority of Winter Park and reviewed their processes to assist eligible candidates with attaining affordable homes. He discussed challenges due to land and construction costs.

Mayor Anderson stated that the EDAB sub-committee is working on action plans to understand affordability and what the supply looks like. He noted that the Land Trust

has twice as many land trust homes outside the city limits. He identified other affordable housing projects that are privately funded and stated that EDAB and CRA are looking at the issue from a regional perspective.

Mr. Briggs addressed the Patmos Chapel property and potential development which would require concessions. There may be opportunities where a portion of the development could be broken off for the city to acquire some lots for affordable housing. Alternatively, the tree farm may offer an opportunity to create an additional lot at the end of the streets that end at tree farm. He spoke about opportunities for accessory homes between 400 and 500 square feet on the rear of properties on single-family properties under the auspices of historical preservation, but it would require modification of the code. He explained that currently, the city allows guest houses that are deed-restricted and not able to be rented. He added that this is an incentive specifically in the historic district.

Commissioner Sullivan for the number of living units beyond the 112 houses.

Commissioner Cruzada responded that there are an estimated 629 units based on his review of Orange County records. As a member of Seminole County Housing Authority and the Orange County Development advisory board, he spoke about their efforts and the lack of funding available. He noted that currently there is a 3-4 year waiting list for affordable housing.

Commissioner Weaver stated that he is in favor of smaller houses and feels 800-1000 square feet is an adequate size for a couple. He shared a picture of a house on Lyman Avenue which is 3-stories with the first floor below grade as an example for the Patmos Chapel property. Discussion followed on zoning and density of units per acre for the Capen/Swoope/Denning area of the city.

Commissioner DeCiccio noted that some residents oppose this type of development in the area and said the commission needs to be sensitive to residents' concerns. Further discussion was held on models/housing compatible with the area and resident concerns about property values. Mayor Anderson added that the definition of housing needs to be expansive and define attainable housing rates. He stated that the word "attainable" is what he is encountering in the marketplace to describe the missing middle market. Discussion followed on what the middle market looks like for the city.

Commissioner Cruzada suggested the city combine efforts with the housing authority to create some type of affordable redevelopment for Tuscany at Aloma. Mr. George stated that Habitat for Humanity has considered that option and had preliminary plans drawn. He noted that the back of the property does have some drainage issues, but is suitable for redevelopment. He added that Habitat has considered redevelopment possibilities for the Margaret Square property as well and noted the base of the problem is the desirability of living in Winter Park which is creating a higher cost of land.

Mayor Anderson stated that the question is where the city wants to create an impact. Further discussion on the challenges with the affordability of housing in the city, middle-market housing outside of the city, and affordable workforce housing options in the city.

Mr. George clarified that he is not advocating HUD-type properties in the city and stated that redevelopment of existing property is more realistic. He noted that middle-market house and appraisal pricing are the same as that of Habitat homes, which is a very different model from the housing authority. Housing authorities are going to struggle with construction and land costs and the city's opportunity has to be multi-faceted not just focused on middle income, low income, or HUD properties. In-depth discussion continued on middle-market housing, ADUs, land cost, areas of the city that could allow for an increase in density, and mixed-use options.

Commissioner Sullivan asked the commission how the city would "sell" the city on affordable housing. Mayor Anderson feels the best way is to be clear about what is being considered. The question is whether there is something the city should do that is affordable for people that work in the city such as Florida Hospital, Rollins, and city employees, and what is needed to sustain workforce housing as well as participate in the regional issues and initiatives. Commissioner Cruzada noted the Florida Financing Agency has shift funds for down payment assistance and suggested providing that information to those wanting to buy a home, as an option.

Mayor Anderson feels the city cannot replicate what can be purchased in areas outside of the city. He discussed working with transportation networks to get employees to and from the city and discussed efforts by the Land Trust and Habitat to provide affordable housing. He suggested considering a collaboration with an independent agency i.e. Habitat, Land Trust, etc. within the city limits on redevelopment. In addition, he would be open to a collaboration with Florida Hospital and Rollins College. Discussion followed on partnering with either entity.

Mr. Briggs noted the hospital's plan to increase density on the surface parking lot adjacent to the hospital and suggested that when the hospital comes forwards with its plan, the city should assert that a portion of that development should address affordable housing opportunities. Discussion followed on workforce housing incentives, commercial subsidies for housing, and mixed-use development that would include workforce housing.

Mayor summarized the discussion and stated the commission is open to further discussion on workforce housing and understanding how Rollins and the hospital partners can subsidize some of their own workforce housing. Discussion was held on options for using property adjacent to the tree farm and prior proposals for redevelopment near Margaret Square.

Mayor Anderson stated that one action item stemming from this discussion would be to see what role, if any, the city should have in an Orange County/Orlando/Eatonville regional partnership.

Commissioner Cruzada spoke about Orange County Development Review's increased focus on affordable housing. Mayor Anderson stated that he and Mr. Knight have a meeting with the Orange County manager and suggested adding affordable housing to that meeting agenda and a request for a Winter Park appointment to any task force they might have. Commissioner Weaver suggested redevelopment of closed/closing malls/shopping centers.

Mayor Anderson suggested a follow-up work session to continue the discussion. He stated that the Congress of New Urbanism website has good middle-market housing articles. He briefly addressed rental vs. ownership and stated his personal belief is that you have to start with renting and long-term renting is good if it is subsidized and rent tracks with increased income.

Commissioner Weaver feels it would be prudent to support ownership rather than rentals as it would be more palatable to taxpayers. Mayor Anderson summarized additional action items stemming from the work session are to have a discussion with Orange County, and get information on mixed-use from Hannibal Square Land Trust.

3) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Mayor Phillip M. Anderson

ATTEST:

City Clerk Rene Cranis