

## Orange County Affordable Housing Advisory Board (AHAB) Minutes

Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 6:00 PM

Whitted BOCC Meeting Room

**Members Present:** Mae Mclendon, Jenn Sykes, Paul Voss, Dion Graham

**Members Absent:** Hasan Abdullah, Keith Cook, Ehmu Ra Ho, Holly Meschko, Tim Woody

**Staff Present:** Corey Root (Director, Housing), Erica Cormack (Community Development Manager, Housing), Shaina Crump (Community Development Specialist, Housing)

I. **Call to Order** – Jenn Sykes, Chair

II. **Updates from AHAB Members & Staff**

- a. Mae recaps House Us Now Meeting in Hillsborough
  - i. Event was not given much publicity
  - ii. Retired police officer, who had lived in her car with her dog, spoke on homelessness; she had been one of the highest-ranking officers, which sent the message that *anyone* can face housing insecurity
  - iii. CEF spearheaded rally
  - iv. There may be another rally coming up, but details are unknown
- b. Board discusses what information is relevant to share and how to stay updated
  - i. Other boards and nonprofits tend to have updates
- c. There are rumors of rent and mortgage hikes in Hillsborough; board anticipates uptick in displacement
- d. Board discusses land and housing in Mebane and Efland
  - i. City of Mebane has been aggressive with annexations
  - ii. Seniors, minorities, well-established families are being displaced
  - iii. Land in Efland is cheaper and is being bought by younger people who are starting big farms, which is bringing more revenue to the area, but is changing the atmosphere in Efland
  - iv. Does Mebane have ordinances to publicize affordable housing?
- e. Introduction of Community Development Specialist, Shaina Crump

III. **AHAB new member recommendations**

- a. There are 6 vacancies on the 15-member board; often numbers are lower in summer
- b. Change process for making recommendations to BOCC?

- i. In the past, board would look through applications and make recommendations, which would often be overridden by BOCC
  - ii. Board notes that recommendations have caused unnecessary anxiety/awkwardness/tension in the past
  - iii. Suggestion is made for encouraging people who are interested to apply, but not making recommendations
- c. Board suggests that we implement better ways of getting to know new members, as it's difficult to be on a board with people you don't know
  - i. Can we have a grander way of introducing new members?
  - ii. Board suggests that each board member review the new member's application
  - iii. Can we reintroduce new-member orientation?
    - 1. Yes, but orientation needs to be updated
    - 2. ALL board members should go through orientation once updated
- d. Board discusses concern with people applying who do not actually care about the issues, but instead apply for professional accolades
  - i. Board suggests we flag these cases for County Commissioner, though there is a hope that the BOCC will be attuned to such issues anyhow
- e. Jenn Sykes will term out in December
- f. Board discusses whether there are ways to retain people who are terming out

**IV. AHAB Meeting Topics, November 2022 – June 2023 (45 minutes)**

**a. Debrief in person AHAB meeting from September 2022 at Rogers Road-Eubanks**

**Neighborhood Association (RENA) Community Center**

- i. General consensus is that meeting went well
- ii. Board expresses curiosity about one participant who sat up front, didn't say much, and then left halfway through
- iii. Public seemed really grateful that the board came to them to ASK for information, rather than to TELL them how things are going to be; people need to be heard
- iv. Many concerns fell outside of what the board is able to control, but board said they would share concerns and research answers
  - 1. Even if government doesn't have perfect solutions, it has the means to find solutions

**b. Frequency/location of other community meetings**

- i. Board suggests quarterly community meetings at various locations (such as community centers)
  - 1. Eno House
  - 2. Cedar Grove Community Center
    - a. Many people being displaced are moving to Cedar Grove

**c. Outside agency presentations**

- i. 8 agencies need to present (4 or 5 each meeting, 15-minute presentations)
- ii. Presentations will take up most of November's meeting
- iii. Rachel Waltz is presenting to County Commissioner if we want to direct people to her

**d. Other topics and presentations**

**i. December/January meeting**

- 1. Annual Work Plan
- 2. More outside agency presentations
- 3. Q1 and Q2 data can be presented to outside agencies

**ii. February meeting**

- 1. Outside agency review

**iii. March, April, May meetings**

- 1. Joint meeting w/ AHAB, Carrboro Affordable Housing Commission, and Chapel Hill Housing Advisory Board
  - a. Should be open to the public
  - b. This could happen in March, April, or May
- 2. Board wants to dedicate one meeting in the Spring to AHAB orientation
- iv. Board suggests staggering outside agency reviews
- v. Is there money in our budget to tour different housing options in Orange County?

**e. Big Bold Ideas (Chapel Hill)**

- i. Established 2018-2019
- ii. Board of experts from community
- iii. Solicited 500 ideas for big & bold ideas to accomplish; narrowed down to 2 (affordable housing is one of those)

iv. Big Bold Ideas is not currently meeting

f. County-Wide Housing Plan is coming up for review in the Spring

**V. AHAB Meeting Locations, November 2022 – June 2023**

a. Board likes the idea of alternating meeting locations between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill

i. Chapel Hill: Nov, Jan, Mar, May

ii. Hillsborough: Dec, Feb, April, June

iii. Must conduct meetings in Zoom rooms

1. Library is an option, but they are generally booked up

2. SHSC is not an option; meeting rooms have been taken over by health clinic, and there aren't accommodations for hybrid meetings

3. Chamber is an option, but it's a fairly small room

4. Town Council Chamber is an option

a. Have Zoom capacity; rooms are large; should be free for us to use since we are govt entity; but their Housing Advisory Board meets Tuesdays, as well

5. Seymore Center

a. Not sure if they have Zoom capacity

**b. In person-Zoom hybrid meeting possibility?**

i. Individuals can request to join remotely, but they are highly encouraged to attend in person

ii. Both members and public should be given option to Zoom in

c. Board changes next AHAB meeting to Monday, November 14 (it was originally scheduled for election day)

i. Location to be determined

**VI. Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 7:20