



Community Affordable Housing Strategies Alliance First Special Committee Meeting Report

Committee Name: Public and Private Employer Housing Incentive Programs

Members: Ann R. Kashmer, Millie Membiela, Barbara Romani, Matthew Schwartz, Lynn Dannheisser, Patricia Braynon, Jose Pons, Ramon L. Rodriguez, Terry Manning, Isabel Cossio Carballo, Cecilia La-Villa Travieso, Joann Hicks, Silvia Unzueta, Jose Hernandez, Truly Burton, Aaron M. Zeigler, Aris Eugene, Elizabeth Pierre, Georgina M. Pardo

Date of Report: November 13, 2006

Prepared by: Ann R. Kashmer, Committee Chair

Meeting Date/Time: November 13, 2006/ 11:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Attendees: Committee Members: Ann R. Kashmer and Georgina M. Pardo
Alternates: Jose Pons

Committee's Mission Statement:

Evaluate the existing policies providing public and private sector employers incentives to initiate housing programs for employees; if necessary recommend changes and develop action plan.

Issue 1: The cost to own or rent a home has increased more rapidly than income in our community. Employers in Miami-Dade County are at a disadvantage when competing for new hires or retaining existing employees. Our workforce is directly affected by the present real estate market condition.

Discussion: There is a need for initiatives that would bridge the gap between the cost to own or rent and income.

ACTION ITEMS TO CAHSA:

Recommendations

Short Term:

- Pilot Program:** Develop and implement a County-funded Employer Assisted Housing Pilot Program for county employees, which may be considered a model to emulate by other public and private employers. It may include Home Buyer Education, Individual Development Account (IDA) match, and/or subsidy funds to help county employees buy a home.
- Community Workforce Housing Initiative Program (CWHIP):** CWHIP is a state funded, public/private, pilot program to financially incent government and private employers to work together to provide workforce housing. The Committee endorses the County's participation in this program. Several local employers have voiced an interest in partnering with the County.

- 3. Federal, State and Local Incentive Funding:** All existing and future publicly financed housing related programs, which the County administers, should contain an Employer Assistance Housing element (i.e. CDBG, Home, SHIP and Surtax funding could be allocated to IDA's to match employer incentives for employees for home purchases).

Intermediate Term:

- 1. Tax Abatement, Incentives and Commercial Revitalization Program:** The County should use some or all of the fees Enterprise Zones collect from equipment and shop taxes as a dedicated source for an EAH program. These fees presently go into General Revenues.
- 2. Community Redevelopment Areas (CRA):** CRA's have their own Tax Incremental Funding (TIF) source, which can be used for housing. Only 3 to 5% of Miami-Dade County's land is in a CRA. TIF could be used to buy down the cost of land/property or acquisition/rehab for rental or for sale properties of a housing development in the CRA. A Request For Application (RFA) for development of affordable housing could be offered to employers or developers. Priority in the RFA should be given to potential tenants or owners who are employees of employers within the CRA or adjacent (TBD by CRA) geographical areas.
- 3. Special Taxing District and Corporate Fees:** The County should explore the viability of creating a dedicated funding source, such as Community Districts or General Revenues, to support an Employer Assisted Housing (EAH) program, which could be used as an incentive to the employer or a direct assistance to the employee (direct funding or matching).

Long Term:

- 1. Federal and State Incentive Funding:** Engage the County Lobbyist(s) to research and support any Federal and State Legislation involving Tax Credits or other incentives to employers that would benefit the workforce housing recipients. Follow Senator Hillary Clinton's proposed legislation relating to Employer Assisted Housing Program, and for-sale housing tax credits. At the State level, recommend corporate tax housing credit to incent employers to start an EAH program.
- 2. Property Appraiser's Office:** The Committee supports a recommendation to change the property tax valuation by a State statutory or constitutional amendment for reduced taxes on restricted income rental property. Being proposed by Tax/Relief/Incentive/Abatement/Insurance Issues Committee.
- 3. Maintenance of Affordability Committee:** The Committee supports a statutory or constitutional amendment to Community Land Trust Taxes to allow tax relief for low and moderate income families with regard to homeownership. Being referred to the Maintenance of Affordability Committee.