



The Florida Nonprofit Housing Advocates Network

The Florida Nonprofit Housing Advocates Network (FNHAN) was launched in fall 2010 to further the Florida Housing Coalition's vision that Florida have at least one community-based nonprofit housing provider working in every jurisdiction. We meet in person at the statewide Annual Conference and telephonically throughout the year. At the 2012 Conference we adopted our first one-year Strategic Plan. It has 10 goals and, impressively, we see below just how much success we have had over the last year.

We will meet again in person at the FHC Statewide Conference on **September 9, 2013**. Please Join us.

1. Sadowski Education Efforts

Ensuring that Florida's dedicated revenue for affordable housing is used for just that purpose is a never-ending process. Advocacy for the 2013 session was robust. And while the trust funds were swept to general revenue, SHIP and SAIL were both funded. Our members, individually, and in partnership with others, invested heavily in this effort through outreach to key legislators and providing the examples and materials used for outreach. See www.sadowskicoalition.com for materials and the Legislative Wrap-Up on pages 4 - 8 for more information.

2. Include affordable housing in the Department of Economic Opportunity's Five-Year Plan

Advocacy with the DEO immediately following the 2012 Conference resulted in a revision to the state's plan that made affordable housing a cross-cutting issue for Florida's Five-Year Business Plan. (<http://bit.ly/PBhxIE>). The DEO's Five-Year Plan was to be used as the blueprint for DEO priorities.

3. Financing for Community Land Trust Homebuyers

During 2012, members of the FNHAN worked with HUD FHA to advocate financing for CLT homebuyers. We arranged a meeting for CLT advocates across the nation (held March 2013) to meet with key staff at HUD in Washington, D.C. to advocate for FHA financing for CLT homebuyers. We collected information from our members across Florida, including, but not limited to, South Florida CLT, Palm Beach CLT, Northwood Renaissance, Housing Leadership Council of PBC, Pinellas County CLT, and Delray Beach CLT to provide evidence to HUD that the current FHA policies need to be changed. This issue is ongoing and will be the subject of discussion at the FNHAN Caucus at the statewide meeting in Orlando at the Conference.

4. Advocate for Nonprofits in the Universal Application (Tax Credits)

Beginning in January 2012, the FNAHN met regularly to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations to address our concerns with the tax credit allocation system: the current system is making it too difficult for the community-based nonprofit to survive; and leaving some of those organizations with no choice but to joint venture with large for-profit developers to stay in business. Our recommendations, delivered to the FHFC, included a priority in funding for nonprofits, and an increase in the developer fee from 25% to 50% for nonprofits who are the partners of for-profit developers in the nonprofit set-aside. The Universal Application is now a thing of the past. And while the FNHAN has begun work on this issue, we will need to continue to address the new system of RFPs and the opportunities that should be incorporated into the process for mission-based nonprofits' opportunities.

5. Address the Property Tax Exemption for Limited Partnerships in Section 196.1978 F.S.

The 2013 session brought success on this issue. The portion of Section 196.1978 that was subject to abuse by for-profit developers has been repealed and the repeal is retroactive. This is an important victory for tax credit development in Florida, the future of which would have been seriously undermined if this provision had not been repealed. Local governments would have been loath to approve or provide support to tax credit developments that would all be removed from the local government property tax rolls.

6. Ensure that Florida Attorney General Bank Settlement Monies are used for Housing

Attorney General Bondi was her own best advocate on this issue. Florida can now boast having used all its Bank Settlement funds for housing related purposes, which is not something that happened in many other states. Bank Settlement funds were appropriated for items such as counseling and legal services to help homeowners in foreclosure, as well as for the courts system moving foreclosure cases through. The Bank Settlement funds were also used for an appropriation to Habitat for Humanity and for Domestic Violence Center's capital improvements. Unfortunately, the Attorney General monies were used to supplant rather than supplement the state and local housing trust fund monies.

7. Prevent Homelessness

The Florida Housing Coalition and several of its member partners have spent many hours in 2012-2013 on the team to end Veterans Homelessness. Our members have done an outstanding job of securing historically high levels of funding for extremely low-income populations and the homeless, including a \$10 million appropriation for nonprofits to use for housing the homeless based on the significant increase in documentary stamp collection for the state housing trust funds.

8. Fight NIMBYism and Promote Fair Housing

Florida Housing Coalition president, Jaimie Ross, authored the Chapter on "Avoiding and Overcoming the NIMBY Syndrome" for the 2013 *Housing Advocates Resource Guidebook* produced by our partner organization, the National Low Income Housing Coalition. A workshop will be held at the FHCC Conference on September 10 on **Avoiding and Overcoming the NIMBY Syndrome**, which includes highlighting the exceptional statutory protection we have in Florida's Fair Housing Act to fight NIMBYism in local land use decisions. This workshop will be in addition to our annual workshop on Fair Housing. Several of our members participated in housing events in April (Fair Housing Month).



9. Surplus Land / Land Banking

According to the law enacted in 2006 (Sections 125.379 and 166.0451, Florida Statutes), an inventory of available lands is due every three years beginning in 2007, which means that 2013 should be the second time such an inventory was compiled and properties disposed of for affordable housing. The Florida Housing Coalition's FNHAN is undertaking a review of the surplus lands program and will be sharing those results at this workshop along with opportunities for land banking in Florida.

10. Educate Newly Elected Officials (Local and State Level)

The Florida Housing Coalition provided a two-hour training at the 2011 and 2012 Statewide Conferences on best practices for housing advocates to meet with their state representatives. Many of our members also addressed their local delegations and city and county commissions to obtain resolutions in support of the Sadowski trust fund appropriations. This year we will have a professional marketing firm on the third day of the conference to address best practices for messaging and marketing affordable housing. **HNN**

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