

THE FLORIDA NONPROFIT HOUSING ADVOCATES NETWORK: 4TH ANNUAL MEETING

The Florida Nonprofit Housing Advocates Network (FNHAN) was launched by the Florida Housing Coalition in fall 2010 to ensure that every jurisdiction in Florida has at least one community-based nonprofit housing provider. FNHAN membership is open to all nonprofit members of FHC, and provides a forum for nonprofit housing providers and their partners to discuss ongoing affordable housing advocacy issues throughout the year. We meet in person at the statewide Annual Conference and telephonically throughout the year. At the 2014 Conference we reviewed last year's goals and successes and adopted our third one-year Strategic Plan. The 2014 FNHAN Strategic Plan has 10 goals to advance in the upcoming year.

If you would like to be a member of the FNHAN and further the goals below, please join us.

1. SADOWSKI EDUCATION EFFORTS

Thanks in large part to members of the FNHAN, the 2014-2015 Florida General Appropriations Act appropriated \$167.7 million of the housing trust fund monies for affordable housing and set-aside 4% (\$3.8 million to DCF and \$200,000 to DEO for training and technical assistance) of the SHIP funds to be used to provide services to homeless persons. The FNHAN members' advocacy efforts for full funding and a dedicated revenue source from an estimated \$245.33 million state and local housing trust funds available for appropriation during the 2015 session will continue. The FNHAN members will be provided with the tools needed to educate legislators in their district offices about the need for SHIP and SAIL, highlighting the successes and local impact of these programs. We will send out alerts and calls to action when needed and keep the membership apprised of what is happening throughout the 2015 session.

2. UPDATES ON FEDERAL HOUSING ISSUES

The FNHAN members recognize the importance of keep-

ing up to date on the issues relating to affordable housing on a federal level. Whether it is funding levels or program changes of the CDBG or HOME programs or decisions from federal courts impacting affordable housing, the FNHAN members will be informed via webinars or email blasts, teleconference calls, or calls for action when appropriate.

3. SUPPORT LOCAL AND STATE EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES THAT CREATE LONG TERM/PERMANENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING (HOMEOWNERSHIP AND RENTAL) WHICH WILL MAINTAIN FLORIDA'S FINANCIAL INVESTMENT FOR YEARS TO COME.

The Community Land Trust (CLT) model of home ownership retains the public's investment and ultimately creates a permanent supply of affordable housing for generations to come. The Florida Community Land Trust Institute, a collaboration between 1000 Friends of Florida and the Florida Housing Coalition, produced a CLT Primer that was last revised in 2008. With the assistance of FNHAN members, we will update the CLT Primer and make it available to our membership online and in print.

Long term and permanent rental housing is critically needed in Florida. Since 1993, the Shimberg Center has estimated that Florida has lost more than 52,000 assisted housing units in 600+ properties. Additionally, the number of expiring rental units with the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) over the next 15 years is expected to be almost 19,900 units. Preservation is not only less expensive per unit than new construction, it allows the elderly and people with disabilities to live in a non-institutionalized environment. The FNHAN members will continue to advocate for long term affordability in Florida's rental programs.

4. ADVOCATE FOR NONPROFITS THAT SERVE THE NEEDS OF FLORIDA'S MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS IN FHFC'S QAP AND RFAS

The Universal Application has been replaced with a process of RFAs by the FHFC. The RFA process al-

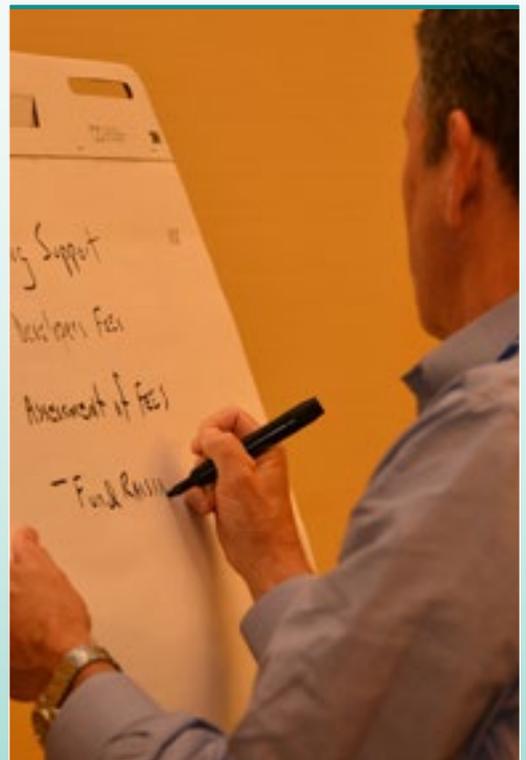


lowers FHFC the ability to be more flexible in the state's housing funding goals by requiring less agency rulemaking, but it also means that substantive requirements for affordable housing financing are incorporated into individual RFAs. The FNHAN will assist mission based organizations serving the most vulnerable populations by working through a subcommittee on strategies and

recommendations that improve the public policy in the allocation of housing resources in the QAP for tax credits and the funding distributed through the RFA process.

5. MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASSISTING HOME-OWNERS IN FORECLOSURE

In 2013 Florida had the nation's highest number of fore-



closure filings and the highest rate of foreclosure. Fortunately there appears to be a slowing of the number of mortgages newly falling into delinquency. Although the Hardest Hit Fund has a policy of providing assistance if the foreclosure is more than 7 days away, FNHAN members are still encountering homeowners potentially eligible for HHF funding that are being foreclosed on by judges across the state. FNHAN has a number of counseling agencies. A subcommittee will be used to make recommendations including (1) addressing the reports of some for-profit agencies and/or law firms that have been hindering rather than helping homeowners in foreclosure; and (2) addressing the reports that some courts are pushing through foreclosures even when the bank and the homeowner are able to come to resolution with the help of HHFs.

6. ENSURE THAT FLORIDA'S PORTION OF BANK OF AMERICA SETTLEMENT MONEY IS USED TO PROMOTE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Floridians are expected to receive more than \$1 billion in settlement funds from Bank of America. Although there are few details on the specifics of the settlement monies, programs are expected to be set up to assist those borrowers that are eligible for relief with potential first and second lien principal reduction and forgiveness, loan modifications and new loans for those struggling to get a loan. Settlement monies will also be used for affordable rental housing and donations to communities impacted by the housing crisis. The FNHAN will work with its partners, including Bank of America and Florida Legal Services, to discover the funding details of the settlement agreement and, if needed, to help ensure the money is used effectively for affordable housing.

7. PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Florida's extremely low-income (ELI) renters are at greatest risk of becoming homeless. The loss of affordable housing units impacts extremely low income households disproportionately. Over 14,000 units have federal rental assistance contracts expiring before 2021, and these units are also most likely to serve ELI elderly and persons with disabilities. In collaboration with other affordable housing providers, FNHAN will continue to work on preservation of existing housing serving

Florida's ELI populations and securing existing and future funding for extremely low-income populations and the homeless.

8. FIGHT NIMBYISM AND PROMOTE FAIR HOUSING THROUGH HOME MATTERS LOCAL REPORTS

At the FHC 2014 Conference, the FNHAN Caucus discussed continued issues of NIMBYism in their communities. The Home Matters 2014 Report from FHC has proven an invaluable education tool at the state level to inform key decision makers on the need and benefit of affordable housing. Many FNHAN members suggested having individualized community Home Matters reports to promote affordable housing and combat NIMBYism locally. We will prepare Home Matters Reports tailored to individual communities as often as practicable based on requests and funding.

9. THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The 2012 and 2013 FNHAN Strategic Plans included goals that continue to be important to our membership. For instance, surplus land and land banking are vital resources in the development of affordable housing, and in 2016 counties and municipalities will again be required to prepare an inventory list of public properties available for affordable housing pursuant to Florida law (Section 125.379 and 166.0451, Florida Statutes). To ensure that the surplus lands program and other goals continue to be addressed, the Florida Housing Coalition's FNHAN is developing a three-year strategic action plan.

10. EDUCATE NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS AND KEY DECISION MAKERS (LOCAL AND STATE LEVEL)

The election on November 4 will surely bring new faces to the Florida Legislature. The Florida Home Matters report will be updated for the 2015 legislative session and certain Home Matters Local Reports will be used to educate newly elected local officials on the importance of providing affordable housing. The FNHAN success of contacting local and state legislators during last session made all the difference in getting the Sadowski Trust funds allocated for affordable housing. Webinars and FNHAN conference calls will provide a forum for members to share information, be kept up to date and engaged in the 2015 legislature session. 