Element 3 - HOUSING ELEMENT Goals, Objectives, and Policies City of Stuart, Florida Effective April 2002[1]

Footnotes:

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Cross reference— Future land use element, Element I; residential development, Element I, Objective A5; East Stuart Special Studies District, Element I, Objective D1; implementation, Element VII, Objective A6.

GOAL STATEMENT 3.A

Ensure the provision of adequate residential sites and housing opportunities for affordable, structurally sound housing in a sufficient quantity to accommodate the housing market demands and affordability needs of current and future residents of Stuart.

Objective 3.A1. - Managed growth.

The City will encourage developers to use the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles or the Florida Green Building Coalition's Green land development and building standards when accommodating the housing needs of the current and anticipated future residents of the City and providing the necessary infrastructure concurrent with planned growth as specified by the Comprehensive Plan. The City shall promote the use of conservation, solar, and other renewable sources of energy supply. This objective will begin upon formal adoption of the plan and will be met throughout the planning period.

The following policies support this objective:

Policy 3.A1.1. Greenhouse gas emission. Through incentives, which may include development review fast tracking, permit fee rebates, impact fee deferrals and administrative variance, the City shall encourage LEED, Florida Green Building Coalition's Green land development and building standards or other "Green" certified buildings through methods including, but not limited to:

- Heat Island reduction.
- Use of local materials, certified sustainable wood products and/or highly recycled content products.
- Energy efficient equipment/fixtures.
- Water saving fixtures.
- Waste management and recycling.
- Pervious paver alternatives.
- Rainwater harvesting.
- Solar and wind energy provisions.

Policy 3.A1.2. Adequate residential sites. The Stuart Future Land Use Map shall designate adequate residential land to accommodate anticipated population growth through the year 2020.

Policy 3.A1.3. Maintaining existing housing stock. To preserve the existing housing stock, especially affordable units, the Future Land Use Map shall set boundaries for non-residential conversion for the following residential areas:

1. Osceola Street near Martin Memorial Hospital.

2. Palm Beach Road corridor.

3. St. Lucie Crescent area.

4. Fern Street.

These boundaries shall be adopted as part of the Stuart Future Land Use Map. The resulting protected residential parcels shall be given a residential-only classification on the Future Land Use Map, and residential-only zoning designations in the revised Land Development Regulations.

Policy 3.A1.4. Small-lot homes in older neighborhoods. To accommodate reasonable residential growth while maintaining the character of older neighborhoods, setback requirements for additions to existing houses on 50-foot by 125-foot and smaller lots shall be lessened, as long as sufficient public access for fire protection is provided. (These lots shall be those in existence according to 1988 City maps.)

Policy 3.A1.5. Alleyways in residential areas. Public alleyways shall remain open for pedestrian access, fire protection, and other public services, and new public alleyways shall be encouraged.

Policy 3.A1.6. Public infrastructure. The City shall annually adopt a Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan that identifies needed improvements to public infrastructure in residential areas and that provides for funding and schedules improvements.

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)

Objective 3.A2. - Attainable housing.

The City will address the attainable housing needs of very-low-income to moderate-income residents by continuing to promote attainable housing in City neighborhoods through revised minimum lot size requirements and special financing made available through the SHIP program, Farmers Home Administration and other funding mechanisms.

The following policies support this objective:

Policy 3.A2.1. . The following definitions and standards for attainable housing and income categories shall be used by the City in its housing programs:

"Attainable housing" means healthy and safe housing that people with low to very low incomes can live in without paying more than 30 percent of their household income (not including utility payments).

"Very low income" means an income falling below 50 percent of the HUD AMI for Martin County, Port Saint Lucie MSA..

"Low income" means an income being greater than50 percent and less than 80 percent of the HUD AMI for Martin County, Port Saint Lucie MSA.

"Workforce income" means an income no less than 80 percent and no greater than 100 percent of the HUD AMI for Martin County, Port Saint Lucie MSA.

Policy 3.A2.2. Streamline regulations. The City shall continue to encourage private sector provision of attainable housing, while maintaining public health, welfare, and safety by reviewing and revising its ordinances, codes, regulations, and permitting process periodically to:

1. Eliminate excessive requirements, and

2. Provide incentives.

Policy 3.A2.3. Provision of land. The City shall help locate land suitable as sites for use in public, private or joint public/private projects to benefit residents in the very-low-income to moderate-income ranges.

Policy 3.A2.4. Seeking funding. As resources permit, the City shall seek State and other funding targeted for very-low-income to moderate-income housing, to the following ends:

A. To address the housing needs of those Stuart residents on the regional waiting list of the Stuart Housing Authority;

B. To provide replacement housing for those displaced by City code enforcement that leads to demolition of dilapidated housing;

C. To increase affordable rental housing opportunities for those ineligible for Stuart Housing Authority units, especially the elderly and young working residents;

D. To increase affordable home ownership opportunities; and

E. To provide the necessary infrastructure to serve affordable housing units.

Policy 3.A2.5. Protecting affordable housing in the City of Stuart The number of affordable housing units within the City should not be decreased. To this end, the City will:

A. Allow accessory rental apartments ("granny flats") in outbuildings such as converted garages.

B. Allow mixed use of buildings and other appropriate zoning techniques as long as public health, safety and welfare are protected.

Policy 3.A2.6. Housing opportunities. In order to expand the number and types of opportunities for attainable housing, the City will encourage new construction through density bonuses and other provisions provided through the land development regulations as well as through grants and special programs administered by the City.

Policy 3.A2.7. Demonstration projects. The City will encourage the private sector to construct affordable and entry-level housing demonstration projects by revising lot area requirements and providing incentives as well as with lenders such as the SHIP program and the Farmers Home Administration to make projects both feasible and attractive.

Policy 3.A2.8. Housing assistance. The City will encourage efforts to assist persons in the very-low-income to moderate-income ranges in locating adequate housing by searching for financing mechanisms and making them available to builders and low and moderate income families. The Stuart Housing Authority will continue to implement housing assistance programs throughout the planning period.

Policy 3.A2.9. Guide for the location of low and moderate income housing. Low and moderate income housing will be located based on proximity to current units and employment centers. The principles and criteria guiding the location of housing will be consistent with, and further the intentions of, the overall Future Land Use Plan.

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)

Objective 3.A3. - Special needs.

The City will implement land use regulations which assure the availability of adequate sites for residents with special housing needs.

The following policies support this objective:

Policy 3.A3.1. Group homes. Group homes licensed by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services for six or fewer unrelated people shall be a use by right in any zone that allows residential use. Licensed group homes for seven or more unrelated occupants shall be a use by special exception in all land use zones that allow multifamily residential use.

"Group home" means a facility licensed by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services to provide a living environment for unrelated residents who operate as the functional equivalent of a family, including such supervision and care as may be necessary to meet the physical, emotional and social needs of the residents. Adult congregate living facilities (ACLFs) shall be included in this definition.

This definition shall not include rooming or boarding houses, clubs, fraternities, sororities, monasteries or convents, hotels, residential treatment facilities, nursing homes, or emergency shelters.

Policy 3.A3.2. Foster homes. Foster homes licensed by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services shall be a use by right in all residential zones.

> "Foster home" or "foster care facility" means a facility licensed by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services to house four or fewer children or adult foster residents in a family environment, including such supervision and care as may be necessary to meet the physical, emotional and social needs of the residents.

Policy 3.A3.3. Adult congregate living facilities (ACLFs). ACLFs licensed by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services for four or fewer unrelated people shall be a use by right in all residential zones. Licensed ACLFs for five or more unrelated occupants shall be a use by special exception in all land use zones that allow multifamily residential uses.

[*Policy 3.A3.4.* Reserved.]

Policy 3.A3.5. Displacement of mobile home residents. Displaced mobile home residents who are deemed eligible for assistance programs for very-low-income to moderate-income persons shall be included as potential recipients when the City applies for State, Federal, or other housing assistance programs for very-low-income to moderate-income occupants.

Objective 3.A4. - Housing condition.

The City shall continue to support policies which act to minimize the number of substandard or dilapidated units either by restoration or demolition.

The following policies support this objective:

Policy 3.A4.1. Definitions. The City adopts the following definitions regarding housing conditions, for use within this Comprehensive Plan.

> "Standard housing" means housing that meets City codes.
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> "Substandard housing" means housing that does not meet City codes, but which could be economically repaired to meet code.
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> "Dilapidated housing" means housing that does not meet City code; could not be repaired economically to meet codes; should be demolished for health or safety reasons.

Policy 3.A4.2. Rehabilitation and prevention of substandard housing. The City shall continue an active, ongoing program of code enforcement and voluntary housing rehabilitation where appropriate.

The purpose of this program is to correct and prevent substandard housing conditions.

This program shall be a joint effort of the City, property owners, neighborhood residents, and the private sector of the community. It shall be a mixture of intensive mandatory code enforcement and voluntary community efforts. It shall include these components:

City Role

A. Identification of substandard conditions, fire code violations, and other regulated health and safety problems by specific location, owner, and violation.

B. Increased code enforcement to force owners to bring property up to code.

C. Encouragement of code and home repair education programs to help residents and owners in target neighborhoods understand City code, and to teach simple skills and techniques that allow individuals to make their own home repairs.

D. Encouragement of continuing neighborhood and private sector efforts to correct code violations and avoid further substandard conditions.

E. Encourage formation of neighborhood associations.

Neighborhood Role

A. Aid in identifying housing units in need of repair.

B. Encourage owners to participate in home improvement projects.

C. Provision of volunteer labor to make repairs.

D. Ongoing efforts to maintain repaired housing in standard condition.

Community and Private Sector Role

A. Aid in organizing home improvement/education programs.

B. Donation of necessary materials and technical supervision of volunteer labor.

C. Teaching home repair skills during education programs.

Policy 3.A4.3. Elimination of dilapidated housing. The City shall pursue an active program of code enforcement to identify and require demolition of all dilapidated housing units. The cost of demolition shall be the property owner's responsibility.

Policy 3.A4.4. Relocation housing. The City supports the relocation of very-low-income to moderate-income occupants of housing which are displaced due to redevelopment activities by implementing State and Federal requirements for the provision of relocation housing.

Policy 3.A4.5. Replacement of dilapidated and substandard housing. The City shall actively pursue State, Federal, or other non-City funding to replace dilapidated or chronically substandard housing units with standard housing units for very-low-income to moderate-income occupants.

Where feasible, the City shall pursue the public use or purchase of land vacated by the demolition of dilapidated housing to serve as sites for replacement housing for very-low-income to moderate-income occupants.

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)

Objective 3.A5. - [Mobile and modular home developments.]

The City will amend its land development regulations to provide design standards for mobile and manufactured home developments. These standards will provide for an adequate number of sites in areas outside flood zones and the hurricane storm surge zone. In order to promote a consistent pattern of residential land uses and protect property values within the City, mobile homes will be allowed in specified residential categories in mobile home developments which may be rent parks, cooperatives, condominiums or subdivisions. Pursuant to F.S. ch. 320, all local requirements will be reasonable and uniformly applied and enforced. Requirements may include appearance standards to ensure compatibility of appearance within a neighborhood.

Policy 3.A5.1. Mobile home developments will be located in areas that are not prone to flooding or excessive danger from tropical storms.

Policy 3.A5.2. Mobile home developments will be designed in order to provide sufficient open space between units and buffering from arterials as well as from any adjacent land use which may adversely effect [affect] the health, safety, and welfare of residents.

Policy 3.A5.3. Mobile homes on individual lots in areas of site-built housing will not be permitted.

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)

Objective 3.A6. - [Relocation housing.]

The City will provide relocation housing for residents which are displaced due to community redevelopment programs in accordance with F.S. § 421.55.

Policy 3.A6.1. The City will make every attempt to avoid the displacement of residents during any community redevelopment projects.

Policy 3.A6.2. The City will take any actions which are equitable and reasonable to minimize residential displacement due to community redevelopment projects.

Policy 3.A6.3. The City will mitigate residential property loss or loss of rental units in accord with F.S. § 421.55, as well as any Federal requirements for the provision of relocating housing.

Objective A7. - [Development incentives.]

In order to provide affordable housing to City residents, the City will continue to apply design and other development incentives contained in the Urban Code and East Stuart Overlay Zone Code.

Policy 3.A7.1. The City will continue to provide a density bonus system and will work with developers to implement such programs.

Policy 3.A7.2. The City will continue to coordinate with lending agencies such as the Farmers Home Administration in order to provide the necessary financing mechanisms to make standard housing affordable in Stuart.

Policy 3.A7.3. In order to implement housing programs quickly and efficiently, the City shall continue to examine ways to streamline the permitting system.

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)

GOAL STATEMENT 3.B

To preserve and enhance Stuart's heritage and character through the protection of historically significant housing.

Objective 3.B1. - Preserve historic housing.

The City shall continue to maintain and update its inventory of historic and archeological resources and shall encourage establishment of local historic districts and landmark designation as resources permit.

The following policies support this objective:

Policy 3.B1.1. Land availability for relocation. The City shall pursue making land available for relocation of historically significant buildings threatened by redevelopment.

Policy 3.B1.2. Adaptive reuse. In revising its Land Development Code to be consistent with this Comprehensive Plan, the City shall adopt a policy or policies to encourage property owners to actively use their historical properties for homes, offices, museums, or other uses appropriate to the preservation of the building. The City shall review its land development regulations to ensure that City policies do not unduly restrict a property owner from active use of an historic property whose historic values have been preserved or restored.

Policy 3.B1.3. Support to owners. The City shall encourage property owners of historically significant housing to seek preservation assistance through supportive educational programs, tax abatement, and assistance with State processing.

Policy 3.B1.4. Historic preservation. The City shall encourage and cooperate with historic preservation efforts to develop and promote public programs and resources which increase awareness of historic places and cultural and historical activities, including incentives for home owners to participate in the City’s voluntary Historic Preservation Program

Policy 3.B1.5. The City shall continue utilizing historic data as identified in its City wide survey, and may be amended from time to time, in order to promote awareness of historic places and sites.

Policy 3.B1.6. Through its Land Development Code, the City shall continue to encourage historic preservation through voluntary means and incentives.

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)

GOAL STATEMENT 3.C

The goal of establishing an East Stuart Special Studies District is to address the unique and special land use and related development issues of this neighborhood. This item is also included in the Future Land Use Element as Goal D.

Objective 3.C1. [East Stuart Overlay District.]

To promote affordable housing and economic development in East Stuart, the City shall continue to apply design and development incentives contained in the East Stuart Overlay District Code, as well as through effective and ongoing code enforcement activities to strengthen the neighborhood character of East Stuart.

Policy 3.C1.1. The City shall encourage new and in-fill development in the East Stuart neighborhood:

- Replace substandard housing with code compliant housing;
- Create accessible and safe neighborhood;
- Encourage a mix of housing types;
- Encourage neighborhood infrastructure, such as sidewalks and walkway linkages

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)

GOAL STATEMENT 3.D

To preserve and enhance the City's existing housing stock.

Objective 3.D1. - Reinvestment.

The City shall continue to implement its Land Development Code to encourage reinvestment in the existing housing stock while maintaining quality development to ensure housing opportunities are available for its residents.

Policy 3.D1.1. The City shall continue to apply existing standards within its Land Development Code to encourage reinvestment in the City's existing housing stock. These standards include relaxed lot coverage and setback provisions, cottage lot allowances, and less restrictive variance criteria.

Policy 3.D1.2. The City shall employ its City's Development Department and Community Redevelopment Agency to assist property owners in redeveloping their property.

Policy 3.D1.3. The City shall explore the development of community appearance standards in conjunction with neighborhood group or associations.

Policy 3.D1.4. To benefit neighborhoods, the City shall continue to emphasize minimum housing standards and crime prevention techniques within its Land Development Code.

(Ord. No. 2205-2010, § 1(Exh. I), 9-27-2010)