

Hamilton Development Corporation
February 24, 2016

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 24, 2016 with Bill Gisness, Brian Stein, Anthony Nickas, Rick Mitchell present. Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox, and DPW Director Bill Redford also present.

Call to order

Brian Stein called the HDC meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Approve warrant #1614

HDC warrant #1614 in the amount of \$2,162.37 consists of mortgage, Harborlight, and Jane Dooley's time.

Bill Gisness moved to approve HDC warrant #1614 in the amount stated. Anthony Nickas seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Minutes Approval

The HDC will approve meeting minutes for January 20, 2016 and February 3, 2016 at a subsequent meeting.

Review of Pre-Bid Conference

Discussion ensued about the pre-bid conference for the 59/63 Willow Street property scheduled for 10 a.m. at Town Hall. Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox reported on responses to the RFP. Harborlight Community Partners will not be attending since it is not interested in the project at this time. The YMCA is not going to participate although if the HDC does not find a suitable developer it might be interested in a development project for the site. Todd Fremont-Smith of Nordblom acknowledged receipt of the RFP but did not communicate whether he is interested or not. This may be too small a project for the organization. The other developers who were sent the RFP did not respond. Fox mentioned how he had been contacted by a company that would re-advertise the RFP on another site.

Stein will be attending the pre-bid conference. A follow-up email will be sent to developers who have not responded including David Cutter and C.P. Berry. The intent

of the conference is to review the RFP and to respond to any questions as well as discuss any workarounds. It was noted that Windover is too busy with existing and future projects, especially in Beverly, to be interested in the HDC property. Also mentioned was that social media comments about the RFP were all positive.

59/63 Willow Street

Other options the HDC could consider for the 59/63 Willow Street property include:

1. Approach Cutter about how he could purchasing the back half of the site where a new building could be located that has frontage on Railroad Avenue and the HDC would keep the 63 Willow Street commercial building that currently houses the plumber's office and barber shop.
2. Combine property with Town parking lot on Railroad Avenue (land swap) and have parking at 59/63 Willow Street. Logistics may be difficult since Harborlight has septic system under the parking lot.
3. Ask recipients of RFP why they are not interested in developing 59/63 Willow Street site. This includes Cutter who had previously tried to buy the parcel before the HDC bought the site.
4. Create a joint venture between the HDC and Cutter where the HDC would focus on housing and Cutter could focus on commercial development.

Hamilton Downtown improvements

Discussion ensued on possibility of HDC creating a master concept plan for the business district illustrating short term and long term projects. It could be posted on social media to get comments. This plan could use a GIS map of the area and include more trees along Bay Road turning into Railroad Avenue. An island could be made across Railroad Avenue with trees and pedestrian walkway. The plan would define other locations for benches, improved sidewalks, period streetlights, lighted Christmas trees, kiosk for signage branding, and a bicycle lane. Three times a year Railroad Avenue could be closed for a street party. The plan could include concepts presented by Selectman Jeff Hubbard so they could be promoted.

Discussion addressed where holiday lights could be added on Railroad Avenue and at Patton Park. A contractor could be hired rather than using public works to install the lights. HDC member Dave Carey is looking into street light option that uses a solar

panel. Discussion was on how trees identified for lights would have to be surveyed including how to bring power to the lights. The HDC suggested that improvement effort should concentrate on Linden Street to Railroad Avenue. Also mentioned was the need to have conversations with businesses along this route (especially the new business owners, and this could be partnered with Hubbard as well as HW Garden Club, Rotary Club and Friends of Patton Park) where they could add lights to trees in addition to the Town's lighting initiative.

Discussion was on concept of adding flower planters in the downtown and details such as how many and what size would be used and how this could be defined in proposed site plan. This topic will be addressed by the HDC with the business owners in a meeting at one of their establishments.

New/old business

Discussion was on future potential in the downtown and if the former Chebacco Road landfill site or other area in Town could be a location where industrial downtown businesses could relocate. (At this point a solar use is being considered for the landfill as a DEP post-closure use.) It was noted that these companies must have succession plans. Stein will identify the contact persons.

Also addressed was the potential for the MBTA parking lot and if the HDC could approach the shopping center owner to revitalize the parking lot with mixed use. Wenham would have to be involved in this discussion. There is federal and state money that could be applied toward this type of development.

In addition, how another bank would not be a preference for the downtown especially given what is occurring between abutters of the Hamilton Gardens site and Institution for Savings. It was noted that the Talbot's conglomerate is not doing well and it owns its store in the downtown.

The discussion revisited how the HDC will continue in its RFP process but will simultaneously converse with some recipients of RFP about why they are not interested in the 59/63 Willow Street as part of planning next steps for the property.

Discussion was on how the HDC is speaking to the bank about status of its mortgage and actions the Corporation is taking. Also, about the warrant article dollar amount for meals tax being \$90,000 versus the \$65,000 and how changes can still be made in the closed warrant. In addition, that the first mixed use site plan has been submitted for Planning Board review for site behind Jim Kroesser's office on Bay Road where a

bakery and housing will be located. It was noted that a new tenant, a caterer, is in the former Jumbo House location on Railroad Avenue. Also, that the first floor of the former workout facility on Willow Street has been rented.

The HDC decided to meet on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 to get back on its regular two week schedule. It was noted that the bids in response to the 59/63 Willow Street RFP are due on April 8, 2016.

Gisness moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 a.m. Mitchell seconded the motion.
VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Brian Stein, President