

**Hamilton Development Corporation**  
**February 18, 2015**

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 with Brian Stein, Bill Gisness, Rick Mitchell, Dave Carey, Anthony Nickas present. DPW Director Bill Redford and Rachel Meketon also present.

**Call to order**

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

**Minutes from December 4, 6, and 11, 2014**

Bill Gisness moved to approve the December 4, 6, and 11, 2014 HDC meeting minutes. Dave Carey seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

**Warrant for Bills**

The warrant is for property taxes on 59/63 Willow Street, water bill, Harborlight bill, Rachel Meketon's time, and Jane Dooley's time.

Stein entertained a motion to approve warrant HDC 1510 in the amount of \$5,576.87. Rick Mitchell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

**Board Appointments**

Rachel Meketon reported that the HDC members will have three-year appointments moving forward. Terms for Carey and Mitchell are up for reappointment. Their terms will be extended by the Selectmen until June 30 and then they will be reappointed for three year terms. Meketon will email BOS Chair Scott Maddern and Administrative Assistant to the Town Manager Maureen Hickey about how Carey and Mitchell are interested in continuing to serve on the HDC.

**Operating Procedures**

Carey and Anthony Nickas have reviewed existing operating procedures from other corporations to glean pertinent information for the HDC. The HDC's attorney is too busy at the moment to assist with this project, and the Corporation does not want to incur any expense for the project. Carey emailed Meketon and Patrick Reffett, Director

of Planning and Inspections, to see if they could provide some germane information that he and Nickas could edit to tailor to HDC. Meketon will speak to Reffett about if there is any possibility of assisting with the creation of the HDC's operating procedures. Meketon offered to research what other development organizations are using and will report to Carey and Nickas. Nickas concurred with Carey that existing procedures they reviewed dealt with organizations that have employees and comply with county government requirements which does not apply to the HDC. Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena had suggested the HDC put policies and procedures in place to streamline processes (i.e., warrant payments, and automatic payments for recurring bills).

### **59 Willow Street**

The 59 Willow Street house has been rented with the HDC having received a deposit. The HDC's attorney provided a lease that was modified for 18 months and one of the HDC members will sign. The tenant is a landscaper and he offered to do the grounds maintenance as well as snow removal for a reduction in rent. The initial ask for rent was \$1,950 and the tenant offered \$1,700 with an agreed upon monthly rent of \$1,750. The HDC currently pays \$75 to \$80 every time the lawn is mowed and \$50 for every snow plowing.

Carey moved that the HDC accept the monthly rate of \$1,750 for an 18-month lease and tenant would perform all of the landscaping related functions. Gisness seconded the motion. Discussion ensued about how the tenant pays all utilities, and pays \$3,500 upfront for first month's rent and a security deposit. VOTE: Unanimous.

The Corporation discussed how the property had been shown 10 times as indicator of demand from rental community and acknowledged the need for more supply of rental properties in Town.

### **Design Guidelines**

The HDC reviewed comments on design guidelines deciding to include sections from MAPC and coordination with existing by-laws. The design guidelines address massing, scale and proportions with comments from visioning meetings incorporated. Additional photographs will be added once they can be taken after the weather improves. Also included was approach on height when a new development would abut residential property so that height complements scale of nearby houses within reason. Discussion addressed reasonable scale for one or two stories as a guideline when there

are abutting commercial buildings as high as 35'. Architectural styles/details and materials were added along with those from MAPC and from local buildings, use of flat roofs and parapets, residential buildings with business uses, storefront, blank walls along pedestrian walkways, window alignment and double-hung, with vinyl siding and concrete paneling discouraged.

Discussion addressed how a proposed change to the zoning by-law for mixed use should be concise when ready to present at fall Town Meeting. The HDC will work on the content from now until the summer, and include better images. The Corporation will focus on clarity and specificity to help people adopt the guidelines that depict what people would like to see and for developers to use for the future. The HDC will review preferred examples of format for the guidelines. Discussion was on if the guidelines are part of the Planning Board's rules and regulations versus being a specific zoning by-law that is statutorily fixed then they could be changed or modified more easily by the Planning Board versus going through a Town Meeting process. Gisness offered to review the Planning Board rules and regulations. Also noted was that the Zoning Board of Appeals could reference the design guidelines when reviewing applications. The HDC will continue to make comments and additions to the design guidelines and will review suggested format at an upcoming meeting.

### **Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Application**

Discussion was on how the HDC should craft the parameters for ULI such as wastewater treatment system, units of new housing and retail. In lieu of renderings, the HDC wants ULI to study several sites (i.e., 20 units on 59/63 Willow Street and consequences, likewise at Hansbury site, former Mike's Auto or a site in Wenham – Haley's property that abuts the 300 Main Street property) and recommend the number of units the Town could handle (i.e., condominiums, rentals, studios, one-bedrooms, two-bedrooms). Also addressed was rather than identify specific sites for the study there is the option of designating an overlay district, and what is the potential for mixed used development within that district and the HDC property.

Discussion ensued on if ULI should analyze a full buildout of the business district (commercial on the first floor and residential on the second floor) and effect on Route 1A (assuming a wastewater system is in place and if there would be a benefit from it) and try to predict the maximum economic potential the zone would produce. Consideration would be given to people expressing interest in not too much growth in the downtown. Tax revenue projection numbers have been pulled together for the 59/63 Willow Street property. Discussion addressed how to help ULI assess entire value of

buildout within the commercial district by looking at the four downtown parcels previously identified. This could give the HDC information about the amount of tax revenue the buildout could bring the Town in the near future (this includes a septic plan) which would facilitate understanding of the benefits of moving forward with mixed use in the downtown. These numbers could be calculated based on type of housing (i.e., if it should attract families and whether not that would tax school system given declining school enrollment in Hamilton).

ULI has not been hired by HDC yet and estimated cost for the study is \$6,000. Meketon will create a draft application for ULI study that defines specific parcels, whole downtown (i.e., second floor stories at shopping center, buildings along Bay Road), wastewater system or not, that will be reviewed by Gisness and Stein and then presented to HDC. Meketon will review ULI website to investigate what has been done for other towns as a reference. Once the HDC is ready to hire ULI it would propose dates for when the study could be done and ULI will respond with cost/schedule. Stein will find out how the Corporation should handle the procurement process to hire ULI and provide that information to Meketon.

**New/Old business**

Discussion ensued about how the HDC should be prepared to describe how it plans to use the annual Meals Tax revenue that will be designated for the HDC at spring Town Meeting. In addition, the Corporation will have recommendation on how 10% of the Meals Tax will be spent for the Town. Last year the HDC recommended that the 10% given to the Town be used for benches downtown. Two benches and trash receptacles should be installed by Memorial Day on Railroad Avenue by the Post Office and on other side of the street. A few people have expressed interest in donating funds toward benches. DPW Director Bill Redford noted that Stein's recent HDC update presentation to the BOS went well. Also, the HDC needs to get copies of its financial statements to understand status of the Corporation's budget.

Mitchell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Gisness seconded the motion.  
VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Stein, President