

Hamilton Development Corporation
December 17, 2014

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 17, 2014 with Brian Stein, Bill Gisness, David Carey, Anthony Nickas present. DPW Director Bill Redford also present.

Call to order

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

Discuss Design Guidelines and agenda for January 10 planning session

Discussion ensued about design guidelines that will be addressed at the January 10 planning session and how the guidelines document could be emailed to the previous vision meeting attendees prior to this meeting. There is also the intent to have the Planning Board review the guidelines in preparation for fall Town Meeting.

Discussion was on using full screen images in a Powerpoint presentation that illustrates the proposed guidelines to get feedback from the attendees. A handout will be provided to give people a chance for further review of the proposed guidelines. The HDC will work towards putting presentation on Town's website. Included in the presentation will also be information derived from feedback from previous visioning sessions as well as from Cecil Group and MAPC. Corporation members will take local photographs and include photos from other towns that demonstrate how the suggested guidelines are in use.

The design guidelines will address design, mass, scale and proportions including height, architectural style and details, storefront, roof types, windows, entrances, materials and colors, awnings, trees, landscaping, lighting and signage. Also referenced is how the design guidelines would apply to residential, business, retail. Discussion ensued about how the HDC wants people to review and provide input on the guidelines based on what people have said they prefer and would be acceptable to them. Fine tuning will be done on lighting, window types, colors, etc. Discussion addressed how people generally like New England styles and how examples could be illustrated while identifying elements such as roof line, orientation to the street, windows, façade and architectural detail. This will give people a framework to contemplate. Also mentioned was how discussion could work toward what has been heard to clarify vocabulary, establish credibility and unanimity while gathering specific reactions to what could be implemented in a design guideline. Discussion addressed

how some architectural styles would not necessarily fit downtown, some modern versions have been adopted, and how people want storefronts to look (i.e., materials likely to be used are clapboard, stone and brick).

In addition, the HDC will mention ideas related to exterior street lighting, crosswalk locations and amount in strategic areas, sidewalks and if new ones would be constructed with oversight by HDC or building owners. Discussion addressed whether there should be sidewalks on Route 1A relative to property lines, and what sidewalk materials should be used such as concrete, brick, bituminous, pavers. The HDC agreed not to discuss benches since that has already been addressed, and that business and way-finding signage should be looked at more (i.e., lead in from train station to the village or at corner of Railroad Avenue). The Zoning Board of Appeals addresses signage pertaining to the zoning by-law. Action items to be accomplished for Jan. 10 visioning meeting include identifying the best images to use for the HDC presentation.

Discussion: Trees at 59 Willow Street

Stein met with arborist at the site to assess status of trees. The arborist is recommending the trees be taken down since they are nearing end of life and there could be a safety issue with potential for tops to snap off especially under the weight of snow. The arborist will send a letter to the HDC containing his recommendation. Discussion was on how the trees could have the limbs trimmed to alleviate abutter's concern about proximity to his property but this would be a temporary measure, and that price the HDC and abutter were quoted to remove trees was reasonable. Discussion addressed whether or not the trees minimally screen street light or is there more shading from Cutter building. Stein will update Cutter about the arborist's recommendation.

DPW Director Bill Redford in his position as deputy tree warden had spoken to Town Counsel Donna Brewer on the matter. Brewer has opined that she disagrees with the HDC's attorney position that the HDC can make the decision about what to do with trees on the property and Brewer is not sure if the HDC is exempt relative to HDC Special Act and Town by-law. Discussion addressed liability for HDC and how Redford could visit the site in his capacity as tree warden to provide an opinion about the trees (i.e., trimming or cutting down) and report at next Corporation meeting.

New/Old business

Stein and Bill Gisness will meet with Police Chief Russell Stevens to brainstorm how to solve parking situation in the downtown. Redford explained how Town manager has asked him, Director of Planning and Inspections, and Stevens to look at parking issue. Carey reported on how he has been tracking down Verizon representative to discuss any possibilities associated with the company's building/site and parking lot.

The HDC will review meeting notes for approval at next meeting.

Carey moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 a.m. Nickas seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Brian Stein, President