

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Minutes

Feb. 19, 2014

Welcome – At 7:30 AM President Brian Stein opened the meeting of the Hamilton Development Corporation. Board members B. Gisness, A. Nickas, R. Mitchell and David Geikie were present. Kristine Cheetham, Hamilton Planning Coordinator was present. Residents Andrew Mente, Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence and Selectmen Jeffrey Hubbard and Scott Maddern were also in attendance.

Agenda Items

Wastewater Treatment Planning – B. Stein introduced consultant Mike Giggey from Wright Pierce. Mike began the meeting with a list of questions that he hoped to get through. The Board agreed for him to lead the discussion.

Step 1 – Needs Assessment

The first step is to determine the rationale for a wastewater treatment system (wts). M. Giggey noted that in many communities septic system failures, frequency/costs of pumping, high water tables or direct threats to drinking water can trigger a wts. For the Hamilton Wenham Village, he is under the impression that the following might be reasons for a wts:

- redevelopment of underutilized property
- increase the capacity for economic development
- solutions for old systems in neighborhoods

The discussion led to questions about data gathering. The Board of Health has information on all properties but not in a digitized format. K. Cheetham will work with consultant to resolve data gathering needs.

For a needs assessment there are also economies of scale associated with the investment. The needs of the downtown may not be enough to justify local investment. Therefore adding in the residential neighborhood may be needed. The definition of the area for the wts is needed. Board member B. Stein wondered about how much economic development and potential density would be needed to justify a wts.

M. Giggey responded that a 10,000 gallons per day was a threshold that triggers a wts. He suggested that sometimes it is more strategic to locate a few smaller systems for collective treatment as opposed to one large one. He said that this depends upon pockets of development.

Step 2 Managing a WTS

M. Giggey transitioned from the preliminary needs assessment to the management strategies. He asked if the HDC was envisioning a water/sewer district. Who would be paying for the project and at what ratios? Was the Board pursuing grants, betterments, taxes, and other strategies? This involves identifying public benefits and quantifying them in order to justify the expenses. He also discussed working with the Assessor's office to project the value of homes/businesses before the wts and after.

He also wondered what ratio to use for a build out scenario. If you plan for 25% growth where does that leave you with gallons per day versus a more aggressive 30%, 50%, or 60% growth. He asked if there was something projected. The answer is not yet. The Board members noted that there is potential for a zoning change that would allow for mixed use commercial/residential growth but that it is not in place yet nor is any policy projecting a percentage of growth. The density ratio for housing is projected at 8 units per acre. This is similar to what exists in the Village now and also meets state standards for public grants. K. Cheetham noted that the consultant for the planning project did a draft buildout projection and she would forward that to Wright Pierce. He questioned the density from a reverse perspective: what zoning threshold is needed to advance the economics of the wts?

Step 3 Locations

Have potential locations for the collection system been identified? If so are they within proximity to major sources of septic needs. The service area is a key component to cost. Roughly 2/3 of costs are associated with collection. The treatment and disposal often are not as cost intensive. However, transportation costs are variable and can increase the scope of the project. He noted that the technologies for package treatment systems are blossoming.

M. Giggey and K. Cheetham will work together on data collection prior to the March 19, 2014 meeting of the HDC.

Development Opportunity – B. Stein updated the Board on the progress with the offer to purchase the property at 59 & 63 Willow Street. He noted that there was some disagreement about the term for the illness clause and the rent. The Board discussed the changes that they already made from 3 months to 6 months. Some wanted to raise the rent if the time were to increase. Others felt that a change in the status of rent might ruin the deal.

ACTION: B. Gisness made a motion to allow the life tenancy – illness clause to increase from 90 days to 180 days. A. Nickas seconded. All voted in favor.