

DRAFT MINUTES  
Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust  
August 3, 2016

Members present: Marc Johnson, Bill Wilson, Michael Lombardo, Peter Britton and Russ Tanzer.

Town Officials and staff present: Shawn Farrell, Selectman, Peter Clark, Planning Board, Mary Beth Lawton, Director, Council on Aging and Dorr Fox, Community Projects Coordinator.

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The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

#### MINUTES

Michael Lombardo moved to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2016 meeting. Bill Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved

#### SELECTION OF CHAIR

It was noted that Peter Britton and Marc Johnson were both interested in chairing the Affordable Housing Trust. Mr. Britton explained that he was a member of the Trust's predecessor committee, the Housing Partnership Committee. He is also a member of the Community Preservation Committee, which can fund affordable housing projects. He is very committed to affordable housing. Mr. Johnson stated that he believes that due to the community involvement and neighborhood response to building affordable housing, that process and procedural issues will be very important for the Trust in the coming years. He is very oriented towards process and procedure and believes he would be an excellent chair of the committee.

Mr. Wilson stated that he believes that both candidates bring a lot to the table and are qualified to be chair. He believes that the Trust needs a chair who will work to create productive meetings. Mr. Lombardo stated that while both candidates are qualified to be chair of the Trust, he tends to support Mr. Johnson because he was an excellent chair of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Johnson stated that there will always be abutters who object to projects and there will need to be chair who can work with the Town's citizens. Peter stated that he was good at cooperating with people and consensus building. After a brief discussion, the Trust selected Mr. Britton as chair by consensus.

#### DISCUSSION WITH BRIAN STEIN, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Brian Stein stated that the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) had discussed the concept of affordable housing in relation to their project on Willow Street. They concluded that they believe that it is important to have a commercial component to the project. However, they would consider a mix of affordable and market rate

housing for the residential component of the project. There is an historic commercial building on the site. Following discussions with the community, they have decided that they wish to retain this building and incorporate it into the project.

They put out a Request for Proposals in the spring and received no responses. There are still issues that need to be resolved, such as storm water control. Mr. Lombardo inquired whether they would consider partnering with a developer. Mr. Stein responded that they are limited in their ability to go this route, however, they may partner with a developer by going through the permitting process prior to reissuing the RFP. Mr. Britton inquired about the extent of the engineering that has been completed on the site. Mr. Stein stated that he and Bill Gisness are working out architectural plans and that they will work with engineers afterwards.

Mr. Johnson inquired whether parking requirements can be waived if the project is permitted through Chapter 40B MGL. Mr. Stein stated that it could, however, septic and storm water issues could not be waived. He stated that under Chapter 40B MGL, they could go with a project that is totally residential. However, they still wish to retain a commercial component. They will know soon, perhaps in the fall, how many residential units they will be able to have in the project. Mr. Johnson noted that they may need to downsize the project to accommodate neighbors. Mr. Lombardo noted that this is a project where Community Preservation funds could be used to create affordable housing.

#### REVIEW OF TOWN OWNED SITES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Britton noted that past research has demonstrated that there are few town owned parcels that could be used for housing, other than very small sites. Mr. Johnson stated that at the last meeting, the Trust reviewed several parcels. Mr. Lombardo stated that he had asked the staff to prepare a scope of work for a consultant to review the sites. Mr. Fox passed out the scope of work for the Trust members to review.

Russ Tanzer reviewed preliminary plans for affordable housing at the Senior Center/ Public Safety Building site. These plans were created by citizen of Hamilton and were not created by the Affordable Housing Trust. He noted that there may be room for twenty units of family housing in the grove of trees behind the public safety building. He noted that the site does not contain wetlands, however access could be an issue. The plans also showed housing on the site of the current senior center and the parking lot for the Winthrop School.

Mr. Wilson inquired whether this was the site that was under consideration for building a cell tower. Mr. Britton noted that cell phone coverage is very important. Mr. Lombardo stated that this is why a consultant should be hired. He noted that both uses may be accommodated on the site.

Mr. Britton moved to execute the scope of services. Mr. Lombardo seconded the motion.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Trust needs information on access, relationship to the Senior Center and density. He also stated that there is a need to look at a few sites. Mr. Lombardo stated that the consultant could figure out scale and mass issues, but not the specific design. He stated that the staff should get three quotes on how much work will cost. There was a brief discussion on whether the consultant should just look at this site or include a few others. Mr. Wilson inquired whether the Trust should notify abutters of upcoming meetings.

Mr. Britton noted that the design of the new building on the Senior Center site could incorporate existing design features of the existing building, such as the cupola and the sign. He stated that they should look at similar projects such as a recent project in Beverly. Mr. Johnson stated that it is too early to be reviewing design details such as signage and that the Trust should not even be reviewing this entire project yet. Mr. Johnson stated that the Trust still needs to reach out to the Council on Aging, the school committee and the public safety departments and then figure out what scope of the project is possible on the site. Mr. Lombardo stated that they need to find out the limiting features of the site.

Conway Felton explained that the proposed plan contains a lot of shock and awe to the members of the Council on Aging. He had met with them and stated that they are concerned about the demolition of their building. People in the audience questioned whether there were images of an alternative plan that showed new housing, but did not include the demolition of the senior center.

Mr. Lombardo stated that he believes that the study may cost \$8000. Mr. Wilson inquired about the size of the building. Mr. Tanzer stated that it has a 6300 square feet footprint.

Mary Beth Lawton noted that the population of people over the age of sixty is growing. She noted that the senior center is an important place in the community. In the future there may need to be a larger facility. Mr. Lombardo stated that the Trust needs to figure out how and whether the site can work for the proposed project. Peter Clark stated that the Planning Board has reviewed a cell tower nearby that will cover all of downtown Hamilton. There would be duplication if both sites are used for cell towers.

Mr. Lombardo moved to vote on the motion and increase the scope of services to \$8000. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.