

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES OF MEETING

May 24, 2017

Members Present: Bill Gisness, Rick Mitchell, Anthony Nickas, and President, Brian Stein

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

This meeting was called to order by Brian Stein at 7:32 am with a quorum established.

Warrant

Motion to approve the Warrant HDC 17-24 to include the tree removal at 81 Linden St. in the amount of \$1,175.00 made by Bill Gisness.

Rick Mitchell seconded.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

**59 Willow St. Request for Proposal (RFP)**

Tom Goodwin, who was absent, had submitted questions to include asking about the associated family project. Andrew DeFranza said one had not been located to date. The second question was regarding a waiver or acceptance by the Board of Health for the separation between the septic leaching field and the stormwater area. Mr. DeFranza said Charlie Wear would be contacted to determine the distance. The third question was regarding if the commercial use could be a pre-sold condo to which Mr. DeFranza said yes.

In response to Bill Gisness' question as to time deadline for the two-development program, Andrew DeFranza said the associated project would need to be stable and it would be preferable to finance them together. Mr. DeFranza noted that the State recently came out with a new funding mechanism for 20 units and under. An appeal would create a bad situation for that scale of a project. Mr. DeFranza explained that the approval process would be simpler and faster with a 40B and that there would be no commercial use or parking on the first floor, resulting in dropping the height of the building to two stories. According to Mr. DeFranza, if everyone loved the idea, 40B was the way to go otherwise, he would pursue site plan review. Financing would not change.

Anthony Nickas asked about getting credits to which Andrew DeFranza said the credits would be gathered the second round. Soft money included HOME, which was part of the Federal Budget, so the money could be affected by political changes. Local banks would buy the tax credits. Mass Housing Investment Corp would be involved. Rick Mitchell asked about the contingency of finding another project with 12 units, and how Mr. DeFranza wanted to maintain control of the property. Mr. DeFranza said he hoped to have the accepted proposal work as a communication tool to gather support for an associated family parcel in another neighborhood. The length of time that the parcel could be tied up would be based on Hamilton Development Corporation's (HDC) comfort level. Mr. DeFranza did not want to spend time and money on

due diligence if another property was not forthcoming. Mr. DeFranza suggested a gating benchmark early in the sequence for the second project and a second gating for obtaining tax credits.

Andrew DeFranza agreed that if another property was not located within six months, the proposal would be done. Mr. DeFranza noted he needed a 21E, survey, basic design, and material from the engineer for a pre-application, which would be due in December. If things were stable and the project was proceeding, Mr. DeFranza said he would acquire a bridge on speculation, allowing Harborlight to buy out the project earlier.

Members of the Corporation discussed the Hamilton Senior Center site, which among various proposals, had a median proposal of 20 units on Town owned land. Rick Mitchell thought it would be the most obvious site. Brian Stein thought it might make sense to put the senior housing at the site. Mr. Mitchell wanted whatever worked most expeditiously. Elaine Swenson (Linden St.) recalled the site was next to an elementary school. Andrew DeFranza said either site could be family housing. Mr. Mitchell said private property was so expensive so a project needed to be large, but downtown was an intelligent smart growth solution.

Dorr Fox said the Senior Center proposal would need to go to Town Meeting and there were 250 people who signed a petition in opposition. Rick Mitchell responded that the opposition was for the back piece and Brian Stein recalled the opposition being against the Winthrop site and school district leases. Mr. Mitchell thought it was the best location with access to transportation and that it would not impinge upon another neighborhood. Mr. Stein noted it was a Town owned property that could utilize the existing building and a small addition for ten to twelve units. Andrew DeFranza stated he needed a minimum of twelve units as part of his contingency. Members of the Corporation decided to engage with the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) and Selectmen and determine how likely it would be to have the AHT fund \$300,000 for the proposal. Andrew DeFranza wanted to have political affirmation of the use from all parties.

Brian Stein suggested putting together a rough timeline to go to the AHT to get the project moving forward. The proposal required having another site by the end of the year at the latest. If the parcel were another Town owned parcel, the Town could sign the permit as the owner. Spring 2018 Town Meeting could approve the sale of the parcel. The Town could carry the responsibility of due diligence for the preliminary design. Both parcels could be permitted at the same time. The PEL process via a 40B from the State would be three to six months. The Zoning Board could take up to six months. Andrew DeFranza noted that if the process were collegial it would be faster and if it were contentious, it would take longer. The PEL could be filed before Town Meeting, if the October vote was positive.

Members of the Corporation redefined the timeline to add: If the site was chosen by the end of September, the AHT and Selectmen could endorse the concept and present it at Fall Town Meeting for a non binding referendum. Assuming the vote was positive, it would take

approximately six months to develop a firm project proposal for endorsement and passage for Spring Town Meeting for the sale of public property i.e., the Senior Center. Andrew DeFranza said the non-binding referendum, vote of support from the Board of Selectmen and AHT funding, as well as a positive response from Fall Town Meeting would be strong enough support for Harborlight to move forward. If Harborlight filed a PEL in advance and waited three to six months for State approval, the beginning of Zoning Board of Appeals approval would be fall 2018. Harborlight would miss the fall funding round. Harborlight could take out a bridge because it would be apparent that everyone was on board at that point. Rick Mitchell suggested changing the zoning in the district that the Senior Center was located in to allow for housing, but it was determined that it might be more difficult than the 40B process.

Elain Swenson (Linden St.) said it would be a different discussion with the abutters if the proposal for Willow St. would be used for families. Ms. Swenson thought having families at the Senior Center site made more sense because it was right next to the school, across from the park and had more open space compared to the very tight site of Willow St. Traffic and parking were a huge concern for the neighborhood. The layout showed that Harborlight was taking the neighbors into consideration. Ms. Swenson was concerned about the height and thought lowering it would be positive. Ms. Swenson also said neighbors were concerned about lighting, buffer and noise pollution.

Members would go to the AHT meeting, present the timeline and proposal, and suggest reconsidering the Senior Center property.

**Budget**

Anthony Nickas presented the proposed budget and determined that some rental income was missing. Mr. Nickas asked members to review the 2018 budget, including principal payments of \$15,000. One tenant had prepaid his rent in June, while the other unit was vacant for a few months, which reconciled the discrepancy.

Motion made by Rick Mitchell to adjourn.

Seconded by Bill Gisness.

Vote Unanimous to adjourn at 8:33 am.

Prepared by:

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Marcie Ricker

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Attest

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Date