

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

June 20, 2018

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

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

The public meeting was held at the Hamilton-Wenham Library at 6 p.m. for the purpose of presenting site planning concepts for some potential improvements to Hamilton's Downtown District and soliciting public input on the ideas. The aim was to hold an informal discussion with downtown business owners, property owners, managers, and community members to gather their thoughts. 35 people were in attendance, including the five members of the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC), Coordinator Dorr Fox, Minutes Secretary Mary Alice Cookson, and Landscape Architects Carl Frushour and Jarod Kershek of Carol Johnson Associates. Surveys were distributed; 26 people filled them out.

HDC President Brian Stein gave an introduction to the meeting and brief overview of its purpose, as well as the purpose of the HDC. Then he turned the floor over to Mr. Frushour, who presented his slide presentation. This included before and after photos of what the downtown looked like now and could potentially look like with various improvements to the streetscape. Two plans were offered: The first option was a "light touch," which included existing parallel parking to remain, the painting of power poles, and new sidewalk. The second option was a "heavy touch," which included angled parking, burying utilities, and new sidewalks.

Some comments:

\* Parking—Several business owners said they did not want to see the parking decreased by even just 5 spaces, as it was already very tight. If the plan were presented with the idea of increasing parking (rather than scaling it back) in addition to making the other improvements, they would be more likely to be onboard. Some expressed dismay that employees in the downtown district do not park further away from their places of business to allow more access for public parking in front of the shops. Willow Street was suggested as a potential place for employees to park. Also, the idea of creating a parking lot on HDC property was suggested. Although there is a rule about not parking prior to 8 a.m. (to discourage commuters to Boston from parking there), some do bend the rules and take up spots.

\*Utilities underground—Many people liked the look of not seeing the overhanging wires, but were concerned with how the Town would pay for the expensive endeavor. The HDC responded that many of the improvements can be done in phases and sections.

\*Plantings—Some business owners liked the idea of the plantings, but were concerned about the watering and maintenance. It was explained that watering is factored in. Gretel Clark pointed out that the Garden Club also deadheads the plants and provides upkeep.

\*Safety—This was a top concern. People who are parallel parking are sometimes preoccupied with parking and don't notice pedestrians crossing. Some felt angled parking would help make the area safer, and help to keep up the flow of traffic along Railroad Ave. Due to the width of the road, angled parking was proposed for just one side of the street. Sidewalks are not in good shape in some areas of the downtown; one woman expressed that they are dangerous for some of her elderly customers.

Landscape architect Mr. Frushour thanked the members of the public for coming out and sharing their suggestions, which will all be taken into consideration. Brian Stein said the HDC will incorporate what they have heard tonight as they move forward with their plans.

The public meeting was recorded.

Prepared by:

---

Mary Alice Cookson,  
Minutes Secretary

---

Attest

Date