

Hamilton Development Corporation
March 16, 2016

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 with Bill Gisness, Brian Stein, Rick Mitchell present. Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox, and DPW Director Bill Redford also present.

Call to order

Brian Stein called the HDC meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Approve warrant #1616

The HDC reviewed for approval the HDC warrant #1616 in the amount of \$1,290.75 which consisted of Harborlight Community Partners, Jane Dooley's time, and costs associated with the RFP (i.e., advertising) and the attorney's time for closing on loan.

Rick Mitchell moved to approve HDC warrant #1616 for \$1,290.75. Bill Gisness seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Minutes Approval

Gisness moved to approve meeting minutes for February 24, 2016 and March 2, 2016. Mitchell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

59/63 Willow Street

Tenant Alex Dale is moving out at the end of the month. Due in part to the uncertainty of the future of the property and he found a space to rent for less money at 300 Main. Discussion was on advertising the HDC's space for rent from now until December. The lease for the house on the HDC's property ends in September and Stein has dicussed with the tenant leasing the property moving forward with a rental agreement month by month. Stein also noted that the "For Rent" sign will be posted at the commercial property, he spoke to the realtor who originally helped rent the space, and ads will be placed in Salem News and HW Chronicle. Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox will investigate if the rental information can be posted on the Patch.

RFP update

Fox explained that the RFP update was put on the Town website last Friday. He has not received any response to the RFP. Discussion was on a landscape consultant that was interested in learning who might develop the property. Also, that a civil engineer had opined that a stormwater system would have to be done for the site. Fox will send an RFP addendum to all attendees of pre-RFP meeting which speaks to the stormwater requirement, site plan review, and that the pre-conference is no longer necessary.

Meals tax

Fox reported on research on meals tax that he had done with the Board of Health. The Health Department has a list of restaurants in Town but does not know whether or not these establishments pay the meals tax. Fox contacted the state and was told that the Town would have to send an email to the state offices requesting information on restaurants paying meals tax and could expect a reply in a couple of months. He has sent the email. Mitchell offered to contact State Representative Brad Hill about whether or not he could help the HDC get information about meals tax generated in Hamilton. The Department of Revenue's website has meals tax information.

Site plan review

Discussion was on whether or not the HDC could hire someone to develop a site plan review package for its property. Gisness mentioned that feedback he had received was that people do not want to go through the site plan review process with its associated fees and multiple revisions, so the HDC could do it. These costs would be incorporated into the development costs for the site. Stein and Gisness could do some of the initial architectural work. The HDC would have to pay for any contracted work (i.e., engineering and legal).

Discussion addressed if the HDC gets the site plan permitted it could then sell its property to an interested developer. Or, if the HDC does not receive any offers to purchase the property, then the HDC could hire a builder who would go through the Town process. Another option could be the HDC hires a consultant (legal, civil, architectural) to carry out an approved plan as a developer such as C.P. Berry or Tom Ford. The HDC will ask its legal counsel to opine on the associated legal process.

Hamilton Downtown Improvements

Discussion ensued about how Dave Carey is going to review a proposed list (i.e., holiday lights, re-establish merchant group) for downtown improvements with BOS Chair Scott Maddern. These recommendations will be rank ordered. The BOS will opine on the Town's interests and priorities and present result to the Town manager which can be communicated to the DPW director. Then location for these improvements can be defined. One of the trees on Railroad Avenue has lights. The HDC is interested in learning where other lights are located which were used on all of the trees on Railroad Avenue.

DPW Director Bill Redford inquired about where the HDC envisions locating benches and flower pots noting that the Town cannot put these items on private property. Discussion was on adopt-an-island option especially regarding public ways. Also mentioned was how the HDC could speak to Dodge Tree relative to getting help installing holiday lights in the downtown. In addition, if the HDC could fund the liability insurance for the next merchant event. The HDC has provided \$6,500 for the year to the Town. Discussion was on whether or not these funds should go into a planned fund that BOS and HDC create. Discussion addressed when a development is moving forward could a developer contribute new sidewalks, lights, or trees to the downtown. Fox offered to investigate what funding could be used for reconstruction of the downtown (i.e., period lighting).

New/old business

The HDC's next meetings are on March 30 and April 13. An HDC update will be given at the April 2 Town Meeting. Discussion was on if the HDC should contribute \$10,000 to the Town versus 10% of what it receives annually in meals tax. The HDC will consider what it wants to do with its Willow Street property moving forward (i.e., land swap with David Cutter).

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

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Brian Stein, President