

Hamilton Development Corporation
June 22, 2016

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 22, 2016 with Bill Gisness, Brian Stein, Rick Mitchell, Tom Goodwin 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 7:30 a.m.

Warrant for bills

Bill Gisness moved to approve HDC warrant #1622 for \$550.18 for staff time, National Grid and Harborlight Community Partners. Rick Mitchell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Approve minutes – May 11 and May 25, 2016

Gisness moved to approve the HDC meeting minutes from May 11, 2016 and May 25, 2016. Tom Goodwin seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

59/63 Willow Street

Discussion ensued about how Peter Kane could survey the 59/63 Willow Street property in the next week (\$2,500 is maximum cost voted by HDC, could be \$1,900 with topographical information). The survey information will be useful for a developer considering the site and, for a neighbor at 81 Linden Street who is concerned about a dying tree overhanging his property. The HDC's property will be staked as part of the survey that will also include contour information.

Discussion was on how the Mac's sign had been hit at the 63 Willow Street building by Chelsea Produce truck. The company will pay for the repair. Also noted was that a cabinet maker had expressed interest in renting the available space in this building as a showroom. The Corporation discussed success it has had putting a sign in the building window advertising the vacant space availability. Also, if the monthly rent should be \$500 to \$700. Gisness will contact the carpenter to see if he has interest in renting for \$600 a month.

The HDC discussed the Hamilton Historical Society's interest in the 63 Willow Street vacant space for its historical items but it is unlikely the Society would pay rent. The Society is considering submitting a CPA project application for \$95,000 to restore this building which has complexities since the building is owned by the HDC rather than the Town. Also mentioned was the ADA accessibility issues with the site. Once the HDC decides what it is doing with the building it will have a conversation with the Historical Society.

The Corporation discussed how once the survey is completed, Gisness and Brian Stein will develop some architectural concepts for the site with a rough site plan. This will identify what could fit on the site relative to retail use, parking, septic system, how many units will fit. Then the HDC could have a discussion with Nordblom who offered to produce a model for the site. Anthony Nickas has created a rough economic model for the property.

The HDC should receive its property survey by the end of next week. The Corporation estimated in the next four weeks a rough site plan could be done by the HDC architects and a theoretical model of what could be built received from Nordblom. If HDC gets site plan approval from the Town, Nordblom would move the project forward and partner with the HDC. Nordblom has access to real estate attorneys which will become necessary for legal advice as part of the process. Another item is a 21E for the site which is a review of public records regarding hazardous waste.

Discussion was on the requirement for a community to have fewer than 7,000 residents to qualify for a Mass. Works grant to fund a site plan. As of the 2010 survey, Hamilton has 7,764 residents. Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox will carry out the due diligence regarding the potential for a Mass. Works grant. This agency is especially interested in TOD sites.

The HDC plans to talk to more developers than Nordblom about potentially developing the 59/63 Willow Street site. Todd Nordblom had told the HDC if the proposed project at the site is larger the company would consider doing it. If smaller, Todd Nordblom will personally develop the project (i.e., finance, build, and manage). The HDC will investigate if there is funding available to pay for the Corporation's development of the site plan once it has a model about what could be built. This discussion reiterated the importance of the HDC getting legal advice from a real estate attorney about potential development that the Corporation is considering for its site. Also reiterated was that there is greater value in pre-permitting the project especially to be clear on the potential density at the site.

Also mentioned was the individual from Ipswich that was serving as a procurement officer for the HDC who is not interested in continuing in that capacity for the Corporation. Goodwin suggested that in his role as a board member of North Shore Community Development he could get a recommendation for a real estate attorney who specializes in local development. Fox will investigate who could be a procurement officer for the HDC. Town Manager Michael Lombardo is the chief procurement officer for Hamilton. Patrick Reffett, Director of Planning and Inspections for the Town may also be able to provide guidance for real estate attorney and procurement officer.

Discussion reiterated the route that the HDC is considering for its property either doing site plan approval or partnering with a developer before the site is advertised. The Corporation concurred about what it could do to reduce risk (i.e., pre-permitting to determine what is buildable) and to bring greater value to the project (i.e., economically, better price). Nordblom has stated that it is willing to donate some of its time to provide input on a possible project. Potential developers are Nordblom, Tom Ford, Harborlight Community Partners, C.P. Berry. Nordblom could be invited back once the survey and rough site plan are done for input. A high level conversation with a real estate attorney could occur before another meeting with Nordblom.

Downtown improvements

Discussion was on how the HDC members had not had a conversation yet with downtown merchants but plan to do so in the near future. The Corporation has received a list from Board of Health about what organizations in Town are paying the meals tax. The Department of Revenue has said who pays the meals tax in Town is privileged information that cannot be released. The HDC members will speak to organizations on the meals tax list. Discussion addressed whether or not State Representative Brad Hill could be asked to assist the HDC to identify meals tax contributors as part of an effort to involve merchants in downtown improvements. Fox will draft a letter to Hill inquiring about who is contributing to the meals tax and the related dollar amounts.

Board business

The HDC's next meeting is on July 6.

New/old business

Discussion ensued with downtown resident Elaine Whipple regarding cones in front of Mac's shop, and on sidewalk due to rising bricks. Also mentioned was that the Anthony Dodge building is for sale or rent, and that the septic system capacity would drive

whether or not it would be a suitable site for housing. In addition, the orthodontic building on Willow Street and Railroad Avenue has been sold. Ms. Whipple expressed concern about Mac's property and quick development of the site by Harborlight Community Partners. The HDC thought development would not occur quickly relative to site plan review with public hearing process through the Planning Board. This development would not be voted on by the Town beyond site plan review by the Planning Board. It was noted that a site plan cannot be denied it can be conditioned (i.e., screening, parking, lighting) as it meets zoning requirements.

Discussion addressed how the HDC hires the Harborlight Community Partners maintenance division to manage the 59/63 Willow Street property. The HDC is sole owner of the former Mac's shoe property and no entity has right of first refusal if it is put on the market. Ms. Whipple noted that the Firehouse Place property is well maintained and they are good neighbors. She expressed concern about a high rise on the 59/63 Willow Street property. The HDC stated that the maximum height would be 35 feet.

Mitchell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 a.m. Gisness seconded the motion.
VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Brian Stein, President