

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Minutes

June 25, 2014

Welcome – At 7:30 AM President Brian Stein opened the meeting of the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC). Board members David Carey, Bill Gisness, Anthony Nickas and Rick Mitchell were present. Planning Coordinator, Kristine Cheetham was also present.

Selectmen Jeff Hubbard was in attendance. Residents Anthony Mente and Richard Boroff were present.

B. Stein noted that R. Boroff was recording the meeting.

Agenda Items

1. Service Agreement – The Board reviewed the Draft Service Agreement as presented by the Town Manager and edited by R. Mitchell. R. Mitchell recommended revising the language referencing the cancellation of the contract. However, he also recommended inserting language with reciprocity so that the HDC could terminate the agreement as well. B. Gisness noted that a length of time of 30 days might be needed if the contract was severed to obtain staff support. Also a term of 6 months for this agreement was favored by the Board with the option to renew for the year. The Board would like to see a more detailed definition of Administrative Services under Item 3.
ACTION: D. Carey made a motion for R. Mitchell to proceed with the negotiation of the Service Agreement with the recommended amendments. B. Gisness seconded. All voted in favor.
2. Warrant – K. Cheetham had a warrant of current bills for signature by the President and Treasurer.
3. Property Management – B. Stein mentioned that Andrew DeFranza of Harborlights was still intending to take on the property management responsibilities for the Willow Street property. B. Gisness mentioned that he has received several calls for rent but has not secured a tenant yet. Some of the equipment remains in the building. Some of the prospective tenants want the place – as is – and some are interested in a more finished look. The walls may need sheet rock and paint. The Board agreed that if the property is not rented by the fall, the Board would consider modifications to the interior. The prospective tenants include an artist, a salon (might have difficulty meeting the title v), a small market, and a fellow with a ministry project. The Board did not express a preference for a particular kind of tenant. They did not think that a business with evening hours was preferred. J. Hubbard felt that a business that would create some foot traffic would be nice. Shops add livelihood while a business/office use is quiet. The Board confirmed that the contract was for a short term 2-3 years while the planning and zoning were resolved. In general, the Board agreed that an artist studio might be the best use of the site and create interest in the front windows.

R. Mitchell was concerned that the barber's business may be suffering due to the vacancy created in McRae's shoe shop. He wondered if some outreach to the media would help.

4. Operating Guidelines – A. Nickas and D. Carey agreed to meet with Deborah Nippes-Mena in July to draft operating guidelines that will work for both the HDC and the town.
5. Minutes – The Board reviewed the minutes of previous meetings.

ACTION: B. Gisness made a motion to approve the minutes from the HDC meetings of 6/4/14, 6/11/14, and 6/18/14. R. Mitchell seconded. All voted in favor.

Wastewater Treatment Workshop

D. Carey missed the previous meeting and the workshop itself. He asked for a brief discussion of the “take aways” from the event. In general everyone agreed that Mike Giggey was informative, engaging, and the strategy of no interruptions during the presentation was helpful. D. Geike noted that the conversation at the end of the evening got a little distracted in its focus. The community was wrestling with the size and scope of the project. Some wanted to expand the discussion to include the whole town – others did not. He also noted that in both Hamilton and Wenham the homes on smaller lots within the groundwater supply areas may need to be researched further. R. Mitchell added that the presentation went well but these communities don't embrace change well. He felt that the work of the HDC must remain focused on the downtown. Although there were clear examples of cost efficiencies associated with a larger system, he would like to learn more about the potential for starting small or phasing. R. Boroff mentioned that the modular systems are smaller and may be an option. J. Hubbard would like to see more information on the financing of the systems. He also wants to have a better understanding of the potential economic benefits. The presentation had some large numbers for a capital investment that he felt would need additional research. A. Mente echoed the concerns about financing. He noted that he is a downtown resident and would like more information on the concept of betterments. The Board then addressed some next steps. They agreed that an initial step was to meet with the Board of Selectmen for feedback. A majority of the Board of Selectmen attended the workshop. The Board also agreed that they would like to meet with the Wenham Board of Selectmen. D. Geikie agreed to work on scheduling a meeting. K. Cheetham noted that the workshop can be viewed on line on the HWCAM website so that the Wenham Selectmen had a chance to see the presentation.

Urban Land Institute (ULI)

B. Gisness informed the Board that he had a meeting scheduled with the staff at the ULI to discuss their potential work with the HDC. He noted that the HDC has a draft for a Technical Assistance Panel already prepared. He is hopeful that the ULI will be able to schedule a fall workshop that will result in an economic assessment of the built out potential for the downtown area. K. Cheetham asked the Board to begin considering who the key stakeholders would be for the fall workshop. The Board agreed that the property owners, real estate developers, and merchants should have a role.

Adjourn – At 8:30 AM B. Gisness made a motion to adjourn. R. Mitchell seconded. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____

Brian Stein, President