

Hamilton Development Corporation
March 4, 2015

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 4, 2015 with Brian Stein, Bill Gisness, Rick Mitchell, Anthony Nickas present. DPW Director Bill Redford and Wenham Planning Board Chair David Geikie also present.

Call to order

Brian Stein called the HDC meeting to order at 7:35 a.m. Bill Gisness said he plans to call Police Chief Russell Stevens to schedule a meeting to discuss parking situation downtown.

Sample Design Guidelines

The HDC reviewed design guidelines from two different towns as models for discussion and possible incorporation of some elements into Hamilton's proposed guidelines.

The HDC updated David Geikie about Hamilton's proposed design guidelines that integrate information from MAPC, the visioning meetings, and feedback from those meetings. Corporation members also summarized for Geikie outcome of visioning meetings including overview of zoning by-laws and possibility of adding mixed used and multi-family downtown, review of three-dimensional images of Hamilton and Wenham area with 35' height and reasonable scale to 28' height, parking and pedestrian/traffic flow, and feedback on design guidelines. Bill Gisness explained that there was no further discussion of septic system since that had been controversial.

Discussion ensued about defining height to the mid-point of a sloped roof or top of flat roof in Hamilton (two stories not including the peak) and 35' to the peak in Wenham. The format of design guidelines from MAPC and two other sources was discussed by HDC. Gisness summarized that there was good turnout at the visioning meetings but he opined that in general attendees were opposed to change in the downtown. The focus of the meetings was on the downtown district, and he stated that he wished more positive/supportive people had attended.

Discussion ensued about sample design guidelines from MAPC, Buzzards Bay and Northboro where clarity and definitions were considered valuable as well as introduction that contains overview and purpose including administrators of the

guidelines (i.e., Planning Board and/or Zoning Board of Appeals). The HDC noted that photos of what would be discouraged in Town would be used sparingly in Hamilton's guidelines. The HDC reviewed what they liked in both presentations (i.e., more images to get points across), portrait versus landscape format. Gisness stated his preference for the Buzzards Bay design guidelines document and mentioned importance of standards (i.e., species of trees, replacement of period lighting). Gisness will work with Meketon who will be formatting Hamilton's design guideline document. Meketon will send draft Hamilton guidelines to Geikie who mentioned that the guidelines need to be appropriate for Wenham as well.

Once the weather improves, the HDC will incorporate new photographs into the guidelines that will be circulated with the goal of being presented at Hamilton's fall Town Meeting. Also at that meeting will be the proposal to add mixed use (this was not a popular discussion amongst visioning session attendees) and multi-family to Hamilton's zoning by-laws.

Revised Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Application

Discussion ensued about refinements to ULI application such as defining what parcels would be looked at, the build-out scenario, list what the HDC wants ULI to do for it including the size of the study (i.e., density and area).

Discussion addressed outline for ULI with focus on three to four parcels downtown and what would happen if they are developed including unit count; as well as build out scenario for the entire downtown. Specifically wanted is a marketing and economic analysis (i.e., tax revenue, impact on: school systems, fire and police, cost/benefit on infrastructure and support services). Discussion was on how more people in the downtown would increase potential Meals Tax revenue and possible job creation due to improved business economics but would result in more demand on public service.

Discussion was on how the HDC wants to understand what the full build out would be assuming by-law change is adopted, the height is defined, with or without the septic system as defined by what the HDC and Town wants to do with the downtown. The HDC reiterated an earlier discussion that the ULI analysis could just focus on cost/benefit analysis of potential development of its 59/63 Willow Street property (i.e., 25 units of residential and retail), former Mike's Auto property, former Hansbury property, and Haley's property in Wenham. Also that a judgment point is should the study look at the maximum number of possible housing units in the downtown (i.e., 500) and resulting need for wastewater system, parking, traffic, school system

consequence and could ULI define if this makes sense for Hamilton. The study's primary focus would be on what density a site (i.e., the four parcels identified with assumptions about how many units) could support, but there is interest in defining a maximized baseline scenario.

Potential outcomes of the study could be a cost/benefit analysis to allow a mixed use by-law as well as the need for a wastewater treatment system if the Town wants to grow in the downtown. Another answer that the study could hopefully provide is if there is an investment in an expensive wastewater treatment system to support growth downtown (i.e., full buildout) would there be enough revenue to support it.

Discussion addressed how the HDC might not want to tie adding mixed use to the zoning by-law with the study because people in the downtown would likely not support a large amount of development in the district. In evaluating the importance of a cost/benefit analysis for any proposed development downtown that could be done as part of the study, the HDC noted interest from downtown commercial property owners to maximize value of their properties, interest in more market rate rental property for people who want to live in or stay in Town, as well as interest in affordable housing.

Discussion was on why the HDC would consider having the study done including making Hamilton and Wenham desirable for the population that wants to work in the city and be able to afford to live in these communities. This could include having more shops. Also, is it better economically for the Town to have mixed use including rentals. The study could provide an overview assuming mixed use development to theorize what is the economic impact of a full build out of the business district within the Town's existing by-laws (i.e., new revenues and business activity, potential infrastructure costs). The full buildout of downtown would be defined by height, building limitations, setbacks, and what the Town considers reasonable.

Discussion addressed importance of including in the study existing building stock relative to what smaller scale space could be added to existing buildings such as a second floor. This scenario and analyzing building out the four parcels previously identified was characterized as more realistic and less threatening compared to a full buildout of the downtown. The HDC will review the draft ULI application as well as review the ULI website to understand what type of study it would deliver to the HDC in preparation for future discussion on the topic.

Approve Minutes

The HDC noted that they had not read these minutes because they were not supplied.

Warrant for Bills

HDC 1511 for \$7,095.25 including \$3,250 for David Cutter, real estate taxes, and loan payment. Gisness moved to approve the \$7,095.25. Mitchell seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous.

New/Old business

Discussion ensued about how the HDC has asked for its financial statements so it can track its revenues and expenses relative to status of the Corporation's budget. The tenant for 59 Willow Street has moved into the house and the HDC has received the security deposit (which will be held in escrow) and first month's rent. A delivery of 100 gallons of heating oil was delivered to the site which will be reimbursed to the HDC.

Discussion addressed how for this year the HDC is fine financially especially with an additional \$750 per month coming in for rent of the former McRae house. The HDC will be required to start paying more cost next year related to its mortgage for the 59/63 Willow Street property.

Mitchell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 a.m. Gisness seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Brian Stein, President