

**Hamilton Development Corporation**  
**April 1, 2015**

The Hamilton Development Corporation met at Hamilton Town Hall at 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 1, 2015 with Brian Stein, Bill Gisness, Rick Mitchell, Dave Carey, Anthony Nickas present. DPW Director Bill Redford, Wenham Planning Board Chair David Geikie, and ULI representative Dick Lampman also present.

**Call to order**

Brian Stein called the HDC meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Approve 1-21, 2-4, 2-18, 3-4, 3-18 Minutes**

Stein entertained a motion to approve the HDC meeting minutes for 1-21, 2-4, 2-18, 3-4, 3-18. Rick Mitchell so moved. Dave Carey seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

**Budget Update**

Discussion ensued about spreadsheet created by Anthony Nickas detailing HDC spending on utilities and expense overages due to tree removal at former McRae site and repairs on 59 Willow Street house. The HDC's cash balance is \$29,000. The Corporation did not receive expected \$65,000 from Town in 2014/FY'15 which Stein will research. The HDC expects to receive an additional amount (i.e., \$65,000 from Meals Tax revenue) at the beginning of FY'16 on July 1. It was noted that income from shoe shop did not start coming in right away due to timing related to when it was rented. Also mentioned was what would occur if Town receives more than the anticipated \$65,000 from Meals Tax.

**Policies and Procedures**

HDC Consultant Rachel Meketon had met with Nickas and Carey to review information she had researched on policies and procedures from several other municipalities. Discussion addressed how this working group had identified a dozen elements of the HDC's policies and procedures that are needed (this would not include employees). Meketon had devised a content sheet of proposed policies and procedures to provide an outline for HDC review. Comments on the draft from Corporation members will be directed to Carey or Meketon. HDC noted that it would be helpful to work with Finance Director Deborah Nippes-Mena to help populate content on policies and procedures regarding accounting and other Town procedures specific to HDC.

**ULI Technical Assistance Application – Discussion with Dick Lampman**

Bill Gisness introduced HDC members to ULI representative Dick Lampman. Gisness summarized how the HDC is interested in outside assistance to help the HDC plan the downtown business district. He summarized how ULI has TAP program where they come in for a day to brainstorm and help a town plan. Gisness described Hamilton's business district and zoning by-law section (Asbury Street to Hamilton/Wenham town line, Willow Street to behind the Hamilton Shopping Center). He also mentioned the three visioning sessions held by HDC where by-law was reviewed, work done on design guidelines, and interest in modifying by-law to include mixed use and multi-family. The HDC needs help in determining cost benefit analysis associated with allowing mixed use and multi-family in downtown district.

Lampman explained that ULI has an educational orientation focused on responsible land use. ULI has 35,000 members worldwide with 1,000 in the Boston/New England division. He co-chairs the Real Estate Advisory Committee that conducts technical advisory panels using TAP. The one-day effort consists of six to eight ULI individuals who evaluate situation from various disciplines to provide a comprehensive view to the process. During the day a site tour is conducted guided by a member of the community or sponsoring agency, then the morning is spent interviewing stakeholders (i.e., business people or landowners) with input from HDC, in the afternoon a closed door charrette session with panel is held to evaluate information. Analysis is done on constraints, opportunities, and ideas as well as recommendations. At the conclusion of the day a public presentation is given.

Six weeks later a written report is provided that includes more detailed information than what was given during the public presentation. This includes economics and demand incorporating knowledge and information gathered from similar communities such as ideas and best practices combined with Town's constraints and opportunities to provide a framework. The product of the one-day session can be used as a catalyst to go to RFP process for various pieces of land so when developers are solicited they will understand what the Town is trying to accomplish and context in which they would be working. ULI helps communities understand what they can accomplish within potential of area and mix of uses that should be encouraged as well as zoning that could be used to incentivize development.

The ULI sessions are held during the week since its members on the panel volunteer for the one-day and sessions are done in a timely manner to accomplish a community's objectives. ULI has not done a session for two towns at once although Lampman noted

that Hamilton and Wenham are considered to be an integrated area. In regard to HDC's interest in cost/benefit analysis for development potential of its downtown, ULI looks at economic drivers since this is generally the main obstacle for communities. Lampman thought Hamilton and Wenham had the demand in the communities it was a matter of putting the right development in place that people would want.

ULI takes a 10,000 foot view and if HDC is interested in economics, specialists in this area would be added to the panel to bring in their experience relative to impact of economic development. In addition, ULI can also bring in panelists who have septic expertise. Discussion ensued about what two or three specific focused goals should be included in TAP from HDC for the panel to evaluate and recommend. Gisness summarized how HDC was created to enable ability to buy/sell land and hire people, that funding is currently from Meals Tax revenue, recent purchase of 59/63 Willow Street property in business district, and interest is putting out an RFP by the end of the year to develop the property, preferably mixed use. Lampman noted that it was helpful when a community holds the land to set the stage for development.

Discussion addressed the documentation that HDC currently has from MAPC and consultant's septic study and what information would maximize value for the panel. Lampman recommended if focus was on economics then HDC should provide more information in this area (this is what HDC lacks) as well as land use, surrounding uses, context, and demographics of Town. He reiterated that panel brought in would have experts in septic, land use, zoning. The information of most interest to ULI is demand drivers such lease rates, land values, data on businesses that would like to expand or come to Hamilton to assess demand in real world scenario. This comes back to the septic issue where existing businesses have interest in expanding but septic limitation is constraining.

Also mentioned was getting a wastewater treatment system in Town could prove to be extremely difficult so analysis would have to be on possibilities with or without a system. The HDC has based data on such a system from the consultant on cost and options which would be designated within certain parts of business district. Lampman noted that this would help ULI determine development capacity. Also addressed was if pursuing a wastewater treatment system was considered to facilitate development what real estate revenues would be achieved. Lampman said this would increase land value. The benefit of mixed use, multi-family and a community located on commuter rail line relative to potential for downtown development will be considered.

Lampman had reviewed draft TAP from HDC. He described how TAPs are reviewed by ULI committee to help it focus on issues that need to be accomplished. Lampman noted how HDC had expertise within the Corporation as well as focus and depth that is useful to ULI to make best use of the one day. Timing for ULI is a one-day session scheduled six weeks after an application is received (i.e., May or early June) and ULI's report could be received before fall Town Meeting. Lampman reiterated that there are similar communities that have solutions to challenges Hamilton is facing. David Geikie agreed to respond to the HDC in 24 hours about whether or not there is any interest in Wenham being included in a ULI study. Lampman noted that ULI is looking for broader objective for Town such as sewer capacity and what potential that would create for Town as well as ROI relative to demand drivers. The HDC already has information on business owner water consumption. Lampman stated that based on the discussion about what the HDC is looking for from a ULI study he encouraged the Corporation to submit an application that would be reviewed via conference call to refine, assemble a panel and establish a date. He did not think Hamilton had a situation where the resources did not align with the wishes, there was a lot of potential along with issues that have to be overcome to realize it.

The HDC notified meeting attendee Jim Kroesser that Wright-Pierce septic study information as well as MAPC information was on HDC's section of Town's website. Kroesser opined that information for ULI would be current real estate taxes downtown, water consumption, rental rates, and intent to generate mixed use density downtown. Discussion was on how ULI report could get people excited about what HDC has been talking about for the downtown to give them a vision and as an instrumental tool to move forward proposed by-law change for mixed use and multifamily.

### **Review of TAP**

Discussion ensued on TAP where information on development concept for four parcels was removed, focus on looking at downtown economic potential/financial feasibility/benefit in current state relative to waste disposal systems and with a wastewater system in place (assuming zoning by-law change for mixed use and multifamily), parking situation, and infrastructure impacts (roads, sidewalks, water, sewer) in current state, by-law change with no wastewater infrastructure change, and if there was mixed use development and wastewater system.

Discussion addressed how development would be limited with no septic or by-law change, zoning change and no increased septic, or mixed use development with zoning change and increased septic capacity (i.e., issue is leaching field). DPW Director Bill

Redford suggested that infrastructure include more than septic such as water and parking. The HDC plans to meet with Police Chief to address current parking situation downtown.

For the three development scenarios discussed land use planning/design and economic analysis/financial feasibility would be involved. Specifically what is the buildout potential, infrastructure costs, and economic benefit (business activity generated and increased tax revenue for Town). Discussion was on importance of economics but downtown revenue is a small percentage for the entire Town and other positive results of development in the area such as greater enjoyment of the Town, potential housing types Hamilton does not currently have, increase shopping convenience as compared to North Beverly, provide a better business environment for merchants, beautification/walkability of downtown (i.e., sidewalks and benches), all of which could raise property values. The HDC will revise TAP and review and submit application so conference call can occur and HDC can get on ULI's schedule before end of school year.

Discussion ensued about political process and importance of keeping public informed related to options to improve downtown where value is seen as a tradeoff to associated cost to garner support (i.e., for wastewater treatment system and bonding). The HDC noted that it is working through a process to develop information from wastewater consultant and by engaging a professional planner (ULI) to thoroughly explain what has been done to date so it could convincingly present proposal for wastewater treatment system and by-law change for mixed use and multifamily in the downtown to the community.

Mitchell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 a.m. Carey seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Stein, President