

MINUTES
Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust
April 18, 2017 – 6 p.m.
Hamilton Town Hall

Members present: Chair Russ Tanzer, Mark Johnson, Michael Lombardo and Bill Wilson.

Town staff present: Dorr Fox, Hamilton Community Projects Coordinator.

Russ Tanzer opened the meeting at 6:05p.m. He welcomed new minutes taker Mary Alice Cookson. He invited the Trust to look at the minutes from the April 3, 2017 meeting, thanking Dorr Fox for the quick turn-around on them. Michael Lombardo made a motion to approve the April 3 minutes. Marc Johnson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

59/63 WILLOW STREET

Mr. Tanzer introduced Brian Stein of The Hamilton Development Corporation and asked him to provide an update on the RFP due back May 9. Mr. Stein reported that the RFP went out a number of weeks ago and questions are due back next week. A few were already received. They are looking at whether the site should be for residential-use (which would trigger affordable housing), mixed-use (commercial and residential) or all-commercial use. They estimate the site could accommodate up to 30 bedrooms. Mr. Stein said the only person who attended the pre-meeting/conference was Andrew DeFranza of Harborlight Community Partners, who had concerns about the number of units that could “politically” be on the site. If 20 or more, Mr. DeFranza said it would probably be a go for him. A few others took out RFP packages, as well, but the only questions so far have come from Mr. DeFranza. Mr. Stein said an engineer did a quick study of the drainage, which is pretty good, as well as reasonable building footprints.

Mr. Tanzer said he’ll look forward to seeing how the RFP process plays out. Mr. Fox asked if there were any steps to be taken in the meantime. Mr. Wilson suggested reaching out to Mr. DeFranza and the other interested parties to see if there’s anything the Trust can do to assist them or if any clarification is needed. The Trust agreed this would be good to do. Mr. Wilson said he would include the matter in his updates to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Tanzer asked members of the public attending the meeting if they had any comments or questions. There were none.

LANDFILL SITE – CHEBACCO ROAD

Mr. Tanzer mentioned previous conversation regarding the site and said he had walked it with David Thompson, 103 Essex Street (a civil engineer in attendance at the meeting). Mr. Tanzer mentioned two spots on the site that might be developable.

One is a spot that is about an acre and a third that abuts wetlands. Another is in the back between where the caps (the two landfill cells) converge, which is a heavily wooded area that's virgin land. Mr. Thompson noted that he thinks there are 3 to 5 acres that are buildable there. He described the location and said you have to cross 50 feet of wetlands to get to it. That access will require working with the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Lombardo said they had a meeting with those constructing the solar array there, who also need an access way, and it might be possible to piggyback with that project to get a way through to the site.

Mr. Johnson mentioned the salamander habitat. Mr. Thompson noted it is on the fringe of the setback and doesn't anticipate it being a major impediment, but it will need review.

Mr. Lombardo said the solar people have met with the Conservation Commission to discuss the permitting process and sequence of things needing to happen and have laid out a plan to move forward. They may need to trim trees or take a few trees down. They expect to have the array built before March of next year. Mr. Wilson asks if this might conflict with any of the proposed development. Mr. Lombardo says they want to keep the solar panels up on the hill with a perimeter fence surrounding the area to keep folks away from them.

While the sites seem most likely to be physically buildable, Mr. Johnson says that at this point it is unknown how marketable they might be. Mr. Wilson suggested reaching out to Mr. Rob Brennan of Cape Build and Mr. DeFranza to look at that. Mr. Johnson asked about the height limit in the commercial overlay district and said they will need to look at the permitting that's in place there, especially since it's a narrow site.

Mr. Lombardo says he will inquire about the height and about the angle of the solar panels and provide information about solar glare.

Mr. Tanzer says it's important as they're developing the plan that consideration be given to affordable housing, and that this site might be more attractive as workforce housing as it is right off of Route 128. Mr. Fox said he would write the letter to see whether the partners might find the sites marketable, financeable, etc.

Mary Cookson, 89 Essex Street, commented that Turtle Creek in Beverly seems similarly situated, off of Route 128, and might be interesting to Mr. DeFranza for this reason. Mr. Johnson noted this site would have a different look and feel from that of Turtle Creek.

Mr. Tanzer inquired about the water supply there. Mr. Johnson noted they might need to speak to Manchester about water and about utility access. Mr. Lombardo said they've had cursory discussions about possibly getting water from Manchester. Mr. Johnson noted that the town has had cross agreement's in the past between other towns, for example Hamilton has provide water to some Essex houses. Mr.

Lombardo said that while the town is exploring that, long-term solutions are not in the Essex watershed.

Richard Boyle, 40 Moynihan Road, asked about the condition of Chebacco Road. Mr. Lombardo described it as rough and said that while it was graded and rolled last fall, it didn't hold up. Ultimately, the residents would like the road paved, he noted, but it is a big project. They would need conversations at the state level for the funding needed (approximately \$1.5 to 2 million). Mr. Boyle commented that if those 30 bedrooms were located there, paving would certainly be needed.

Mr. Jack Lawrence, 105 Maple Street, said that as he recollects, Manchester doesn't have exclusive access to water out there and Hamilton may have some rights. Mr. Lombardo said no, the Town doesn't have permit to pull water from there at this point. However, if the Town didn't tap into the Manchester plant, there are sites that could be viable for putting in a well.

Mr. Wilson asked if they should be thinking about writing up what studies they might want to conduct or whether that's premature. Mr. Lombardo said it's premature since the partners might not be interested in the project. Mr. Johnson suggested giving them the topos. Mr. Lombardo says he will send a preliminary layout to Mr. Fox for distributing, which will show where the solar arrays are and tell the partners what is known about the site so far. Mr. Johnson adds that if a site walk is required, they can coordinate that.

Mr. Tanzer reiterated that they should invite Mr. DeFranza and Mr. Brennan to the next meeting to discuss what they might be interested in doing at the landfill. The other Trust members agreed and set the meeting for Tuesday, May 9 at 6 p.m.

VACANT SEAT AND CHAIRMANSHIP SELECTION

Mr. Tanzer said the Trust is actively seeking candidates for the vacant seat created by the departure of Peter Britton. Mr. Johnson explained that when there are vacancies on other boards, such as the Planning Board, the Planning Board recommends a candidate and votes separately whether to appoint him/her, and then the Selectmen also vote separately. Members of the public in attendance at the meeting were invited to send a note to Mr. Tanzer if they had interest in applying for the seat. Mr. Fox said he would add the matter as an agenda item for the next meeting. After the seat is filled, the Trust will then vote on chairmanship. Until then Mr. Tanzer will continue serving as interim chair.

In response to a question from Ms. Cookson about why there are only five people serving on the Trust, Mr. Johnson explained that the Special Act of the Legislature calls for five members with one being the Town Manager. He noted that the Trust has the power to own property, borrow, lease, etc. This can't arbitrarily be changed because it would require an amendment from the state.

Mr. Wilson discussed adding non-voting members to have more bodies and skillsets represented. Pertaining to the chairmanship, he said he thought it best to wait until

they have the full body to vote on that. He said he liked the idea that before every meeting there is a process to meet and set the agenda so that Mr. Tanzer gets help and they can make sure everything is covered. Mr. Johnson said in addition to meeting monthly, he'd prefer to pull the group together on an ad-hoc basis in a properly posted meeting to address issues that arise.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

Mr. Wilson asked about the role of the Trust pertaining to the matters being discussed this evening at the Selectmen's meeting. Mr. Johnson said that the process they've adopted calls for them to circle back in the permitting process. He said there will be a certain shape that happens in determining the number of units involved and then it will come back to the Planning Board.

Rob Harrison, 2 Horseshoe Lane, asked if there was a list of basket projects. Mr. Fox gave him a list and said it was also posted on the website.

Robert Borsetti, 746 Bay Road, asked what criteria must be met to move a project into the basket. He asked why the two sites being discussed (the Landfill site and the Willow Street site) had not been moved into the basket yet. Mr. Tanzer responded that the Willow Street site is in the RFP process, which is due to come to fruition May 9, and the Landfill site requires the Trust to find out if there is any interest before doing any of the legwork. After that, the Trust will determine if the site makes it into the basket.

Mr. Borsetti asked if the Trust had approached Mr. Brennan about potential interest in cottage housing there and was told yes.

Mr. Lombardo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Adjournment was unanimously approved.