

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MEMORIAL ROOM, HAMILTON TOWN HALL
December 19, 2018

Members Present: Brian Stein (president), Bill Gisness, Rick Mitchell, Tom Goodwin, and Anthony Nickas

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Brian Stein called the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. with a quorum present.

Warrant for Bills

Mr. Stein presented Warrant HDC-1914 for \$7,145.65, which included the fee for Bob Shannon (feasibility study), refunding Harborlight Community Partners' \$2,500 deposit, minutes secretary's time, and the final bill for Carol Johnson Associates (landscape architects).

Decision:

Bill Gisness made a motion to approve payment of Warrant HDC-1914. Tom Goodwin seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve payment.

Anthony Nickas said he didn't see where the Harborlight deposit had gone into the account. Mr. Fox said it was deposited a couple of years ago and was most likely in the cash balance. He will check on it. Mr. Nickas mentioned deposits should be separated out in the future. [The deposit is being returned because the Harborlight project has been withdrawn.]

Approve Minutes for Dec. 12, 2018

Mr. Stein made a motion to approve two sets of minutes for Dec. 12, the regular morning meeting and the public meeting that evening. Mr. Goodwin seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the minutes.

Downtown Improvements—Discussion on Dec. 12 Evening Meeting

Mr. Gisness noted it was a light crowd. Primary discussion came from Paul Thober, owner of the Weathervane Tavern. Parking issues were discussed, but weren't as much of a

lightning rod as they were at the previous meeting, according to Mr. Goodwin. [About three existing parking spaces will be lost by the proposed parking scheme.] Meeting participants included David Cutter (who had expressed interest in purchasing the HDC property). At the meeting Chris Connolly of Connolly's Pharmacy stated that similar downtown improvement plans had been discussed going back into the '80s and things hadn't happened. Mr. Gisness said it was a sad statement when people say things like "nothing happens." New people come onto the Town boards and propose things and do what they can and often don't get the support they need from the community. Some people in Town want to see things get done and others don't. Mr. Stein said Mr. Cutter was supportive of the HDC's efforts. A pocket of open space for gathering and socializing was proposed at the meeting and Mr. Cutter expressed he might want to fix up the side of his building and behind it for such a space. [He owns the building where Timeless Interiors is.] Mr. Stein wasn't sure outdoor seating was necessary there aren't that many food establishments, but it's open to discussion.

Discussed was how to press forward now that Harborlight's proposed Willow Street project is off the table. Mr. Stein said he's heard from Town Manager Joe Domelowicz that the Town wants to pave Chebacco Road and connect a water line up to Manchester's water supply. The Town would be looking for State money for this large endeavor and could be in competition for the money that the HDC is looking for to facilitate the downtown improvements. One proposal is that Dodge Tree Service, which has about an acre of property downtown, may be interested in relocating to Chebacco Road after the paving and if a deal can be made. This would free up that property.

Mr. Stein asked if they should talk more aggressively with Mr. Cutter whose off-the-cuff offer was to buy the Willow Street property (#59 and #63) for what the HDC paid for it. He wasn't inclined to do that, wanting to get more than the assessed value back. Rick Mitchell suggested they keep it as just one option. Selling directly would save the HDC a broker's fee. Finding someone who could do a 20-unit senior housing project (market rate apartments) with first-floor retail would be an ideal situation. Mr. Goodwin inquired if Mr. Cutter is just an investor or a developer. Mr. Stein said developer.

Mr. Gisness suggested it would be worthwhile to get a downtown business group active again. Mr. Stein said the group still meets, but he doesn't hear much from them. It was agreed Mr. Fox and Minutes Secretary Mary Alice Cookson will go door to door to talk with business owners in the area and find out when would be a good time for them to meet as a group with the HDC. They'd especially like to receive input from the new business owners in Town. Suggested people to invite included a couple who spoke at the meeting (Robin and Jack Davis); Steve of the Locksmyth Hair Salon; Mr. Thober of the Weathervane; Houndstooth consignment shop; Feathers med spa (located nextdoor to Houndstooth); the new realty company next to the dentist; managers at Timeless Interiors; Ward's Hair Co.; Linda Meiggs, property manager for the Shoppes at Hamilton Crossing shopping plaza; and Honeycomb Bakery. The idea is to let the owners know the HDC would like to meet with them and discuss the best uses for the annual dollars the HDC spends on downtown as well as the improvements they'd most like to see. Mr. Fox noted the annual dollars (\$10K) generally include the flower boxes and wreaths. Mr. Gisness said yes, but the shop owners

might have other suggestions. As a side note, he mentioned that the wreaths downtown are smaller than they have been in previous years. Mr. Fox will talk with Nunan's Florist about that.


New/Old Business

The next meeting was set for Jan. 9 at 7:30 a.m. Mr. Fox had requested it be moved from Jan. 2 so the mortgage bill will be ready to pay.

Adjournment

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 a.m. Mr. Goodwin seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Prepared by:



Mary Alice Cookson



Attest

1/9/19

Date