

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MEMORIAL ROOM, HAMILTON TOWN HALL
February 20, 2019

Members Present: Brian Stein (president), Bill Gisness, and Anthony Nickas

Members Absent: Rick Mitchell and Tom Goodwin

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Brian Stein called the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. with a quorum present.

Warrant for Bills

Mr. Stein presented a warrant for HDC minutes and a water bill.

Bill Gisness made a motion to approve payment of Warrant HDC-1918 in the amount of \$183.52. Anthony Nickas seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously among those present (3-0) to approve the warrant.

Approve Minutes—Jan. 23 and Feb. 6

Mr. Gisness made a motion to approve the Feb. 6 minutes. Mr. Nickas seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously among those present (3-0) to approve the Feb. 6 minutes.

The HDC postponed voting on the Jan. 23 minutes vote until the next meeting, as Mr. Nickas, one of only three members present, hadn't attended the Jan. 23 meeting.

Downtown Improvements

Nunans' Contract: The HDC had some questions on the Nunans' 2019 contract. The amount for the downtown flower baskets and their watering seemed high (about \$5,700 just for the baskets alone, excluding the islands and their watering). Also the HDC members were surprised that the total number of baskets was 46 because they didn't think there were that many. Dorr Fox obtained last year's bill and explained there are two baskets per pole. Last year's bill was about \$9,000, including the islands. After reviewing last year's bill, the HDC

found this year's bill to be reasonable. The amount is only \$2 more per basket than last year.

Decision:

Mr. Nickas made motion to approve the Nunan's 2019 contract. Mr. Gisness seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously among those present (3-0) to approve the contract.

Signage: The HDC discussed how things are progressing on getting a sign for the business owners perhaps to be located at the MBTA station. Mr. Fox said there is a substantial fee to post something on the existing board, which is near where commuters get on and off the train. Also, the board is full at this point, so the HDC would most likely have wait until one of the current advertisers opted not to renew. The HDC noted also that the map of area businesses that would be part of the sign would most likely need periodic updating, which would involve additional costs. Mr. Stein said he would rather ask Linda Meiggs, who manages the property for the shopping center if they could put a sign on that property near the path that crosses over the tracks by Talbots. Mr. Gisness said this would involve having a sign/structure built. Mr. Fox said the woman who made the Historic District signs said she was interested in the project. Also, Tim Neill, owner of Allied Conservation, told him he had created a sign that he still has on his computer and can update. Mr. Fox was under the impression that Mr. Neill would update the map for free and the HDC could handle the printing/production. Mr. Gisness noted that Mr. Neill's map extends to Wenham's town center. Mr. Stein said he thought they could include Wenham on the map to make it more substantial. Mr. Fox will contact Mr. Neill and Ms. Meiggs. Mr. Stein said he hasn't yet contacted Connolly's Pharmacy about perhaps putting a sign on the side of that building, which is another potential location.

Website: Mr. Fox said he talked with Alexa Lucci who created the Town's website and she thought it would be better and less expensive to have the downtown business owners' website as a community page that would be part of the existing Town website. Mr. Fox said Town Manager Joe Domelowicz agreed and as part of an existing website, the page would get more traffic. Nothing has been checked out legally yet with Town Counsel. There was some hesitation on the part of the HDC as the idea had been previously discussed as a Chamber of Commerce-like page, and they weren't sure of the appropriateness of the municipality endorsing the commercial page. Mr. Gisness commented that the website/page should tie in all the activities happening in Town, including walking and hiking trails, activities at Patton Park and the pool, Myopia Hunt Club, horse trails, etc., to encourage people to visit the area.

Mr. Stein noted Mr. Domelowicz had said at the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting that he will be putting out a Town newsletter that residents can opt in to receive. Mr. Nickas posed the issue that they wouldn't want their info. to be different (conflicting) from what the

Town posted. Minutes Secretary Mary Alice Cookson said the Town's newsletter would most likely cover some of the same information the HDC would like to get out to the public. It is in a preliminary stage at this point.

Mr. Fox said he spoke with Police Chief Russell Stevens and learned the Town is wanting to have a sign at the Public Safety Building with an LED screen on both sides. Who gets priority to post there will be an issue.

Emails to the Business Owners: Mr. Stein said it would be good to talk with the group of business owners who came to the last meeting to see if they are meeting on their own and what the HDC can do to support them. Rick Mitchell had reported recently via email that there is a new Hamilton business owners' Facebook page being launched. Mr. Fox said it's being done by Angela Watson Arvanites of the new shop, A Monogram Shop. He thought she had attended the HDC's public meeting, and it was suggested that he and Ms. Cookson contact her.

Mr. Gisness asked if a thank-you email had been sent out. Mr. Fox and Ms. Cookson said it had. Mr. Gisness said each month an email should go out to give the business owners an update on actions the HDC had taken on their behalf. For example, Mr. Fox had asked Chief Stevens about perhaps getting a handicapped parking space at the bottom of the ramp outside the new spa. There already is a handicapped space just across the street and there are already many handicapped parking spaces in Town so the Chief wasn't promising anything. Also, Mr. Fox had asked Chief Stevens about extending the amount of two-hour parking spaces and that's also up in the air.

59/63 Willow Street

Mr. Stein said he received a call from the man doing the market study who said it is taking more time than he had thought and he will have it to them by the next meeting. Mr. Gisness said it would be helpful to have some broker input. He reviewed the RFPs Mr. Mitchell had written and had the following comments: It should say 20-25 "bedrooms" rather than "units" and the project needs site plan review not a special permit. The HDC will review the market study next week. Mr. Gisness asked if Mr. Fox could assemble a list of who they would want to reach out to, including engineers, architects, and attorneys.

Elaine Swenson, 6 Linden Street, said she came to the meeting to hear an update on Willow Street. She said the minutes weren't up to date. Mr. Stein explained that the Jan. 23 minutes weren't voted on today because only two of the three of them had been at that meeting. The other minutes were current. He filled her in on the current status: that the HDC was working to get Willow Street permitted and taken through the site plan review process and then they would be looking for a buyer/developer. He and Mr. Gisness stressed that the

HDC does not want to be long-term landowners and their goal in buying Willow Street in the first place was to do something to benefit the downtown.

New/Old Business

None.

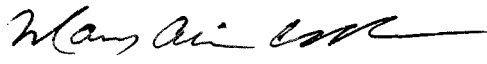
Mr. Gisness thanked Mr. Fox for his hard work.

HDC members discussed that they had had problems with the Town's email server and were also receiving a fair amount of spam. Mr. Fox said he would look into it. Ms. Cookson said she heard at the BOS meeting that the Town would be getting a new company to handle its email service since the current one is going out of business.

Adjournment

Mr. Stein made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:12 a.m. Mr. Nickas seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously among those present (3-0) to adjourn the meeting.

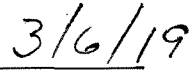
Prepared by:



Mary Alice Cookson



Attest



Date