

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES OF MEETING

Memorial Room, Hamilton Town Hall, 577 Bay Road

May 15, 2019

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

Members Absent: None

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Rick Mitchell called the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. with a quorum present. He announced the HDC was conducting interviews with a number of consultants for the 59/63 Willow Street project for taking it through the site plan review process. The members introduced themselves to the first candidate. Mr. Mitchell said they hoped to reach a decision by May 22 or the end of the month.

Interviews for Consultants for 59 Willow Street Project

Savoi/Nolan Architects

The team of Ken Savoi and Bill Nolan gave their presentation. They are a largely residential design firm in downtown Ipswich that started in 1989. Mr. Nolan joined the firm three years ago. They have done mixed-use (commercial/residential) projects. Their philosophy is to be good service providers, build projects that suit the area and meet the needs of their clients. They rely on referrals from clients and builders. Mr. Savoi has ties to the area and has worked on the Town Hall in the past. He has completed projects on Railroad Ave., where Timeless Interiors is located. Both have served on their town boards, which gives them an appreciation for what's expected. There are five others at the firm.

Mr. Gisness asked who the HDC would be working with. Mr. Savoi said himself or Mr. Nolan. Mr. Savoi said he'd most likely be the one presenting. Mr. Gisness asked if they had ever worked with a development corporation comprised of part-timers and volunteers. Mr. Savoi replied by talking about his experience with nonprofit housing groups and listed some. When Mr. Gisness asked him about how many presentations with the Town would be needed, he responded about three.

Brian Stein noted himself and Mr. Mitchell are on the Planning Board and would be recusing themselves.

Tom Goodwin commented it is a unique site and asked for thoughts on enhancing the idea put forth. Mr. Savoie said the building out front where the barbershop is fits the scale of the neighborhood. The house behind is secondary and would be removed. Since the scale of the front building is appropriate to the scale of the neighborhood, his idea was to put the density behind it. He asked about how many units they expected and the HDC said the max was about 20-23 bedrooms so it was up to the architect on how that was configured.

Mr. Gisness said civil engineers have said the project should be around 20 bedrooms. The intent is to leave the front building and work on the back. Commercial would be on the first floor.

Mr. Savoie asked if they would achieve parking under the building or behind. Mr. Gisness said the HDC would look for their expertise. The same with how many commercial units there would be. He told Mr. Savoie he had thought it would be just one commercial space. He mentioned that Acord Food Pantry was looking for a bigger space and could want to move in there.

Mr. Goodwin said in terms of design, they've heard walk-in retail isn't best for the space, so maybe something more like an insurance or law office. Mr. Savoie said they try to design flexible space, but it's good to know if there is a target, something the Town is lacking. In the design process, Mr. Savoie said they communicate openly so as not to get out on a tangent. The fact that they are located nearby helps. Mr. Nolan said he creates a project schedule for checkpoints using percentages so they don't go off-track.

Mr. Gisness asked how much time would be needed to put together a package. The architects said they could be ready to meet in two weeks. Mr. Savoie asked if they'd get an immediate critique at the biweekly meetings. Mr. Gisness said yes.

Mr. Mitchell asked for their experience working with multidisciplinary teams, legal counsel, etc. Mr. Savoie said on almost any project there are always other consultants. They frequently work with engineers of all sorts and attorneys during the approval process. They don't have their own attorney but work with those involved. He asked if they anticipated other boards reviewing the project. Mr. Mitchell said just the Planning Board.

When asked if the scope of services was sufficient to provide accurate pricing of their fee, Mr. Savoie said yes. The bulk of time will be in the design. Having done a number of projects, he has a good idea of what's involved.

Mr. Mitchell asked if it were realistic in terms of their availability and staffing to have this completed by the end of October. Mr. Savoie said yes. While this is site plan approval only, he said that oftentimes the Planning Board is looking at the outside of the building and impact mechanical systems have on the appearance of the building and will want to know how those could be screened. For this he needs a general sense of what the systems are in the building, in addition to lighting etc. Mr. Mitchell said they'd have some info. in the site plan documents relating to these things and the architects might need to fold in some advice from consultants on some of the items. Mr. Savoie said they do have structural engineer consultants they use as well as other consultants.

Mr. Goodwin asked how they presented their cost structure, whether it was hourly. Mr. Savoie said they would give them a fixed fee based on time and hourly rate. There won't be many reimbursable expenses (like mileage) since the firm is close by.

Mr. Savoie wanted to know how many projects the HDC has done and if this was the first. Mr. Mitchell said this would be the first. After a successful site plan review, they expect to bid out the project for construction. The HDC provided a bit of history saying their intent had been to do some affordable housing on the site, which didn't work out.

SV Design, Thaddeus Siemasko, Architect

Mr. Siemasko knows Mr. Stein. Mr. Stein recused himself.

Mr. Mitchell gave Mr. Siemasko and Kristen Broyles, a registered architect who has been with the Beverly- and Chatham-based firm five years and two months, an idea of what they were looking for—a 20 minute presentation leaving the remaining 10 minutes for questions. Mr. Siemasko gave a Powerpoint. He talked about tending to do more creative custom work. One philosophy is to always do the right thing even when hard. He's been in the business 32 years and said he wants the process to be fun. He worked on Firehouse Place and the Acord food pantry. He did the Honeycomb building with Mr. Stein. He also did a "cleanup" at the Salem Five Bank. He knows the Town. He said another in the firm, Ben Scott, might be involved. Mr. Siemasko is married to attorney Miranda Gooding, who is also being interviewed this morning. He detailed some of the projects he's worked on in Beverly. They recently got approval for 50 units of family affordable housing there. He said they do a thorough site analysis, looking at sun, wind, trees, utilities, pedestrian and vehicular access, and the neighborhood.

He thought the schedule seemed reasonable. He thought getting neighbor consensus would be the biggest part of the project. He can generate fly-over images to give knowledge to the neighbors about what they are going to get. As far as whether he were given enough detail to accurately price the project, Mr. Siemasko said yes. He thought the number of meetings

seemed sufficient. He said the HDC would be working with either him or Ms. Broyles. They wouldn't see anyone but him or her at the meetings.

Mr. Gisness told them the HDC is planning to bring in a civil engineer and lawyer and asked if they needed anyone else. Mr. Siemasko thought perhaps someone to do a traffic study. He said they'd set goals in increments. Mr. Gisness asked for rough cost per square foot for construction. Mr. Siemasko said it is about \$200-something. He said he saw it as a wood-frame, but there might be some steel for the commercial space. He stressed they shouldn't go to the Planning Board until they feel they have something that will be supported. Mr. Gisness asked what their opinion was about morning meetings vs. evening. He said they should offer as wide a range as possible. He said he isn't above going into each living room of the abutters. He prefers mornings, but if can't get enough abutters for mornings, he can do evenings. He thought having a decision by the end of the month sounded great. He concluded by saying: We want to do it!

Hancock Associates, Engineers

Joe Peznola, director of engineering, gave his presentation. He said that his firm has expanded through regional offices. They have almost 80 employees. This project would be supported out of the Danvers office. He might bring in project manager Katie Cruz, who is familiar with permitting process, but he oversees everything. He brings to the table his strategic planning and experience in multi-family housing. He's been a civil engineer for 30 years. He has developed a niche in developing housing through Chapter 40B. He talked about his history, 20 years on the Zoning Board of Appeals in his hometown of Hudson, Mass. He worked for CHAPPA as co-chair of the training subcommittee for 8 years.

He said some of his favorite projects are with nonprofit housing developers. He has established relationships with nonprofits and does a lot of senior housing. These projects tend to be smaller and team-oriented. They have weekly calls to check in and make sure projects are on track. He gave examples of projects he's done, including a 23-unit project in Lowell on a small site. They permitted it quickly and got right into construction. He talked about doing a 62-unit senior housing project in Sudbury, which he said was a community similar to Hamilton. He said the design review board was conscious of the impact of the height of the building on the area. Septic there was also challenging. He said that he's looked at the issues that Harborlight brought to light, such as storm water and septic. You can do septic up to 10,000 gallons but after that you go to a waste water treatment plant, so the project might not be economical viable. A treatment plant is at least \$1M.

Mr. Gisness asked if Mr. Peznola would be the one presenting to the Town. He said that many times he takes on the role. He said Ms. Cruz is also a phenomenal engineer and adept at presentation. He thought the project put forward was achievable. He said they can put a team tougher and pride themselves on responsiveness.

As far as whether he foresees any issues, he said he hadn't seen any soil testing and would want that. He said there was a depression before you reach the parking lot heading toward the main street. There is a new septic under one of the parking lots. It will be challenging to marry the two, he said.

He thought the scope of services did provide enough detail to provide accurate pricing. He thought the civil engineering part would be \$20K to \$25K.

Mr. Gisness asked if he had any experience with the Hamilton Planning Board. He said they did have some contact out of the Danvers office.

He asked the HDC, as far as next steps, were they going to choose the architect, engineer and legal rep. and if they would be simultaneous decisions. They said yes and that then there would be negotiations on pricing. Mr. Mitchell noted the HDC didn't anticipate this as affordable housing. They see it as market-rate condos and pursuing as-of-right development.

Mr. Stein said the Planning Board does have some flexibility in terms of the bylaw. There aren't a lot of regulations. There are some parking requirements, but they have been forgiven over the years. The HDC will run with permitting the project and then put the project out to bid. They don't envision it going to construction documents at this point.

Miranda Gooding, Attorney, Glovsky & Glovsky

Mr. Mitchell explained the project. Ms. Gooding said it was a project that's in her firm's wheelhouse and in her own wheelhouse in terms of permitting experience. She has done permitting work for about 10 years. The bulk of her work has been in Beverly, primarily for Windover and now Beverly Crossing. She's learned a lot about galvanizing community support and working through the boards to get that done. She worked on a subdivision project in Hamilton that didn't go through. They had problems with an abutter. She detailed other projects she has done in the area. She said this is the kind of project she's been doing and would enjoy being a part of. She cited a recent story of being at a master planning meeting in Beverly and having a vocal opponent come up to her and say that in the end she liked the building that was built.

Mr. Goodwin asked if she were the face for the public meetings. She said yes and that typically the process is collaborative, but the attorney is generally the first person up to speak and sets the tone. If things go well, the lawyer talks less.

She talked about overcoming density issues and said the key is to remind people that the folks living in the new projects are their neighbors. A large percentage of those living in the buildings are from the community already or from the wider North Shore community.

Mr. Goodwin discussed the optionality of going the rental or condo route. He asked if there were difficulties from a permitting perspective. Her thought was that you have to make the decision early on, as it's not easy to switch from apartments to condos. She said a developer wanting the most flexibility would develop a project as condos and reserve the right to have rentals, but they are taxed as condos from the get-go so it's a draw on the bottom line.

Mr. Mitchell asked if she saw any unique challenges in Hamilton. She said this community isn't accustomed to multi-family development, which is the challenge. There's tension for folks sensitive to the budget and concerned with the school and the notion of bringing in more people and families has a chilling effect.

Mr. Mitchell asked if she saw it part of role of legal counsel to offer advice about the best approaches in terms of design and marketing the project. She said yes. She said hopefully there is a team that knows the community and appreciates the challenges. She thinks they'd have that team (alluding to her husband Mr. Siemasko, who was interviewed previously). As far as how she sets her fee, she said she has never done permitting as a flat fee. Her practice is to bill hourly but she would be willing to give thought to a flat fee depending on the "team" and how well everyone works together. In the interest of not having costs go out of control, Mr. Mitchell said the HDC would be interested in her conceptualizing and saying: Here's what we believe the fees will be given what we know.

She asked about some of the base survey work. Mr. Stein said they did have engineering conduct some preliminary soil testing and look at drainage and septic there. Ms. Gooding noted the potential waste water treatment issue, but the HDC told her the previous engineering consultants felt they could do it with the septic.

She said a big role she plays is in being the master scheduler, sending out the Outlook invites, and getting the team together to run through what the presentations would look like. Her style is collaborative. She said it is important to hear who the people are that they should be touching base with.

Approve Minutes—May 1

In the interest of time it was agreed to postpone the vote on the Minutes until the next meeting.

Warrant for Bill

Mr. Fox reported that the warrant wasn't prepared yet, but the HDC decided to vote on it and Mr. Mitchell can sign it later. The amount of Warrant HDC-1926 was \$9,308.30.

Mr. Stein asked for detail. Mr. Mitchell explained there was a 2003 agreement between the HDC and the Town for services that hadn't been charged since 2014. Anthony Nickas clarified that the amount charged was just for this fiscal year and going forward. Mr. Nickas said it wasn't in the budget, but there hadn't been an issue previously because the consulting line item was always pretty rich. But this year had been different because of the website and other projects. Also in the warrant was \$1,250 (half of the \$2,500 for the website design).

Decisions:

Mr. Stein made a motion to approve payment of HDC warrant for \$9,308.30. Mr. Goodwin seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the payment.

Mr. Fox said in order to pay that, the HDC needed to transfer money. He had prepared a transfer of \$4K to consulting services. Also there was another transfer needed in the amount of \$5,500, which was actually two transfers, from the legal retainer category as well as building maintenance category.

Mr. Mitchell asked for a motion to transfer \$5,500 from the consulting services to the line item account with \$2,500 coming from repairs and maintenance and \$3,000 coming from legal retainers.

Mr. Stein made a motion to transfer the \$5,500 from the consulting services to the line item account. Mr. Goodwin seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to make the motion.

Mr. Stein then made a motion to transfer \$4K from the HDC bank account to consulting services. Mr. Goodwin seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion.

New Mortgage for 59/63 Willow Street

Mr. Mitchell asked for the HDC to take a vote to approve commitment for financing on the extension of the mortgage and creating a line of credit of \$100K to be used for the site plan review.

Decision:

Mr. Nickas made a motion to approve the commitment letter. Mr. Stein seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to accept the motion.

Update on the Street Fair

The Street Fair will be held from noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday. There will be a Town table. Mr. Fox asked if they wanted him to draft a one-page flyer to talk about the projects the HDC is working on. They said yes.

New/Old Business

None.

Adjournment

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:37 a.m. Anthony Nickas seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously among those present (*4-0) to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Stein had left the meeting just prior to this vote.

Prepared by:

		
Mary Alice Cookson	Attest	Date