

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES OF MEETING

Memorial Room, Hamilton Town Hall, 577 Bay Road

June 26, 2019

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

Associate Members Present: Angela Arvanites and Chad Smith

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Rick Mitchell opened the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) meeting at 7:32 a.m. He welcomed new Associate Member Chadd Smith and said he will be a big help to them with his knowledge of commercial and residential real estate. Mr. Smith is a realtor, a Hamilton resident, and president of the local Rotary Club.

Mr. Mitchell gave some background on the creation of the associate membership.

Angela Arvanites arrived. She owns A Monogram Shop downtown and is on the Open Space Committee. She is also the founder of the new Shop Local HW group and Facebook page. Mr. Mitchell said they are appointing the two new associate, non-voting members because Bill Gisness and Tom Goodwin expect to step down as members at the end of the year. Mr. Mitchell cited both Mr. Gisness' and Mr. Goodwin's history with the HDC and the Town. He said he looked forward to the new members' active participation and giving them exposure to what the HDC does so they might be appointed by the Board of Selectmen (BOS) as full members when Mr. Gisness and Mr. Goodwin resign.

Warrants for Bills

Mr. Mitchell presented Warrant HDC-1931 in the amount of \$3,660 for staff time, reimbursement for expenses at 63 Willow St., reimbursement to the Town of Hamilton, the attorney's fee, and maintenance fee for the downtown flower baskets.

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to approve payment of Warrant HDC-1931 in the amount of \$3,660. Brian Stein seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the warrant.

Mr. Mitchell presented a second warrant, HDC-2001, in the amount of \$2,952.12, for the HDC's mortgage payment.

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to approve payment of Warrant HDC-2001 in the amount of \$2,952.12. Anthony Nickas seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the warrant.

Mr. Fox said he was also seeking the HDC's authorization for an account transfer of \$491.55 to the Governmental Fees category from the Advertising and Printing category. He said they do not expect any advertising or printing expenses between now and Friday, the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to approve the \$491.55 transfer of fees. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to make the transfer.

Approve Minutes—June 12

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to approve the June 12 minutes. Mr. Nickas seconded the motion. The HDC voted (4-0-1) to approve the minutes. *Mr. Stein abstained because he was not present at the June 12 meeting.

Downtown improvements

No discussion.

59/63 Willow Street

Mr. Mitchell explained for the benefit of the new members that the HDC is a public nonprofit development corporation funded through the local meals tax (about \$70K per year), which gets appropriated by the Town to the HDC. He recommended the new members take a look at the HDC's history that can be found on the Town website. He said the HDC bought the Willow Street property in 2014 with the goal of redeveloping it into a commercial property. He discussed that the first time they put it out to an RFP [Request for Proposal], they didn't get any response. Two years ago, they put it out again and the response was a proposed 20-unit senior housing complex that was linked to a project on Longmeadow Way. When the Longmeadow project was defeated, the Willow Street project ended also because the respondent, Harborlight Community Partners, couldn't do one without the other.

Mr. Stein explained there are two commercial spaces for rent at Willow Street. The house behind is also rented. Mr. Gisness added that a main reason the HDC purchased the property was because it wanted to make sure the property was used for a business that

would serve the downtown and/or housing that would support the other local businesses there. Since then a mixed-use bylaw was also put through to allow for mixed uses.

Mr. Goodwin added that the HDC had a market study done that discussed various combinations of commercial and housing to be considered. Mr. Mitchell noted the limited septic is an issue and that the site isn't suited to a business with heavy water use, such as a restaurant.

The HDC also discussed the status of the tenant who had stopped paying rent in November and had left in May. Mr. Mitchell arranged for new tenants to purchase the office equipment and furniture the old tenant had left behind. Right now, the HDC is preparing the space to be occupied, having cleaners come in and adding fire and smoke detectors and new fluorescent bulbs.

Mr. Gisness noted the old tenant's sign is still up and suggested the property management company take it down. Mr. Mitchell said the new tenants are looking to replace it and are working on that. Ms. Arvanites asked about the business of the new tenants. They sell CBD (cannabidiol) oils and are using the space for administrative offices. The previous tenant has agreed to pay \$300 a month until his debt is paid off.

Discussion of Consultants for HDC

Mr. Mitchell discussed the recent market assessment that was done and how it had contracted with legal, civil engineering, and architectural consultants to take the project through the permitting process so that developers will be more likely to invest in the project. They hope to get a package together for approval by the first of next year, which would be a project offering housing with a total of about 20 bedrooms along with some commercial on the first floor. The HDC plans to use the proceeds of the sale of the permitted project to make upgrades and improvements to the downtown. Mr. Stein noted the pilot project will be on Railroad Ave. leading down to Willow Street, but then they'd like to expand that further along Bay Road. Mr. Gisness outlined the area of the HDC's jurisdiction.

The HDC mentioned an idea of perhaps helping the Town to fund the lighting of some trees in Patton Park for the holidays. They then discussed next steps, starting with a kick-off meeting with Attorney Jill Mann and the architectural firm SV Design. They don't yet have a contract with Charlie Wear of Median for the civil engineering services, but expect to have that soon. The HDC discussed scheduling the kick-off meeting for July 10 during its regularly scheduled time of 7:30 a.m.

Mr. Stein said he talked with Mr. Wear who had said he would prefer they had the survey that was previously done registered at the Registry of Deeds because it looked like more of

a draft to him. However, Mr. Stein and Mr. Mitchell both thought it better to have Meridian take the project from beginning to end by completing their own survey.

Website Update

Mr. Mitchell said what they saw at the last meeting was a website that was about 90-percent complete. Its purpose is to promote the downtown businesses. An idea had been raised at the last meeting that they increase the functionality of the website so that the businesses can be grouped by categories. For example, so that all restaurants in town appear under the category of restaurants. Mr. Fox said he had talked with the website developer and this functionality can be added for an additional cost of \$400-\$800 (charged at \$125 per hour).

Ms. Arvanites was asked for her opinion of the website and said she thought it looked great and was more robust than she had been expecting.

Website editor Mary Alice Cookson showed the site as it stands now and included Tim Neill's new map. She and Mr. Fox discussed the changes that the developer had sent them (which was basically an end-around to save money) that looked less than ideal. They talked about what they would like to see instead as far as the formatting.

Decision:

Mr. Goodwin made a motion that the HDC approve an expenditure of up to \$800 for further refinement of the website. Mr. Gisness seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the expenditure.

Ms. Arvanites said that her group Shop Local HW would work on driving traffic to the new website. Mr. Goodwin asked Mr. Fox if he could also discuss how to enhance the website in Google searches with the developer.

Ms. Cookson said she was working on a contact list/spreadsheet with contact information for about 130 businesses and was in need of some addresses to complete the holes on the spreadsheet.

Ms. Arvanites said Wenham collects as part of its business registration process a required field for email addresses. Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Fox to discuss the issue with the Town Clerk's office or whoever handles the process since currently there is no Town Clerk. The idea is to have a completed database so the HDC can easily reach out to the businesses. Ms. Cookson will forward the spreadsheet to Ms. Arvanites today so she can send it out to her group asking them to submit their information. Mr. Gisness said to make it clear that it was just for in-house use so the businesses and HDC can better communicate.

Budget

Mr. Nickas went over the changes he had made to the budget. He said the projected numbers needed to be updated for the closing of the loan as soon as the numbers for the end of the year were finalized. The fiscal year ends at the end of June and July 1 starts the new budget.

Mr. Nickas said the \$18K that they put in should take care of what they need for consulting staff time. Mr. Fox said he didn't know how long it would take to get him those numbers. He wasn't sure if he could have them for the next meeting, but Mr. Nickas said that was OK.

New/Old Business

Mr. Gisness asked about the sidewalk being repaired outside Town Hall. He wanted to know if it fell under the Complete Streets program. Mr. Fox said no, it was being done by the State since Bay Road is a state road.


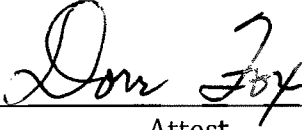
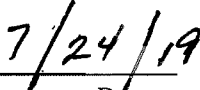
Ms. Arvanites noted the owner of the auto parts store downtown was moving away and would be leasing the space.

Mr. Fox noted the \$3K credit the HDC had inquired about was a reimbursement of closing costs from the bank. Mr. Nickas said he'd like to have a reconciliation statement of it. Mr. Fox said he will fill out a form and give it to the Finance Dept. The money is already in the bank account.

Adjournment

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 a.m. Mr. Stein seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Prepared by:

		
Mary Alice Cookson	Attest	Date