

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES OF MEETING

Memorial Room, Hamilton Town Hall, 577 Bay Road

November 13, 2019

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

Associate Members Present: Angela Arvanites

Associate Members Absent: Chad Smith

Rick Mitchell opened the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) meeting at 7:30 a.m.

Warrant for Bills

Mr. Mitchell presented Warrant HDC-2009 in the amount of \$1,061.24 for utilities and HDC staff work.

Decision:

Tom Goodwin made a motion to approve Warrant HDC-2009 in the amount of \$1,061.24. Brian Stein seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the warrant.

Approve Minutes—Oct. 30, 2019

Mr. Stein made a motion to approve the Oct. 30 meeting minutes. Bill Gisness seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the minutes.

Angela Arvanites arrived at 7:34 a.m.

59/63 Willow Street

Mr. Mitchell reported that new light fixtures were installed and the wiring was upgraded. A threshold will be added. The new tenant hasn't signed yet, but the space is expected to be rented starting Dec. 1.

The Planning Board's Site Plan Review/public hearing took place last Tuesday evening. Approximately 18-20 neighbors attended as well as three members of the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Primary issues raised were about parking, traffic, storm water runoff, and impact on the neighborhood. There was a question on the size of the proposed building. Mr. Mitchell noted this meeting can be watched on HWCAM.

Mr. Gisness asked if the perspectives presented were correct as relating to grading and how the site drops off. Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Stein [who are Planning Board members and were present at the meeting but are recusing themselves] thought yes. Mr. Gisness asked if anyone at the meeting spoke in favor of the project. Mr. Stein said no. The HDC is hoping to have supporters at the next meeting, perhaps a local realtor. Mr. Gisness suggested Chad Smith, but it was thought better to have someone not on the HDC board.

Mr. Mitchell said Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust (HAHT) Chair Russ Tanzer had asked at the hearing if there would be an opportunity to include affordable housing units in the project. According to the inclusionary bylaw, for every 10th unit and every 7th thereafter, there should be one affordable unit. However, Attorney Jill Mann has said she believes the bylaw pertains to subdivisions and not this project. There is an opportunity to use the space set aside as an outside area for grilling to squeeze in a couple more units if necessary.

Also at the hearing, the Planning Board requested a peer review of the drainage and an "abbreviated" parking study. The HDC is responsible to incur the expense. The peer review will look at the sightlines coming from the driveway and other things of this nature, but it would be limited in scope not a full traffic count. Mr. Mitchell said the peer review will verify Civil Engineer Charlie Wear's work pertaining to the geology, septic, and design. It should be completed by the Dec. 3 Planning Board meeting and will cost about \$6K-\$8K. Mr. Mitchell said he felt it was good to do in the interest of transparency and assuring the neighbors' interests are protected; it isn't a choice, it must be done.

Mr. Mitchell said it was suggested by Town Manager Joe Domelowicz that the HDC respond to the neighbors' concerns and shrink the building size down by some units. This idea was being driven by two BOS members, including Jeff Hubbard and Rosemary Kennedy, who has been pursuing a grievance that the Accessory Housing bylaw wasn't done correctly, although Mr. Mitchell said Town Meeting passed it by two-thirds majority and the Attorney General has approved it (twice). Mr. Mitchell is meeting with Mr. Domelowicz today to discuss the issue of building size. He noted the project could have included at least 20 units but they had reduced that to 18. Mr. Gisness said one of the HDC's charges is to increase the tax base, and also this project is in line with the housing element of the Master Plan. Mr. Goodwin asked if the Planning Board understands they could have gotten 22 units. Mr. Mitchell said he will make the point.

The HDC discussed that only a small group of people have come forward with objections. If they choose to have affordable units, those rents would be reduced by 50% to 80%. The HDC members agreed they were willing to entertain the idea of affordable units as a gesture of good faith but were not wanting to shrink the size of the building. They decided to "hold fast." Mr. Gisness referred to Willow Street's history and the affordable housing project for seniors that fell through.

Mr. Mitchell said he had copies of the Town's Accessory Housing Bylaw if people wanted to read it. He said Julia Maycock, 62 Willow St., had written a letter to Attorney Mann asking if the HDC would consider language to preserve Mac's shoe shop in its current state (the physical condition not the usage) as a way to lessen the impact of this project on the neighborhood and preserve its character. The HDC could put language into the deed to restrict it. Mr. Mitchell said the building needs significant work of at least \$100K. It isn't economical to tear the building down, but someone might decide to renovate it. A question was asked about what the consequence would be if a developer wanted to buy the housing project but not the front piece. That is one reason to put it in the suggested language. For now it was agreed that the HDC right wants to retain the option for ownership of the front piece but will await what developers say. Ms. Arvanites said she liked the idea of having control over what happens to that space.

Mr. Mitchell noted the Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) is supportive of the project. He and Anthony Nickas will be appearing before the FinCom at its next meeting to give an update and review the budget. Mr. Mitchell noted the FinCom is seeking revenue because in a couple of years the Town will reach its levy limit. Mr. Nickas said the tax revenue on the property for condos would be about \$30K-\$35K. The HDC is paying about \$10K now.

The HDC discussed that the Town has commissioned a civil engineer to look at the Town landfill to see what's buildable there. Mr. Mitchell is also interested in looking at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and idea of potential commercial zoning there following an article appearing in this past Saturday's *Salem News*.

Mr. Nickas noted the meals tax money transferred to the HDC was \$74,880. In previous years it was \$65K.

Downtown Improvements

The Shop Local HW group planning the holiday event will meet later this morning, according to Ms. Arvanites. Their social media plan is in place and they are generating posts highlighting the businesses She asked if the HDC would also share the posts.

Mary Alice Cookson said the flyer was posted on the HDC's Shop Local page. She thought the Town Facebook page might be the most expedient and appropriate place for it to receive the most views.

Mr. Mitchell asked about bank sponsorship. Mr. Arvanites said Salem Five donated \$750. Each participating businesses contributed \$40.

Ms. Arvanites said they will give a special thanks to all the organizations that helped and the HDC will get a special shout-out.

New/Old Business

Ms. Cookson asked if the HDC would consider paying Tim Neill of Allied Conservation, the artist who designed the Town's downtown business map, \$10 for each change made to the map to compensate him somewhat for his time. The board was agreeable. He has been asked to update the map quarterly. Ms. Arvanites asked Ms. Cookson if the new business in Town (pet supply store that moved in where the auto parts store had been) had contacted her yet. She said no.

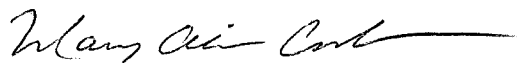
The next Planning Board meeting is Dec. 3.

The next HDC meeting will be Dec. 4. It was decided to skip the next meeting because it is the day before Thanksgiving. The HDC will need to perhaps sign a warrant between now and then.

Adjournment

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 a.m. Mr. Stein seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn.

Prepared by:



Mary Alice Cookson

12-4-2019

Date