

HAMILTON PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 10, 2019

Members Present: Richard Boroff, Peter Clark, Janel Curry, Dan Hamm, Rick Mitchell, Brian Stein, (Chair), and Bill Wheaton.
Associate Members: Laura Walsh
Planning Director:

This meeting was called to order in the Memorial Room at Town Hall at 7:00 with a quorum established.

Pre-application – Site Plan Review informal discussion

Brian Stein and Rick Mitchell recused themselves as they are both members of the Hamilton Development Corp (HDC) who is proposing the project. Member Janel Curry became acting chairperson. The intent of the proposal has the HDC pursuing permitting of a project which would later be constructed by a developer who would be selected by the HDC.

Jill Mann (attorney) was present to discuss the proposal. Ms. Mann introduced Christy Hoares (architect) and April Ferraro (Meridian Engineering). The project is located in the Hamilton Business District and includes the Mac's Shoe Repair building. Ms. Mann indicated that the proposal was consistent with the Master Plan. The proposal provides apartments which would accommodate Hamilton's aging population (55 to 75 year old) in an effort to allow them to age in place in the same community. The project would promote more affordable and walkable housing in a mixed use commercial development which also is considered smart growth. Eighteen one and two bedroom rental units would be located on the second and third floors with commercial use on the first floor. The project site is near the commuter line. The three storied building would be under 35' tall and would meet all zoning requirements. Setbacks would need to be discussed as part of the Site Plan Review. A carport would be provided for residents.

April Ferraro showed slides of the site. Ms. Ferraro said the development team considered all parameters of where development could occur. A driveway from Willow St. allowed for commercial access on the first floor. Screening from single family homes adjacent to the property would be provided. Parking for eight cars would be provided. A basin would be constructed under the parking area for water infiltration and septic. A line of trees had been preserved by turning the septic 90 degrees. Pedestrian use would be provided. The goal of the architects was to minimize visual intrusions.

April Ferraro showed a slide of the entry drive from Willow St. and the 2,400 sf of commercial space with architectural features (columns) to create a human scale. Tenant amenities were noted including a carport and access to a fitness center, toilet, common rooms, and storage.

Necessities such as trash, mechanical, and boilers were located in the center as well. Entry and fire egress points were shown. The second and third floor footprints were the same.

Apartments were on a double loaded corridor with two bedroom units at the end. One bedroom units were 680 to 900 sf. Five of the nine units had private balconies. Two of the units had Juliette balconies. Some units had bay windows to articulate the exterior and add square footage to the apartments. The building would be clapboard on the second floor with shingles on the first floor, both of which would be colored in a weathered or natural gray with a deeper green window sash. The first floor commercial unit would have a glass façade.

Landscaping was discussed as was the bridge to the train over the lowlands. Fencing and ever greens were proposed where single family housing abutted the site. Grass would be the groundcover to allow access to the train. One of the charges of the Hamilton Development Corporation was to create a walking landscape to make downtown more convenient. The abutting Black Cow property would be 10' higher than the proposed site. Jill Mann said perspectives would be provided in the proposal to define the site.

The proposal would be sold to a third party developer. An application would be submitted the following week. An abutters' meeting would be held before the public hearing. The 18 units would not provide affordable housing. Trash would be held inside the building. The Town would not be responsible for trash removal or snow removal. Dan Hamm wanted to see a lighting plan. Rick Mitchell noted the mechanicals were all on the roof. An elevator would serve all three levels. There would be a flat roof behind the gabled roofs. The flat roof would encourage the use of solar panels. Janel Curry hoped to see a perspective comparing the size of the existing Willow St. building with the proposed building. A slide of elevations was shown comparing the new building to the yellow building on Railroad Ave. The new building would be 4' taller than the yellow building to the top of the roof. The building would be seen through the parking lot but not from Railroad Ave.

Master Planning – Discussion

The powerpoint presentation had been sent to the consultant. Rick Mitchell noted that no comments had been received. The presentation would be held at the Council on Aging Building. Mr. Mitchell wanted to ensure the FinCom would be present to determine the financial impacts.

Board discussion regarding potential future By-law amendments.

Peter Clark wondered if the housing section being considered would be integrated into the Master Plan or if it would stand alone. It was determined the document would stand alone until the rest of the Master Plan was updated. Richard Boroff discussed how the Open Space Plan was being updated and would be completed in November. Rick Mitchell said the Affordable Housing Trust was completing the Housing Production Plan. Transportation would be the next major component to be added to the Master Plan.

Scenic Roads were discussed. There was a list of 13 roads that had been designated. Richard Boroff said that as of 2013, there had not been a By-law written to oversee scenic roads. Some members questioned if the Historic District Commission or Conservation Commission had designated scenic roads. William Wheaton recalled that it was a State program. Brian Stein recalled there were two different lists of scenic roads and there was no official designation. Mr. Boroff said the parameters of the By-law included not cutting trees or changing stone walls. Rick Mitchell suggested that Patrick Reffett contact the Historic District Commission and Conservation Commission and have one of the commissions designate the roads.

Board Business.

Minutes

Janel Curry made motion to approve the minutes of August 20, 2019.

Rick Mitchell seconded.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Adjournment.

Motion made by Rick Mitchell to adjourn at 8:30.

Seconded Janel Curry.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Prepared by:

Marcie Ricker

Attest

Date

