

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES OF MEETING

Conference Call

March 3, 2021

HDC Members Present: Rick Mitchell (President), Anthony Nickas, Angela Arvanites, and Anthony Passaretti (Associate Member)

HDC Members Absent: Brian Stein and Chad Smith

HDC Coordinator: Mary Alice Cookson

** Note: All of the above participated via remotely via conference call. The conference call number was published on the posted public agenda.*

Chair Rick Mitchell opened the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) conference call/meeting at 9:04 a.m. with a quorum present and took a roll call. Along with Mr. Mitchell were: Angela Arvanites, Anthony Nickas, and Anthony Passaretti (associate member).

Warrant for Bills

Mr. Mitchell presented Warrant HDC-2110 in the amount of \$2,318.04. It included staff pay, liability insurance, a water bill, and a Harborlight Community Partners' monthly maintenance bill. Mr. Mitchell explained the Harborlight bill for \$200 was for work done after the closing on the 59/63 Willow Street property and he had let them know that as of that date services would no longer be needed. He will be advising Dyan Katz in the Finance Department not to pay it.

Decision:

Mr. Nickas made a motion to approve Warrant HDC-2110 in the amount of \$2,318.04. Ms. Arvanites seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with "ayes" from Mr. Nickas, Ms. Arvanites, and Mr. Mitchell, (3-0) unanimous among those present.

Approve Minutes—Feb. 3, 2021

Decision:

Ms. Arvanites made a motion to approve the HDC meeting minutes of Feb. 3, 2021. Mr. Nickas seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with "ayes" from Ms. Arvanites, Mr. Nickas, and Mr. Mitchell, (3-0) unanimous among those present.

Update on 59/63 Willow Street

Mr. Mitchell reported Traggorth Companies is in process of getting all the legal documentation finalized. Mr. Mitchell said he had driven by the property and saw a delivery of temporary fencing. Mr. Passaretti said Traggorth would be holding a Zoom meeting tomorrow night with the neighbors. He expected work would be happening when the weather warms up or possibly sooner. He will report back to the HDC regarding the Zoom meeting.

Downtown Business Grant Update

The \$55K grant proposal for what Mr. Mitchell described as a robust downtown business campaign was submitted on Feb. 10. Mr. Mitchell said he can share the final draft of the grant proposal with anyone who wants to see it. The HDC voted at its last meeting to contribute \$5K toward the project. Plans are for a Town-wide mailing incorporating a social media, advertising campaign, and Street Fair to be held in September. Mr. Mitchell asked Ms. Arvanites about the banners downtown. She reported that Shop Local HW's Karen Moulton of TM Landscaping arranged for them to be taken down and they were removed.

Parking Study

Mr. Mitchell attended a presentation last Thursday about the parking study, which is done. He has a final draft he can share if anyone would like to see it. There are nearly 2,000 parking spaces, which are primarily off-street. There is limited parking west of Bay Road. Regulation isn't good and signage is faded, unclear, and in some cases, non-existent. The sidewalks are in poor condition. The consultant will be making recommendations and should have a final report by the end of March.

Future Initiatives

Mr. Mitchell said Chad Smith, who is a realtor, had contacted the owners of Dodge Tree as well as Welch & Lamson. There was no interest by Dodge Tree in selling their property and Welch and Lamson have not yet responded. However, Mr. Mitchell noted that even if the owners were willing to sell today, the HDC would not have enough meals tax money for securing the mortgage (although it would have the funds for the down payment). Mr. Mitchell suggested that once the parking study recommendations are given, the HDC might work with the Town to help fund some of the improvements to improve traffic flow, parking, and signage. Mr. Passaretti agreed that anything the HDC could do to assist the Town was a good thing. Mr. Nickas agreed, but cautioned they should keep enough reserve for other projects. Mr. Mitchell said he was thinking in tens of thousands not hundreds of thousands. It was discussed that sometimes improvements can take a long time due to complex systems and procedures that dictate how public money is allocated and bid out. For example, when the HDC wanted to add benches and trash receptacles on Railroad Ave., it took a long time to get it done.

New Business:

Mr. Mitchell said he had shared with the HDC members a PowerPoint from the Planning Board (PB) that talks about expanding the commercial district to incorporate 14 acres for the Winthrop School, Public Safety and COA building and the PB would be doing further due diligence. Last night it looked at Option B, which is expanding to the Winthrop site and incorporating three properties on Bay Road that are residential so there would be a contiguous district on both sides. That may be coming by the time of Special Town Meeting in the fall.

Mr. Mitchell said he discussed with Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) Chair John Pruellage that the HDC wants to continue receiving the meals tax funds in whatever amount it is going to be. Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Nickas will attend the FinCom meeting next week. Mr. Nickas asked Coordinator Mary Alice Cookson to request updated financials from the Finance Department, which she said she would do.

One question asked is what 59/63 was bringing in for property taxes and what would be coming in now from the Traggorth development. It was discussed that commercial property is taxed differently from residential property in that it is assessed not just on value but on profitability. Mr. Nickas said he hadn't seen the numbers yet. Mr. Mitchell said he would try to find out the information.

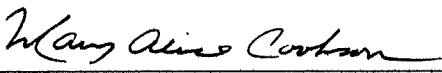
Mr. Nickas inquired about the status of the Nunan Florist order for the hanging baskets in the downtown district. Ms. Cookson said the florist ordered the flowers and was on track for spring installation.

The next HDC meeting date was set for Wednesday, April 7, at 9 a.m. Ms. Arvanites said she will be traveling and was unable to attend.

Adjournment

Mr. Nickas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 a.m. Ms. Arvanites seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with "ayes" from Ms. Arvanites, Mr. Nickas, and Mr. Mitchell, (3-0) unanimous among those present.

Prepared by:


Mary Alice Cookson
HDC Coordinator

4-7-2021
Date