

HAMILTON PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
Via Zoom 83259281303
Password 587205
December 1, 2020

Members Present: Corey Beaulieu, Richard Boroff, Marnie Crouch, Dan Hamm, Rick Mitchell, Brian Stein (Chair), and Bill Wheaton.

Planning Director: Patrick Reffett

Others present: Dave Traggorth (Traggorth Companies, LLC)

This meeting was called to order by Brian Stein at 7:03 p.m. with a quorum established via Zoom.

Roll Call: Marnie Crouch – here, Bill Wheaton – here, Dan Hamm – here, Rick Mitchell – here, Corey Beaulieu – here, Richard Boroff – here, Patrick Reffett – here, and Brian Stein – here.

Patrick Reffett introduced Ann Schlecht who will be assisting the Planning Board and several other town boards, committees, and groups in taking minutes.

EXTEND SITE PLAN REVIEW APPROVAL

Brian Stein and Rick Mitchell recused themselves as members of the Hamilton Development Corporation. Dan Hamm was the acting Chairman.

59-63 Willow Street – On December 17, 2019 the Hamilton Planning Board granted a Site Plan Review approval to the Hamilton Development Corporation for a mixed residential commercial project at the site. The project is under a sales agreement with the Traggorth Companies, LLC which has sought various funding sources for the project and required appropriate timing to obtain those resources (State and local grants).

The Hamilton Development Corporation and Traggorth Companies, LLC., and Traggorth Companies, LLC's nominee, Willow Street Hamilton LLC, are now requesting an extension of the Site Plan Review approval in accordance with Hamilton Zoning Bylaw Sec. 10.6.14 for one year from the date of the initial approval in addition to minor amendments which have been approved by the Board.

The Board approved Dave Traggorth's request on behalf of Willow Street Hamilton LLC to extend the original approval for a period of one year per Section 10.6.14 and also extend the respective dates of individual minor modifications of the Site Plan Approval for a period of one year from their dates of Board approvals.

Patrick Reffett reminded Board members that site plan approval only lasts a year if construction is not undertaken. The need for outside funding precipitated extra time demands.

A motion was requested. Patrick Reffett asked voting Board members to authorize Dan Hamm to sign a certification of the Board so that the vote can be prepared in the next few days to file with the clerk.

Marnie Crouch moved that the Board grant the joint request of the Hamilton Development Corporation and Willow Street Hamilton LLC to extend site plan approval and to authorize Dan Hamm to execute any necessary documents.

Seconded by Richard Boroff.

Roll Call Vote: Marnie Crouch – aye, Corey Beaulieu – aye, Bill Wheaton – aye, Richard Boroff – aye, Dan Hamm – aye.

REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF VARIOUS POTENTIAL CHANGES TO BYLAW LANGUAGE –The Board moved on to review the “flexible development” residential zoning bylaw and to consider creating an open space fund to offset density on development parcels. Patrick Reffett sent the latest draft that Marnie Crouch put together.

Bill Wheaton presented an updated matrix draft for inclusion in the bylaw similar to the matrix in the Senior Housing Bylaw while still allowing the accumulative percentages of set asides that he had come up with in the prior drafts considered at the last few meetings.

Members discussed the potential complexity of the proposed matrix as it was written and discussed ways to make it less complex.

It was agreed that there needs to be a cap on the number of units in a development and in the town as was done with Senior Housing Bylaw. Members discussed a cap on the share of land left open such as 75% and a base density in the RA district of 2. Maximum density would be 3.5 units per acre in the RA district if these two changes were made.

Rick Mitchell suggested rounding up and moving column I, by either building it into column B or making it column C, so that the beginning base density for each district, whatever that number may be, is the second column (after the designation of the existing districts), thereby enabling people to understand that the matrix starts with the current zoning for the flexible development and then the next column reflects that for the payment of \$50,000 a developer

can buy an additional unit. Other incentives then would be applied in columns C, E, and F so that there is a cumulative process as the matrix is read across from left to right for ease of comprehension.

Members also discussed the need to eliminate smart growth and replace it with advanced water and energy efficiency, the need for examples that would also help the general understanding, and a column for the maximum density per acre as in the Senior Housing Bylaw.

Brian Stein suggested that at the next meeting the Board review a final draft of the matrix that can be sent out to developers for comment before the Christmas holidays so the Board can discuss it again in mid-late January, early February in light of the comments.

BOARD BUSINESS

Patrick Reffett circulated a study today that spanned the last 5 years regarding the number of houses that had been built in the town and the number of school-aged children residing in them. Patrick Reffett said that he and Bill Wheaton had information and that they should coordinate before discussing their findings in depth. He determined that, excluding senior housing, there were a total of 26 units of new construction in the town since 2015.

Patrick Reffett found that during that 5-year period 14 students within the newly constructed 26 units equated to .38 students per each residential unit which is substantially less than what people assumed. Patrick Reffett also noted some in-town movement for 4 of those units, where students that were already enrolled in school moved within the community.

OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

Senior Housing Cap Consideration

Patrick Reffett asked the Board to consider whether or not to increase the numeric cap of 100 senior housing units per the Senior Housing Bylaw for Spring town meeting because the number will be 85 if the proposed senior housing development on Essex Street is included, leaving just 15 units to reach the cap.

Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary

Rick Mitchell reported on the Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary Task Force meeting that he, Patrick, Dave Thompson, David Smith and Selectman, Jamie Knutson (by phone) attended on Monday, November 30, 2020. It was the first time that the Gordon Theological Task Force

had met in a year so it was an update on various issues. One of the issues concerns water supply.

The other issue is that the GCTS Task Force needs to request and have a meeting with the leadership to find out what is happening with the sale of the 210 residential units on the campus that GCTS in July indicated that it is proposing to sell to a developer and turn into rental housing. GCTS leadership had represented that at least 25% of the units were going to be affordable and if that were the case, then all of the 210 units would count in the town's subsidized housing inventory (SHI). The GCTS Task Force had not heard anything from GCTS officials and had no discussions, so a meeting will be requested for an update to know what is going on. If GCTS sells the property and it becomes rental housing, then there would be a significant contribution to the town in terms of tax revenue as well as affordable housing for the SHI.

Task Force member Dave Thompson is questioning some kind of remuneration from GCTS for all of the students the town has educated, some 30-40 students for the last 30 years.

Habitat for Humanity

Patrick Reffett reported to the Board that Habitat for Humanity of the North Shore has been pursuing a 40B project at 434 Asbury Street. It has prepared a submittal that is now in the process of being evaluated by Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Habitat has not submitted it formally to the town yet. When it does, it will go to the Selectman and the ZBA. The ZBA as part of that 40B process will send a courtesy review request of the project to the Planning Board and to the other boards and committees as part of the town government.

Adjournment

Motion made by Marnie Crouch to adjourn at 8:49 p.m.

Seconded by Rick Mitchell.

Roll Call Vote: Marnie Crouch – aye, Bill Wheaton – aye, Dan Hamm – aye, Corey Beaulieu – aye, Rick Mitchell – aye, Richard Boroff – aye, Brian Stein – aye. Unanimous in favor.

Prepared by:

Ann Schlecht

Attest

Date