



Diane Nichols Tradd
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager

FROM: Diane N. Tradd, Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

SUBJECT: COUNCIL MOTION OF 7/24/18 BY COUNCILOR LEAHY
REQUEST CITY MANAGER PROVIDE UPDATE TO CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE HAMILTON CANAL
INNOVATION DISTRICT

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) continues to meet and work with all parties interested in developing innovative projects in the HCID, encouraging a dynamic mix of uses to revitalize the area in a manner consistent with the approved Hamilton Canal Master Plan. DPD also works closely with community partners to promote Lowell as a place of innovation and entrepreneurship and foster an environment that is supportive of commercial ventures ranging from start-ups to new corporate headquarters.

Notably, the City has come to an agreement in principle with WinnDevelopment (“Winn”) to develop approximately 130 units of housing and 5,000-8,000 square feet of commercial space on parcels 8 and 9. Winn has submitted project plans to the Zoning Board of Appeals and continues to pursue other necessary permits for the project. Construction of this project is anticipated to begin this fall pending City Council and DHCD approval of the development plan. Additionally, DPD continues to work with two local companies looking to develop two separate 50,000 square foot office buildings on parcels 5 and 17. It should be noted that while the City has been engaged in positive ongoing discussions with these and several other parcel-specific project proponents, to date no agreements have been finalized or property transferred exclusive of the executed Winn land disposition agreement.

As the Council is aware, several public projects for the district are nearing final design or are under construction: the Lowell Justice Center, HCID North Infrastructure (Streets F & G and Signature Bridge), and the HCID parking garage. Construction of the Justice Center and HCID North Infrastructure is ongoing while garage construction is anticipated to begin this October. These three projects total over \$200,000,000 in new public investment in the District. This ongoing and planned construction utilizes two HCID parcels as staging areas; namely parcels 1 and 11, making it difficult for the City to actively market these sites. Moreover, until the land exchange with the National Park Service (NPS) is finalized, the City is unable to fully market and/or come to agreement for the land swap parcels (15 and 16). Additionally, as a condition of the City’s non-binding preliminary land swap agreement with NPS; NPS retains the right to use parcel 15 for parking until the HCID garage is constructed and opened. DPD remains in close contact with NPS and Congresswoman Tsongas’ office to expedite the final steps required to complete the transaction, meeting frequently to hammer out final details such as easements required from the MBTA and National Grid.

Finally, the temporary parking area located at Parcels 2,3, and 4 is encumbered with a use agreement with Trinity Hamilton Canal Limited Partnership that requires the City to provide parking in either the temporary lot or another location for the benefit of 110 Canal. DPD anticipates shifting the spaces required to the HCID parking garage, currently scheduled to open in January 2020.

DNT/ns
8/10/18

cc: Clare Ricker, Chief Design Planner
Joe Giniewicz, Urban Renewal Project Manager