

Jan. 20

Town Manager on medical leave

The Hamilton Board of Selectmen will need to discuss a contingency plan for the town's day-to-day leadership, after learning about a possible extended medical leave for Town Manager Michael Lombardo.

Selectmen Chairman Scott Maddern said the board will discuss "interim coverage of the Town Manager position" due to an ongoing medical condition of the town manager at their upcoming meeting on Monday, Jan. 23.

Maddern said Lombardo had been out of the office since last week, but could not publicly discuss town employee health or other medical information, due to federal law.

Hamilton Police Chief Russell Stevens has been working as the interim town manager, but Maddern said it's likely he wouldn't continue working two jobs after Monday.

Affordable Housing Trust Chairman Peter Britton said he'd like to more aggressive approach for supporting projects in the future through CPC funding.

Jan. 31

Affordable housing for Bay Road tabled

The Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) chose to back away from soliciting housing development proposals located behind the Public Safety Building and the Winthrop Elementary School, a parcel of town owned land roughly near 256 Bay Road.

At the last trust meeting on Jan. 19, the AHT voted unanimously to table further discussion on the parcel until the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District weighs in about the future use of the school building.

Proposals for developing the parcel, considered by the AHT for the last several months, drew considerable ire from abutters ranging from the Council on Aging to local neighbors along Horseshoe Lane and Tally Ho Drive, among others.

The latest possibility drew a vehement opposition based upon a feasibility study solicited by the town on behalf of the trust late last year.

The study, created by Hargidon Architecture and Design, focused on the possibilities of creating either condominiums for sale or a larger-scale rental complex.

The designs, unfortunately for the AHT, mentioned a restructuring of the Winthrop School playground fields as well as the removal of a wooded pathway to the schools for the additional housing.

Affordable Housing Trust member Marc Johnson questioned whatever number of units the AHT could potentially bring to fruition would be worth a massive community pushback against the affordable housing.

Other concerns noted by attendees of the meeting, as in all prior affordable housing project proposals through the past year, included the potential impact to area traffic and development on areas classified as wetlands among others.

The AHT did take action on a different parcel at the meeting, however.

The AHT unanimously voted to have 7 Kinsman Lane, a private 7.5 acre property adjacent to the Hamilton Cemetery, considered for possible development by partner developers of the Board of Selectmen.

The trust currently has about \$270,000 in its reserves at the moment and the Community Preservation Committee expects to have funding for projects somewhere between, \$800,000 to \$1 million this year.