

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission

February 16, 2023

APPROVED

In attendance: Doug Chabinsky – Acting Chair, Martha Chabinsky (remote), Sarah Chastain (remote), Tom Quinn, Nicole Crawford.

Staff present: Kristan Patenaude, Recording Secretary (remote)

Doug Chabinsky, Acting Chair, called the work session to order at 7:00 p.m.

Nicole Crawford sat for Chris Buchanan. Sarah Chastain sat for Tom Grella.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

1. **CASE #: PZ16897-013023 – Frances G. Straccia (Owner & Applicant); 120 Boston Post Road, PIN #: 017-102-00** – Request for approval to install a heat pump on the north side of the house.

Doug Chabinsky read and opened the case.

Tom Quinn moved that the application is complete and that there is no regional impact.

Discussion:

Doug Chabinsky noted that there are no dimensions or size for the proposed heat pump listed on the plan. This is important to make sure that it is properly screened.

Frances Straccia stated that she was not told this was required. She submitted other material with the application.

Tom Quinn stated that the Board should have a conversation regarding completeness before entertaining discussion with the public.

Doug Chabinsky stated that specifications or data sheets are generally required as part of the application.

Frances Straccia stated that staff told her the application was complete. She offered to drive home and bring the data sheet back.

Doug Chabinsky agreed to table this case to later in the meeting.

2. **CASE #: PZ16898-013023 – Neil & Patty Benner (Owners & Applicants); 8 Cross Street, PIN #: 017-099-000** – Request for approval to make changes to windows, add a door on the Eastside of the house, replace the roof and removal of a chimney.

Doug Chabinsky read and opened the case.

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Martha Chabinsky moved that the application is complete. Seconded by Doug Chabinsky.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

Martha Chabinsky moved that the application has no regional impact. Seconded by Tom Quinn.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

Neil Benner explained that the proposal is for a kitchen renovation. In order to complete the renovation, an existing kitchen window is proposed to be replaced, and another window is proposed to be replaced with a door. The roof over that section of the house will need to be replaced and an existing chimney, which is likely not original to the house, is proposed to be removed.

In response to a question from Martha Chabinsky, Neil Benner stated that the chimney is currently used as a furnace flue, but this will no longer be needed. The chimney is in very bad condition.

In response to a question from Doug Chabinsky, Neil Benner stated that it is unclear if this section of the house was an add-on to the original structure.

Doug Chabinsky stated that the property is listed as #99 on the National Register, and was built in 1900, as a Greek Revival.

In response to a question from Tom Quinn, Neil Benner stated that the existing window in the kitchen is a double window. The intention is to make this a triple, double-hung all-wood window. The window to be replaced with a door is currently a single window.

FINDINGS:

- 1. Contributing property**
- 2. Proposed work will be visible to the general public**
- 3. All proposed materials are within the HDC guidelines**
- 4. Removal of the chimney will not impact the historic character of the house, as it was not original to the house**

Martha Chabinsky moved to approve the application, as submitted. Seconded by Nicole Crawford.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

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Doug Chabinsky noted that there is a 30-day appeal period, during which time anyone can appeal the Commission's decision, starting from the date of approval. Beginning work within this time period is at the applicant's own risk.

- 3. CASE #: PZ16899-013023 – Rick Boyd (Owner & Applicant); 8 Main Street, PIN #: 017-085-000** – Request for approval to repair/reconstruct the existing enclosed porch at the front façade of the first floor and to replace the existing windows on the second story located at the two front bedrooms.

Doug Chabinsky read and opened the case.

Martha Chabinsky moved that the application is complete. Seconded by Tom Quinn.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

Doug Chabinsky moved that the application has no regional impact. Seconded by Tom Quinn.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

Matt and Becca DesSureau, principal architect, and project manager, presented to the Commission. Becca DesSureau stated that the origin of this structure was a three season porch which was not intended to be part of the main floor. The structure is thus settling and beginning to pull away from the main structure of the house. The proposal is to remove the structure and rebuild it with a proper foundation beneath it. The space will be replaced in the same configuration and placement as it currently exists. It may look different once completed, but this is due to the roof structure leaning and caving. The historic nature of the property will be maintained and preserved.

Doug Chabinsky asked if any of the existing materials will be reused. Becca DesSureau stated that the intention is to reuse the exterior and interior doors. There may also be a potential to reuse the flower boxes and gutters. The existing windows likely cannot be reused, as they cannot currently be used as proper windows due to disrepair and lack of weatherproofing. The first and second floor windows are proposed to be replaced. The second-floor windows in the bedroom may be original to the property.

Martha Chabinsky asked why the existing windows cannot be repaired. Matt DesSureau stated that the existing windows are single-paned, highly deteriorated, and well below code standards. The intention is to replace these with double paned, glazed windows.

Doug Chabinsky stated that if the windows are in a section of the house that was added after the house was built then they are likely not original.

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Tom Quinn noted that the proposed work is approximately 10' away from the street, and thus historic accuracy is important. Ideally the windows could be rehabilitated.

Doug Chabinsky stated that he does not believe the window replacement will harm the historic value of the property.

Martha Chabinsky noted that the proposed windows are aluminum clad. Doug Chabinsky stated that the regulations require all-wood windows. The low-E coating proposed for the windows has a tint to it, which is also not appropriate.

Doug Chabinsky asked about the muntin size. Becca DesSureauult stated that the intention is to make the muntins match as closely as possible. The existing first floor windows have a 7/8" muntin, and the second floor has 5/8" muntins. Doug Chabinsky stated that a more historic application would be 5/8" for both. These muntins should be fixed inside and out, with a spacer bar in-between.

In response to a question from Nicole Crawford regarding the siding of the structure, Matt DesSureauult stated that the intention is not to take off any more than needed on the existing house. The exposure will match the house. There will be wood clapboard siding on the porch.

In response to a question from Doug Chabinsky regarding the sill thickness, Becca DesSureauult stated that this will be a 2"x2" tapered trim, similar to the existing.

Tom Quinn asked if the application will be held up until window specs that reflect all-wood windows without a low-E coating are submitted. Doug Chabinsky stated that he believes the Commission could give an approval with the condition that spec sheets reflecting these items be handed into the Community Development Office.

Matt DesSureauult asked if the Commission makes considerations for the fact that all-wood exterior windows have higher maintenance needs, versus aluminum clad windows, which look almost identical to all-wood windows. Doug Chabinsky stated that this is a contributing property. The work proposed is not far from the road and people will be able to tell if these are aluminum clad windows at a certain distance. If the proposed work was located 150' back from the road, this might be a consideration. Doug Chabinsky noted that the primer on Pella windows is great. He only has to paint his windows once every 8-9 years.

FINDINGS:

1. Contributing property

2. #85 on the National Register

3. Store, Federal two-story clapboard, low hip roof, alterations and additions were chimneys, and a single-story enclosed porch across the front façade, and two-story addition, likely built in 1860 per the Historic District survey

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4. Proposed work will be highly visible to the general public

5. All-wood windows without a low-E tint will keep in character with the property

6. Restoring the porch, even though it is not part of the original structure, has value to the structure

7. Siding material proposed is appropriate

In response to a question from Nicole Crawford, Becca DesSureau stated that the intention is to remove the existing light fixtures and reinstall them. This will also be done with an existing mail slot and hardware. The side lights on the door will also be reinstalled.

Martha Chabinsky asked about the proposed roof shingles. Becca DesSureau stated that there are not yet physical samples for this. The intention is to make these match the original house as closely as possible. Doug Chabinsky stated that slate or pewter gray shingles would match fairly closely.

Doug Chabinsky moved to approve the application, pending a resubmittal of the spec sheets for the windows to ensure they are all-wood, and clear glass, with 5/8" muntins on both the porch and bedroom windows. No work can begin until the spec sheets are reviewed. Seconded by Tom Quinn.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

- 1. CASE #: PZ16897-013023 – Frances G. Straccia (Owner & Applicant); 120 Boston Post Road, PIN #: 017-102-00 – Request for approval to install a heat pump on the north side of the house.**

The Commission retook this item at this time.

The Commission reviewed the data sheets for the heat pump.

Doug Chabinsky moved that the application is complete. Seconded by Nicole Crawford.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

Doug Chabinsky stated that it appears this is proposed to be placed back in the center of the rhododendron area. He stated that this will provide great screening for the pump.

In response to a question from Doug Chabinsky regarding if this is proposed to allow for cooling and heating to the second floor, Frances Straccia stated that this is the case, and the system will run next to the existing gutter. Doug Chabinsky stated that this should be painted to match the color of the house.

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Frances Straccia noted that she reviewed the project with her neighbors and there were no complaints.

FINDINGS:

- 1. Contributing property**
- 2. #102 on the National Register**
- 3. Built 1840, Connected farmhouse Greek Revival 2 1/2 story, clapboard pitch roof with dormers, pedimented gable, end front corner balusters, and a 3 bay front facade**
- 4. Location of the compressor will be well-shielded with existing vegetation, and thus there will be no visibility from the public way**
- 5. Piping running up the house will be painted to match the color of the house and the piping running next to the gutter will not be obtrusive**

Doug Chabinsky moved to approve the application; it is complete with the submitted spec sheet for the compressor, and conditioned that the piping running up the house will be painted the same color as the house and be run directly next to the gutter to the second story. Seconded by Tom Quinn.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, aye; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 5-0-0.

Doug Chabinsky noted that there is a 30-day appeal period, during which time anyone can appeal the Commission's decision, starting from the date of approval. Beginning work within this time period is at the applicant's own risk.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Minutes: January 19, 2023

Martha Chabinsky moved to approve the meeting minutes of January 19, 2023, as submitted. Seconded by Tom Quinn.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, abstain; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 4-0-1.

Martha Chabinsky moved to approve the meeting minutes of January 31, 2023, as submitted. Seconded by Nicole Crawford.

Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky, aye; Martha Chabinsky, aye; Sarah Chastain, aye; Tom Quinn, abstain; and Nicole Crawford, aye. 4-0-1.

2. Continued discussion on HDC regulation updates

Doug Chabinsky noted that this item has not yet been completed and he would like to postpone discussion to a future meeting.

3. Discussion of HDC fee schedule

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259 Doug Chabinsky stated that he would like to amend the fee schedule to not charge for conceptual
260 discussions with the Commission. This will need to be taken up at a future meeting.

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262 **4. Any Other Business**

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264 Martha Chabinsky stated that she would like the Commission to have a conversation regarding
265 properties in Town that have not complied with certain aspects of approval and other
266 enforcement items. Doug Chabinsky stated that he has spoken with Building Inspector, Scott
267 Tenney, regarding a few items that have not been shielded properly, or certain properties, such as
268 the gas station, that are in heavy disrepair. There will need to be additional discussions about
269 these items at a future meeting.

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271 **The meeting was adjourned at 7:57pm.**

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273 Respectfully submitted,
274 Kristan Patenaude

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276 Minutes approved: March 16, 2023