

Town of Amherst, New Hampshire  
Historic District Commission  
Minutes  
June 18, 2015

The Amherst Village Historic District Commission met on **Thursday, June 18, 2015 at 7:00 pm** in the Barbara Landry Meeting Room, 2nd floor, in Amherst Town Hall, 2 Main Street, Amherst, NH 03031.

In attendance were Jamie Ramsay, *Chair*; Sue Clark, *Secretary*; Sally Wilkins, *Planning Board Representative*; ; Jeanne Rosenblatt, *Alternate*; Doug Chabinsky; Thomas Grella; *Board of Selectmen Representative*; Christopher Hall, *Alternate*; Bruce Fraser.

Jamie called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

OLD BUSINESS

**CASE #: PZ6083-042715 – Rick & Barbara Closs – 122 Amherst Street, PIN #: 005-055-000 – Request to construct a new single family residence.**

This hearing was continued from May 21, 2015 where the Commissioners requested that the applicant incorporate improved historical elements into the proposed house design.

Present: Barbara Closs

Mrs. Closs submitted new drawings that contained added colonial elements into the design to give the house more historical character. She reported that they are officially the owners of the house.

She stated that the following changes were made to the design:

1. Change in roof pitch from 6 to 8.
2. Added 6 over 6 muntins, crown moldings and historic sill trim to the windows.
3. Hayloft door added above the garage.
4. Colonial front and garage doors provided.
5. Arch at the entry to compliment garage doors.
6. Replaced windows on South elevation to provide symmetry.
7. Increased size of trim moldings.

Mrs. Closs felt the changes in the design represented everything the Commissioners wanted to see and questioned whether they could move forward in their construction.

Chris questioned whether Mrs. Closs liked the changes. She stated “yes”. Sue felt that the Closs’ did a great job of incorporating the Commissioner’s recommendations. Jamie questioned whether the proposed siding was 4 inches. Mrs. Closs stated “yes”. She added that the pitch of the roof would be

43 raised. Doug stated that that was a typical pitch for a cape. Discussion followed regarding house  
44 colors. Jamie stated that the Commissioners do not rule on colors.  
45  
46 Mrs. Closs stated that there would be no windows in the garage because it was their preference to  
47 have transoms. Doug felt that the proposed hayloft door was in keeping with the character of the area.  
48 Mrs. Closs stated that she preferred the door because it was more appropriate than a window,  
49 however, it would only be for show purposes.  
50  
51 Discussion followed concerning the floor plans. Jamie stated that it was not a concern of the Historic  
52 District Commission and asked whether the dimension of the house was unchanged with what was  
53 presented. Mrs. Closs stated they only did these touches because until they actually knew they could  
54 build the house, the cost of architectural work was very expensive.  
55  
56 Tom questioned whether there would be changes to the other two sides. Mrs. Closs stated only to the  
57 window space and added trim which will be done all around. She said fixtures would be done down the  
58 road.  
59  
60 Jamie stated that looking at the site plan, this was not an engineered drawing but there are grade lines  
61 indicated on it. Discussion followed regarding the elevation changes of the lot. Sally questioned  
62 whether the lot pitched down from the road. Mrs. Closs stated "yes". Jamie asked what would happen  
63 if they ran into ledge – 13' below Amherst Street – it would be significant. He said that these grades  
64 are appropriate and should be maintained as presented. Mrs. Closs stated that they will obtain a  
65 survey site plan from Fieldstone Land Surveyors.  
66  
67 Chris stated that if they ran into ledge, their house would need to come out of the ground. Sally stated  
68 that they won't know that until they begin digging, however, if it needs to come up they will still be  
69 below grade of Amherst Street. Jamie stated that if they ran into ledge, he would suggest an alteration  
70 to grades and come back to the HDC. Mrs. Closs stated that it was their preference to keep it at grade.  
71  
72 Doug stated that the application needed to come back to the HDC if the elevations were changed with  
73 altered plans. Sally recommended that if the change was more than 2', they should return to the HDC.  
74  
75 Jamie opened up discussion to abutters in the audience.  
76  
77 Lance Benjamin, 2 Lyndeborough Road – Mr. Benjamin stated that he was unable to attend last  
78 month's meeting, however, he has had the opportunity to look at the plans. He said that the previous  
79 owners were well aware of the homes in the area and the need to preserve the character of the  
80 District. He said that a home of this type was not consistent with the area. He stated that he went  
81 through a process with the HDC about 10-12 years ago when he applied to have a farmer's porch  
82 added to his home. As a result of hearings with the HDC, he had to agree not to add a farmer's porch.  
83 Mr. Benjamin stated that he didn't understand why they would allow a ranch to be built on that lot and  
84 hoped that the HDC would be more consistent in their rules. He said there were plenty of other areas  
85 that a ranch could be built other than the Village.  
86

87 Mrs. Closs stated that they attempted to find other lots to build a Net Zero home equipped to have  
88 handicap accessibility but couldn't find one to fit their needs.

89  
90 Sally stated that the town ordinances do not specify house types, only historical elements like muntins  
91 and loft doors. She said there is nothing that says that ranches are not allowed. Jamie stated that  
92 there are single story ranches found in the District – there are some on Cross Street, however, they  
93 predate the HDC.

94  
95 Hearing no other comments or concerns, Jamie stated that he would accept a motion.

96  
97 MOTION: Sally moved to accept the revised drawings as presented, with the condition that if the  
98 elevation changes by more than 2', they will need to come back to the Commission for review, Doug  
99 2<sup>nd</sup>. Jamie stated that this would be added to the findings discussed at the previous month. Tom  
100 stated that the lighting fixtures, when chosen, will be approved by the Chair. VOTE: *All in favor*.

101  
102 Mrs. Closs questioned whether they were able to begin construction. Jamie stated "yes" and that a  
103 Certificate of Approval letter will follow.

104  
105 **CASE #: PZ6153-052015 – Richard Hall – 4 Main Street, PIN #: 017-083-000 – Request for approval to**  
106 **install a 14KW Kohler standby generator.**

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108 Present: Richard & Carol Hall

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110 Mr. Hall stated that he was present to request approval to install a 14KW standby generator as a  
111 source to back up his power supply system. He provided a plan where the proposed generator would  
112 be installed. He stated that the generator would be 29"x26"x48" and would be sitting on a concrete  
113 pad and installed approximately 6' from his garage. He said that Ciardelli Fuel Company will supply the  
114 propane tanks and connections and would be gray in color and will be screened with trees and shrubs.

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116 Jamie stated that during the site walk, he felt that anything the Commissioner's would want has  
117 already been done by the applicant and he would be comfortable with it. Jamie asked whether  
118 Ciardelli needed to have their advertising on the tanks. Mr. Hall stated that he spoke with Andy  
119 Ciardelli and labels will be taken off.

120  
121 Hearing no other comments from Commissioners, Jamie called for findings on the case:

122  
123 FINDINGS:

- 124 1. House number 83 on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 125 2. Very significant property.
- 126 3. Contributing property.
- 127 4. Significant public view.
- 128 5. Tanks to be well screened by trees and shrubs.

**MOTION:** Bruce motioned to approve the application to install a generator on the location presented as shown with the exception that no advertising will be on the tank, Sue 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *All in Favor*.

**CASE #: PZ6177-052715 – Jessica Carreiro – 1 Old Coach Lane, PIN #: 019-006-001 – Request to replace roof, repaint exterior, and add roof line to porch.**

Present: Jessica Carreiro

Ms. Carreiro stated that she purchased the home in September of 2013 at which time it was noted that the roof was over 10 years old and would likely need to be replaced. Jamie stated that in terms of repainting the exterior, painting the house was not a problem. He asked for details for the roof. She said the current roof is a gray asphalt shingle which they would like to replace with a dark gray metal roof.

Ms. Carreiro stated that when she purchased the home, she didn't know the house was in the Historic District because her realtor did not inform her. Sue stated that the house was built in 1964. Chris stated that there is nothing in the ordinance about siding and materials. Jamie said that he would like a better definition for the window in front of the garage.

Ms. Carreiro stated they would also like to replace the sliding door and two large floor-to-ceiling windows on the porch with a standard exterior door and two standard windows approximately 30x24 in size. She stated that this would provide a more traditional colonial appearance. She said that in addition to changing the roof line on the breezeway; they would like to add a window on the front facing wall of the garage with shutters.

Sally questioned what the windows would be made of. Ms. Carreiro stated that they were all wood but would like to replace them with all vinyl. Jamie stated that replacing the windows was not on the table. He said the design guidelines in HDC require wood and that cost was not a consideration of the HDC. Jamie stated that the window construction needed to be all wood with simulated divided light and a fiberglass door which would be more energy efficient than a wood door.

Ms. Carreiro asked if everything else was fine. The Commission said "yes". Jamie questioned whether there were any abutters in the audience that had concerns. There were none.

Hearing no other comments or concerns from the Commissioners, Jamie called for findings in this case.

**FINDINGS:**

1. Non-contributing property.
2. House built in 1964.

**MOTION:** Doug motioned to approve the application with a modification that wood windows be installed in the porch area and door, wooden windows with simulated divided light and all wood construction and the rest as presented, Tom 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *All in favor*.

**CASE #: 6178-052715 – Beth & Shawn Bawell – 169 Amherst Street, PIN #: 006-115-009 – Request to construct an addition to include kitchen, dining room and laundry room.**

Present: Beth Bawell

Ms. Bawell requested an extension of her Historic District approval granted in 2013 to enlarge her kitchen, dining and laundry room. She stated that the approval was due to lapse on June 21, 2015 and construction is not complete.

Sally questioned whether there were any changes to her application. Ms. Bawell stated they planned to make the porch smaller than planned. Jamie questioned whether there were any abutters in the audience who had any concerns. There were none.

MOTION: Sally motioned to extend the approval by one year which was granted by the Historic District Commission in June 2013, Doug 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *All in favor*.

**CASE #: PZ6179-052815 – Jason & Leigh White, 14 Middle Street, PIN #: 017-098-000 – Request to allow the construction of a fence.**

Present: Jason White

Mr. White requested approval for the construction of a fence to enclose his backyard. He stated that the fence will come off the back corner of the house to the edge of the property and then straight back to the neighbor's privacy fence. He stated that the back fence will run parallel with the street including the gate. Jamie stated that during the site walk, it was noted that the design of the fence was like his neighbors. Mr. White stated that he would be painting the fence white so it will fit in with the District. Sue stated that this was house number 99 on the National Registry of Historic Places. Hearing no other comments or concerns, Jamie called for findings in this case.

FINDINGS:

1. Contributing property #99
2. Highly visible property.
3. Proposed fence visible and appropriate for surrounding properties and Village.

Jamie questioned whether the gate would be within the fence line. Mr. White stated "yes". Sally stated that the fence would be facing Middle Street.

MOTION: Doug motioned to accept the application as presented, Bruce 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *All in favor*.

**CASE #: PZ6180-052815 – David & April Savino, 5 Foundry Street, PIN #: 017-040-000 – Request to construct a second story addition to the existing ell.**

Present: David & April Savino; John Condon, Condon & Fox Building Corp.; Tony Hall; Abutters (see sign in sheet)

218 Mr. Savino began by reporting that they bought the house 18 months ago. He stated that the house  
219 has evolved over 50 years where it used to be a duplex with two front doors and porch. He stated that  
220 finished space was added in 1977 with a barn-like structure. He said at that time, the bay window was  
221 removed and the existing windows were put in to match the rest of the house. He stated that it was  
222 their goal to make changes to the house with the assistance of John Condon of Condon & Fox Building  
223 Corp. whose company could leverage their historic expertise.

224  
225 He provided drawings that illustrate what their vision would be for the next few years. He said he was  
226 here to seek approval for the addition above the ell which would be approximately 400 square feet of  
227 additional living space. He reviewed each drawing with the Commissioners and provided explanations  
228 of changes being proposed. Discussion followed concerning the roofline. Mr. Savino stated that the  
229 front of the house will have a superior roofline design with more of a simple design incorporated in the  
230 rear.

231  
232 He stated that the windows to be used in the addition would be 6x6 wood with true divided light to  
233 match the existing home. Doug questioned whether the windows to be used would be double hung.  
234 Mr. Savino stated he would be using casement windows but they would look like a double hung  
235 window. Jamie stated the preference would be to install double hung windows and not casement.  
236 Mrs. Savino stated that from the exterior, they will not look like casement windows until they are  
237 opened. Mr. Savino stated that any new window would be a vast improvement over what currently  
238 exists.

239  
240 Jamie stated that the Commissioners must consider this application very carefully as this was a very  
241 significant historic building in Amherst and wasn't originally where it was as it was moved. He stated  
242 that the proposed new design was a "cardinal change" and is of historical significance. Mr. Savino  
243 replied that the current house is over 3000 square feet with the addition just over 400 square feet.

244  
245 Mrs. Savino stated that they needed the space and wanted to do something that would be nice. She  
246 questioned whether the proposed addition was too big for the Commissioners to consider. Sally stated  
247 that the house was not constructed to be a residence but has been one for many years and the original  
248 building is odd because it was not a house.

249  
250 Jamie stated that he won't dismiss what the thought process was and made sense from a spatial  
251 standpoint, however, it was a cardinal change. Mr. Savino stated that it was their only alternative.

252  
253 Chris stated that the design is extremely tasteful and from a visual standpoint, it definitely changes the  
254 character of the house but is an improvement. He said the main portion of the house has been there  
255 for over 100 years – the house has already been altered at a 13% increase. Mr. Savino stated that he  
256 brought in appropriate resources to add square footage to the house and felt they have hired experts  
257 to do the work.

258  
259 Jamie stated that the addition as proposed did not overpower the front part of the house but it  
260 significantly changed the "flavor" of the building. He said that the prominent view was not dead on  
261 from Foundry Street. Mr. Savino stated that the addition improves the look from how they would use

the property and yard where they would spend most of their time. Sue thanked the applicants for bringing their best design to the HDC.

Discussion followed regarding the casement windows. Sally stated that we could force double hung windows but we may not like the results – casement windows were less objectionable in this case because of the size required for egress. Chris stated that he was in favor of the application. Jamie stated that he had a lot of difficulty expanding this house. Sally stated that if you own a house and it doesn't meet what you would like your "21<sup>st</sup> Century" house to look like and whether there's an obligation for the HDC to preserve a historic building? She felt there was.

Abutter Terry Mayo, 93 Boston Post Road – Mr. Mayo stated that for 43 years, there has been no barn there and the only addition in 43 years was one more bay to the garage and closed in porch.

Tony Hall stated that he has 35+ years of working on old houses and from his perspective, knows what a jewel this house is in the Village and the view surrounding it. He said he is aware of the historic attributes of the house, both from an aesthetic standpoint, and from the government of the town.

John Condon stated that it was never intended to look like it was part of the main house. He said they did not design it to look as grand of scale and that it would remain a historic house, however, it needed to meet the needs of its owners.

Abutter Amily Moore, 7 Foundry Street – Ms. Moore stated that she has heard a lot about what was happening on the East side but not on the West side where they reside. She said this addition would have a significant impact to her house because the existing house is close to her property line (approximately one foot). She directly addressed the homeowners and said the proposed addition would block sunlight to her home. Ms. Moore was happy to see that the existing tree in place would block the "white" of the building. Jamie requested that the audience address their concerns directly to the Chair and not to each other.

Tom recommended that the Commissioners revisit the site in order to see where the height of the addition would be. Jamie thought this was a great suggestion because of the significance in the change of the house. Mrs. Savino also suggested that the Commissioners conduct an interior walk through. Sue stated that another visual was a good idea. Bruce questioned how the HDC can accommodate any additions to historic properties. He said he is still up in the air about this application and was not sure if there was a solution as an alternative.

Mr. Mayo spoke about the risks involved if lead paint was detected in the existing clapboards during construction. He questioned how contractors could possibly work in that area without permission from abutters due to the close proximity of property lines. He provided an example where a building was built 9" from their lot without permission. He said he hoped that the HDC would protect the integrity of the best buildings in the town and not set a precedent that you will regret with people making changes.

305 Sue stated that the HDC were the “keepers of the legacy” and will take everything into consideration  
306 when a decision is reached. She said that there hasn’t been a case like this in a long time. Jamie  
307 agreed and said that the HDC would never make a hasty decision and will always preserve these  
308 buildings. Mr. Savino replied that they were not changing the exterior – they were preserving it to a  
309 21<sup>st</sup> century standard that would attract people to the Village and this was a step in that direction.  
310

311 Sally stated that the preservation of this structure is significant enough that she would be prepared to  
312 say “if you can’t have a master bedroom, then you shouldn’t have a master bedroom – we are  
313 advocates for the building”.  
314

315 Jamie stated that he liked Tom’s suggestion to revisit the site to view the roofline. He requested that  
316 the applicant mock it up to give Commissioners a better assessment to define the roofline. Doug  
317 recommended that this be tabled to July. Jamie requested that Mr. Savino work with Deb to schedule  
318 a follow up site visit.  
319

320 MOTION: Jamie motioned to table this application in order to provide a mock up with a follow up site  
321 visit and discuss it again next month, Sue 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *All in favor*.  
322

323 **CASE #: PZ6181-052815 – Dean & Daphne Jackson – 5 Mack Hill Road, PIN #: 020-027-000 – Request**  
324 **approval to replace deteriorating, uninsulated door.**  
325

326 ***For the record, Sue Clark recused herself from the discussion as she is an abutter and left the meeting***  
327 ***at 9:50 pm.***  
328

329 Present: Dean & Daphne Jackson  
330

331 Mr. Jackson requested approval to replace his deteriorating door and upgrade it to French doors in  
332 order to have more direct light, style and efficiency.  
333

334 Jamie stated that he didn’t see any opposition in the design request that would “fly in the design  
335 criteria” for the HDC. He questioned whether the door would be all wood. Mr. Jackson stated “yes it  
336 would be all wood construction with divided light muntins.” Jamie questioned where the door would  
337 go into. Mr. Jackson stated “directly into an office living space”.  
338

339 Discussion followed on the history of the home. Mrs. Jackson stated that the house had two doors,  
340 however, her father decided to take one out. She said there was no HDC back then. She said they  
341 decided to go back to two doors in order to bring more light in.  
342

343 Sally stated that it looked like a detached barn and she felt the French doors would look odd on a barn  
344 and that the sizing wasn’t quite the same – the height and width of the French doors. Chris questioned  
345 whether there was visibility there. Mr. Jackson stated “yes”.  
346

347 Hearing no other comments or concerns, Jamie called for findings on the case.  
348



349 FINDINGS:

- 350 1. Limited public visibility.  
351 2. Contributing property - number 144 on the National Register of Historic Places.  
352 3. Is obscured by trellised fence.  
353

354 MOTION: Doug moved to approve the application, Bruce 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *Voting in favor of the motion were*  
355 *Jamie, Sally, Bruce, Doug and Jeanne.*  
356

357 **CASE #: PZ6182-052815 – Matt Larson – 11 Carriage Road, PIN #: 017-019-000 – Request to replace**  
358 **existing wood windows of the same style and color using integrated light muntins.**  
359

360 Present: Luke Hanscom, Pella Windows & Doors - representing the homeowner, Matt Larson  
361

362 Mr. Hanscom stated that Mr. Larson was traveling and he would be representing him. He stated that  
363 the proposed project is for the replacement of (21) double hung windows. He stated that the work is  
364 proposed due to severely damaged window conditions that compromised the window's functions,  
365 safety and energy efficiency. He provided a sample window for the Commissioners to view.  
366

367 Mr. Hanscom stated that the windows would be of solid wood wrapped in an aluminum clad to protect  
368 the exterior color from fading. He said the interior would be exposed wood that will be painted to  
369 match the interior of the current windows in the house. He said that the proposed style will be double  
370 hung windows with matching muntins.  
371

372 Jamie questioned whether Pella made an "all wood" window? Mr. Hanscom stated that they did but  
373 not as a replacement window.  
374

375 ***For the record, Jeanne Rosenblatt left the meeting at 10:15 pm.***  
376

377 Jamie questioned what the width of the muntins was proposed to be. Mr. Hanscom stated they are ¾"  
378 and adjustable. Sally stated that it says 7/8" – Mr. Hanscom stated that it can be adjustable. Jamie  
379 stated that he was comfortable with no more than 7/8". Doug stated that it should match what is  
380 currently there in terms of size.  
381

382 Mr. Hanscom added that the windows to be replaced with be on the same side of the house and will  
383 be replaced consistent on the sides of the house. Jamie questioned whether Pella made an all wood  
384 architectural series. Mr. Hanscom stated that they were available for builders to purchase for new  
385 homes but not as a replacement window.  
386

387 Jamie stated that he was not comfortable with clad. He said that everything along Carriage Road is  
388 significant and he would suggest that Mr. Hanscom go back to his sales manager to explore options  
389 that would allow replacement windows to be wood. Jamie stated that it clearly states in the ordinance  
390 that all wood construction is required and said "clad doesn't make it".  
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392 Hearing no other comments or concerns, Jamie called for findings on this case.

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FINDINGS:

1. Contributing property.
2. Highly visible.
3. House number 19 on the National Register of Historic Places.

MOTION: Bruce motioned to table this case without prejudice to July 16, 2015, Doug 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *Voting in favor of tabling the case were Jamie, Sally, Chris, Bruce, & Doug.*

Minutes: The minutes of May 21, 2015 were tabled to July 16, 2015.

Adjournment: Tom motioned to adjourn at 10:45 pm, Doug 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: *All in favor.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debra A. Butcher