



**Town of Amherst, NH  
Historic District Commission  
FINAL MINUTES**

**Barbara Landry Conference Room**

**Thursday, 18 May 2017, 7:00 PM**

*Historic District Commission members in attendance were: Jamie Ramsay, Chairman;  
Chris Hall, Vice-Chairman; Susan Clark, & Tom Grella, BOS Ex-Officio.  
Staff in attendance included: Simon Corson, Town Planner.*

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Jamie Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

**II. CASE #: PZ8587-042617 – Adrian & Rahel Menig, 27 Middle Street.  
PIN#: 017-105-000 – Request for approval to install a split rail fence, (2)  
lamp posts on each side of the driveway & construct a stone fireplace (BBQ).**

Mr. Ramsay requested that this case be tabled until the June 15<sup>th</sup> HDC meeting.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Chris Hall and SECONDED by Mr. Tom Grella to table  
Case #: PZ8587-042617 until the June 15<sup>th</sup> HDC meeting.  
Voting: all in favor; no abstentions, or objections. Motion carried unanimously.*

**III. John Robichaud, Facilities Manager, SAU 39**

Mr. John Robichaud explained to the Commission that the Brick School has no use for the exterior oil tank on the property and plans to remove it. He's planning to place 2-3 filler bins for trash/recycling, as well as redoing the landscaping after first consulting the Garden Club. The remaining paved sidewalk will be removed and the area reseeded.

In response to a questions from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Robichaud stated that there were no plans to put down concrete slabs under the fillers.

The group thanked Mr. Robichaud for the discussion and wished him luck.

45  
46 In response to a question from Mr. Will Ludt, Mr. Robichaud stated that he could look into  
47 putting the new handicap accessible entrance around the back of the building, instead of to  
48 the side.  
49

50 **IV. CASE#: PZ8546-041717 – Nick & Ali Pearson, 41 Courthouse Road;**  
51 **PIN#: 016-007-000 – Request for approval to pave an existing dirt driveway**  
52 **with a brick surface that matches the existing front path to the house.**  
53

54 Present: Paul Scott Adams (previous owner of the property and current neighbor), Ali  
55 Pearson – Property Owner  
56

57 Mr. Adams explained to the Commission that the current dirt driveway makes snow  
58 removal very difficult. The plan is to lay down stamped concrete, which will be the same  
59 color and shape as the bricks that currently lead to the front door. They also hope to make a  
60 small path from the driveway to the front door, using the same materials.  
61

62 In response to a questions from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Hall stated that Dube's Landscaping will  
63 be the contractor for the project.  
64

65 Mr. Ramsay stated that he knows of a few true brick driveways in the Historic District. He  
66 believes it will be appropriate for the new driveway to match the existing path to the house.  
67

68 In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Adams stated that there will be 1 root of  
69 the maple tree across the street that may be impacted from this project, but that it will not  
70 impact the whole tree.  
71

72 Mr. Hall stated the findings of this Case:  
73

74 **FINDINGS:**

- 75 1. House is on the National Registry, Lot #127, Map Lot #16-7.  
76 2. House is a Contributing Property  
77 3. House is visible from the public access.  
78 4. Plan will have a minimum effect on the property itself.  
79 5. Material choice is consistent with the rest of the material currently found on the property.  
80

81 *A MOTION was made by Ms. Clark and SECONDED by Mr. Hall to accept the findings and*  
82 *the application under CASE # PZ8546-041717 to allow the paving of the existing dirt*  
83 *driveway with a brick surface that matches the existing front path to the house.*

84 *Voting: All in favor. No abstentions, or objections. The motion carried.*  
85

86 Mr. Ramsay explained to the applicant how the 20-day appeal process works, in case the  
87 Historic Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other party of interest.  
88

89 **V. John Bement, Courthouse Road – Q&A for a proposed arbor project**  
90

91 Mr. Bement handed out plans for a proposed arbor to be added behind his home. He hopes  
92 that grape vines will grow from it and it will become a shady spot in his yard.

93  
94 In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Bement stated that he plans to put it on top  
95 of his brick patio.

96  
97 Mr. Ramsay stated that Mr. Bement will need to submit an application and make a formal  
98 presentation for these plans because each application is considered specific to each property.

99  
100 Mr. Bement said he will expect to present this to the Commission in July.

## 101 102 **VI. Review of Minutes from April 20, 2017 Meeting**

103  
104 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Ramsay and SECONDED by Ms. Clark to table the review of*  
105 *the April 20, 2017 meeting minutes until the June meeting due to the lack of a quorum.*  
106 *Voting: all in favor. No abstentions, or objections.*

## 107 108 **VII. Simon Corson – Work Group Committee Update**

109  
110 Mr. Simon Corson explained that he hoped to have a dialogue and receive comments from  
111 the Commission regarding the draft guidelines document the Work Group was working on.  
112 Mr. Hall helped create the map for contributing/non-contributing properties, but Mr. Corson  
113 would like to eventually use the new parcel lines in order to make it more current.

114  
115 Mr. Hall stated that the purpose of the document is to provide the general public with more  
116 information about and the reasoning of the Historic District Commission. Once the public  
117 understands the history and becomes attached to it, they may also become more attached to  
118 the Commission. This document should aid in making the group more transparent on what it  
119 does and why.

120  
121 Mr. Corson explained that there is a larger project of making all the Amherst public  
122 documents, websites, etc as consistent as possible.

123  
124 In response to a question from Mr. Hall, Mr. Corson stated that the largest historic district in  
125 the state might actually belong to Nashua, but it's not Amherst.

126  
127 Mr. Corson asked the group to consider that the district essentially has 2 names. The National  
128 Registry recognizes the name of the district to be the "Amherst Village Historic District,"  
129 while around town he's seen that "Village" is often excluded.

130  
131 Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Hall discussed trying to get rid of using the "Extended Historic  
132 District" wording. Mr. Hall explained that the district really needs to be considered from a  
133 contributing/non-contributing point of view.

Mr. Ramsay discussed the houses in town that were built during the post-WWII to 1960 time period that aren't considered contributing due to age, but these houses are still a part of Amherst's history and thus maybe should be "contributing" anyway.

Mr. Hall stated that Mr. Corson has advised him that it really should be up to a historian to make decisions regarding the significance of any properties in town. There are also many map misalignments that they've noticed, which should also be reviewed by a historian.

Mr. Corson expressed his interest in the district being referred to in a consistent, clear manner to the public so that there isn't additional confusion on the issue. It makes sense to use the name that people would find if they looked up the district in the National Registry.

Mr. Hall stated that, while he has no desire to push the issue on way or another, from a public relations perspective, it would be easier to remove "Village" from the district's name.

Mr. Corson stated that the Community Development Department would like to start having work sessions (starting the first Thursday in June) that would be public meetings in order to move forward in discussing what the district should be called, what the commissions are here to protect, and what can be improved upon. Mr. Hall asked that the start date for these meetings might be postponed until more members are around to join.

In response to a question from Mr. Will Ludt, Mr. Corson explained that the CLG Grant hasn't yet been funded to the town, but will hopefully arrive in September. The funds from this grant can be used to do an inventory on the properties in town to decide what is contributing versus non-contributing.

Mr. Corson asked the Commission to consider looking at the wording that currently exists on the letters that go out to the public from the town and the public website for consistency. Mr. Ramsay stated that this will be tabled until the next meeting, due to the missing Commissioners.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Hall and SECONDED by Mr. Grella to adjourn the meeting at 8:11PM.*

*Voting: all in favor. No abstentions, or objections.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristan Patenaude