



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

**Barbara Landry Conference Room**

**Thursday, 20 July 2017, 7:00 PM**

*Historic District Commission members in attendance were: Jamie Ramsay, Chairman;  
Chris Hall, Vice-Chairman; Susan Clark, Doug Chabinsky, Chris Buchanan, &  
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 7:00 PM.

**II. CASE #: PZ8764-061417 – John Bement, 9 Courthouse Road, PIN #: 017-109-000 –  
Request for approval to construct a 9' x 7.6' cedar arbor in the backyard.**

Present: John Bement – Property Owner

Mr. Bement explained his plans, which include adding an arbor to the existing brick deck in the backyard. He plans to supplement each post with a grapevine, so that eventually the grape leaves will add shade to the deck area.

**FINDINGS:**

1. House is on the National Registry, Lot #109
2. House is a Contributing Property
3. Visibility of planned structure is limited due to being in the backyard with a surrounding fence
4. Style of proposed construction is appropriate and will use natural materials

Mr. Hall stated that he believes once the grapevines grow in this structure will be virtually invisible to the public.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Chabinsky and SECONDED by Mr. Grella to accept the application as submitted.*

*Voting: all aye. No abstentions, or objections. Motion carried.*

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

**III. CASE #: PZ8800-062817 – Paul & Susan Spiess, 142 Amherst Street, PIN #: 017-001-000 – Request for approval to construct a new side entrance door and roof canopy.**

Present: Paul Spiess – Property Owner

Mr. Spiess explained his plans and the reasoning behind them. Currently his foyer does not allow for much natural light. The flat roof has also posed some risk to those entering the house in the winter. The front door is aging out and repairs need to be done to it.

In response to a question from Mr. Hall, Mr. Spiess stated that the current door is not the original door to the house. He estimates it to be around 30 years old.

In response to a question from Mr. Hall, Mr. Spiess stated that he guesses the home was built sometime between 1810 and 1820.

Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Chabinsky discussed the door plans having 9 lights instead of the standard 6, due to 3 extra lights on the side panel. They also discussed the choice of an oak sill versus a bronze/metal one.

Mr. Ramsay explained that the proposed awning will be appropriate for conserving the warranty coverage on the front door.

In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Spiess stated that the proposed construction calls for turned knee braces, but no columns.

**FINDINGS:**

1. House is listed on the National Registry, Lot #1
2. House is not a Contributing Property
3. House is highly visible from the public access
4. Style of the proposed construction is appropriate with the existing house and will not detract from the ongoing structure

Mr. Ramsay stated that the proposed construction includes a wooden door and an asphalt-shingled roof.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Chabinsky and SECONDED by Ms. Clark to approve the plans as submitted, with the condition of a required properly scaled drawing submitted prior to the issuance of a building permit.*

*Voting: all aye. No abstentions, or objections. Motion carried.*

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

In response to a question from Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Spiess stated that his house does have a #142 mounted on the door, but it is difficult to see.

85        *Ms. Susan Clark left the meeting.*

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87 **IV. Review of Minutes from June 15, 2017**

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89        *A MOTION was made by Mr. Hall and SECONDED by Mr. Chabinsky to approve the*  
90        *meeting minutes from June 15, 2017 as written.*

91        *Voting: 5 ayes, 1 abstention. Motion carried.*

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93 **V. Simon Corson – Work Session Schedule; CAMP Grant**

94        Mr. Corson explained that the CAMP grant should be available to the town around  
95        September or October. He hopes the Commission can come up with questions and topics that  
96        only a preservation expert can answer.

97        Mr. Corson discussed the language, regarding “Amherst Village Historic District,” or  
98        “Amherst Historic District,” on the letter to new Amherst District residents and on the town  
99        website.

100       Mr. Ramsay stated that he believes that the wording “Village” should remain.

101       Mr. Buchanan explained that he believes it best to keep all documents consistent. He thinks  
102       to change the “Village” wording would be counterproductive and add unnecessary work for  
103       others. “Village” may mean different things to different people, but by being in this place,  
104       “Village” is the correct definition. Mr. Chabinsky and Mr. Hall agreed.

105       *A MOTION was made by Mr. Buchanan and SECONDED by Mr. Chabinsky to accept both*  
106       *town documents with the “Village” wording included.*

107       *Voting: all aye. No abstentions or objections. Motion carried.*

108       Mr. Hall and Mr. Buchanan discussed what the Commission could list on an agenda in order  
109       to discuss areas that need more guidance or regulations that need changing.

110       Mr. Chabinsky stated that he would like to find things to help improve the regulations and  
111       improve the guidance on how to stay current while also maintaining the character of the  
112       town.

113       Mr. Ramsay stated that the Commission will hold a work session on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at the same  
114       time as a normal Commission meeting.

115       Mr. Ramsay assured the Commission that he’s been in communication with the Department  
116       of Community Development in order to discuss applications coming before the group as  
117       incomplete. This should not be an issue going forward.

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119 **VI. Adjournment**

120       *A MOTION was made by Mr. Chabinsky and SECONDED by Mr. Grella to adjourn the meeting*  
121       *at 7:46pm.*

122     *All aye. No abstentions or objections. Motion carried.*

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128     Respectfully submitted,

129     Kristan Patenaude

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