

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission

July 15, 2021

APPROVED

In attendance: Jamie Ramsay – Chair, Doug Chabinsky, Bill Rapf, Tom Grella – Board of Selectmen Ex-Officio, and Tracie Adams – Planning Board Ex-Officio.
Staff present Natasha Kypfer – Town Planner, and Kristan Patenaude – Recording Secretary (remote).

Jamie Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

Eric Hahn, DPW Director, regarding the installation of granite curbing for the Amherst Street Bike/Ped Path

Eric Hahn and Assistant DPW Director, Eric Slosek, addressed the Commission. Eric Hahn explained that he had originally asked to be on the June agenda and does not mean for this short notice to be a slight against the Commission. He explained that survey work found that the Town has sufficient right of way to complete the Amherst Street bicycle/pedestrian sidepath. This will include a 5' grass panel, an 8' side path, and the rest of the road width that will be kept the same as it is now. He explained that granite curbing is being proposed on some areas of the sidepath as an additional safety measure. In order to separate sidepath users from traffic, a horizontal or vertical distance is a necessary safety feature. Granite curbing was chosen as a vertical safety feature because it will look nice. This will be kept as narrow as possible through the heart of the Historic District.

In response to a question from Bill Rapf, Eric Slosek explained that granite curbing will also be used along one section of Amherst Street, across from Border Street, where there is a guardrail and stream crossing. There will not be enough room for a grass roadway separation in this area, so granite curbing will be used.

In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, Eric Hahn stated that the original proposal was for this path to be located on the south side of the road. However, due to the number of telephone poles on that side of the road, it was determined that the path shall be located on the south side of the road from Courthouse Road to the stop light, and then on the north side of the road up to the Milford town line.

In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, Eric Slosek stated that the granite curbing within the Historic District will terminate just past Country Mansions.

In response to a question from Tom Grella, Eric Hahn stated that it was known from the get-go that granite curbing would be needed somewhere along the path. The cost of the curbing is offset from other items. The path is 8' wide and will be able to be plowed using a pick-up truck with a plow attachment.

In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, Eric Hahn stated that Continental Paving will be doing this work for the Town. The sidepath is being completed in conjunction with already scheduled road construction to achieve cost savings.

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission

July 15, 2021

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Tracie Adams thanked the DPW for their work making sure this project will fit in with the rural characteristics of the Historic District.

The Commission thanked Eric Hahn and Eric Slosek for their presentation.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. CASE #: PZ13953-032921 –Dina & Melissa Masotta (Owners & Applicants), 3 Old Jailhouse Road, PIN #: 017-073-000 – Request for approval to demo back wing of home and rebuild from foundation up. Continued from May 20, 2021**

Natasha Kypfer noted that neither Dina nor Melissa Masotta was in attendance either in-person or via Zoom for this meeting. She suggested that, due to the applicants' non-responsiveness and the lack of submission of requested items, the Commission deny this application, without prejudice, as noted on pages 2 & 3 of the staff report. If the applicant chooses, a new application can be submitted at a later date with all applicable information included.

Tracie Adams noted that the applicant was made aware that additional materials were needed on April 15th, at the site walk on May 20th, and twice in the month of June (8th and 29th). She agreed with Natasha Kypfer's recommendation to terminate the application at this time without prejudice.

There was no public comment at this time.

Doug Chabinsky moved to terminate this application, without prejudice, until such time that a new application can be submitted with the appropriate information. Bill Rapf seconded.
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 2. CASE #: PZ14312-060321 – David & April Savino (Owners & Applicants), 24 Courthouse Road, PIN #: 016-017-000 – Request for approval to install a 24'x15' screened porch on the back side of the house.**

David Savino presented the case.

David Savino explained that the proposal is for a 24'x15' screened porch. This will not be attached directly to the historic part of the house. He noted that he is proposing to use mahogany wood snap in/outs to accommodate both screens and 12-light storm windows, depending on the season. The screened porch will feature the same architectural shingles as the house. The section of the house that the screened porch will attach to, which faces Amherst Street, will have its shingles replaced to match. A monolithic blue slab floor is being proposed, along with a propane fireplace.

July 15, 2021

APPROVED

In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, David Savino explained that the fireplace will be directly vented through a stainless-steel chimney.

In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, David Savino stated that his options for the porch were mahogany or pine, and he selected mahogany to last longer.

In response to a question from Tracie Adams regarding missing items from the Staff Report checklist, Natasha Kypfer stated that it is not atypical for items to be missing from Historic District Commission applications. It is up to the Commission to determine the adequacy of application submissions.

David Savino noted that he assumed the information he submitted regarding the house, lot, and proposed structure were enough. Natasha Kypfer stated that she emailed the Staff Report to David Savino last week and that a drawing of the proposed structure as it is intended to sit on the current lot can be submitted, if the Commission so chooses.

Natasha Kypfer explained that items on the checklist that have not yet been submitted, include:
6. Plan or site plan showing abutters, the dimensions and location of the proposed building, addition, site work, or fencing in relation to the property line(s), existing structures, setback line, curb cuts, historic stone walls, and mature trees greater than 15" in circumference. Drawings should indicate by dotted lines or other means existing foundation (or footprint) that will be permanently altered as a result of the work. (Scale not less than 1" = 30'), and
8. Site plan (Item #6 above) must show location of adjacent structures within 100' of parcel boundaries.

David Savino showed each Commissioner a drawing indicating where the proposed structure will sit on the property. He stated that he will also email the drawing to Natasha Kypfer.

FINDINGS:

1. The location of the proposed renovations has limited public view.
2. The proposed renovations have an appropriate design and are common to a number of homes located in the Historic District.

Doug Chabinsky moved that the application be accepted as presented, with the addition of the site plan to be submitted. Seconded by Tom Grella.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Jamie Ramsay explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the Historic District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.

3. **CASE#: PZ14313-060321 – Charles & Irene Pyle (Owners & Applicants), 5 Courthouse Road, PIN#: 017-095-000 – Request for approval to install a 6'x6' hot tub, a whole house generator, and propane tanks in the backyard adjacent to the garage.**

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission

July 15, 2021

APPROVED

Charles & Irene Pyle presented the case.

Charles Pyle explained that the hot tub will not be seen from Cross Street. There will be a limited view from Courthouse Road, but there are shrubs between the road and the proposed hot tub location. He does not intend to use the lights in the hot tub, so the lighting will not be offensive to neighbors.

Charles Pyle stated that the whole house generator will be installed by Johnson Electric. This will not be completed until next spring. The proposed location for the generator is placed as far from abutters as it can be. He is willing to place, as suggested, plantings around the generator for screening, such as three rhododendron plants.

Jamie Ramsay noted that the proposal includes two, 120-gallon, propane tanks, to be placed approximately 10' from the property line. This is to code.

There was no public comment at this time.

FINDINGS:

1. All proposed renovations have very limited public view.
2. Property is a Contributing property

Charles Pyle noted that he has notified all of his abutters as to his plans, and none seem to have any objections.

Doug Chabinsky moved to accept the application as presented. Seconded by Tracie Adams.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Jamie Ramsay explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the Historic District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.

OTHER BUSINESS:

4. Discussion regarding plans for new school on Wilkins School site

Natasha Kypfer explained that this item will be postponed to a future meeting.

The Commission considered that this is just a conceptual discussion to hear possible views of the site moving forward.

5. Minutes: May 6, 2021; May 20, 2021

Doug Chabinsky moved to approve the minutes of May 6, 2021, as presented. Tom Grella seconded.

TOWN OF AMHERST
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Voting: 4-0-1; motion carried (T. Adams abstaining).

Doug Chabinsky moved to approve the minutes of May 20, 2021, as presented. Tom Grella seconded.

Voting: 4-0-1; motion carried (T. Adams abstaining).

6. Any other business

Natasha Kypfer suggested that the Commission discuss officer appointments for the upcoming year at its next meeting.

Doug Chabinsky moved to adjourn at 7:59pm. Tom Grella seconded.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude

Minutes approved: August 19, 2021