

TOWN OF AMHERST
Heritage Commission

August 12, 2021

APPROVED

1 In attendance: Will Ludt – Chair, Conor Frain – Vice Chair, Lisa Montesanto (remote), Gordon
2 Zuerndorfer, Linda Zuerndorfer (alternate), John Bement (remote), and Tom Grella – Board of
3 Selectmen Ex-Officio
4 Staff in attendance: Kristan Patenaude – Recording Secretary.
5

6 **1. Roll Call to Order**

7 Will Ludt called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. Will Ludt introduced the members and
8 Katrina Holman. He explained that Katrina Holman has worked with the Commission on
9 several grants in the past.
10

11 **TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:**
12

13 **2. Tribute to Doug Nelson – Baboosic Lake Road**

14 Will Ludt stated that Doug Nelson recently passed away. Doug Nelson was a great help to the
15 Commission with keeping the corn crib renovated. Will Ludt remembered Doug Nelson as a
16 hard worker who was very dedicated.
17

18 **3. “Throw Back” Thursday – Amherst Heritage – none at this time.**
19

20 **4. “60 Oldest Homes Outside the Historic District” – Katrina Holman**

21 Katrina Holman explained that she has been researching Amherst history intensively over the
22 last 12 years. She stated that she originally began her work through a project of the
23 Congregational Church’s for Christmas House Tours around the Village. From research on those
24 homes, she quickly discovered that many of the books in the Library are not reliable sources; the
25 tax database for the Town is also not always accurate. She gave a number of examples of
26 properties in the Village that she was able to discover the correct date for. She stated that, in
27 2010, the Amherst Historical Society created the first Walking Tours book. She explained that
28 many of the earliest deeds for properties in Town are now found online, and thus there is little
29 excuse for the dates for properties to be incorrect.
30

31 Katrina Holman stated that in February and March of 2021, she submitted the corrected dates for
32 75 houses in the Village to the Town, with supporting evidence. From March to July of this year
33 she has submitted an additional 49 date corrections to be corrected in the tax assessor’s database.
34 Her goal is to get as many properties’ correct dates identified as possible. She has already
35 completed most of them in the Village. She is wondering how to get this information out to the
36 public.
37

38 Will Ludt explained that the Commission previously received a grant to update its GIS mapping
39 information regarding historic placed in Town. This will be added to over time. He noted that
40 someone is needed to vet this information before it is updated. Katrina Holman agreed to help
41 with the project.
42

August 12, 2021

APPROVED

Town Administrator Shankle noted that the dates on the tax cards for properties in Town are for depreciation purposes only. He does not believe it is a good idea to try to use the database as an accurate way to date houses in Town.

Katrina Holman noted that the database is what real estate agents use to tell people the dates of their properties. She noted that some people take this information as fact and even use it when putting the date information signs posted to their properties.

Town Administrator Shankle noted that the information with correct dates should probably also be placed in another spot, so as not to use the database as a historic record for this information.

The Commission and Katrina Holman agreed to work together on their projects, when it is appropriate. Will Ludt noted that a private donation will be used to make copies of the current Town Historic properties report, completed through the grant, and to digitize it.

5. Discussion on 2021 Master Plan History & Cultural Resources

Will Ludt stated that the Heritage and Cultural profiles for the Master Plan update are being created. He suggested that the Commission and Historic District Commission work to vet the information within these profiles.

Conor Frain stated that he feels the format presented is okay. He feels that the profile seems to go from containing real history facts, to other blurbs of information.

Will Ludt agreed. He stated that he believes the historical perspective of the profile is appropriate, but more information is needed. He noted that he believes the Master Plan is supposed to look into the future, such as the proposed metal detecting policy and demolition delay policy, and he does not see that information provided.

Tom Grella noted that on page 2, regarding the 2008 findings, the 4th bullet he believes is incorrect. He feels that the Town has done a wonderful job at preserving the historic nature of its buildings. He is unclear if the schools have done as good of a job. He also noted that, in regard to the second to last bullet on that same page, the Town does have a cell tower policy in place.

Will Ludt stated that, regarding the last bullet on this page, the Commission has tried to identify stone walls, foundations, etc., and has made substantial progress to identify heritage resources in Town. The grant just awarded will also help with this.

Conor Frain agreed that progress has been made but noted that the Town still has much to do to identify resources before they are developed or otherwise lost. This item could be tied to the future possible demolition delay policy.

Tom Grella noted a spelling mistake on page 5 – “brick structures” should be “brick structure.” He also noted that the picture on page 8 is stated to be P MEC but is actually Buchanan Field. He also stated that, regarding the Bicentennial Committee, there were two women who did much of

August 12, 2021

APPROVED

the work on this project, Rosamond 'Roz' Buchanan, and Theresa Greenblatt, that he believes should be recognized.

Gordon Zuerndorfer stated that the links under the map sections do not seem to be linking properly. Conor Frain suggested generalizing these links, as the Heritage Commission will continue to exist, but the link may someday change.

Will Ludt stated that he would continue to read and redline the document. The Master Plan Steering Committee plans to have a town input session in September.

John Bement noted that he believes the date of the formation of the Garden Club should be noted, 1971.

The Commission discussed possibly linking the profile to a document of all the maps of the Town cemeteries.

6. Resurgence of Metal Detecting Policy

Will Ludt stated that he and John Bement will continue to work on this document. The intent is to present it to the Board of Selectmen in September.

6. Minutes: 10 June 2021

This was not addressed by the Commission.

7. Chair Topics and Discussion/Roundtable

In response to a question from Linda Zuerndorfer, Will Ludt stated that the State has a metal detecting policy for state beaches and parks, but it does not cover individual towns.

Will Ludt noted that the Commission is the trail steward for the Amherst Conservation Commission trail that runs off the Josiah Parker Trail to the Corn Crib. All are free to help with trail maintenance.

Conor Frain moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06pm. Gordon Zuerndorfer seconded.

Roll call: Will Ludt – aye, Conor Frain – aye, Lisa Montesanto (remote) - aye, Gordon Zuerndorfer - aye, John Bement – aye, and Tom Grella – aye; motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude*

Minutes approved: October 14, 2021