

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission Meeting

February 15, 2024

APPROVED

1 In attendance: Doug Chabinsky – Acting Chair, Tom Grella – Board of Selectmen Ex-Officio,
2 Tom Quinn – Planning Board Ex-Officio
3 Staff present: Nic Strong, Community Development Director
4

5 Doug Chabinsky, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
6

7 **PUBLIC HEARING**
8

- 9 1. **CASE #: PZ18455-012324 – Timothy & Lee Kachmar (Applicants & Owners);**
10 **15 Mack Hill Road, PIN #: 020-022-000** – Request for approval to update kitchen
11 and reorient windows to back property view and for an addition of an 800 square foot in-
12 law apartment on the south side of the house.
13

14 Doug Chabinsky read and opened the case.
15

16 **Tom Quinn moved to accept the application as complete and that there is no**
17 **regional impact. Seconded by Tom Grella.**

18 **Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky – aye, Tom Grella – aye, Tom Quinn – aye. 3-0-0.**
19

20 Tim Kachmar stated that there are three existing windows on the back wall of the house which
21 look out to the back of the property. The request is to keep two windows on the side wall,
22 looking to Mack Hill, and place four windows on the back wall to look out to the back of the
23 property. The work also includes a reorganization of the kitchen. The work will not keep the
24 JELDWEN windows but will instead move to Marvin windows.
25

26 Doug Chabinsky stated that the specs provided do not specify the manufacturer. Tim Kachmar
27 stated that the windows will be Marvin windows. Doug Chabinsky noted that the proposed
28 windows are casement instead of double hung windows. Tim Kachmar stated that the existing
29 windows are casement as well. The windows are proposed to be all-wood.
30

31 In response to a question from Tom Grella, Doug Chabinsky stated that the specs for the
32 windows are 5/8” muntins.
33

34 Tim Kachmar stated that in 2018 he proposed an in-law apartment, but no work was completed.
35 The proposal is for an 800 s.f. in-law apartment to be constructed on the south side of the house.
36 The apartment will match the house, with wood windows, wood siding, and shingles to match
37 the existing house. There will be a small crawl space under the foundation, and the proposal is to
38 use old fieldstones on the property to create a retaining wall.
39

40 Doug Chabinsky noted that the proposed window muntins will need to be 5/8” and the windows
41 will need to be all-wood. A mini split is proposed but there is no information provided on how it
42 will be screened. Tim Kachmar stated that the mini split will be placed in the courtyard side of
43 the house, so it will not be seen from the road. He noted that the intention was that the proposed

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44 retaining wall will be screening both the foundation wall of the proposed addition along with the
45 mini split. He stated that if the retaining wall was not sufficient he would use other approved
46 means to screen the mechanical unit.

47
48 Tom Quinn asked if the new windows would match the existing house. Tim Kachmar stated that
49 the existing windows are Pella, and the intention is to match them as closely as possible. Doug
50 Chabinsky stated that 6 over 6 windows would be appropriate for the apartment.

51
52 **FINDINGS:**

- 53 1. Contributing property
- 54 2. Listed as #149; the Hobson-Chickering Place on the National Register
- 55 3. Proposed addition is visible from the road. Massing and style is in keeping with the
56 existing house.
- 57 4. Retaining wall should block mechanical structures and applicant has stated that if the
58 items are visible from the road they will be screened.
- 59 5. Windows on the side and back of the existing house are essentially a replacement in kind.
- 60 6. The change to the windows on the side are of a better proportion for that wall.

61
62 **Tom Grella moved to approve the application as submitted, with the conditions that**
63 **the windows in the kitchen and others on the property will be all-wood inside and**
64 **out, the mechanical structures will be screened if necessary, and all muntins should**
65 **be 5/8". Seconded by Tom Quinn.**

66 **Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky – aye, Tom Grella – aye, Tom Quinn – aye. 3-0-0.**

- 67
68 2. **CASE #: PZ18456-012324 – Lynda M Tracey (Owner)**
69 **& Bryan Norwalt (Applicant); 98 Amherst Street, PIN #: 005-044-000** – Request for
70 approval to construct a 28'x25'two car garage with living space above.

71
72 Doug Chabinsky read and opened the case.

73
74 Tom Quinn noted that he received an email from the Chair regarding certain missing items from
75 the application. Bryan Norwalt stated that he has a copy of the information with him. Doug
76 Chabinsky stated that if the Commission does not have adequate information at this time, he
77 would suggest the applicant request a continuance to the next meeting. The Commission
78 reviewed the information provided by the applicant and noted the following:

- 79
- 80 • the application needed to include the proposed addition in relation to the original house in
81 order to view the massing;
- 82 • the information the Commission needs is generally what will be required for construction
83 drawings for the building permit anyway;
- 84 • the height of the proposed addition in relation to the house was discussed as the applicant
85 indicated the peak of the garage would be higher than the house;

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- 86 • the pitch of the roof should be indicated. The applicant noted that his current plan
87 showed a different pitch for the addition than the existing house. This was noted to need
88 discussion.
89 • the applicant noted that some of the differences were because he had increased the roof
90 height after he received the original plans. It was noted that this difference required the
91 trusses to be redesigned and the plans need to be revised.
92 • the height to peak of the addition was unknown;
93 • windows would be double hung;
94 • no garage door design was submitted.

95
96 The Commission discussed what information would be needed from the applicant for the next
97 hearing: revised plans that included the addition in relation to the existing house, the massing,
98 the rooflines, heights and other dimensions, window details, including wood construction,
99 muntin thickness of 5/8", siding materials, fascia board materials, garage door materials and
100 design, a site plan with distances to lot lines, wetlands, etc., elevations of the proposed addition
101 from all sides. The applicant stated that he would redo the plans and resubmit because he didn't
102 realize those things were needed.

103
104 **Doug Chabinsky moved to continue this application to March 21, 2024, at the**
105 **request of the applicant. Seconded by Tom Grella.**
106 **Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky – aye, Tom Grella – aye, Tom Quinn – aye. 3-0-0.**

107
108 **OTHER BUSINESS:**
109 **2. Minutes: January 18, 2024**

110
111 The Commission tabled discussion on the January 18, 2024, meeting minutes to the next
112 meeting.

113
114 The Commission reviewed the proposal for the design guidelines. Tom Quinn stated that the
115 proposal seems to come from a firm that works with larger cities, and he asked if the firm has
116 any experience with smaller towns. Doug Chabinsky stated that the firm has done significant
117 work in historic districts in larger cities, and he believes they have the skills to do this project. He
118 stated that, if the Commission does not believe this firm is capable of doing this work, he would
119 like to see the grant funding returned to the State to be used for other purposes.

120
121 In response to a question from Doug Chabinsky, Nic Strong explained that, if the Commission
122 agrees to move forward, it should set up a discussion with the firm.

123
124 **Doug Chabinsky moved to enter into a discussion with the firm regarding meeting**
125 **the specific needs of the Commission, prior to final acceptance and negotiation.**
126 **Seconded by Tom Grella.**
127 **Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky – aye, Tom Grella – aye, Tom Quinn – aye. 3-0-0.**
128

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129 The Commission discussed a schedule for this meeting. Commissioners agreed that they would
130 like it to occur as soon as possible.

131

132 The Commission noted that there are openings for alternates and that this is posted on the Town
133 website.

134

135 **At 7:48 p.m., Doug Chabinsky moved to adjourn. Tom Quinn seconded the motion.**

136 **Roll Call Vote: Doug Chabinsky – aye, Tom Grella – aye, Tom Quinn – aye. 3-0-0.**

137

138 Respectfully submitted,

139 Kristan Patenaude

140

141 Minutes approved: