

**Town of Amherst, New Hampshire
Historic District Commission
November 20, 2014**

In attendance: J. Ramsay, Chairman; T. Veillette, Vice Chairman; S. Clark, Secretary; D. Chabinsky;
T. Grella, Selectmen's Representative; L. McCoy (Alt); B. Fraser and J. Rosenblatt (Alt)

J. Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:03pm and introduced the board. He then read the first case.

**1. Case# PZ5526-102314- Jean Haley Hogan, 1 Beldens Mill Lane, PIN#: 018-041-000
Request for approval to replace five (5) windows.**

T. Grella recused himself from the case since the applicants are clients of his.

J. Haley Hogan spoke to the commission. The windows are beyond repair in a cement lock foundation in the basement. She would like to replace them. They will still be 6 over 6, but far more efficient. The windows are on the basement level on the side of the residence. They are not visible to the public to her knowledge. The type of replacement windows was submitted in the application documentation.

J. Ramsay wondered if it is a contributing property. It was decided it's not. S. Clark stated this portion is not part of the original structure- it's on a cinderblock foundation.

J. Ramsay stated most commission members were on the site walk so are familiar with the home.

B. Fraser commented the home is far back from the road. The owner confirmed the windows will look the same and that the current windows are beyond repair.

Findings:

1. Non contributing
2. Not visible
3. Replacement is within the regulation

D. Chabinsky moved to accept the application as submitted. B. Fraser seconded. Vote: Unanimous

**2. Case# PZ5548-102914- Susan Teeple, 3 Courthouse Road, PIN #: 017-096-002
Request for approval for construction of a 12'x16' shed.**

T. Grella recused himself from the case since the applicants are clients of his.

T. Veillette recused herself from the case as she is an abutter.

J. Nhaass spoke as the representative for the case. He stated he would like to put up a garden shed.

J. Ramsay asked if there is a difference between the shed he wants to put up and the shed that is shown in the plans that were submitted. Yes. He handed out new drawings to the commission.

D. Chabinsky asked for clarification on which way the shed will face on the property. This was clarified.

J. Ramsay asked about the siding of the shed- will it all be clapboard. One side will be clapboard and three sides will be shiplap. J. Ramsay asked about windows- will they be 6 over 6. Yes, single pane.

J. Ramsay asked if it will be wood construction. Yes. J. Ramsay asked if there will be electricity or plumbing. No.

46 **Findings:**

- 47 1. Not a contributing property- built in 1999
48 2. Visible from the street
49 3. Style in keeping with architecture of the village
50 4. No question what the use is from the road
51 5. High visibility

52
53 ***D. Chabinsky moved to accept the application for a shed with wood construction- clapboard on the***
54 ***front and shiplap on the other three sides. Windows will be 6 over 6 single pane as discussed. There***
55 ***will be no electricity or plumbing. S. Clark seconded. Vote: Unanimous***

56
57 J. Rosenblatt asked what the ramp will be made of. Pressure treated wood.

58 J. Ramsay asked if the roofing will be asphalt shingle to match the house. Yes.

59
60 **3. Case# PZSSS0-103014 - Christopher & Koren Jones, 41 Courthouse Road, PIN #: 016-007-000**
61 **Request for approval to remove six (6) mature trees in close proximity to the structure.**

62
63 T. Grella recused himself from the case.

64
65 Deb Farrow, realtor, spoke to represent the applicants in the case.

66 A buyer is interested in purchasing the property contingent on the trees being able to be removed.

67 The home is in jeopardy of being hit by falling branches. The trees are causing damage to the roof, siding
68 and foundation.

69
70 S. Clark confirmed the trees are taking over the home.

71 T. Veillette expressed concern for the structure and agreed the trees are causing damage.

72
73 Scott Adams - 40 Courthouse Rd. and former occupant of 41.

74 S. Adams believes that not all of those trees threaten the buildings. Some of them do. He would like to
75 understand if it is an all or nothing decision from the buyer's standpoint? Also, who chose the six trees?

76 D. Farrow explained that the new owners are planning on using the detached shed as a workspace and
77 the trees in question were specifically chosen by the buyer.

78
79 S. Adams doesn't think they should all be taken down. One is leaning away from the structures and is
80 not dead- it should not be cut down. Some of them do threaten the buildings and should be cut down.

81 S. Clark had S. Adams clarify which tree on the map he is referencing.

82 S. Clark also had this type of tree. Her arborist explained that these trees break off from the top- they
83 don't uproot from the bottom. They are dangerous for the home, family, and driveway. If the
84 commission denies the application and something falls on the home or causes injury, there would be
85 serious liability.

86 J. Ramsay clarified that the HDC is trying to steer clear of tree applications. The value to the HDC of this
87 type of application is to allow the HDC to make owners aware of any ramifications that may occur when
88 work is done on these historic properties. It gives them pause while considering the work they are
89 planning.

90
91 S. Adams clarified: so you don't have the authority to say yes or no? J. Ramsay replied that is correct.
92 There is too much liability.

S. Adams asked, so why is it in the Amherst code? T. Veillette stated that the code has not yet been updated.

L. McCoy asked if they are pines with shallow roots. J. Ramsay replied yes, white pines with shallow roots. D. Chabinsky stated these trees that are damaging the home need to come down and if the buyer is an artisan, they would probably prefer light to come into the shed.

D. Chabinsky moved to accept the application. B. Fraser seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Mrs. S. Adams expressed a concern regarding the aftermath of the tree removal. She is assuming the stumps will be ground? Yes.

Findings:

1. Contributing property.
2. House number 127
3. Built c. 1740

D. Farrow asked for clarification whether the approval goes with the owner or with the property. J. Ramsay and T. Grella confirmed that it is with the property and will apply to the new owners.

**4. Case# PZ5551-103014 -Ronnie & Amy Guptill, 120 Amherst Street, PIN#: 005-054-000
Request for approval of exterior alterations to include replacement of brick and aluminum siding with wooden clapboards, relocation of the entry way, replacement of windows and roof.**

R. Guptill spoke on his own behalf. Since the site walk, the applicant is now going with the Jeld Wen windows. He is proposing two options for the back of the house. He prefers to use casement windows, but is prepared to do the 2 over 1 windows if that's what the HDC requires. When he moved in, he had the full intention of restoring the windows, but there's too much rot and it would be too difficult to put them back together. He included a letter in his application which states the reason for the project. R. Guptill stated the site walk was beneficial to the applicants and he appreciates the time the commission spent reviewing the home.

T. Veillette asked about the chimney removal. R. Guptill clarified it's a vacant chimney that goes through the kitchen. The new kitchen will take up $\frac{3}{4}$ of the area and the mud room will be smaller. The chimney would be right in the middle of the new kitchen layout. R. Guptill further stated the chimney is in disrepair.

T. Veillette asked about the age of the L shape portion of the home. D. Chabinsky suggested it might be the 1950's.

J. Ramsay stated the home is not a contributing property. It's in the extended historical area. The house was built c. 1840-1850. It is a typical country Greek revival home. The loss of the brick and vinyl would help the look of the home.

D. Chabinsky stated the intent is to restore it to what it may have looked like.

B. Fraser asked if the 2 over 1 windows are approved windows. Discussion ensued and it was determined that yes, this style was used historically and it would be consistent to keep them.

J. Ramsay asked the commission about their opinions on moving the door. D. Chabinsky thinks it will be better balanced. And the home won't look like a 1950's style home.

J. Ramsay sees the applicant is proposing a relocation of the entrance but asked if the columns will be reused. Yes, the owner wants to keep the 1800's materials as much as possible.

J. Ramsay asked for thoughts from the commission on the back of the house- should the owner use casement or double hung windows? The owner clarified what is happening with the kitchen renovations and how the new windows will be positioned over the sink. The preference from the owner is to have as much light come in with the least amount of visual impairments. He asked what the requirements are for the spacing between the windows. Is it 5" of total trim, or 5" of trim around the perimeter of each window?

D. Chabinsky prefers the smallest amount of trim between the new windows. To clarify, 5" should go around the two larger end windows and 5" of top and bottom trim for the new smaller windows, but there should be none or minimal trim between the small windows. He suggested casement windows are probably ok there since they're on the back of the house.

J. Ramsay suggested that if there are 2 over 1 windows flanking the sides, and casement windows between, it starts to have a strange look. The commission discussed their thoughts on this.

D. Chabinsky suggested the applicant's plans are fine and the HDC approve them in this case because there is no visibility to the rear of the house and that they approve casement windows with no munnions in them. They will use Jeld Wen windows of all wood construction with simulated divided light. T. Veillette seconded.

The applicant asked since there is a large trim board that goes across the back of the house in addition to the 5" trim above the windows, does he have to keep the 5" trim?

D. Chabinsky stated it should be fine without it- as long as the house is uniform.

Findings:

1. Noncontributing property
2. Built c. 1840
3. Addition for façade 1950s
4. Highly visible from Amherst St
5. No visibility to back of house
6. Proposed renovations to façade facing are appropriate to the house

Vote: Unanimous

C. Buchanan of 7 Corduroy Rd
Representative from the Village Strategic Planning Committee

C. Buchanan explained that he was present to inform the HDC of a lighting project that the Village Strategic Planning Committee is working on. The blue colored floodlight on the Congregational Church doesn't seem right for the village. The committee is brainstorming what lighting might accentuate its historical features. They found a company called Ripman Lighting Consultants, formed the committee and are now working on some ideas for solutions. The consultants offered to do a free demonstration. The committee suggested incorporating the demonstration at the Christmas tree lighting. It would be a one night demonstration that will be set up that day and taken down the next so the community can see if they like the look of it.

187 The buildings that are planned to have the lighting demonstration are:
 188 Town hall
 189 Library
 190 Church
 191 Brick School
 192 Civil War Memorial
 193
 194 C. Buchanan handed a brochure to the HDC that the lighting company had provided.
 195
 196 J. Ramsay stated that the biggest part of the historic village that makes Amherst unique is that it stands
 197 alone without parts of it standing out. He expressed concern of what will be lit up for the public viewing,
 198 because it may put ideas in the resident's heads that may not adhere to HDC/ZBA/Ordinance codes.
 199
 200 L. McCoy and S. Clark asked who else is on the committee and this will take money- is there any plan for
 201 that. C. Buchanan listed the other members of the committee and claimed that there is not yet a
 202 financial plan. He would like the HDC to have some input with the project.
 203 D. Chabinsky stated the photos in the brochure show cityscapes and huge buildings- nothing really that
 204 would work in Amherst. Depending on when the meetings are, he would be willing to work with the
 205 committee. From what he has seen, nothing seems appropriate for the Amherst Village.
 206
 207 L. McCoy asked why lighting is necessary and stated that he prefers the darkness of night.
 208 C. Buchanan believes that some of the buildings: town hall, top of the school, front of the church would
 209 be nice to be seen at night.
 210 L. McCoy explained he is on the Heritage Commission and their goal is keeping the town simple so the
 211 people can relax. When you bring light, you bring modernism.
 212 D. Chabinsky stated that the church has had that flood light for many years, and it is garish. If they can
 213 agree to a more appropriate light to anchor the common, it would be better than what is there.
 214 J. Ramsay stated the village is unique in its simplicity. That is what defines it. J. Rosenblatt stated that
 215 having some light on the town hall would be nice since it is used every night and it's a big dark structure.
 216
 217 C. Buchanan confirmed he has the same thoughts and his goal is to specifically highlight certain special
 218 places. He also confirmed that the church has been notified and is interested to see the demonstration.
 219
 220 **Minutes- October 16, 2014**
 221 ***D. Chabinsky moved to accept the minutes of October 16th as submitted. S. Clark seconded.***
 222 ***Vote: Unanimous***
 223
 224 The commission discussed topics on their mind.
 225 The strategic planning movement is happening in the village. J. Ramsay couldn't attend the meeting last
 226 week. There should be someone representing the commission at the meetings. L. McCoy asked if the
 227 meetings are open to the public. S. Clark believes so.
 228
 229 L. McCoy every few years projects and groups spring up around the village. Why aren't they looking at
 230 improving the entire town? Why just the village? They used to spiff up the whole town with tree
 231 trimming etc. T. Grella stated the town is working with minimal monies for those purposes. Most of the
 232 tax dollar now goes toward education.
 233

234 D. Chabinsky brought the topic back and stated the HDC needs to have a representative at the strategic
235 meetings when J. Ramsay can't be there. S. Clark stated when those coffees happen in the evenings, the
236 HDC has to have representation there as well.

237
238 L. McCoy asked what the purpose of that whole project is and what is the end?
239 It was answered that money has been appropriated to study what could be done to improve the village.
240 The focus/ purpose is the utilization of the center of town- to its best resources. This includes traffic and
241 sidewalk issues. S. Clark believes it is a divider between the haves and the have-nots.

242
243 The board discussed the idea of the whole town being able to have input to the village. Some members
244 believe that those who live outside the village shouldn't be able to make decisions that affect the village.
245 J. Rosenblatt suggested that the village is part of Amherst and everyone who lives in Amherst should be
246 able to have an opinion about it. The divide comes from saying if you live outside of the historic district,
247 you can't have input to the projects.

248 J. Ramsay thanked J. Rosenblatt for her input as it is a good point.

249
250 The board discussed who could make the meeting once a month on Wednesday evenings if J. Ramsay
251 can't make it. No one seemed to be able to at first. D. Chabinsky said he may be able to do it if given a
252 few days' notice. J. Ramsay stated it will be a fairly short lived timeframe as the project is expected to be
253 finalized in April.

254
255 ***D. Chabinsky moved to adjourn at 9:12pm. J. Ramsay seconded. Vote: Unanimous***

256
257 Respectfully submitted,
258 Jessica Marchant

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