

Town of Amherst, New Hampshire
Historic District Commission
Minutes
February 19, 2015

The Amherst Village Historic District Commission met on **Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.**

In attendance were Jamie Ramsay, *Chair*; Doug Chabinsky; Sue Clark, *Secretary*; Sally Wilkins, *Planning Board Representative*, Jeanne Rosenblatt, *Alternate*; Bruce Fraser; Christopher Hall, *Alternate*; Tom Grella, *Selectmen's Representative*

Jamie called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Jamie announced the agenda and made a suggestion that the Commissioners discuss Cases PZ5799 & PZ5800 together since they are identical in their applications. Commission members had no opposition with combining the cases into one discussion.

Case #: PZ5799-0107415 - Historical Society of Amherst-Wigwam Museum, 17 Middle Street, PIN #: 017-092-000 & **Case # PZ5800-010715** – SAU 39-Chapel Museum, 1 School Street, PIN #: 017-082-000 – To allow a wrought iron handrail to be built at the building front entrance stairs.

Present: Susan Fischer on behalf of the Historical Society.

Jamie stated that the proposed handrail would be built identical to the handrail built at the Amherst Town Hall building and positioned directly in the center of the stairway. Sally stated that there would be double doors that open in the middle.

Jamie felt that the handrails would provide safety and easier access for the public as both applications involved public buildings. He questioned whether the handrails were being proposed to be drilled and anchored directly into the cement. Sally stated that it would most likely be drilled. Sue stated that it would look like the handrail out front of Town Hall.

Sally stated that she was not a Commission member when the application came before the Historic District for Town Hall when it was decided to install only one and asked why. Tom stated that putting one handrail in would cost less for the Town than installing two which most likely was the reason. Doug thought the one handrail would define the in/out passage ways into the buildings.

Hearing no other comments or concerns, Jamie requested findings for both applications from members.

FINDINGS:

1. Both are contributing buildings.

- 43 2. Both buildings are very visible to the public.
- 44 3. Handrails would provide safety for public considerations.
- 45 4. Found to be unobtrusive.
- 46 5. Precedent set from the Town Hall installation.

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48 MOTION: Doug motioned to approve both applications as submitted and to be drilled into the granite;
49 Sally 2nd. *VOTE: All in favor.*

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51 **Case #: PZ5850-012615 – Violation**

52 Jay & Meredith Kobzik, 5 Courthouse Road, PIN #: 017-095-000 – To allow replacement of windows
53 with double hung wood windows and to replace existing driveway with stone pavers and construct a
54 walkway and patio out of stone pavers.

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56 Present: Jay Kobzik, homeowner

57

58 Jamie opened discussion by stating that a notice of a potential violation was issued to Mr. & Mrs.
59 Kobzik from Colleen Mailloux, Community Development Director concerning the replacement of
60 windows within the Historic District without prior approval. Jamie asked Mr. Kobzik to explain why an
61 application was not submitted for the work to be done.

62

63 Mr. Kobzik stated he and his family moved into Amherst in August of 2014 and that he loves being part
64 of the historic section of the Town and is passionate about living here for the long term. He said that
65 when he moved into the home, however, he discovered many “cheap” components within the house.
66 He said that when he initially looked at the house, just opening a window nearly broke his wrist. He
67 told Commissioners that he was never introduced to the Historic District by his Real Estate Agent nor
68 informed what the guidelines were for making exterior changes to the property. He stated that his
69 goal was to maintain the integrity of his home, but at the same time, to follow the rules. Jamie agreed
70 that more communication is needed concerning the District.

71

72 Mr. Kobzik stated that his reason for replacing the existing windows were because of safety concerns
73 and that any egress through the windows was not possible in case of a fire. He said it was necessary to
74 bring in a window expert. He stated that he replaced all the windows with 100% wood double hung,
75 primed interior and exterior windows (Jeld Wen) and paid “top dollar” for those materials from Milford
76 Lumber.

77

78 Discussion followed regarding replacement of the roof and the faulty siding. Mr. Kobzik stated that
79 there was no insulation on the outside walls, and when he hired a contractor, the siding actually fell off
80 so it is currently being replaced with clapboard.

81

82 Jamie stated that the clapboard replacement would be considered to be a “replacement in kind” and
83 was acceptable. Chris recommended that Mr. Kobzik measure the area and put back what was there.
84 Mr. Kobzik stated that his intention was to keep everything original.

85

Jamie stated that had this come before the Historic District through the proper channels, the windows could have been addressed. He said that the windows being used have been approved by the Commission in the past. He thanked Mr. Kobzik for coming in and explained that the process was the only issue here. He stated that the Commission does not want to be a “policing” arm.

Sally stated that the problem Mr. Kobzik speaks to about not knowing the rules and regulations that govern the Amherst Historic District is something that needs to be addressed for those who move into the Village. Jamie agreed and said it “probably will not come from the realtor involved in the sale”.

Sally suggested that the Commission vote on the application in two separate votes. Jamie agreed and requested findings from members on the windows:

FINDINGS:

1. After-the-fact Historic District Application.
2. The windows are what the Historic District would have suggested.
3. Contributing Property.

MOTION:

Bruce motioned to approve the section of the application pertaining to the windows as installed, Sue 2nd. *VOTE: All in favor.*

Mr. Kobzik described the stone pavers he would be using for the driveway, walkway and patio. He said the pavers look like rock and weigh approximately 50lbs each – he said they will install like a puzzle. He stated that he would be using thicker ones for the driveway than the patio.

Discussion followed regarding the layout of the stone pavers. Jamie thought they would look more like cobblestone and shaped like a puzzle. He asked what the name of the product was. Mr. Kobzik stated that he would be using a product called “Belgard” which he felt was unrivaled in the industry for its natural look. Jamie stated that he would like to view the pavers and asked if the Commissioners could see one. Mr. Kobzik stated that he wanted to bring a sample to the meeting; however, they were too heavy (approximately 80lbs) to carry it. He stated that the cost to install them was approximately \$40K.

Sally recommended that the Chair view the pavers. Chris asked what color was selected. Mr. Kobzik stated “tan” which was a blended aggregate.

Doug recommended approving the application conditioned upon the Chair’s observation of them. Jamie stated that he would conduct a site visit to view them.

MOTION:

Sally motioned to approve the pavers subject to the acceptance of the pavers by the Chair after he looks at them, Doug 2nd. *VOTE: All in favor.*

130 **OTHER BUSINESS**

131
132 122 Amherst Street-PIN #: 005-055-000 - Informal discussion on building concept plans.

133
134 Present: Mr. & Mrs. Rick Closs, potential land buyers; Keith Leach, land owner;
135 Ron Guptill, 120 Amherst Street

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137 Jamie welcomed Mr. & Mrs. Closs to the meeting to present a conceptual design on their plans to build
138 a new home (Net-Zero) at 122 Amherst Street.

139
140 Mr. Closs stated that he decided to retire two years ago and since that time, he and his wife have been
141 looking for lots to build a new home and eventually found one in Amherst, New Hampshire. He stated
142 that the home would be an excellent example using current technology and said that his proposal
143 would meet Amherst Historic District code and designed to complement neighboring homes and the
144 community.

145
146 Mrs. Closs stated that she envisions that anybody could buy this home and would accommodate
147 anybody coming into the home – it could be a great home for a family with a handicapped child. She
148 said it opened her eyes that they wanted to pursue their goals to build one.

149
150 Mr. Closs stated that he has been in contact with an architect and a builder who have designed and
151 built Net-Zero homes – in fact the builder currently has one under construction and approximately 80%
152 completed in Hollis, NH. Doug asked what style of home was being built – colonial style or Cape. Tom
153 asked if Mr. Closs knew what the address was so he could drive by to view it.

154
155 Discussion followed concerning the roof and solar cells. Mr. Closs stated that he wanted the roof to be
156 flat so the cells would be flat and they will be positioned on the south side of the building. Jamie stated
157 that they must be a minimum of 100 feet back from a public way.

158
159 Mr. Closs stated that it was his goal to present a formal design to the Commissioners at their March
160 19th meeting and will have information on most of the materials to be used. He assured the
161 Commissioners that vinyl would not be used. Deb stated that his application must be received by the
162 Office of Community Development by Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 4pm to be put on the March
163 agenda. Sally stated that 10 days were needed to send out notices to abutters as well. Mr. Closs stated
164 he wished to move in this year, however, it may have to wait until April to complete the application.

165
166 Doug questioned whether there were any preliminary issues with their abutters. He stated that the
167 Commissioners need to make allowances for new technology as long as it conforms to the guidelines.
168 He said that this was a perfect example of how potential homeowners can fit in the Historic Village
169 utilizing modern amenities. He said he was excited about this proposal. Ron Guptill, 120 Amherst
170 Street, stated that he thought the design would result in a classic colonial consistent within the Village.
171 He stated that he would put his support of the proposal in writing to the Commissioners.

173 Jamie stated that the Commissioners would not be involved with the interior of the house, only the
174 exterior. Sue thanked Mr. & Mrs. Closs for coming in to present their plans.

175

176 MINUTES:

177 January 15, 2015 – Sally stated that the minutes needed to reflect that she abstained from the vote
178 taken for 92 Boston Post Road. Sally made a motion to approve the minutes with this amendment, Sue
179 2nd. *VOTE: All in favor.*

180

181 Boston Post Road

182 Doug stated that he would be drafting an email to Colleen Mailloux regarding non-compliance with
183 two properties on Boston Post Road.

184

185 Welcome to Historic Amherst Village letter & brochure

186 Jamie stated that he received a request from Colleen Mailloux to draft a “Welcome to Amherst Historic
187 District” letter to send to new property owners to the district and to solicit one or two HDC members
188 to review and revise the brochure. Jamie requested that this be placed on the March agenda and
189 requested that Colleen attend. Sue requested copies of the brochure to review prior to the meeting.
190 Deb will scan the brochure and send it to members via email.

191

192 Hearing no other issues before the Commission, Jamie motioned to adjourn at 8:10 pm, Sue 2nd. *VOTE:*
193 *All in favor.*

194

195 Respectfully Submitted,

196

197 Debra A. Butcher

198 Recording Secretary

199 Town of Amherst

200 Historic District Commission