

1                                   Town of Amherst, New Hampshire  
2                                   **Historic District Commission**  
3                                   **Minutes**  
4                                   **January 21, 2016**  
5

6   The Amherst Village Historic District Commission met on **January 21, 2016 at 7:00 pm** in the Barbara  
7   Landry Meeting Room, 2nd floor, Amherst Town Hall, 2 Main Street, Amherst, NH 03031.  
8

9   In attendance were Jamie Ramsay, *Chair*; Sue Clark, *Secretary*; Tom Grella, *Board of Selectmen*  
10   *Representative*; Doug Chabinsky; Chris Hall; Bruce Fraser  
11

12   Jamie called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.  
13

14   **NEW BUSINESS:**  
15

16   **CASE #: PZ7025-121515 – David & Susan Clark, 6 Mack Hill Road, PIN #: 019-014-000 – Request to**  
17   **construct a 2<sup>nd</sup> story addition to the existing ell for the purpose of creating added living space.**  
18

19   *For the record, Historic District Commissioner Member Susan Clark recused herself from deliberations*  
20   *on this Case.*  
21

22   **Present:** David & Susan Clark, homeowners; John Condon, Condon & Fox Building Corporation; Tony  
23   Hall  
24

25   Mr. Clark introduced Mr. Condon & Mr. Hall to Commission members and stated that they have been  
26   working on this project for three years. He stated that they have been looking at 2<sup>nd</sup> story ells for hip  
27   roof colonials/Georgians and have leaned heavily on these men because of their knowledge and  
28   experience with colonial architecture.  
29

30   Mr. Clark read the project description from the plans and stated that he would walk Commissioners  
31   through the plans and answer any questions. Commission members reviewed each page of the site  
32   plan which included the existing house site plan, the existing structure facing east and west and all  
33   wetlands, elevation views coming up and down Mack Hill Road, and the floor plan of the proposed  
34   addition and the north elevation of the proposed addition.  
35

36   He stated that the original house was built in 1773 with an ell added in 1791. He stated that the  
37   original ell was taken down in the mid 1940's and rebuilt from the ground up with a full cement cellar  
38   and the garage was added at that time. Jamie questioned whether the addition to the west was all  
39   razed in the 1940's.  
40

41   Mr. Clark stated that they purchased the home in 1999 and added on. He said the front structure is  
42   the original structure of the house – 1773. He said going to the right, the ell and the garage are not

original to the home – the ell was added in the mid 1940's by the Cabots. He said it has a full cellar and believes that the garage was put on at the same time but not definite.

Chris questioned whether the original part of the house is the Georgian style built in 1790? Mr. Clark stated that the original part of the house facing the south is a two-story four room house and sold in 1773. He said that at that time, there was a store, inn and tavern. Mr. Clark provided the following historical information on the home:

1. Nathan Kendell moved the business outside of the house and built the structure on the north side of the driveway.
2. The house was moved three houses up on the same side of the street – that was Kendell's original dry goods store. He added onto the house in 1791.
3. Originally thought it was two houses, Mr. Garvin, State Architectural Historian, came to the house and looked at the rooms and put together what he thought happened – it wasn't a 2<sup>nd</sup> house – it was an addition in 1791. The ell is 50-55 years old.

Chris questioned whether the proposal was to raise the 1940's ell structure to add a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor which would connect to the existing 1790's structure. Jamie asked when did Jackson take ownership of the house? Mr. Clark said they owned it for roughly 40 years. The Clarks bought it in 1999 and the previous owner was circa 1960. Mr. Clark said that the addition does not go over the full length of the ell – the original structure plus the addition on the ell looks more original than the existing one-story ell.

Mr. Clark directed Commissioners to Page 6 of the plans. He said the south side of the house has 6 over 9 windows which represents similar windows to the existing windows on the ell and will be matching those windows. Chris asked whether they were trying to mimic what is on the main house? Mr. Clark replied "yes".

Mr. Clark referenced Page 7 and stated it shows diagrams of the house with the addition from the east and you cannot see the addition at all looking straight on. He said from the west, you can see the addition and the pitch on the original structure vs. the pitch of the addition.

Mr. Hall stated that most of the thought process was to make less of an impact on the roof of the original house. The roof pitch was reduced to a four to have less of an impact on the main house but will mimic and compliment the pitch by having a similar pitch on the west elevation. He said the hip roof main house had a 9 pitch and a 7 pitch and they will join with a 4 pitch and then move over and have the same 7,12 pitch. Mr. Hall stated that had that been a gable end without a hip, it would have made the 4 pitch roof more obvious and this way they will have made a better blend to the old house.

Moving onto Page 8, Mr. Clark stated that to the right, coming up Mack Hill, there will be no visual sighting of the addition from that perspective. He referenced Page 2 again and said that if you look at the chimney on the existing ell, it seemed to be out of scale compared to the rest of the house and the other chimney vs. if you look at Page 1, after the addition is on, scale wise the tall chimney fits into the house in a more complimentary way.

87 Jamie stated that the addition completely surrounds the existing chimney. Mr. Condon said that it will  
88 not require raising the chimney in any way. Mr. Hall said that the chimney would have been built to  
89 the height it is to purposely catch the draft in the shadows of the main house.  
90

91 Jamie questioned whether there would be any change to the windows. Doug stated “no”. Jamie asked  
92 what was the distance to the main house and the setback to the addition? He said it appears there is a  
93 setback but it is flush to the main house and that with the corner board, visually you would think it is  
94 but it is the cornice.  
95

96 Mr. Hall stated that the lesser roof pitch will distinguish the hip of the original house – it will not  
97 following evenly and will go at a lesser pitch out to there. He said that the hip and distinction or the  
98 original house will be maintained.  
99

100 Discussion followed regarding the intersection of the trim and that the trim is of a lesser scale and will  
101 complement the main house but will break up the intersection as well.  
102

103 Jamie questioned whether the fascia of the main house will remain higher than the fascia of the  
104 addition. Jamie asked whether the dripline will hang past the corner board of the existing house. Mr.  
105 Condon said it will project further than the existing house but not as much as the main house.  
106

107 Mr. Hall stated that as the house stands now, it is painted blue gray with white trim which makes the  
108 corner board distinct and as it stands, it helps to make it stand out.  
109

110 Mr. Clark said that another reason it stands out is because the garage is not flush with the ell – he said  
111 it projects out three feet and even though the ell is flush with the main house, the garage extends 6.5’  
112 from the main house.  
113

114 Chris questioned whether there would be an demolition to the existing ell or main house? Mr. Condon  
115 said that the roofing will come down and they may have to replace the joists.  
116

117 Mr. Clark stated that there is an existing door accessing attic space over the ell and they will be very  
118 close to the existing door in that bedroom. They plan on scabbing on top of the current roof and not  
119 take any of the roof off. He said that the plumber thinks it might be possible to combine some of the  
120 vents.  
121

122 Chris questioned what the square footage was. Mr. Condon stated “325 sf”. Chris asked about the  
123 overall house – 4,465 sf.  
124

125 Jamie questioned where the plumbing vents were. Mr. Condon stated that there are three; two  
126 coming out the back side of the oldest portion of the house with one on the backside of the ell now –  
127 all fairly close but right there is all coming together.  
128

129 Jamie questioned whether the structure of the original roof, the main block of the house, will not be  
130 compromised in any way, i.e. demolished and whether the entire assembly stays in place. They said he  
131 was correct.

132

133 Jamie asked whether the plane of the new roof of the addition rely on the strength of the original roof  
134 in any way. Mr. Condon stated “yes” but is yet to be designed and that there have been conversations  
135 with an engineer. He said if it goes forward, it will be engineered to support that roof in a way that it  
136 doesn’t have to become invasive to the existing building.

137

138 Tom questioned whether the small gap in the cornice is venting. Mr. Condon stated “yes”.

139

140 Jamie asked about the historic sill and how did that scale vis a vis the original window in the house.  
141 Mr. Condon stated that the main part of the house most of what is there is 1.5-2”. He said they will  
142 make their own 1.5” sill. Jamie asked if it will match the original – 1.5” is in scale with other windows  
143 in the house. He said some of the window sills you see in the Village are pushing 3”.

144

145 Chris had two procedural questions - anything known or documented in the Register. Jamie looked  
146 into the inventory.

147

148 Sue pointed out that in the inventory, when James Garvin came, the date of the house in the Register  
149 filing is incorrect – it says 1750 and 1775 which is not accurate. Jamie read from the inventory.

150

151 Chris thought it sounded like descriptive features but nothing called out that would be impacted by  
152 this addition. Chris asked if there were any precedent on 2nd story ells? Jamie stated that he preferred  
153 not to look at the most recent one. He said the Bradbury house ell is a 2<sup>nd</sup> story addition added around  
154 1995. Doug referenced his own house in 1997. Chris said he wants to make sure there is no  
155 documentation against it. He wants to mitigate fact vs. opinion. He said this looks more historic rather  
156 than the single story ell. He said for him it is two things: massing and the massing is well mitigated by  
157 the designs and to put numbers to it, a 4,465 sf with a 3xx addition is a 7%. He said for him it is a  
158 tasteful addition.

159

160 Jamie stated that a lot of what the Commissioners talk about here rests on opinion – what are we  
161 looking at. He said what works for one house may not work for another. Doug stated that what it  
162 comes down to is being able to adapt the property as times change and living conditions change and  
163 doing it so that the addition does not overwhelm the original structure.

164

165 Jamie called for Findings:

- 166 1. Contributing property – House #169 on the Registry of Historic Places.
- 167 2. It is most visible from Mack Hill Road – nothing offensive to existing structure.
- 168 3. Massing is appropriate.
- 169 4. Windows are in scale.
- 170 5. 7% increase in square footage.

171

172 Jamie questioned whether there were any other comments from Commissioners and the audience.  
173 Hearing none, he called for a motion.  
174

175 MOTION:

176 Doug motioned to accept the application and plans as documented and presented, Chris 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: All  
177 in favor.  
178

179 Jamie said it is very unusual when a change is proposed to such a significant house that it marches  
180 though in one meeting. He said the addition is sympathetic to the house and a good fit. He said that is  
181 probably the only reason that the change would go through so quickly through this Commission.  
182

183 Jamie explained the 20-day appeal period to the applicants.  
184

185 *At this point, Sue resumed her place as a member of the Historic District Commission.*  
186

187 MINUTES:

188 Doug motioned to approve the minutes of December 17, 2015 as written, Tom 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: All in favor.  
189

190 OTHER BUSINESS  
191

192 Jamie reported that the Commission has lost three members – Larry, Jeanne and Tracy and felt that  
193 there needed to be more discussion on who we are, what we are supposed to do, restoration vs.  
194 preservation, etc.  
195

196 The Commission agreed that a subcommittee will address regulatory revisions, the role of the HDC,  
197 etc. Chris, Sue and Doug volunteered for the committee. Colleen will ask for a member of the Heritage  
198 Commission and a member of the Planning Board to participate as well, in addition to one or two  
199 residents. This will be a working group that will propose changes to the regulations and potentially the  
200 zoning ordinance. It will be a 6-12 month process.  
201

202 ADJOURNMENT:

203 Doug motioned to adjourn at 9:15 pm, Sue 2<sup>nd</sup>. VOTE: All in favor.  
204

205 Respectfully Submitted,  
206 Colleen Mailloux  
207  
208