

1                                    Town of Amherst, New Hampshire  
2                                    **Historic District Commission**  
3                                    **Minutes**  
4                                    **April 20, 2017**  
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6    The Amherst Village Historic District Commission met on **April 20, 2017 at 7:00 pm** in the Barbara  
7    Landry Meeting Room, 2nd floor, Amherst Town Hall, 2 Main Street, Amherst, NH 03031.  
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9    *Historic District Commission members in attendance were Jamie Ramsay, Chairman; Chris Hall, Vice*  
10   *Chairman; Susan Clark; Doug Chabinsky; Chris Buchanan, Alternate & Tom Grella, BOS Ex-Officio.*  
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12   *Staff in attendance included Community Development Director Gordon Leedy & Planner Simon Corson.*  
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14   **CALLED TO ORDER**  
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16   Chairman Jamie Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.  
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18   **RECREATION DEPARTMENT – UPPER WILKINS FIELD– JONES ROAD FENCE REPLACEMENT**  
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20   Jamie proposed to allow Craig Fraley to present first on the agenda concerning the Upper Wilkins  
21   Field– Jones Road fence replacement.  
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23   Mr. Fraley described the failing condition of the existing chain link fence and distributed a conceptual  
24   drawing showing locations of new fencing and barrier rocks. He stated that it was their plan to install a  
25   stockade fence similar to the one that was constructed at Joshua’s Park. He stated that fence materials  
26   would consist of unfinished natural oak, split rail fencing screwed into posts. He stated that he would  
27   be taking large stones from Joshua’s Park and using them as sitting blocks so cars would not be  
28   permitted to drive through. Craig said that they would be creating a picnic area surrounded by  
29   shrubbery on the street side. The start time to begin would be within the next month.  
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31   Sue stated that she liked the idea of shrubbery and the choices made. Chris H. questioned whether  
32   they would be required to go through the process of an application through the Historic District  
33   Commission. Gordon stated “no” as they are exempt from the process.  
34

35   Jamie liked the “park-look” idea and thought it would be a big plus for that location. Sue & Chris B.  
36   agreed. No other comments were expressed. The Commissioners thanked Craig for coming in.  
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38   *Community Development Director Gordon Leedy left the meeting.*  
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43 NEW BUSINESS

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45 **CASE #: PZ8467-032117 – Mark & Jessica LaFlamme, 120 Amherst Street, PIN #: 005-054-000 –**  
46 Request for approval to replace (10) existing windows with Marvin Clad Windows.

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48 Present: Mark & Jessica LaFlamme, Property Owners.

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50 Jamie reminded Commissioners that the applicant met with them last month on a conceptual plan  
51 only. No formal decision or actions were taken by the Commissioners.

52  
53 Mr. LaFlamme thanked the Commissioners for their input last month. He stated that after he  
54 purchased and moved into his home, he learned that his property is located within the Historic District  
55 area. He said he wasn't aware of that fact until after a "Welcome to the Historic District" letter was  
56 received from Town of Amherst Community Development Director Gordon Leedy.

57  
58 Mr. LaFlamme proposed the following Marvin window materials and specifications:

- 59 1. Clad wood framed windows to maintain current and outside dimensions.  
60 2. Wood window sizing to 4 9/16" jam.  
61 3. Clad window is wood framed, wood sash with clad and ¾" jam.  
62 4. Wood framed windows will have aluminum fascia covered by screens.

63  
64 He stated that his property is considered to be in the "Extended Historic District" surrounded by homes  
65 that he has observed to have non-conforming siding. The Extended Historic District is property that is  
66 outside the original National Register designation. He stated that the only way anyone would know  
67 the windows weren't wood would be to actually touch it. He feels these windows provide energy  
68 efficiency and while they may lose some height and depth, they will be long lasting. He stated that he  
69 plans on living in the home for many years.

70  
71 Discussion followed concerning specific windows proposed to be replaced. Chris H. stated that this  
72 home is within the Historic District but is not considered to be a "contributing property". He stated  
73 that during his recent research of homes on the National Registry, it would be recommended that the  
74 Commissioners not use the term "extended" Historic District as part of our vocabulary in describing  
75 properties.

76  
77 The applicant was asked whether the current windows were in disrepair. Mr. LaFlamme answered  
78 "no" but felt they needed to be replaced as they are located on the front of the home.

79  
80 Doug asserted that the Commissioners would be setting a precedent if they approve non-wood  
81 windows as they have been rejected many times in the past. He stated that the Commissioners have  
82 guidelines and windows have been a "flash" point with residents in the Historic District and if  
83 approved, will see many more applications requesting clad windows. He cautioned that the  
84 Commissioners need to be very specific in their decisions and to stand behind them. He felt that the  
85 guidelines may need to be revamped. Jamie felt that the Commissioners needed to clearly define  
86 these types of homes so they would not be setting a precedent.

Chris H. offered a compromise to consider clad windows in the rear and require wood windows in the front of the house. He thought the Commissioners needed to consider materials that provided longer lasting results for homeowners. Tom strongly voiced his disapproval and stated that he would not vote nor support clad windows front or rear. Discussion continued regarding the age of the property and it was thought to be no earlier than 1850. It was stated that the home is surrounded by a wide range of homes built in various years and owners (past and present) were very careful about preserving the character of the house.

Discussion followed regarding standards and guidelines for rehabilitation of historic buildings when there is a need for repair and replacement of deteriorated features of a home. Planner Simon Corson presented a document entitled "How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property" that include the seven areas of integrity of a property that need to be considered when the property is listed on the National Register. This document comes from the Department of the Interior.

Doug reviewed the document and briefly read the narrative of each aspect as it assesses integrity of a property:

1. Location
2. Design
3. Setting
4. Materials
5. Workmanship
6. Feeling
7. Association

Doug again expressed concern about setting a precedent; however, he acknowledged the need to move forward under the area of these guidelines after reading this document.

Hearing no other comments or concerns, Jamie called for Findings to this Case:

**FINDINGS:**

1. House is not on the National Registry but is in the Historic District.
2. House is a Non-Contributing Property.
3. House is significantly set back from the public way.
4. Decision was referenced based on the document entitled How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property" and a change in windows would be appropriate.

**MOTION:**

Doug motioned to accept the application under Case # PZ8467-032117 to allow the replacement of 10 deteriorating windows with aluminum clad to maintain the character and the feeling of the house, Chris H. 2<sup>nd</sup>. *VOTE: Voting to approve the application were Jamie, Sue, Chris H. & Doug. Voting in opposition of the motion was Tom. Chris B. abstained. The motion carried.*

Tom stated that "when all these people come back to us who were denied, the Town of Amherst's legal budget will skyrocket".

Jamie explained to the applicant how the 20-day appeal process worked if the Historic District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other party of interest.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

##### HDC – Work Group Committee Meeting Summaries – Simon Corson

Simon handed out a summary of the three meetings he had with Chris Hall & Chris Buchanan. He stated that the first meeting on March 28, 2017 was formed to discuss regulations and it was agreed upon that decisions needed to be made based on clear rules rather than opinions. He stated that the second meeting, held on April 4, 2017, was joined by Heritage Commission Chairman Will Ludt and discussion was held on how the two commissions could effectively work together. The third meeting, held on April 11, 2017, joined by Deb, talked about developing an information packet for new Commission members, look at fees being charged for applications, and how the administrative process took place.

Doug thought the process was great and is excited to hear what the working group presents. He stated that is imperative to address our regulations as they currently do not address applications concerning satellite dishes, generators, etc. and Commissioners have been struggling with these types of applications.

Simon stated that he will be addressing the Website, Welcome letter to new owners, and other administrative matters at the May meeting.

##### 27 MIDDLE STREET – CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION

Present: Adrian Menig, Property Owner

Jamie introduced members of the Commissioners and stated that the homeowner was present tonight for a conceptual discussion only for a new fence and other areas of improvements to his property.

Mr. Menig stated that he purchased the property six months ago and discovered that there were various structural repairs that needed to be addressed as well as adding new amenities for improving the home. He said he plans on submitting a formal application for the next Historic District meeting.

Mr. Menig provided photos and the site layout of the proposed fence. He stated that the fence will visually define the property and hopefully prevent joggers from running through his property. Chris H. stated that the regulations that guide fences are clearly documented. Mr. Menig stated that the fence would consist of diamond shaped posts similar to a split rail type. Doug stated that he has this type of fence at his own home and they are allowed in the regulations. Doug asked if cedar would be used. Mr. Menig stated "yes".

Mr. Menig questioned whether he could combine other proposed work to be done on one application. Deb stated "yes". He stated that he would like to install (2) lamp posts on each side of the driveway (4 in total) and to construct a stone fireplace (BBQ) out of a natural stone in the sitting area of his yard.

Jamie reminded the Commissioners that the construction of a grill would be considered a structure. He asked to keep this small. Mr. Menig stated that he would be enclosing that area with shrubbery for privacy purposes. Chris H. read the regulations as they pertain to landscaping requirements.

Overall, the Commissioners were pleased that Mr. Menig presented his concept plans and will await his formal application in May. Deb reminded Mr. Menig that the application deadline for May is Thursday, April 27, 2017 by 4:00 pm.

#### MINUTES

Sue motioned to approve the minutes of March 16, 2017 as written, Doug 2<sup>nd</sup>. *VOTE: Voting to approve the minutes were Jamie, Sue, Doug, Chris H. & Chris B. Tom abstained. The motion carried.*

#### HISTORIC DISTRICT – REORGANIZATION

Sue questioned whether the Commission could change the membership of Chris Buchanan from an Alternate to a full member. Tom stated that appointments are made by the Board of Selectmen.

Secretary: Jamie motioned to have Sue Clark as Secretary until spring 2018, Chris H. 2<sup>nd</sup>. *VOTE: All in favor.*

Vice Chairman: Sue motioned to have Chris Hall as Vice Chairman until spring 2018, Tom 2<sup>nd</sup>. *VOTE: All in favor.*

Chairman: Doug motioned to have Jamie Ramsay as Chairman until spring 2018, Tom 2<sup>nd</sup>. *VOTE: All in favor.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

Doug motioned to adjourn at 9:35pm, Chris B. 2<sup>nd</sup>. *VOTE: All in favor.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debra A. Butcher