



**Town of Amherst, NH
Historic District Commission
FINAL MINUTES**

Barbara Landry Conference Room

Thursday, 17 January 2019, 7:00 PM

Historic District Commission members in attendance were: Jamie Ramsay, Chairman; Chris Hall, Vice-Chairman; Doug Chabinsky; Chris Buchanan; Sally Wilkins, Planning Board Ex-Officio; Tom Grella, BOS Ex-Officio; and Bill Rapf. Staff in attendance included: Simon Corson, Planner; Kristan Patenaude.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Jamie Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

II. Adrian & Rahel Menig – 27 Middle Street, PIN #: 017-105-000 – Conceptual discussion regarding the construction of a two-car garage – 24’x30’ in size and 1.5 stories.

Present: Adrian Menig

Mr. Menig stated that the proposed two-car garage is modeled after his house, with similar siding and finish. The driveway on the property goes all the way through, and he would like for the detached garage to sit off of it. The proposal is for a 24’x32’ garage, which will be 1.5 stories tall. He is trying to decide where the propane tank to heat the garage will sit, and there will possibly be an AC unit at a future date as well. The plumbing and electrical will be run over from the main house, but he’s hoping to keep the propane separate.

In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Menig stated that he’s had many conversation with Scott Tenney, Building Official, regarding having a bedroom and bathroom in the upper part of the garage. He is aware that he will need to have a variance for this, and will need to have a new drawing done for the septic system.

In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Menig explained that the property setbacks are another reason for the variance. One corner of the proposed garage will get within the setback by about 20 feet.

31 Mr. Buchanan referred to Article 7, New Construction, in regards to looking at other
32 examples around the Village for ideas. He also referred to Article 8.1, D, in regards to
33 minimizing and concealing the visual impact of any utilities.
34

35 Mr. Chabinsky stated that the Commission will look at the massing of the proposed
36 construction relative to the other buildings on the property. This proposed garage is almost
37 as big as the main house.

38 Mr. Wilkins stated that barns were typically larger than their respective houses.

39 Mr. Hall explained that this proposed garage doesn't look like a barn though.

40 Mr. Menig stated that he already has a barn on his property and thought it might look
41 strange to have two barn-type structures.
42

43 In response to a question from Mr. Hall, Mr. Menig stated that he cannot rehab his barn for
44 this proposed garage, as he would lose a lot of living space.
45

46 In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Menig stated that he believes the height of
47 the existing barn from the ridge to the ground is about 22 feet. Mr. Ramsay explained that
48 the standard height for most carriage houses around the Village is a maximum of 14 feet.
49

50 Ms. Wilkins stated that the proposed garage's expansive wall is an issue visually. The 3-
51 over-3 windows shown there are not square.
52

53 Mr. Ramsay stated that the proposed garage must look like it grew from there; it must fit.
54

55 The Commission discussed what type of siding would be appropriate for a barn-looking
56 type garage.
57

58 In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Menig stated that there are 2 man/pass
59 doors for the proposed garage, one on the front left and one on the back right that will lead
60 directly to the stairs inside.
61

62 The Commission explained that they have no specifics on what types of weather vanes are
63 acceptable to place on top of the garage.
64

65 Mr. Corson suggested that the Commission review the character-defining features of the
66 property in order to determine how best to accent the existing structure.

67 The features are: House, Federal. 2 story, graduated clapboard, pitched roof with narrow
68 center chimney, narrow 1 bay gable end, and 3 bay (irregularly spaced openings) front
69 facade. Center entrance: surrounds, pilasters supporting modified narrow entablature,
70 altered. Screen porch and barn. 1820.
71

72 Mr. Ramsay suggested that Mr. Menig Photoshop or sketch his existing property next to
73 the proposed garage in order to see how they relate to one another visually.
74

75 Mr. Menig stated that, when he comes before the Commission with a formal application,
76 he's also going to include a request to put a metal roof on the existing barn. Mr. Buchanan

77 referred to Article 6, Section G, stating that the character of the original roof shall be
78 restored or preserved. Mr. Hall explained that the barn is not part of the original property
79 structure.
80

81 **III. Formalize letter to District Residents**

82 The Commission reviewed Mr. Buchanan's draft letter to Historic District residents. The
83 agreed on some changes, and will review the letter again at the next meeting.
84

85 **IV. Minutes: December 20, 2018**

86
87 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Chabinsky and SECONDED by Mr. Hall to accept the*
88 *meeting minutes from December 20, 2018 as submitted.*
89 *Voting: 5-0-1; motion carried. (SW abstained)*
90

91 **V. Discussion – Lantern-style Lamps**

92 Mr. Buchanan explained that he is revisiting this project that he first brought to the
93 Commission 2 years ago. Properties in the Historic District have lighting types that need to
94 conform and be appropriate ambiance-wise; whereas public and government areas in town
95 have lighting that is fairly anachronistic and detracts from the area as a whole.
96

97 There doesn't appear to be any written history regarding the style of outdoor lanterns
98 specifically found in Amherst. Mr. Buchanan is hoping to explore alternates to the
99 industrial, telephone pole-style street lamps there currently are in and around the Village.
100

101 The group researching this idea decided to narrow down the style of lamps that might best
102 fit the Village and agreed upon a time frame of 1759-early 1800's. They examined three
103 types of lanterns: post, culvert, and onion, which all fit in New England during that time
104 period. The most common was probably the post lantern; it was also the earliest used and
105 the simplest of the three. Mr. Buchanan took photos of some 80 lamps throughout the
106 Village, and the post lantern was the most common.
107

108 Ms. Wilkins stated that Amherst didn't have street lighting at that time, and asked if Mr.
109 Buchanan had contacted Eversource regarding what it would take to swap out the Village
110 lights.
111

112 Mr. Buchanan stated that a similar project was done in Rindge. At the time, Bruce Berry
113 went and took pictures of the updated lighting, which included colonial post lanterns on
114 iron posts.
115

116 Mr. Buchanan stated that there are approximately 50 street lamps currently in the Village.
117 Ms. Wilkins questioned if more lamps would be needed to achieve the same amount of
118 lighting, if the proposed lamps are dimmer than the current ones.
119

120 Mr. Rapf suggested that, if money is to be spent, they should first work on burying the lines
121 in the Village.

122 Mr. Grella explained that Eversource recently went about removing approximately 12
123 lights down the 101A – Route 122 corridor.

124
125 Mr. Rapf expressed concern because Amherst never had this type of lighting in the past. He
126 believes that this type of lighting surrounding the town Green could be considered
127 “cutesy.”

128
129 Mr. Ramsay stated that the lighting on Town Hall was first proposed with a mock-up and
130 now has become part of the fabric of the Village.

131
132 Mr. Buchanan stated that the Historic Society has a postcard from the 1800’s taken at the
133 intersection of Middle St and Main St which shows a post lantern there. He would like to
134 put 1 or 2 of these lanterns up in the Village as a type of mock-up.

135
136 Ms. Wilkins stated that a wooden post would not be a good idea, as it will need to be
137 replaced every 10-ish years.

138 Mr. Chabinsky recommended choosing the least expensive type for the mock-up just to see
139 what the town’s people think.

140
141 The Commission gave a consensus on the post lantern style.

142
143
144 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Chabinsky and SECONDED by Mr. Rapf to adjourn the*
145 *meeting at 9:00 p.m.*

146 *Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

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148
149
150
151
152 *Respectfully submitted,*
153 *Kristan Patenaude*