

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Historic District Commission

July 16, 2020

**APPROVED**

1 In attendance: Chris Hall – Vice Chair, Doug Chabinsky, Tom Grella – Ex-Officio, and Chris  
2 Buchanan.  
3 Staff present: Nic Strong – Community Development Director, Natasha Kypfer – Town Planner,  
4 and Kristan Patenaude – Minute Taker.

5  
6 *Chris Hall sat as Chair for Jamie Ramsay, in his absence.*

7  
8 Chris Hall called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

9 Natasha Kypfer read the following statement: I find that due to the State of Emergency  
10 declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the  
11 Governor’s Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, as extended by  
12 Executive Orders 2020-05, 2020-08, 2020-09, and 2020-10, this public body is authorized to  
13 meet electronically.

14 Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this  
15 meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor’s Emergency Order.

16 However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:  
17 Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by  
18 video or other electronic means:

19 We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting.

20  
21 All members of the Commission have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during  
22 this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen  
23 and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #312-626-  
24 6799 and password 871 6109 9172, or by clicking on the following website address:  
25 <https://zoom.us/j/87161099172> that was included in the public notice of this meeting.

26  
27 Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

28 We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the  
29 meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions  
30 have also been provided on the website of the Planning Board at: [www.amherstnh.gov](http://www.amherstnh.gov).

31  
32 Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are  
33 problems with access: If anybody has a problem, please call 603-341-5290.

34  
35 Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

36 In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and  
37 rescheduled.

38  
39 Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

40  
41 Let’s start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their  
42 presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting,  
43 which is required under the Right-to- Know law.  
44

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45 **Roll call attendance: Tom Grella, Doug Chabinsky, Chris Buchanan, and Chris**  
46 **Hall; all alone and present.**

47  
48 OLD BUSINESS:

- 49  
50 **1. CASE #: PZ12459-032720 – Tara Syverson – 12 Main Street, PIN #: 017-006-000**  
51 **– Request for approval to demolish existing 2-car garage and replace with a 3-**  
52 **car garage with living space above and a connecting structure to the main house.**  
53 ***Tabled from June 18, 2020.***  
54

55 Chris Hall read the case.

56  
57 Chris Hall noted that there were no applicants or attendees present for this case at this time. Chris  
58 Hall explained that he and Jamie Ramsay completed a site walk of the property and received 35  
59 pages of information from the Historical Society about the history of the property. All of this  
60 information leads him to believe that the foundation for the area being requested to be  
61 demolished was around in at least the late 1800's. He and Jamie Ramsay showed the applicants  
62 pictures that seem to prove that the structure was on the property in 1891. They also shared with  
63 the applicants the reasons and regulations that the Commission usually sites for not demolishing  
64 a historic structure.  
65

66 Chris Hall explained that he spoke with the applicants about seeking an architect for the project  
67 who will work within the regulations for a potential new addition. Some of the items that he  
68 noted that should be kept in mind include: most three car garages in the Village are single story  
69 structures, and that the massing of the proposed structure should complement the existing  
70 structure. It was suggested that the applicant may wish to table the applicant until other ideas can  
71 be discussed for the project.  
72

73 Being that no one was available to speak to this application at this time, the Commission moved  
74 to the next item, to readdress this later in the meeting.  
75

76 *Bill Rapf entered.*  
77

78 NEW BUSINESS:

- 79  
80 **2. CASE #: PZ12723-060820 – Paul Klapatch & Lydia Bennett, 90 Boston Post**  
81 **Road, PIN #: 017-059-000 – Request for approval to construct an 11'x13'**  
82 **screened porch addition attached to the back of the existing garage.**  
83

84 Present: Paul Klapatch & Lydia Bennett

85  
86 *Doug Chabinsky recused himself, as an abutter.*  
87

88 Chris Hall read and opened the case.

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89 Lydia Bennett explained that the proposal is to construct an 11'x13' screened porch off the left  
90 side of the back of the garage. This will not be visible from the street. The porch will be screened  
91 on two sides, and walled on the other two sides. The addition will be largely obscured by hedges  
92 and a mature elm tree. She explained that the proposed siding on the addition will match the  
93 existing house, white cedar clapboards. The existing house and garage will block the view of the  
94 proposed addition from outbound traffic. The neighbor across the street will be the only one with  
95 sight of it.

96

97 Lydia Bennett explained that the proposed structure will have three, wooden barn-style sashes,  
98 and a gabled roof. Paul Klapatch added that there will be one door to access this structure from  
99 the outside, but no access to it from the garage. He noted that the scale and dimensions of the  
100 project have recently been added to the plan, per comments from the Staff Report.

101

102 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Lydia Bennett stated that she believes the garage  
103 portion of the house was built in the 1970's. Chris Hall agreed with this assessment and noted  
104 that the proposed structure would not be added to any part of the historic structure on the  
105 property. He also noted that the proposed screened porch is smaller than the garage; thus  
106 allowing for proper proportioning.

107

108 In response to a question from Chris Buchanan, Lydia Bennett stated that the proposed materials  
109 will mirror the garage materials, cedar clapboards painted white. The proposed windows are  
110 about half the size of the existing windows and will be situated slightly higher, under the eaves  
111 of the proposed structure. These windows will be 1 over 5, with low profiles, and pine trim.  
112 There will be a wood framed screen door that will swing inwards.

113

114 Chris Buchanan noted that there are several examples of screened porches around the Village.  
115 The elevation and scaling of the project has been made clear and seems appropriate. While there  
116 are no regulations regarding the height of the proposed structure, the Commission generally  
117 looks to other examples to stay consistent. This proposed structure meet the height of the existing  
118 mudroom, which addresses any scaling questions. He also noted that the proposed materials are  
119 all similar to those existing, and that the proposed windows keep with the same character of the  
120 existing windows.

121

122 In response to a question from Bill Rapf, Lydia Bennett stated that the corner posts and trim will  
123 match the existing structure as closely as possible.

124

125 In response to a question from Tom Grella, Lydia Bennett stated that the shingles will be  
126 architectural asphalt singles, to match the existing roof.

127

128 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Doug Chabinsky stated that the visibility of the  
129 proposed structure is very limited and doesn't dominate the property. He has no issue with the  
130 proposal.

131

132 Nic Strong noted that there was nothing submitted for or against the project by abutters.

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133 **Chris Buchanan moved to accept the application, as submitted. Tom Grella**  
134 **seconded.**

135  
136 **FINDINGS:**

- 137 **1. House is on the National Registry, #56**  
138 **2. House is a contributing property, known as the Osgood the Blacksmith's Shop**  
139 **3. Proposed construction has a partially limited public view**  
140 **4. Proposed construction in no way touches the historic part of the house; instead it**  
141 **touches the garage, which was probably constructed in the 1970's**  
142 **5. Proposed siding material is consistent with the existing cedar siding**  
143 **6. Proposed scaling is consistent with the existing property**

144  
145 **Roll call: Chris Hall – aye; Chris Buchanan – aye; Tom Grella – aye; and Bill Rapf**  
146 **– aye. Motion carried unanimously.**

147  
148 Chris Hall explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the Historic  
149 District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.

- 150  
151 **3. CASE #: PZ12724-060820 – David & April Savino, 24 Courthouse Road, PIN #:**  
152 **016-017-000 – Request for approval to construct an 18'x36' inground swimming**  
153 **pool with bluestone and western red cedar pool-code fencing.**

154  
155 Present: David & April Savino

156  
157 Chris Hall read and opened the case.

158  
159 David Savino explained that the proposal is to install an 18'x36' pool in the backyard with  
160 bluestone coping and to replace the existing fencing on the property. He explained that the  
161 current fencing is hemlock fencing that will be replaced with pool-code cedar fencing.

162  
163 In response to a question from Chris Hall, David Savino stated that the proposed project will not  
164 be visible from Courthouse Road, with the existing trees and landscaping to be added. This  
165 project will also not be seen from Amherst Street, due to the 6' high solid cedar fence to be  
166 installed.

167  
168 In response to a question from Chris Hall, David Savino stated that the pool equipment will be  
169 tucked away along the fence line and, thus, not visible. The closest neighbor proximity is about  
170 200-300 yards away from the proposed project area.

171  
172 Chris Hall noted that the pool equipment will not be heard from that distance.

173  
174 April Savino explained that the proposed fencing was selected based on looking at similar fences  
175 in the Village. David Savino stated that they are using Fence Solutions and Northern Lights  
176 Landscaping for the project. He showed the Commission a picture of the proposed 6' cedar

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177 fencing, with cap posts. There will be a section of rail fencing that abuts the cedar fencing. April  
178 Savino explained that the proposed fencing will be very similar to the existing fence, with the  
179 addition of some wire fencing in the rail fence areas.

180

181 In response to a question from Chris Hall, David Savino stated that the proposed black vinyl will  
182 be pool compliant. David Savino also stated that there will eventually be a blue stone patio added  
183 to the backyard as well.

184

185 Chris Buchanan explained that, per the regulations, he believes that a “structure” in this case  
186 does not apply to an inground pool. The proposed fence is within the regulations. He noted that a  
187 6’ tall privacy fence is the maximum size allowed and is generally discouraged. The utility of the  
188 proposed fence could be to hide anachronistic items on the property – in this case, the pool.  
189 Thus, a 6’ tall privacy fence could be appropriate in this case as a mask to the pool.

190

191 Chris Hall noted that the fencing, due to the proposed pool, also must be code compliant, which  
192 could add to the reasons for its approval at this height.

193

194 In response to a question from Chris Hall, David Savino explained that the existing fence is a 4’  
195 tall hemlock fence that starts approximately 6’ from the house and abuts the property line. The  
196 hemlock fence will be essentially replaced in kind, but will now run snugly against the house  
197 with a pool code gate. There will be another area of fencing on the property, from the corner of  
198 the barn to the back of the property. This area will be about 20-22’ from the pool.

199

200 In response to a question from Chris Buchanan, David Savino stated that the proposed fencing  
201 will be natural and weathered.

202

203 There was no public comment on this case.

204

205

206 **Bill Rapf moved to accept the application, as submitted. Doug**

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**Chabinsky seconded.**

**FINDINGS:**

1. **House is on the National Registry, #139**
2. **House is a contributing property, known as the Gordon-Atherton House**
3. **Proposed pool is not part of the visible public view. Proposed fence has limited public view from Amherst Street, and no public view from Courthouse Road.**
4. **Proposal seeks to use the maximum allowed size of a privacy fence, per the regulations, but is appropriate in this case to hide the anachronistic aspect of the property [proposed pool].**

**Roll call: Chris Hall – aye; Chris Buchanan – aye; Doug Chabinsky – aye; Bill Rapf – aye. Motion carried unanimously. [Note: Tom Grella was present but unable to vote on this and future motions, due to computer issues.]**

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221 Chris Hall explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the Historic  
222 District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.

223

224 *The Commission retook CASE #: PZ12459-032720 at this time.* Being that there was still no one  
225 to speak to this application, the Commission decided to table it at this time.

226

227 **Chris Buchanan moved to untable and retable CASE #: PZ12459-032720 to August**  
228 **20, 2020. Doug Chabinsky seconded.**

229 **Roll call: Chris Hall – aye; Doug Chabinsky – aye; Bill Rapf – aye; Chris Buchanan**  
230 **– aye. Motion carried unanimously.**

231

232 OTHER BUSINESS:

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234 **4. Minutes: June 18, 2020**

235

236 **Doug Chabinsky moved to approve the minutes from June 18, 2020, with the**  
237 **addition of Bill Rapf as an attendee. Chris Buchanan seconded.**

238 **Roll call: Chris Hall – aye; Bill Rapf – aye; Chris Buchanan – aye; Doug Chabinsky**  
239 **– aye. Motion carried unanimously.**

240

241 **5. Any other business**

242 Chris Buchanan explained that he is beginning to work on the organizational flow for the review  
243 of the Commission's regulations, as previously discussed. He plans to get a list together for the  
244 group within the next month or so and will email it to the group closer to the next meeting.

245

246 **Bill Rapf moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm. Chris Buchanan**  
247 **seconded.**

248 **Roll call: Doug Chabinsky – aye; Chris Buchanan – aye; Bill Rapf – aye; Chris Hall**  
249 **– aye. Motion carried unanimously.**

250

251 Respectfully submitted,

252 Kristan Patenaude

253

254 Minutes approved: August 20, 2020