



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

Barbara Landry Conference Room

Thursday, 18 January 2018, 7:00 PM

*Historic District Commission members in attendance were: Jamie Ramsay, Chairman;
Chris Hall, Vice-Chairman; Doug Chabinsky, Tom Grella, BOS Ex-Officio; and
Sally Wilkins, Planning Board Ex-Officio.*

Staff in attendance included: Simon Corson, Kristan Patenaude.

I. Call to Order

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

**II. CASE #: PZ9465-122917 – Kaye Matthews, 6 Beaver Brook Road, PIN #: 018-023-000
– Code Violation – Replacement of original wood siding with vinyl siding installed
without Historic District Commission approval.**

Present: Kaye Matthews – Owner

In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Ms. Matthews stated that the roof, as well as the siding, was replaced at the same time.

In response to a question from Mr. Ramsay, Ms. Matthews explained that she had an opportunity come up quickly to have the siding replaced and she never considered consulting the Historic District Commission.

Ms. Wilkins pointed out that Ms. Matthews house is not a historic house, nor is any other house in this neighborhood. She believes that the Commission would have approved the application if Ms. Matthews had come to them beforehand with it.

Mr. Chabinsky stated that the Beaver Brook Rd. neighborhood must have been included in the Historic District for a reason, and that changing houses that contribute to the district has an impact on it.

45 In response to a question from Mr. Hall, Ms. Matthews stated that she has lived in the
46 house since 1983 and was not oblivious to the fact that the house is part of the district, as
47 there was an addition put on it 20 years ago, which they had to go through the Historic
48 District Commission to do.

49
50 In response to a question from Ms. Wilkins, Mr. Corson stated that a building permit was
51 not required to replace the siding, in this case, but is required to replace the roofing.

52
53 In response to a question from Mr. Chabinsky, Ms. Wilkins stated that the siding on the
54 whole house was replaced, not just the back.

55
56 Two members of the public, and neighbors to Ms. Matthews, spoke on her behalf. Judy
57 Gauthier, and Judy Clayborn each spoke to the increase in curb appeal due to the new
58 siding. They both believe it looks nice and that you can't tell it is vinyl and not wood
59 siding.

60
61 In response to a question from Mr. Hall, Mr. Corson confirmed that the Commission's
62 options in this case are to approve the case after the fact, or deny it, meaning that the
63 applicant would either need to take the work down or appeal to the Zoning Board.

64
65 In response to a question from Mr. Grella, Ms. Matthews explained that the contractor she
66 used is not local to Amherst.

67
68 Ms. Wilkins explained that there have been previous cases that the Commission has denied
69 after the fact, and no further action was taken from the town to make sure the issues were
70 reversed. She believes this is a larger issue than approving this case after the fact.

71
72 Mr. Chabinsky stated that he believes the decisions made by the Commission effect the
73 community and problems can develop if people are treated differently based on the
74 regulations in front of the Commission.

75
76 **FINDINGS:**

- 77 1. Houses in the Beaver Brook Rd. neighborhood, including 6 Beaver Brook Rd., are all
78 Non-Contributing.
- 79 2. This decision is being made in response to a violation, where the proper process was
80 not followed in permitting this work.
- 81 3. House is barely visible from the public way.
- 82 4. House was constructed in the 1960's and is consistent with other homes in the
83 neighborhood.
- 84 5. Construction does nothing to detract from the home, only issue is the material used.
- 85 6. Construction is reversible.

86
87 The group discussed the need to make their rules and regulations clearer and more
88 perceptible to the public.

89

90 *A MOTION was made by Ms. Wilkins and SECONDED by Mr. Hall to approve this case as*
91 *an after the fact application, for use of a non-approved material on a non-contributing*
92 *property.*

93 *Voting: 3 ayes, 1 opposed. Motion carried.*

94
95 **III. Other Business**

96 The Commission reviewed signs that Ms. Wilkins presented for Joshua's Park.

97
98 The Commission reviewed the minutes from December 21, 2017.

99 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Chabinsky and SECONDED by Ms. Wilkins to accept the*
100 *meeting minutes from December 21, 2017 as submitted.*

101 *Voting: 2 ayes, 2 abstentions. Motion carried.*

102
103 The Commission discussed the possibility of changing their regulations with regards to
104 non-contributing properties.

105 Mr. Grella suggested that the Commission needs to do more public outreach in regards to
106 the regulations, possibly in the form of a personal visit and handing a pamphlet to new
107 owners in the Historic District.

108
109 The Commission discussed their goals for 2018 with Mr. Corson.

110 Mr. Corson explained that the Community Development Office is getting ready to apply
111 for the COG grant that will be used to get a new survey of the town done. The surveyor
112 will look at every property and provide documentation that can be made into a GIS
113 product. Mr. Corson believes they will hear back on the status of the grant in late February.

114
115 The Commission discussed having a work session to review their regulations and propose
116 changes, before having a public hearing to let the public know.

117
118 Mr. Corson, on behalf of Mr. Buchanan, discussed some goals for the upcoming year. Mr.
119 Buchanan would like for the administrative review process to be discussed during the year.
120 He would also like to discuss a way to formalize the Commission's advisory capacity. Mr.
121 Buchanan hopes to have a conversation in 2018 regarding burying the utilities in town.

122
123 Mr. Hall discussed the possibility of having historic signage in the town.

124 Ms. Wilkins expressed her interest in creating house markers for contributing and non-
125 contributing properties, which could mimic the other historic signage.

126
127 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Chabinsky and SECONDED by Mr. Hall to adjourn the*
128 *meeting at 8:36 p.m.*

129 *Voting: all aye. Motion carried unanimously.*

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133
134 Respectfully submitted,
135 Kristan Patenaude