

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Historic District Commission

November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

1 In attendance: Jamie Ramsay- Chair, Doug Chabinsky, Chris Hall, Chris Buchanan and Bill Rapf  
2 (Alternate).  
3 Staff present: Nic Strong – Community Development Director, Kristan Patenaude – Minute  
4 Taker.

5  
6 Jamie Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. He introduced the Commissioners.

7  
8 OLD BUSINESS:  
9

- 10 **1. CASE #: PZ11392-053119 – Carol & John Bennett (Owners & Applicants) – 6**  
11 **Main Street, PIN #: 017-084-000 – Request for approval to replace vertical**  
12 **board siding on side of barn with clapboard & replace existing rotted shutters.**  
13 ***Applicant requested to withdraw the application on 10/25/19.***  
14

15 **Chris Buchanan moved to untable the case. Chris Hall seconded.**  
16 **All in favor.**

17  
18 **Chris Hall moved to grant the withdrawal of the application, without prejudice.**  
19 **Chris Buchanan seconded.**  
20 **All in favor.**

21  
22 NEW BUSINESS:  
23

- 24 **2. CASE #: PZ11957-103019 – Gerard & Maureen Zimmer (Owners & Applicants)**  
25 **– 6 Davis Lane, PIN #: 005-096-002 – Request for approval to construct a**  
26 **14’x20’ storage shed.**  
27

28 Present: Gerard Zimmer (Owner & Applicant)

29  
30 Gerard Zimmer stated that the proposal is in hopes of moving items to the storage shed in order  
31 to use the existing garage for cars. He worked with the nearest neighbor to determine the best  
32 location in the backyard for the shed. The neighbor had no objections to the project. The  
33 proposed shed will be from Reeds Ferry; the Colonial design.

34  
35 Bill Rapf agreed that the property’s backyard is very large and the shed will be far from  
36 anything. This is a modest, non-contributing house and he doesn’t believe the proposed shed will  
37 be distracting at all.

38  
39 Chris Hall noted that the Commission is not in receipt of some details, including the number of  
40 windows, doors and materials specifications.

41  
42 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Gerard Zimmer stated that the proposed shed will be  
43 as shown in the pictures, but without shutters or a cupola. He also stated that the doors and  
44 windows will be as shown in the picture, but that he is open to whatever type of siding the

November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

45 Commission recommends. The Commission was in favor of the cedar clapboard style of siding  
46 offered by the shed company.

47

48 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Gerard Zimmer stated that there will be a base of  
49 crushed stone under the shed but that the structure will not be raised up at all.

50

51 **FINDINGS:**

- 52 1. Non-contributing property, #51 on the National Register
- 53 2. Proposed structure will have slight visibility from the public view.
- 54 3. Proposed shed is similar to the shed next door, and thus not out of place in the  
55 neighborhood.
- 56 4. Proposed size of the shed, 14'x20' is not overpowering to the property.

57

58 Jamie Ramsay noted, initialed and dated on the application that the proposed shed will have  
59 cedar clapboard siding and that the cupola in the picture will not be on the shed.

60

61 **Chris Hall moved to approve the application as amended. Bill Rapf seconded.**  
62 **All in favor.**

63

64 Jamie Ramsay explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the  
65 Historic District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.

66

- 67 **3. CASE #: PZ11955-103019 – Christina Ferrari & Timothy Yarnall (Owners &**  
68 **Applicants) – 5 School Street, PIN #: 017-080-000 – Request for approval to**  
69 **replace wood fencing, deteriorating woodwork on front porch, replacement of**  
70 **columns, flashing on porch roof & footings, remove and replace gutters and**  
71 **downspouts.**

72

73 Present: Christina Ferrari (Owner & Applicant) & Greg Mattison, Mattison Contracting, LLC

74

75 Christina Ferrari explained that this proposal is identical to one presented to and approved by the  
76 Commission in September 2017. Due to a change in contractor on the project, the work was not  
77 initiated and the approval has since lapsed.

78

79 In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, Christina Ferrari explained that there is no change  
80 to the intent of the originally submitted proposal. The proposal looks to replace most items in  
81 kind. The fence will need to be redone, but in the same style.

82

83 In response to a question from Doug Chabinsky, Christina Ferrari agreed that the major change  
84 between the two applications is that this one includes a fence.

85

86 Greg Mattison, general contractor, stated that he plans to utilize all of the existing steel rods from  
87 the fence, as they are German rods. Mahogany may be used for the fence. The decking will be

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Historic District Commission

November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

88 recreated with Douglas Fir tongue and groove decking, in order to replace it with historically  
89 correct materials.

90

91 Will Ludt, 3 School Street, stated that he is a next door neighbor to the project, and appreciates  
92 that the applicant will be keeping the curve to the fence. He believes it to be an iconic fence in  
93 town.

94

95 Doug Chabinsky requested that a full list of the materials to be used be submitted. Greg Mattison  
96 agreed and stated that he would have the list to the Commission by the first week in December.

97

98 In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, Christina Ferrari stated that she would prefer the  
99 deck facing to be square-shaped.

100

101 The Commission reviewed the findings as referenced from the approved minutes of September  
102 21, 2017, as follows:

103

104 **FINDINGS:**

105

1. House is on the National Registry, Lot #80

106

2. House is a Contributing Property

107

3. Proposed construction is highly visible

108

4. Proposed construction materials are all wood, or consistent with current materials

109

110 **Doug Chabinsky moved to approve the application, with the amendment of receiving a**  
111 **list of materials after the holiday. Chris Hall seconded.**

112

**All in favor.**

113

114 Jamie Ramsay explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the  
115 Historic District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.

116

117 **4. CASE #: PZ11956-103019 – Thomas Stantial & Melissa Gallery (Owners &**  
118 **Applicants) – 5 Foundry Street, PIN#: 017-040-000 – Request for approval to**  
119 **install two high velocity HVAC systems to be located on the left side of the house**  
120 **– one to be located behind the house and the other to be located on the left side of**  
121 **the house.**

122

123 Present: Thomas Stantial & Melissa Gallery (Owners & Applicants)

124

125 Thomas Stantial explained that they just closed on the house on November 1<sup>st</sup>. They have  
126 renovated three historic homes in the past. This property has forced hot water baseboard heaters.  
127 They would like to correct these items, as they are not historically accurate. They would also like  
128 for the home to have central air conditioning. They are proposing two high velocity HVAC units,  
129 one to be located behind the garage and one mid-way on the left side of the house. They hope to  
130 re-landscape the property in the spring, and will work to conceal both units at that time.

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Historic District Commission

November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

131 Chris Hall noted that the unit to the side of the house appears quite close to the neighbor.  
132 Thomas Stantial explained that these are the quietest units that can be purchased.

133  
134 Chris Buchanan noted that, per Historic District Commission Regulations - Article 7, Section  
135 8.1, D: "The visual impact of ... utility structures and equipment shall be minimized." In the  
136 past, the Commission has asked others to minimize the appearance of such structures with shrubs  
137 that will obscure them year-round.

138  
139 Matt Longo, 7 Foundry Street, stated that he is the nearest neighbor and has concerns regarding  
140 the proposal. He is concerned because the property lines are not exactly known and he is worried  
141 about some of the landscaping possibly crossing onto his property. He also has concerns about  
142 the aesthetics of the house in regards to the unit on the side of the house. Finally, he is worried  
143 about the possible noise from the unit. He is opposed to the proposal in its current suggested  
144 location.

145  
146 Thomas Stantial stated that they would prefer to have both units at the back of the house, but the  
147 HVAC company stated that running copper pipe from the front of the house all the way to the  
148 back would not be the best idea.

149  
150 Jamie Ramsay stated that the abutter's property line is to be respected.

151  
152 Chris Hall and Matt Longo took time to review the application as presented.

153  
154 Chris Hall explained that the applicant will buffer the sound and look of the unit in any number  
155 of ways, hopefully with as natural of a look as possible. Matt Longo stated that this is a  
156 reasonable compromise.

157  
158 **FINDINGS:**

- 159 1. Contributing property, #40 on the National Register  
160 2. Property is in a very prominent location and is highly visible  
161 3. Per Article 7, Section 8.1, D this does not comply visually, but to help make it comply,  
162 the applicant has agreed to put some sort of shrubbery around it to keep the sound in,  
163 make it less visible from the street and from the neighbor's property.

164  
165 Thomas Stantial agreed that they will get the neighbor's approval before deciding on what to  
166 buffer the side unit with.

167  
168 **Chris Buchanan moved to approve the application as submitted, with the inclusion of**  
169 **landscaping to obscure the utilities year-round. Doug Chabinsky seconded.**  
170 **All in favor.**

171  
172 Jamie Ramsay explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the  
173 Historic District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.

174

November 21, 2019

DRAFT

- 175           **5. CASE #: PZ11968-103119 – Brendan & Katherine Farrell (Owners &**  
176           **Applicants) – 84 Boston Post Road, PIN #: 017-057-000 – Request for approval**  
177           **to replace existing fence in front of house and repair rotted siding.**  
178

179 Present: Brendan Farrell (Owner & Applicant)

180  
181 Brendan Farrell explained that he is proposing to replace the fence almost exactly as it is. It will  
182 be the same color and same architecturally.

183  
184 Chris Hall noted that the pictures submitted appear to show a Gregorian style fence. This is not  
185 allowed for in the regulations. The regulations state that simple picket fences are allowed, but not  
186 gothic style pickets.

187  
188 Brendan Farrell agreed that the simple picket style is the type of fence that he will put up. The  
189 Commission agreed that this is a replacement in kind.

190  
191 In response to a question to a question from Chris Hall, Brendan Farrell explained that the rotting  
192 siding areas will be replaced in kind with the same material and paint color. The Commission  
193 agreed that this is also a replacement in kind.

194  
195 Due to both of the items being replacements in kind, the applicant does not need to move  
196 forward with the hearing process.

197  
198           **Chris Hall moved to grant the applicant's verbal request for withdrawal, without**  
199           **prejudice, with the understanding that all work done will be strictly replacements in**  
200           **kind. Jamie Ramsay seconded.**

201           **All in favor.**

202  
203 OTHER BUSINESS:

- 204  
205           **6. Minutes: October 17, 2019**

206  
207           **Chris Hall moved to approve the minutes from October 17, 2019 as submitted.**

208           **Jamie Ramsay seconded.**

209           **3-0-2 (C. Buchanan & D. Chabinsky abstained); motion carried.**

- 210  
211           **7. Chris Buchanan, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee – Discuss a plan to**  
212           **use interlocking brick-style permeable pavers in place of asphalt on upcoming**  
213           **road construction.**

214  
215 Chris Buchanan, Chair of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee described what a  
216 Village Special Roadway District is, as per the Multimodal Master Plan. There are not many  
217 places in town that can be designated as such, but the Village streets fit the concept. The idea is  
218 to encourage safety by defining the area as different from the surrounding zones. In the past,

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Historic District Commission

November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

219 signs have been used to communicate these spaces, but this type of highway language is not very  
220 effective, per experts. The best way to communicate this message is through gateway treatments  
221 and alternative pavement surfaces. These proposed modifications would be done during already  
222 scheduled roadwork, as a way to reduce costs.

223

224 The currently proposed roadwork schedule is for Davis Lane, Carriage Road, and Main Street in  
225 the Village. The Committee is seeking a capital reserve fund to be funded over several years, in  
226 order to obtain funds for the gap between the cost for asphalt and the proposed interlocking  
227 pavers.

228

229 Chris Buchanan explained that UNH conducted an environmental and plowability study which  
230 showed that the interlocking pavers are a positive idea. The plan would be that eventually all of  
231 the roadways in the Village Special Roadway District would be changed over to the pavers, but  
232 this will only be done in small segments during road construction. The intent is to change the  
233 character of the entire district in order to make streets more becoming of mixed use.

234

235 Chris Buchanan introduced Ashley Allard and Dan Nevinckas, of the company Unilock, to  
236 describe their product. Ashley Allard explained that interlocking pavers help to slow down  
237 drivers and also are permeable and thus, a cost-savings to the town as a drainage system. The  
238 visual effect of the pavers is that the road is no longer dominated by vehicles, but shared in  
239 conjunction with pedestrians and cyclists. The pavers can be plowed and no special snow  
240 maintenance equipment is needed. The town would want to use salt, not sand, as a snow  
241 treatment so as not to clog up the pavers.

242

243 Chris Buchanan noted that the town is moving towards using 100% salt on their streets, which  
244 would work well with these pavers.

245

246 In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, Ashley Allard stated that their high quality  
247 concrete pavers have a high PSI and low absorption rate and will stand up to rock salt. There is a  
248 long-term savings to the town with these pavers, as regular asphalt needs to be re-sealed or re-  
249 surfaced over time, where these do not.

250

251 In response to a question from Doug Chabinsky, Ashley Allard explained that the entire roadway  
252 would be redone in the pavers, leaving less of an issue for frost heaves. The interlock of the  
253 pavers allows for a natural warming area in the base, which prevents and pavers from popping.

254

255 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Dan Nevinckas stated that there are paving lots done  
256 by Unilock that are 35 years old. Unilock is the oldest paving stone manufacturer in the United  
257 States. Roads constructed with these pavers have a long life expectancy; 25 years or more.

258

259 In response to a question from Chris Hall regarding the driving area in front of the previous  
260 Sports Authority area, Ashley Allard explained that this is actually stamped concrete. This is not  
261 paver material and is usually slippery in the winter.

262

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Historic District Commission

November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

263 In response to a question from Jamie Ramsay, Dan Nevinckas explained that an engineer signs  
264 off on the full spec of the project.

265

266 In response to a question from Chris Buchanan, Dan Nevinckas stated that Unilock recently  
267 completed a project on Church Street in Portsmouth. The city decided that they didn't want the  
268 pavers to be permeable due to the steep slopes in the area and are so far very happy with the  
269 project. Portsmouth is looking for ways to expand their city standard and Unilock took into  
270 account its historic design.

271

272 Will Ludt, 5 School Street, suggested that if the Village streets are going to be reconstructed, the  
273 town might want to consider burying the cables while there's an opportunity to do so. He also  
274 suggested that there be more of a push for no thru trucking in the Village.

275

276 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Dan Nevinckas explained that there are options to  
277 factory-seal the pavers in order to lessen the amount of tannic acid staining that occurs naturally  
278 when leaves fall on them. These stains will not absorb into the pavers however and will  
279 eventually wear off.

280

281 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Ashley Allard explained that, during a typical  
282 application, there will be a rigid edge created between the streets and abutting driveways, and  
283 then an edge treatment will be done to merge the two. This makes for an aesthetically pleasing  
284 transition point.

285

286 Doug Chabinsky stated that Amherst never historically had cobblestone streets. He believe this  
287 idea feels out of place with the Village. Asphalt has become almost innocuous versus this new  
288 cobblestone-like material (uniform vs. patterned). He is not sure the aesthetic view fits the  
289 Village, but he think it might be better safety-wise.

290

291 Chris Buchanan stated that the number one objective of this project is to increase safety for  
292 multimodal users in the Village. The Commission's regulations also call for a reduction in  
293 asphalt, which this would help to achieve.

294

295 Chris Hall noted that he is open-minded to the idea. The project is not looking to create false  
296 cobblestone streets, but simply another type of surface.

297

298 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Chris Buchanan stated that there is about a \$155,000  
299 gap between asphalt and these pavers for the three Village streets. The plan would be to  
300 complete these three streets over three years. Ashley Allard also noted that the pavers give a  
301 long-term, lifecycle cost savings to the town.

302

303 Chris Buchanan explained that the CIP Committee will be taking a deeper look at this project  
304 from a planning perspective. The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee will also be  
305 communicating with the DPW in order to get an updated schedule for road construction. The  
306 next major steps for this project will probably come at this time next year.

November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

307 In response to a question from Chris Hall, Chris Buchanan stated that the Village lampposts were  
308 ordered in July and took about 8 weeks to make. He will check with the DPW on the status of  
309 that project.

310

311 The Board discussed the complaint from 120 Amherst Street briefly, and decided to defer the  
312 item to the next meeting, to give time for consideration of the options involved.

313

314 **Chris Buchanan moved to adjourn the meeting.**

315

316 **Discussion:**

317

318 Nic Strong asked the Commission if the group was going to begin cases by accepting the  
319 application as complete, and determining regional impact, as noted in the Staff Report.

320

321 Jamie Ramsay stated that he believes regional impact is a moot subject for this  
322 Commission, as its objective is to maintain and preserve the District.

323

324 Nic Strong noted that any land use board that receives an application is supposed to  
325 consider if there could be regional impact; the Historic District Commission is a land use  
326 board. She agreed that there could be a motion made at the beginning of each meeting to  
327 state that there is no regional impact on any of the applications to be heard. She noted  
328 that she generally agreed that there would be few cases of regional impact, but if a large  
329 parcel of land happened to be in the Historic District and was proposed for subdivision it  
330 could be an issue.

331

332 Chris Buchanan explained that there is not much guidance on how the Commission  
333 should conduct itself; if Nic Strong has any suggestions for the group, they would find it  
334 helpful.

335

336 Nic Strong explained that the Commission can look at the list of items to be submitted for  
337 an application, and then determine if the application is complete or if other items are  
338 needed.

339

340 Doug Chabinsky stated that applications were once checked more thoroughly for  
341 completeness in the Community Development Office before coming before the  
342 Commission. If there are certain requirements for an application, the Community  
343 Development Office should tell applicants at the time of submittal.

344

345 Chris Hall noted that about 80% of the applications in the past six months had  
346 insufficient information and very few were turned away, as the Commission worked with  
347 homeowners during the process. Help from the Community Development Office would  
348 help head off these applications and give the owners a heads-up. The paperwork is pretty  
349 clear to fill out. He is confused as to why so many applications are now coming to the  
350 Commission incomplete.



November 21, 2019

**DRAFT**

351  
352 Nic Strong explained that the Community Development Office can tell applicants to  
353 submit certain items but the only entity that can accept the application as complete is the  
354 Commission itself. If applicants don't submit certain items, or don't understand the  
355 application, they can still come before the Commission. Each applicant gets a copy of the  
356 staff report before the meeting, which includes the checklist of items needed/submitted.

357  
358 The Commission discussed a process by which each Commissioner would go into the  
359 Community Development Office once a month to review received applications for  
360 completeness.

361  
362 Doug Chabinsky stated that the Commission wants to encourage applicants to do work  
363 correctly. The process can still be made easier for applicants; a completeness pre-review  
364 by the Office or Commissioners might achieve this.

365  
366 Nic Strong agreed to consider the pre-review process. She also noted that there is likely  
367 some language on the checklist that is confusing to applicants and should also be  
368 reviewed.

369  
370 Chris Buchanan explained that the Commission has been considering an overhaul to their  
371 regulations since 2016.

372  
373 **The motion to adjourn was called at 9:16 p.m. Doug Chabinsky seconded.**  
374 **All in favor.**

375  
376  
377  
378 Respectfully submitted,  
379 Kristan Patenaude

380  
381 Minutes approved: (enter date of meeting at which approved and then go to header, change  
382 DRAFT to APPROVED and include approved date in the footer.)