

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission

September 19, 2019

APPROVED

1 In attendance: Jamie Ramsay- Chair, Tom Grella-Selectman Ex-Officio, Doug Chabinsky, Bill
2 Rapf, and Sally Wilkins.
3 Staff present: Simon Corson – Town Planner; and Kristan Patenaude – Minute Taker.

4
5 Jamie Ramsay called the meeting to order at 6:55 pm.

6
7 OTHER BUSINESS:

8
9 **1. Minutes: August 15, 2019**

10
11 **Bill Rapf moved to approve the minutes as written, with one amendment [to change**
12 **all instances of ‘...party of interest,’ as on Line 57, to ‘...interested parties.] Tom**
13 **Grella seconded.**

14 **4-0-1 (D. Chabinsky abstained), motion carried.**

15
16 OLD BUSINESS:

17
18 **2. CASE #: PZ11392-053119 – Carol & John Bennett (Owners & Applicants) – 6**
19 **Main Street, PIN #: 017-084-000 – Request for approval to replace vertical**
20 **board siding on side of barn with clapboard & replace existing rotted shutters.**
21 *Case tabled from June 20, 2019 concerning the barn only. Case to be tabled per*
22 *applicant’s request to October 17, 2019.*

23
24 **Sally Wilkins moved to retable the case to October 17, 2019, as requested by the**
25 **applicant. Bill Rapf seconded.**
26 **All in favor.**

27
28 NEW BUSINESS:

29
30 **3. CASE #: PZ11662-082619 – Matthew & Christina (Owners & Applicants) – 7**
31 **Narragansett Road, PIN #: 018-008-000 – Request for approval to install a**
32 **privacy fence.**

33
34 Present: Matthew & Christina (Owners & Applicants)

35
36 Matthew explained that they just moved into this home this morning. The house is on the corner
37 of Narragansett Road and Amherst Street. There is not much of a land barrier between the home
38 and the main road. They are proposing to put up a fence on the Amherst Street side of the
39 property. It will wrap about 1/3 of the way around the house. The fence will not particularly be
40 seen from Narragansett Road or Amherst Street due to a substantial tree buffer. Matthew stated
41 that the fence will comply with all of the cosmetic requirements.

42
43 **FINDINGS:**

44 **1. Non-Contributing property**

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission

September 19, 2019

APPROVED

- 45 2. Proposed fence will not be visible from Narragansett Road and there will be limited
46 visibility from Amherst Street.
47 3. Proposed materials will be in accordance with the ordinance and will blend in.
48 4. Proposed fence is not exactly a privacy fence, as it will not be dividing neighbors.
49

50 **Doug Chabinsky moved to approve the application, as presented. Sally Wilkins**
51 **seconded.**
52 **All in favor.**
53

54 Jamie Ramsay explained to the applicant how the 30-day appeal process works, in case the
55 Historic District Commission's decision was contested by an abutter or other interested party.
56

- 57 **4. CASE #: PZ11674-082819 – Douglas & Leslie Allen (Owners & Applicants) –**
58 **117 Boston Post Road, PIN #: 017-004-000 – Request for approval to extend**
59 **existing garage to include a third bay with a matching door front.**
60

61 Present: Douglas & Leslie Allen (Owners & Applicants)
62

63 Chairman Jamie Ramsay stated that the he received notice from the Office of Community
64 Development that there is a balance due on this application. It is therefore an incomplete
65 application. The application will not be heard by the Commission until it is complete. He further
66 explained that there are two current violations on the property. These will need to be corrected
67 before the application can be heard. These violations include a windmill in the back of the barn
68 and a plate glass window.
69

70 Douglas and Leslie Allen stated that they believed these issues were resolved years ago.
71

72 Simon Corson, Planner, stated that there are outstanding violations on the property. The Office
73 of Community Development is working to understand what occurred in the past. If the owners
74 have additional documentation regarding these violations, the Office would like to see it. The
75 owners will be receiving a letter from the Building Official regarding the violations.
76

77 Douglas and Leslie Allen stated that the approval of these violations is mentioned in
78 Commission meeting minutes from about a year and a half ago. They suggested that the Office
79 work to find this information for themselves.
80

81 Simon Corson stated that the application is still incomplete, due to fees owed.
82

83 The owners and the Commission discussed the details of these violations.
84

85 Jamie Ramsay stated that the violation information will be found, the owners will be further
86 informed on this matter, and this application will be heard when it is complete and the violation
87 issue is settled.
88

September 19, 2019

APPROVED

89 OTHER BUSINESS:

90

91 **Discussion:**

92

93 Francis Straccia, 120 Boston Post Road, addressed the Commission with concerns regarding her
94 neighboring property, Amherst Gas. She explained that the previous owner took care of certain
95 things on the property, such as removal of leaves, cutting the grass, and painting the building.

96 The current owner has allowed the paint to peel, has not cut the grass, has let the leaves pile up,
97 and has dumped snow onto her bushes. She intends to sell her property within the next couple of
98 years and doesn't believe that she will receive the highest price possible for it due to the derelict
99 property next door. She stated that she believes there are a couple of Historic District

100 Commission regulations that might apply to this issue, including Section D, Article II,
101 paragraphs D and E, and Section D, Article V, paragraph A.

102

103 Francis Straccia stated that she takes care of her home because she sees it as her duty, being that
104 her home is one of the first seen when people enter the Village. She believes there are other
105 abutters to the property that are equally unhappy.

106

107 Simon Corson recommended that Ms. Straccia allow the Community Development Office to
108 look at the codes with the Building Official and determine if there is a violation at hand or not.

109 The regulations mentioned tend to address the character and integrity of the property as it applies
110 to the architectural integrity of the structure. Long, uncut grass does not affect the structure itself.
111 He believes this is a civil dispute and not one that should involve the Town.

112

113 Jamie Ramsay stated that he understands the concerns addressed by the property owner, and
114 believes that owners in the Village rely on each other. He encouraged Ms. Straccia to get this
115 issue onto the next Historic District meeting agenda.

116

117 Francis Straccia stated that she will talk with her fellow abutters and try to encourage them to
118 attend the next Commission meeting.

119

120 Simon Corson stated that the Historic District Commission is not a neighborhood association.
121 The group has a regulatory focus on the historical characteristics and integrity of properties.

122

123 **5. Discussion of Historic District Survey**

124

125 Simon Corson stated that the survey is in its final draft. There were some grammatical changes
126 and a table added in that more clearly shows the determinations across the district in terms of
127 contributing/non-contributing. He stated that the final pdf version will be shared with the
128 Commission and posted on the website. He is hoping to use the remaining funds from the project
129 to print laminated booklets.

130

131 **Jamie Ramsay moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 pm. Tom Grella seconded.**

132 **All in favor.**

TOWN OF AMHERST
Historic District Commission

September 19, 2019

APPROVED

133

134

135

136

137 Respectfully submitted,

138 Kristan Patenaude

139

140 Minutes approved: October 17, 2019