

**AMHERST HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Jane Wald – Chair, Patricia J. Auth, Robin Fordham, Janet Marquardt, Theodore Parker

Staff Present: Brandon Toponce, Historical Commission Staff Representative

Meeting Date: April 10, 2019

Time Started: 5:10 PM

Time Ended: 6:45 PM

PUBLIC HEARING

Mitchel Mroz Jr. and Mary Lynn Olson, 562 Montague Road

Mr. Mroz stated their insurance company is requesting the barn be removed in order to insure the property. He stated the cost would increase 80% to 100%, which would be far too expensive for them.

Ms. Marquardt asked if the homeowners before them had to pay the higher insurance.

Mr. Mroz was unsure

Ms. Auth asked if detail on the barn and insurance was included in the sale agreement.

Mr. Mroz answered that the sale agreement did not give detail on the barn and insurance.

Ms. Marquardt added how the Commission is concerned with the loss of barns throughout the community, and a barn is not completely falling down it is the role of the commission to help preserve this integral part of the landscape.

Ms. Wald reminded the commission and the applicant of the review process, stating how the Commission has been given the task to help promote the preservation of the built environment. She also added that after discussion with the applicant, the Commission would determine if the building would be considered historically significant. If the barn is found to be significant, the Commission could issue a delay, or still allow the demotion to take place.

Ms. Marquardt asked if the insurance company came to inspect the building.

Mr. Mroz said he believed they did since they want to cancel the insurance.

Ms. Auth asked the applicant if when they purchased the property they had the intention of tearing down the barn.

Mr. Mroz said when they purchased the home they did not think much of the barn and did not intend to get rid of the barn.

Ms. Marquardt asked if they looked at the cost of repair and stabilizing the building, which would be much more affordable than restoring the interior.

Ms. Olson said they are on a fixed income and to do this work would be unrealistic. She then asked the Commission who would pay for the repairs since they were unable to do so.

Ms. Wald suggested that grant money might be available to repair the building.

The Commission reviewed Section 13.4, Standards for Designation found in the Zoning Bylaw. After discussing each of the items, they determined that under 13.4100 of the Zoning Bylaw, the building was found to have historic character, interest and value as part of the development of the Town of Amherst. In addition, the barn embodied the distinguished characteristics of an architectural type, as stated in Section 13.4111 of the Zoning Bylaw.

With this review, it was determined the barn was a significant structure. However, they believed that in order to evaluate the condition of the building and the barn's geographic setting, a site visit should be conducted.

Ms. Wald made a motion for the site visit to be conducted and that the review and determination by the commission be held at a later date. Ms. Fordham seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

The site visit was scheduled for Thursday, April 11, at 5:45 PM, and the continued meeting for Tuesday, April 23, at 5:00 PM

OTHER ITEMS NOT ANTICIPATED

Ms. Fordham updated the Commission on the CPAC votes, stating the Preservation Plan and the West Cemetery project were both approved, while the grant match was not funded.

Adjournment

The next meeting for Wednesday, May 1 was canceled due to the lack of a quorum. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.