



TOWN WARRANT
Annual Town Meeting
April 28, 2003

Hampshire, ss.

To one of the Constables of the Town of Amherst, in said county, Greetings:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby directed to notify the registered voters of the Town of Amherst of the Annual Town Meeting to be held in the Auditorium of the Amherst Regional Middle School in said Amherst at seven-thirty o'clock p.m. on Monday, the twenty-eighth day of April, two thousand and three, when the following articles will be acted upon by town meeting members:

ARTICLE 1. Reports of Boards and Committees (Select Board)

To see if the Town will hear only those reports of Town officers, the Finance Committee, and any other Town boards or committees which are not available in written form.

ARTICLE 2. Zoning Map – Common Land Protection (Planning Board)

To see if the Town will amend Sections 4.350 and 4.351 of the Zoning Bylaw by deleting the ~~lined out~~ language and adding the language in ***bold italics***, as follows:

- 4.350 ***Except in the WP, ARP and FC districts, All*** common land hereunder shall either (1) be conveyed to the Town of Amherst and be accepted by it for park or open space use, or (2) be conveyed to a non-profit organization, the principal purpose of which is the conservation of open space, (3) be conveyed to a corporation or trust owned or to be owned by the owners of the lots or residential units within the development, or (4) be conveyed to a private, non-profit or public entity for the purposes of farming, with a restriction enforceable by the Town of Amherst being recorded which provides that such land shall either be actively farmed or kept in an open and natural state, If such a corporation or trust is utilized, as indicated herein, ownership thereof shall pass with conveyances of the lots or residential units. Under the second and third ownership alternatives listed above, a restriction enforceable by the Town of Amherst shall be recorded providing that such land shall be kept in an open or natural state and not be built upon for residential use or developed for accessory uses such as parking or roadway
- 4.351 In the ~~FP~~ ***WP, ARP and FC*** ~~D~~districts, ~~that portion of the eCommon~~ ***Land which is set aside as permanently preserved farmland and*** and all Unbuildable Land Area (***hereinafter within this section collectively referred to as “Common Land”***) in a residential development shall be protected by a permanent agricultural preservation restriction recorded on the deed ***preserved as open space. Said Common Land shall be kept in an open or natural state, or as active farmland, and shall be used and managed so as to protect public water supplies (in the WP and ARP districts) and/or to preserve farmland and related accessory resource-based land uses (in the FC District, and in the WP or ARP districts where appropriate). Common Land shall not be built upon for residential use or developed for accessory uses such as parking or roadway.***
- 4.351.0** Title to this ~~permanently preserved farm~~ ***Common*** ~~Land~~ may remain with the original ~~farmland~~ owner ***or another individual or entity (hereinafter “owner”),*** or ***may*** be conveyed to the Town of Amherst, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, a ***corporation or trust functioning as a*** homeowners association, or a non-profit ~~farmland~~ trust or similar conservation organization whose principal purposes include the protection of water quality ***and/or the*** preservation of

farmland *and related accessory resource-based land uses, as appropriate*. The agricultural restriction recorded on the deed shall be enforceable by the Town of Amherst. It shall be kept as active farmland or kept in an open or natural state for future farming uses, and shall not be built upon for residential use or developed for accessory uses such as parking or roadway.

4.351.1 *The applicant shall submit a management plan detailing the future use and management of the Common Land. Review and approval of the management plan shall be a condition of the Site Plan Review approval.*

ARTICLE 3. Zoning Bylaw - Professional Research Park District (Planning Board)

To see if the Town will amend Section 3.359 of the Use Chart (Section 3.3) of the Zoning Bylaw, by deleting the ~~lined-out~~ language and adding the language in *bold italics*, as follows:

3.359 ***Technical or professional office such as architect, engineer, lawyer, financial services, or similar office providing services to clients in person on the premises predominantly by appointment or, administrative business office or similar*** Business or professional office not providing services to the ***general*** public in person on the premises.

R-0												
R-LD	R-N	R-VC	R-G	R-F	B-G	B-L	B-VC	COM	OP	LI	PRP	FPC
N	N	SP	N	N	SPR	SPR	SPR	SPR	SPR	SPR	SPR	N
											(SP)	

Standards & Conditions

For the purposes of this section, the general public shall be defined as including all persons acting as customers or clients not receiving services by appointment. Exceptions shall be affiliated professionals or consultants conducting business with the office use, salespersons and service contractors (delivery, maintenance, etc.).

In the R-VC District, the Zoning Board of Appeals may grant a Special Permit for an ***technical or professional office for professional or office uses not dealing directly with that provides services by appointment to clients in person on the premises, or, for an administrative business office or similar office that does not provide services to the general public in person on the premises.*** The Zoning Board of Appeals may grant a Special Permit providing it finds that, in addition to meeting the provisions of Article 7 and Section 10.38, the proposed office use meets the following conditions:

1. Is located on the ground floor only, and occupies no more than 50 percent of the gross floor area of the structure, exclusive of storage space.
2. Shall be allowed only as a second Principal use, where the first Principal use is a residential use consisting of one dwelling unit.
3. Shares a property line with or is adjacent to another property with a similar use permitted under this section or a property in the B-L, B-VC or COM districts.
4. Employs no more than 5 persons who work on-site.
5. Where located in an existing building, the residential character of the structure and site shall be maintained.

ARTICLE 4. Affordable Housing Restriction (Select Board and Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee)

To see if the Town will authorize the acceptance of an Affordable Housing Restriction, in accordance with Chapter 184, section 31, of the Massachusetts General Laws, on Lots 1 and 2 as shown on a plan entitled “‘Preliminary Subdivision Plan’ Plan of Land in Amherst, Massachusetts, Prepared for ALANDEV, LLC,” which lots are situated on the southerly side of Old Belchertown Road and which comprise portions of Parcels 4 and 7 on Assessors’ Map 21B.

ARTICLE 5. Petition - Zoning Map - Old Belchertown Road – PRP to R-O (Zahradnik, Palley, Schaffer Bacon)

“To see if the Town will amend the Official Zoning Map by rezoning Map 21B/Parcels 4 and 7 and a portion of Parcel 18, from Professional Research Park (PRP) to Outlying residence (R-O).”

ARTICLE 6. Petition – Special Act – Resident Aliens (V. Morales)

“To see if the town will vote to authorize the Select Board to file with the legislature a request for a special act entitled, An Act authorizing local voting rights for permanent resident aliens residing in Amherst, as follows:

Section 1. Notwithstanding the provision of section one of chapter fifty-one of the General Laws, or any other general or special law, rule or regulation to the contrary, resident aliens eighteen years of age or older who reside in Amherst may, upon application, have their names entered on a list of voters established by the town clerk for the town of Amherst and may thereafter vote in any election for local offices and local ballot questions.

Section 2. The Select Board of Amherst is authorized to formulate regulations and guidelines to implement the purpose of this act.

Section 3. Nothing in this act shall be construed to confer upon permanent resident aliens the right to vote for any state or federal office or any state or federal ballot question.”

ARTICLE 7. Petition – Conservation Land – Wentworth Farm (V. Morales)

“To see if the Town will vote:

Whereas, 25-30 acres of land bounded by Belchertown Road, Old Farms Road, and land of the Conservation Commission abutting the Fort River and composed of Parcel 46 and portions of Parcels 17 and 18 of Map 18A of the Town Cadastre have been owned by the town and managed by the Conservation Commission since 1983; and,

Whereas, according to state law and a 1998 Division of Conservation Services policy neither town land nor land that has been used or managed as conservation land may be donated as compensation for town conservation land whose purchase has been assisted by state funds if such land is proposed to be withdraw from conservation use; and,

Whereas, there is no parcel of town conservation land or combination of parcels of town conservation land north of the town center that would be suitable for an elementary school site; and,

Whereas, town conservation land may not be used for a school site or any other purpose unless there is no suitable private land available, notwithstanding price or other factors; and,

Whereas, there are private sites north of the town center and elsewhere in town that are available and suitable for an elementary school site; and,

Whereas, because of wetlands and vernal pools, this 25 – 30 acre parcel has only 3 plus buildable acres – which buildable acreage may be itself compromised by being a functional part of the habitat of an endangered species; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amherst Representative Town Meeting vote to transfer this 25 – 30 acres of land bounded by Belchertown Road, Old Farms Road, and land of the Conservation Commission abutting the Fort River and composed of Parcel 46 and portions of Parcels 17 and 18 of Map 18A of the Town Cadastre which are now informally managed for the town by the Conservation Commission, from the care and custody of the Select Board to the formal management and control of the Conservation Commission under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 8C.”

ARTICLE 8. Petition – Town Meeting Improvements Committee (A. Root)

“To see if the town will vote to have the Moderator appoint a Town Meeting Improvements Committee consisting of 9 registered voters, at least 5 of whom shall be elected Town Meeting Members from different precincts of the town, to recommend to the Fall 2003 Town Meeting such additions and/or changes in by-laws and other governing acts, rules and regulations so as to improve Town Meeting with consideration given but not limited to the following:

1. To reduce the number of votes – develop ways & means so that all warrant articles including budgetary items, for which there is no objection, be passed by a single vote of unanimous consent at the start of Town Meeting.
2. To create increased accountability – develop ways & means so that town meeting will use a method of voting so registered voters will have an opportunity to know exactly how each town meeting member voted on a representative cross-section of votes taken.
3. To maintain an appropriate balance between the town’s legislative and executive functions – require town officials and committees to provide informational material and positions in favor or opposed to articles on the warrant in printed form rather than by vocal presentation.
4. To save time – Sponsor or sponsors of a warrant article or the sponsor or sponsors of any substitute motion shall have a total of 5 minutes to present their arguments, which can only be extended, prior to commencement of their presentations, by a vote of 2/3rds of those present. Successive speakers on the same motion shall be limited to 3 minutes each, which can only be extended, prior to commencement of their presentations, by a vote of 2/3rds of those present.
5. To shorten town meeting – develop ways & means to reduce or completely eliminate all vocal readings on motions, whenever possible, while keeping the TV audience and those with disabilities appropriately informed.
6. To provide a more efficient and balanced presentation of all sides of an issue – within the town meeting enclosure – use wireless microphones so that questions, comments plus “pro & con” positions are alternately presented from town meeting members’ seats, whenever possible.
7. To reduce the size of Town Meeting from a present total of 240 to 210, 180, 150, or 120 elected members in such a way as to create staggered terms whereby a precinct would elect 1/3rd of its members at each annual town election for 3-year terms.
8. To improve consideration of Warrant Articles pertaining to state, national or international affairs – develop rules that will be sensitive to both those who regard such measures as appropriate for Town Meeting action as well as those who think otherwise.
9. To improve attendance – develop standards for attendance that would allow town meeting members to be replaced for chronically poor attendance.
10. To improve attendance accountability – the Town Clerk shall keep a simple attendance record disclosing the date and time of entrance of each Town Meeting Member – as well as the time of exit of each Town Meeting Member who shall be present at the conclusion of each session.”

ARTICLE 9. Petition – Resolution - Genetically Engineered Food (A. Dunbar)

“To see if the town of Amherst will vote to adopt the following resolution to protect our farms, our food and the environment:

Whereas, genetically engineered foods have been shown to cause long-term damage to the environment, the integrity of rural and family farm economics, and can have serious impacts on human health; and,

Whereas, GE crops, which are stringently regulated in over 30 countries, have been found to contaminate their crops through cross-pollination; and,

Whereas, studies have implicated GE crops as a risk to human health, including allergic reactions, stomach lesions and cancer;

Now, be it resolved that the Town of Amherst calls upon our Federal Legislators to support the mandatory labeling of all genetically engineered food and seeds, as well as a Massachusetts moratorium on the further growing of GE crops until there is credible and independent scientific evidence that these products are not harmful to our health, the environment, and the integrity of organic crops;

And further be it resolved that the Clerk send copies of this resolution to the elected representatives for this town, including the Massachusetts State Legislators, the Governor, and the Commissioner of the Department of Food and Agriculture.”

ARTICLE 10. Petition – Council on Youth (E. Morales)

“We request that a “Council on Youth” (name could change) be established to be an ongoing town commission to study the questions concerning youth in this time. It would follow the design of the Council on Aging that was established to support the needs of seniors. Youth are much more susceptible to the dangers inherent in this society than ever before in the history of our country because of the rapid growth of communications – media and internet. This Commission would recommend and support initiatives that address resolving such issues that contribute to putting youth at risk. It would be appointed by town manager and available to specific request made, in writing, to join. This “Council on Youth” would be made up of, at least, one third youth ages 15 – 20, and would be a program that qualified them to receive credit (ALPS, community service learning, internship) in one of the various programs in the regional high schools, charter or public. The group would be involved with the network of town departments and agencies that support youth. Representatives from various departments and agencies would be an asset to this council. The establishment of such a council places Amherst as a town that is truly concerned and can stand by youth in such volatile times. It takes the discussion out of the realm of temporary committees or groups and places it alongside of the town’s priority commissions and councils such as the Arts Council, The Council on Aging, Human Rights commission, DAAC – Disability Access and Advisory Council and many others that have grown out of individuals concern for the well-being of the citizens of Amherst. Youth are tomorrow’s leaders. This is a way to support them now.”

ARTICLE 11. Petition – Committee for a Teen Center – Skate Park Complex (E. Morales)

“We request that a Task Force/Committee For a Teen Center–Skate Park Complex be established to do the following: A. Develop an Action Plan of all the elements needed in order to build or dedicate a site to a Teen Center-Skate Park Complex for the youth of Amherst. B. Set a timeline for each element to be resolved so that the final product is the establishment of such a youth-friendly complex. This includes: 1) Explore all viable and available, now or in the near future, town owned land or property, centrally located and on a bus line, that could be used for this purpose: for ex.- the Kendrick Park site that has been deeded to the town; the L-shaped piece of land adjacent to the War Memorial Pool leading down to Triangle Street; 2) explore the acquisition or leasing of property from Amherst College or the University of Massachusetts that may be available now or in the near future. 3) Develop a funding strategy and design architecturally sound, working with qualified individuals. The results of the actions listed above will be presented as needed to the Town of Amherst Select Board and any other relevant town department or agency for advice or approval. In other words, the best make-up of this task force would be youth (skate-boarders and others), representatives from relevant youth-concerned departments in the town or schools, local adult allies for youth, a legal consultant, an architect familiar with the construction and design of skate parks. This task force would be volunteer and by appointment of the town manager, and could provide internship and community service learning credit for students.”

ARTICLE 12. Simmons Property Conservation Restriction (Conservation Commission)

To see if the Town will rescind the vote taken on Motion D under Article 8 of the Special Town Meeting of October 28, 2002, and, in its place, 1) authorize the Select Board to acquire by gift, negotiated purchase or eminent domain a parcel of land containing 12 acres, more or less, designated as Parcel 23B-60 of the Town Cadastre, located west of Middle Street, from John and Adele S. Simmons, to be managed and controlled by the Amherst Conservation Commission in accordance with Chapter 40, Section 8C for conservation and passive recreation purposes, 2) raise, borrow and/or appropriate \$195,000.00 for the acquisition of said and to meet said appropriate with funds transferred and/or borrowed in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 293, the Community Preservation Act , 3) authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to issue any bonds or notes that may be necessary for that purpose, as authorized by M.G.L. Chapter 44, or any other enabling authority, 4) authorize the Town Manager or his designee to file on behalf of the Town any and all applications deemed

necessary under the Self-Help Act (M.G.L. Chapter 132A, Section 11) or any other applications for funds in any way connected with the scope of this acquisition, 5) authorize the Town Manager, the Board of Selectmen and/or the Conservation Commission, as they deem appropriate, to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments including the conveyance of a perpetual conservation restriction in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 184 as required by Section 12(a) of Chapter 44B or Chapter 293 Section 10 of the Acts of 1998 as amended, as may be necessary on behalf of the Town to affect said purchase. Said conservation restriction may be granted to the Kestrel Trust or any other organization qualified and willing to hold such a restriction.

ARTICLE 13. Bylaw Amendment – Human Rights Bylaw (Human Rights Commission)

To see if the Town will amend the Human Rights Bylaw to increase the number of members from seven to nine.

ARTICLE 14. Sidewalk Easement – Amherst Housing Authority (Select Board)

To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to acquire at no cost from the Amherst Housing Authority an easement approximately 1,500 square feet in area for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a new public sidewalk and associated utilities and landscaping along the west boundary of the Ann Whalen Apartments property at 33 Kellogg Avenue, which comprises a portion of Parcel 65 on Assessors' Map 14A.

ARTICLE 15. Street Acceptances – Farview Way and Valley Lane (Select Board)

To see if the Town will accept as town ways portions of Farview Way and Valley Lane, as laid out by the Select Board and shown on plans of land filed with the Town Clerk, and authorize the Select Board to acquire by eminent domain, purchase or otherwise any fee, appurtenant rights, easements or other interest in land therefore, no appropriation being required.

ARTICLE 16. Landfill Closing (Select Board)

To see if the Town will appropriate \$ 2,500,000 for the closing and capping of cell 3 of the Amherst Sanitary Landfill and determine whether such appropriation shall be met by the transfer of available funds, by borrowing, or otherwise and further to authorize the application for and acceptance of any gifts, bequests, or grants from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or otherwise and further authorize the Treasurer to borrow in anticipation of reimbursement for said grants.

ARTICLE 17. Bio-Stabilization Process for Cell 3 (Select Board)

To see if the Town will appropriate \$800,000 for the installation of a bio-stabilization process in cell 3 of the Amherst Sanitary Landfill and determine whether such appropriation shall be met by the transfer of available funds, by borrowing, or otherwise and further authorize the application for and acceptance of any gifts, bequests, or grants from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or otherwise and further authorize the Treasurer to borrow in anticipation of reimbursement for said grants.

ARTICLE 18. Comprehensive Site Assessment for Old Landfill (Select Board)

To see if the Town will appropriate \$50,000 to conduct a Comprehensive Site Assessment study at the old sanitary landfill on Old Belchertown Road and to meet such appropriation transfer \$50,000 from Solid Waste Fund Surplus.

ARTICLE 19. Sewer Easement – Chapel Road Sewer (Select Board)

To see if the Town will acquire by purchase, gift or eminent domain for construction of a wastewater pumping station, highway, drainage and general utility purposes, a triangular shaped parcel of land bounded northerly by South East Street a distance of more or less 100 feet, southerly by land now or formerly owned by Haneef and Nazrin Sanabdeen a distance of more or less 90 feet and northerly by Mechanic Street a distance of more or less 110 feet.

ARTICLE 20. Cushman School Transfer (Select Board and School Committee)

To see if the Town will authorize the transfer of the care, custody and control of a certain parcel of land situated on the westerly side of Henry Street, being Parcel 94 on Assessors' Map 6A, containing approximately two acres of land, more or less, with a building thereon known as the Cushman School, from the School Committee to the Select Board for the purpose of conveyance of the Cushman School building and either conveyance or lease of a portion of the parcel of land, referred to above, upon which the Cushman School building is situated.

ARTICLE 21. Cushman School Conveyance (Select Board)

To see if the Town will authorize the Select Board: 1) to convey the building known as the Cushman School, which is situated on a certain parcel of land on the westerly side of Henry Street, being Parcel 94 on Assessors' Map 6A, 2) to either convey or lease a portion of the above-referenced parcel, which portion shall contain one acre, more or less, and 3) to the extent that such parcel is to be leased, to enter into a lease agreement of up to 99 years on such terms and conditions as the Select Board deems reasonable and appropriate.

ARTICLE 22. Transfer of Funds – Unpaid Bills (Select Board)

To see if the Town will, in accordance with Chapter 44, section 64, of the Massachusetts General Laws, appropriate and transfer a sum of money to pay unpaid bills of previous years.

ARTICLE 23. Authorization for Compensating Balance Accounts (Select Board)

To see if the Town will accept the provisions of Chapter 44, section 53F of the Massachusetts General Laws, which authorize the Treasurer to enter into written agreements with banking institutions pursuant to which the Treasurer agrees to maintain funds on deposit in exchange for banking services.

ARTICLE 24. Optional Tax Exemptions (Select Board)

To see if the Town will authorize a maximum additional exemption of up to 100 percent for taxpayers qualifying for exemption under Chapter 59, sections 17D, 22, 37A, and 41C of the Massachusetts General Laws.

ARTICLE 25. Retirement Assessment (Select Board)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$2,080,289 for the Hampshire Regional Retirement System assessment.

ARTICLE 26. FY 2004 Operating Budget (Finance Committee)

To see if the Town will adopt a comprehensive operating budget for the ensuing year and raise and appropriate money therefor.

ARTICLE 27. Reserve Fund (Finance Committee)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$85,000 for the Reserve Fund for FY 2004.

ARTICLE 28. Special Services - Amherst Community Television (Select Board)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$4,000 for Amherst Community Television and related expenses.

ARTICLE 29. Special Services - Human Services (Select Board and Human Services Funding Committee)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$151,995 for the following human services:

- Amherst Survival Center
- Casa Latina Outreach Program

Family Outreach of Amherst Domestic Violence Response Project
Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Family Outreach of Amherst
Not Bread Alone
Center for New Americans
Children's Aid and Family Services
HomeSharing
Everywoman's Center
Amherst Family Center
First Call For Help
Men's Resource Center
Safe Passages
Service Net/Interfaith Cot Program
YWCA/Youth Outreach Program
School-Age Tuition Assistance Fund

ARTICLE 30. Special Services - Congregate Housing (Select Board)

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$5,000 for the development and coordination of support services for tenants of congregate housing and related housing units, said program to be fully reimbursed by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

ARTICLE 31. Special Services – Transportation Subsidies (Select Board and the Public Transportation Committee)

To see if the Town will endorse no-fare public transit service to the Amity Street/University Drive, Village Park, Echo Hill, Cushman, Orchard Valley and Elf Hill areas of the Town, year-round weekend service on the South Amherst/North Amherst/Belchertown Road routes, elderly and disabled special transportation services, and approve the levying of an assessment by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the Town's proportionate share of the cost of such services.

ARTICLE 32. Capital Program - Chapter 90 (Joint Capital Planning Committee)

To see if the Town will authorize the expenditure of \$475,000 of Chapter 90 funds for qualifying purposes and further authorize the Treasurer to borrow in anticipation of reimbursement of these funds from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ARTICLE 33. Capital Program – Equipment (Joint Capital Planning Committee)

To see if the Town will appropriate \$924,800 to purchase, repair, and/or install new or replacement equipment and determine whether such appropriation shall be met by taxation, by the transfer of available funds, or otherwise and further to authorize the application for and acceptance of any gifts, bequests, or grants.

ARTICLE 34. Capital Program - Buildings and Facilities (Joint Capital Planning Committee)

To see if the Town will appropriate \$309,600 to repair and/or improve buildings and facilities and determine whether such appropriation shall be met by taxation, by the transfer of available funds, or otherwise and further to authorize the application for and acceptance of any gifts, bequests, or grants.

ARTICLE 35. Stabilization Fund (Select Board)

To see if the Town will appropriate and transfer a sum of money to the Stabilization Fund for FY 2004.

ARTICLE 36. Free Cash (Select Board)

To see if the Town will appropriate and transfer a sum of money from Free Cash in the Undesignated Fund Balance of the General Fund to reduce the tax levy of the 2004 Fiscal Year.

You are hereby directed to serve this call by posting attested copies thereof at the usual places:

Prec. 1 North Amherst Post Office
Prec. 2 North Fire Station
Prec. 3 Marks Meadow School
Prec. 4 Amherst Post Office
Prec. 5 Town Hall

Prec. 6 Fort River School
Prec. 7 Crocker Farm School
Prec. 8 Munson Memorial Library
Prec. 9 Wildwood School
Prec. 10 Campus Center, UMass

Hereof fail not and make return of this warrant with your doings thereon at the time and place of said meeting.
Given under our hands this seventh day of April, 2003.

Carl Seppala, Chair
Eva Schiffer
Dolly Jolly
Anne Awad

Board of Selectmen

April 8, 2003

Hampshire, ss.

In obedience to the within warrant, I have this day as directed posted true and attested copies thereof at the above designated places, to wit:

David Knightly
Constable, Town of Amherst