

TOWN OF BEDFORD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
October 1, 2019

A meeting of the Bedford Historic District Commission was held on Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road, Bedford, NH.

Present: Theresa Walker (Chair), Judy Perry (Vice Chair), Charles Fairman (Planning Board Liaison), Catherine Rombeau (Town Council), Christopher Allen (regular member), Joe Vaccarello (alternate member), Steven MacDougall (alternate member), Mark Connors (Assistant Planning Director, Staff liaison)

Absent: Phil Greazzo (Town Council Alternate), Janet Tamulevich (regular member)

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Acceptance of Agenda:

Chairwoman Walker called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Connors read the agenda into record.

II. New Applications:

1. **Frank Robertson (Owner)** – Request for approval to construct a new single-family residence and associated improvements on a vacant lot on Wallace Road, Lot 14-67-1, Zoned R&A.

Background Information:

Project Background: The applicant was in front of the Historic District Commission at its August and September meetings to present conceptual plans for the construction of a single-family home on the subject lot. The applicant submitted architectural plans for the Commission's review at its September meeting and presented shiplap and vinyl siding samples for the HDC's review. The applicant informed staff that there are no changes to the proposed architecture from the last meeting.

The only new information submitted is the plot plan showing the home's proposed location on the lot, limits of tree clearing, and the proposed driveway and wetland crossing. As the applicant noted at the last meeting, the home will occupy an 'L-shape' footprint with the residence and garage occupying different wings. The plans show a deck on the rear side of the home and an 18' by 36' pool also in the rear yard.

The home will be sited approximately 175-feet at its closest point from Wallace Road (this being the side of the garage). The main wing of the home will be sited approximately 225-feet from the road. The proposed home location is sited closer to Wallace Road than the applicant indicated at the previous meeting. The plot plan shows that the lot slopes

steeply downhill from the proposed location of the pool and the applicant informed staff that his engineers told the applicant it would not be feasible to locate the home further back on the lot. For comparison, the home location is roughly comparable to the location of the new home on the abutting parcel to the south.

The plan shows the driveway curb cut location at the northern part of the parcel. The driveway will curb south to access the home which will be sited approximately in the center of the lot (from a north to south perspective). The driveway will cross a wetland swale that runs across the front of the property and the applicant will need to obtain a NHDES Dredge and Fill permit for the wetland crossing.

The plan shows that the existing tree line will be maintained along Wallace Road apart from tree removal for the driveway itself. It appears some trees will be removed to provide a front yard, but a vegetated buffer of existing woodland spanning approximately 90 to 100 feet will exist between the front yard and the roadway. Staff believes that the applicant did an effective job of maintaining the existing tree line along Wallace Road when the abutting property to the south was developed.

There are a few remaining items that the applicant should share with the Commission, including:

- *Spec sheets for the pool and surrounding fencing*
- *Window, door, and garage door specifications*
- *A spec sheet for the proposed garage cupola*

Staff Recommendations:

Assuming the applicant can provide the outstanding materials at the meeting, staff would recommend approving the application. The Commission reacted favorably to the proposed architecture at its last meeting and it does replicate agricultural architectural elements. The applicant has worked with the Commission over the previous two meetings to responsibly design the home. Since the home will be sited closer to the road than originally envisioned, staff would recommend a condition that staff may require additional landscaping to provide a vegetated buffer from the abutting properties and the road if necessary (Condition #7). Staff would also recommend minimizing disturbances to the stonewall that runs across the front of the property (Condition #1).

Frank Robertson shared the plot plan with septic design showing setbacks for the front, rear, and side yards; the proposed driveway; a proposed pool, and where the house will sit on the lot. The house can't sit as far back as originally proposed because of elevation issues. It will now be in-line with the other home he built on the abutting lot. He indicated the location of the home.

Chairwoman Walker asked if anything in the plans had changed since last meeting. Mr. Robertson indicated that he went from 1 window to 2 windows to add more light (in the area to the right of the front doors when you are facing the home).

Chairwoman Walker asked if he would leave the garage doors as before. Mr. Robertson indicated the doors would be the same with the one all the way to the left being a little larger to accommodate his van.

Chairwoman Walker asked Mr. Robertson to address the clearing on the site. Mr. Robertson went to the lot where the surveyor had pinned the corners of the house and given the size of the trees Mr. Robertson would like to back 75-feet from the rear of the house. On the plans from the street looking into the lot, the back of what will be the garage is about 20-feet clear; another 50-60 feet to the front; and the side another 30-40 feet on the right-hand side of the house.

Chairwoman Walker asked if a tree line or buffer would be maintained between him and the existing abutter. Mr. Robertson talked to the neighbors briefly. There are some pine trees between their properties. Mr. Robertson is unsure which property owns the trees. The neighbor expressed some interest in having the pines taken down. Mr. Robertson would like to fix areas that have overgrown the stone wall, as well as rocks that have fallen and add trees behind the wall in the front yard.

Chairwoman Walker asked if the 70-feet in the back of the home would include room for a pool. Mr. Robertson said it would include room for a pool. In the back Mr. Robertson will level off what he can. He will not have much back yard. If he's lucky he will be able to come out of the walk out and have the land be flat, but then the yard will drop off. Chairwoman Walker asked if the pool would need a retaining structure. Mr. Robertson thinks it will be needed. He speculated they will probably have to shore it off or figure a way to slope it less aggressive to the pool area.

Mr. Fairman understands that the historic homes in the Historic District can be seen from the road and from their neighbor's house. He has no problem with Mr. Robertson cutting down trees, as long as it is not clear-cut. He understands neighbors do not like homes behind them, but it does happen in the Historic District and it happened to him. It is not the Historic District Commission's place to limit or restrict what he can cut down for trees, it is only their job to make sure the home is an aesthetic fit for the Historic District, and he thinks Mr. Robertson has done a good job with the design of this home. Mr. Robertson indicated he wants to keep the hardwood trees and clean them up, and only wants to take down the problematic trees that could potentially fall over on his home.

Mr. Robertson said the wetlands are located after the stone wall. He wouldn't mind clearing out that area of saplings and planting spruce trees and cleaning it up. He thinks it will provide a bigger buffer than what is there now, and it would provide a buffer all year long.

Mr. Connorsw shared some new information the applicant provided on exterior lighting and the cupola. Mr. Robertson says that he does not see the pool going in right away. He doesn't mind coming back regarding the pool at a later time if he needs to.

Ms. Rombeau asked about the exterior lighting of the house. Mr. Robertson is unsure which lighting he will use, but shared sample photos of the one he is leaning toward. He also shared photos of the cupola. The light in the cupola will be a 40-watt bulb so it should not shine out like a beacon to bother the neighbors.

Chairwoman Walker opened the floor for public comment or testimony. There was none. She asked if there were any questions from the members of the commission.

Ms. Rombeau asked if any conditions would have to be added in regard to the addition of the pool and fencing. Mr. Connors recommends adding a condition that the applicant come in for approval on the pool and fencing.

Mr. Fairman asked if the applicant would like to change the date on condition #5 regarding building of the swimming pool – right now he has 2-years before he would have to come back regarding the swimming pool and Mr. Fairman suggested changing it to 4-years. Mr. Connors also said the design of the pool and fencing could be considered in a separate application. Mr. Robertson said that either way works for him. He is not very concerned about the pool at this juncture.

MOTION by Mr. Fairman that the Historic District Commission approve the application to construct a single-family residence on Wallace Road, Lot 14-67-1, as requested by the applicant in accordance with the information submitted, because the applicant has provided evidence that demonstrates consistency with the Historic District ordinance and regulations, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The disturbance of the portion of the stonewall necessary to construct the driveway shall be minimized and the wall rebuilt within the property.**
- 2. Tree clearing associated with the construction of the residence should be consistent with the limits as shown on the plan dated September 24, 2019 submitted by the applicant.**
- 3. The applicant shall maintain existing vegetation to the west of the structure to ensure vegetated screening from the abutting parcel.**
- 4. Prior to the start of construction, the applicant shall obtain all necessary Town approvals.**

5. All work shall be completed by the applicant within two years of the date of the Historic District Commission approval.
6. The applicant shall submit photos of the completed work for the file.
7. Prior to receiving a Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall contact the Planning Department to visit the site. At such time, planning staff shall have the authority to require additional landscaping to provide a vegetated buffer from the road and abutting properties.
8. Prior to the construction of the pool and the fencing the applicant shall submit details to the Planning Department for approval by Planning Staff.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Perry. Vote taken – all in favor. Motion carried.

2. **Kathleen A. Van Anglen Revocable Trust of 2009 (Owner) , Jeremy & April Hinton (Applicants)** – Request for approval to construct a 24’ by 40’ two-story accessory structure at 30 Church Road, Lot 20-62, Zoned R&A.

Background Information:

Project Background: The applicant is in the process of purchasing the subject property and it is staff’s understanding that the sale should be complete by the time of the HDC hearing. The property is 1.1 acres and the existing residence dates to 1957. The home is a brick front Colonial style. Most of the home is brick-sided, however an addition was added in 1996 facing Church Road that is wood-sided. The HDC approved those improvements. Most of the rear of the home is also wood-sided. The home spans 3,680 of interior square-feet and includes a large patio and indoor swimming pool. Trees and vegetation help screen views of the home from Church Road.

Project Description:

The applicant is requesting approval to construct a 24’ by 40’ two-story accessory structure toward the rear of the property. The structure would include garage space for vehicles on its lower level and a multi-purpose room on its upper level. The structure will be designed to mimic a barn with a gambrel roof, rooftop cupola and weathervane, and barn style windows and garage doors.

According to the applicant, the structure would stand 28-feet tall at its highest point. The structure would be clad in grey clapboard siding to match the siding on the addition to the home. The applicant will bring samples of the siding as well as specifications for the doors, windows Staff would recommend approval of the application. The accessory structure has been thoughtfully designed to incorporate design elements consistent with agricultural buildings. The parcel is reasonably compact and staff would warn that it does not appear capable of accommodating any additional structures of considerable size.

, and cupola to the meeting.

The structure would be sited toward the rear of the lot approximately 165-feet back from Church Road and 54-feet at its closest point from the rear property line. The home on the abutting rear parcel is set back considerably from the rear property line. The structure will be sited 37-feet at its closest point from the abutting property to the west. Staff would recommend that the applicant maintain the existing vegetation to the west of the garage to provide vegetated screening from the abutting parcel to the west (Condition #3).

Staff Recommendations:

Staff would recommend approval of the application. The accessory structure has been thoughtfully designed to incorporate design elements consistent with agricultural buildings. The parcel is reasonably compact and staff would warn that it does not appear capable of accommodating any additional structures of considerable size.

Jeremy Hinton of 30 Church Road and Steve Labbe the builder and owner of Cherrywood discussed the Hinton's request for an approval to build a 2-story accessory structure. Mr. Hinton just closed on his home yesterday. He would like 24'x40' detached garage. He and his wife are excited about being new residents and attempted to make sure the exterior met the appearance of other homes in the Historic District. They liked the home on Church Road because it provides more additional space. There were no issues or recommendations from the staff report.

Mr. Labbe explained that it is a gambrel style garage with carriage-style doors and fixed transoms on the side. They shared samples of the white wood clapboard of primed cedar which will match the addition on the back of the house currently. The hope is to not take down any trees; however, there is one to the right of the driveway that may need to come down depending on how they angle the garage. The tree is not in the best condition, but if they can save it they will. The garage will have a black asphalt shingle roof.

Mr. Fairman asked if the driveway would be modified to connect to the garage. Mr. Labbe said that is true. Mr. Fairman asked about where the new septic would go. Mr. Hinton said that Felix Septic Service is coming tomorrow to determine where to put the septic. The existing septic is at the end of life, so the Hintons would like to replace it. Mr. Labbe indicated there is room to the right of the garage for the septic. Mr. Labbe indicated the well is in the pool area in back of the house.

Chairwoman Walker asked if the space above the garage would be finished upstairs to use as additional space. Mr. Hinton indicated it would.

Chairman Walker asked if the one window in the middle on the second floor is just a plain pane with no grids or dividers. Mr. Labbe indicated it is a fixed pane. She also asked if the shutters that look like closing barn doors are fixed. Mr. Labbe indicated they are.

Chairwoman Walker asked how the garage compares in height to the existing home. Mr. Labbe said the garage is 27.8-feet at the highest point of the cupola.

Mr. Vaccarello asked if the rec-space above the garage is 5'x16" in area. Mr. Hinton said that is correct.

Mr. Connors asked if the exterior will be white to match the house and the garage doors will be black or charcoal. Mr. Labbe said the garage doors would look best in charcoal.

Mr. MacDougall asked if the garage would be for everyday use for parking. Mr. Hinton said they do not have a third vehicle yet, so he isn't sure that it will be for everyday use right away.

Chairwoman Walker opened the floor for comment from the public.

Judy Crandall of 37 Church Road – She indicated she had to come before the Historic District Commission 15-16 years ago and it was quite a process. She is very familiar with the house and indicated that it already has an existing attached garage. She asked if the Hintons are proposing to put the garage where the lawn is at the end of the driveway. They reviewed the plans for the location. Ms. Crandall said she doesn't mean to be insulting, but she characterizes the Historic District as having a lot of ambiguities in their processes. She doesn't feel that all of the homes in the district are historic – many like her own were built in the 1970's. She is not against what the Hintons are doing and is just curious about how it will look. She said it is their home and she cannot tell them what to do but wonders about the height in relation to the roof, and if they already have a 2-car garage why are they making another detached garage on the grass. She said the houses on her street are very eclectic. She has seen some things approved in the Historic District that she questions. When she moved to Church Road the 3-homes including the Hintons were not even built yet – truthfully the entire neighborhood looks eclectic, and Bedford looks like a hodgepodge of different styles. She feels houses should inhabit the site, and that a lot of homes in Bedford do not. There have been a lot of changes in the 30 years she's lived here and she doesn't always agree. She just feels that they should give thought to how it will look. She welcomes them to the neighborhood and is sorry to meet for the first time in this way. She just hopes that they put everything together so that it looks pleasing aesthetically. There is no driveway, so she feels it probably will be an adjunct building to their residence.

Chairwoman Walker clarified that there will be a driveway and as mentioned earlier in the meeting there was an oversight and the driveway was not depicted on the plans today. Ms. Crandall feels there is a lot going on with the roofline of the structure. Mr. Connors said the scale is on the bottom of the plan and indicated the dimensions. Mr. Hinton

commented on the height and said the structure is lower in height than the main building. It will not tower over the property.

Ms. Crandall also asked about the septic and well location. She knows if you move the septic you must get approval from the State, it can't just be moved and it must be ensured that there is no leaching. Chairwoman Walker said that is absolutely correct and that it is outside the Historic District Commission's jurisdiction.

Mr. MacDougall asked which utilities would be present. Mr. Hinton said it would just be heat and electricity. Mr. MacDougall asked if it would have its own furnace or boiler. Mr. Labbe said it would have a mini split. Mr. MacDougall asked if it would have a bathroom or water. Mr. Labbe said it would not have a bathroom and it would not have water.

Mr. Hinton had Felix Septic Service come out twice to determine the condition of the existing septic and location.

Chairwoman Walker said she thinks the design is attractive and where it will be sitting is slightly lower. The mix of the rooflines does not seem out of line with other Historic properties to her. It has a very traditional barn-style look which is common with historic colonial homes.

MOTION by Mr. Allen that the Historic District Commission approve the application to construct a two-story 24' by 40' accessory structure at 30 Church Road, Lot 20-62, as requested by the applicant in accordance with the information submitted, because the applicant has provided evidence that demonstrates consistency with the Historic District ordinance and regulations, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. All work shall be completed by the applicant within two years of the date of the Historic District Commission approval.**
- 2. The applicant shall submit photos of the completed work for the file.**
- 3. The applicant shall maintain existing vegetation to the west of the structure to ensure vegetated screening from the abutting parcel.**

The motion was seconded by Ms. Rombeau. Vote taken – all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Hinton thanked Mr. Connors for all of his help through the process.

III. Approval of Minutes – September 3, 2019

MOTION by Ms. Rombeau to accept the September 3, 2019 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaccarello. Vote taken – all in favor. Motion carried.

IV. Communications:

Mr. Connors shared that a public draft of the Master Plan is almost ready after some delays to the project (for a number of reasons). The Master Plan is a long-range plan for the town. He will keep everyone updated on when it is released after which there will be a 30-day period for public comment, followed by a public event after that. It will definitely be this year.

V. Members Comments and Concerns:

- None

VI. Adjournment:

MOTION by Ms. Perry to adjourn meeting at 7:45pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Allen. Vote taken – all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Tiffany Lewis