

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES
August 6, 2019**

A meeting of the Bedford Historic District Commission was held on Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Road, Bedford, NH.

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

Absent: Judy Perry (Vice Chair), Phil Greazzo (Town Council Alternate), Steven MacDougall (alternate 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.

Old Business:

- None

II. New Applications:

1. **Greg Zimmerman (Applicant), Zimmerman/Chew Family Revocable Trust (Owner) – Request to remove three windows from the north elevation of an attached barn and replace with wood clapboard siding at 86 Bedford Center Road, Lot 20-13, Zoned R&A.**

Greg Zimmerman of 86 Bedford Center Road introduced himself. He is continuing a painting project to the north face of the attached barn on his property. The lower windows are in sad shape. They are very soft. He shared a photo of the condition of the window. He initially looked at replacing the windows, and then thought he might remove them because the windows don't have much function on the lower level of a barn. There are 3 windows - one of which is blocked by a large tree that shades everything and he is not getting much light coming through the windows as a result.

Mr. Zimmerman shared photos of the property over the decades. The middle windows disappear from the photos from the 1930's. In the photo from 1901 it looks as though there were no windows there. During the 1960's and 1970's

chickens were kept in the basement of the barn, and he believes that is why the windows were added because chickens need to know the cycle of the day for egg production.

Mr. Zimmerman would like to remove the 3 windows in order to bring back a look that is clean (it looks lopsided having no windows on the top and only on the lower level), and for ease of repair.

Ms. Walker asked what the lower portion of the barn is used for today. Mr. Zimmerman indicated it is being used for storage. Ms. Walker asked if the intent is to pull the windows out and replace with clapboard siding similar to what is in existence on the rest of the barn and paint to match. Mr. Zimmerman said he would remove the windows and probably be left with rough cut boards to match the sheeting that is behind there, and then clapboard over it with pre-primed cedar clapboards. It would match everything above and below, and to the left and right of the windows currently.

Mr. Connor asked if the goal, when finished, is to make it look as though there were never windows there. Mr. Zimmerman agreed.

Mr. Fairman asked if he would take out some of the other clapboard and stagger the joints. Mr. Zimmerman indicated he would. The clapboards below the windows and halfway up to the windows are not in the best shape anyways, so he would intend to replace them, as well. He would take off everything from the top of the window and down and then put up new cedar across the face of that whole portion.

Ms. Walker opened the floor for comments and questions. There were none.

MOTION by Mr. Allen that the Historic District Commission approve the application to remove the 3 windows on the North façade of the barn and replace with clapboard siding at 86 Bedford Center Road, Lot 20-13, as requested by the applicant in accordance with the application 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 in 2 years of the date of Historic District Commission approval, and 2) The applicant shall submit photos of the completed work for the file. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tamulevich. Vote taken – all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Zimmerman asked if hard copy photos or electronic were preferred. Mr. Connors indicated that either would be fine.

2. **Frank Robertson (Owner) – Request for conceptual review of potential architectural styles for a proposed new single-family residence on a vacant lot on Wallace Road, Lot 14-67-1, Zoned R&A.**

Ms. Walker indicated that Mr. Robertson had come before the Historic District Commission months ago to discuss the property adjacent to the one we would be discussing this evening. Mr. Robertson indicated that was correct. Ms. Walker asked if construction was underway on the property the Historic District Commission approved of several months ago. Mr. Robertson said that was correct. He said things are moving along well, and the exterior is almost done and they are in the process of doing the septic now. The underground electrical is all done and they hope to do landscaping soon after they button up the interior.

Ms. Walker indicated that the property to be discussed tonight is the property immediately to the right when looking at a photo. Mr. Robertson indicated that is correct. He would like to get feedback and ideas on what he can do so that he doesn't hit a roadblock like he did last time around. He and his wife were driving around in Massachusetts and saw a barn-style home and snapped some photos of it which they shared for review. He would like to build something similar, perhaps a little bigger with more windows. He asked if it would be o.k. to put more windows and bigger windows on the back side of the house. The lot slopes back and would allow for a walk-out basement, so he would like to have bigger windows in the back so that there would be a better view of the back of the house from the great room.

In an attempt to confirm orientation on the lot Chairwoman Walker asked if the rear of the lot slopes so that it would permit a walk-out basement. Mr. Robertson confirmed it did. He said the main part of the house as it turns would slope off toward the back of the lot and the walk-out would be from there.

Mr. Robertson asked to view an aerial photo of Lot 14-67- which is in a "T" shape. He said the goal is to push his house a little further back and stagger it behind the one he is building now and the one to the right of him – and kind of push it behind those two houses. There are some wetlands in the back, so he is not sure how far back he can go yet. If you are in the street looking at the lot - the driveway starts on the right and curves to the left so it blocks most of the house from the road.

Chairwoman Walker asked for clarification and said, "Where I see the intersection of Lane and Wallace – the driveway would be on the side of your lot furthest away from Lane." Mr. Robertson indicated that is correct. He said at the time the approved wetlands variance occurred the driveway was located pretty much where the "hand" is going through there now. He walked the lot with the surveyor the other day and he indicated they are still pushing for that same area.

Chairwoman Walker asked if there were wetlands on the front portion of the property that caused the driveway to be pushed in that direction. Mr. Robertson thinks that is how it was designed before. There are a couple of big trees they are trying to go through in that area, and he thinks it would look nice to keep the trees and skirt right through them and head out back.

Chairwoman Walker asked him to describe how far back the house he is currently building on the other lot is from the abutter. Mr. Robertson indicated he would be way behind the abutter. Chairwoman Walker asked in relationship to the house that is existing at 328 – where is the home that is currently under construction and how far back on its lot does it sit. Mr. Robertson indicated on the aerial photo where the number “328” is there is a line right next to it which goes through the red mark that divides his lot and the lot he is building on, and the white house is located just before that line and is to the left of his pool. Chairwoman Walker asked if he was contemplating having the house we are discussing tonight sitting farther back. Mr. Robertson indicated that is correct. Chairwoman Walker asked if he wishes to take advantage of the “T” shaped lot. Mr. Robertson indicated he would like to if he can, but there are wetlands back there, so he can only go so far, but his goal is to push back as far as he can. He will need to cut some of the trees in the back to open it up. He would like to try having a backyard if he could. For the house he just sold he cut down a bunch of pine trees which wreaked havoc on the roof, so he would like to push some of the pine trees away from the house as best as possible and open it up a little bit.

Chairwoman Walker looked at the photo of the barn-style home Mr. Robertson presented and asked how he envisioned it facing the street. He indicated the windows near the tree on the left of the photo would be facing the street. It is an “L” shaped home and the garage would be facing Lot #328. The garage would not be facing the road. Chairwoman Walker clarified that what you would see is the side of the barn, several windows, and the main entrance and the garage would be to the side. When looking at the photo of the barn-style home he saw in Massachusetts where the entrance is - Mr. Robertson indicated he would have to push that part further out, and he would rather have the front entrance face the street and leave the driveway as it is in the photo – so you would drive up the driveway and it would turn into the garage. The front entrance is straight ahead – but not the garage – only the front entrance faces straight ahead. The front entrance to the house he is building has grown on him and his wife a lot, so he may want to do something similar to that and add more columns (maybe have two on each side). He is not 100% sure yet.

Chairwoman Walker opened the floor for comments and questions about the basic architectural style of the barn-style property.

Chairwoman Walker feels the simplicity of the clapboard siding is appealing and would be consistent with other uses in the district as well as the minimalist design. Mr. Robertson indicated he would like to add a second cupola on the other side.

Mr. Fairman asked if it would be a 2-story home. Mr. Robertson said the way the walk-out is, it may allow him *not* to do that. His idea is to build the house and live in it until he can't walk; so, a first-floor master is appealing to him and his wife would like the kids on the same floor as them, so he might do a one-level ranch. Mr. Fairman indicated that if he were to decide to make a 2-story home he would probably want more dormers, especially over the garage.

Mr. Fairman suggested that Mr. Robertson view another barn-style home located on 10 Gage Road in Bedford, and Chairwoman Walker mentioned one in Manchester on North River Road near the intersection of Union St. She believes that structure was really a barn at one point and was an authentic conversion to a home.

Mr. Fairman indicated that colonial ranch homes are usually plain and simple. The oldest house in Bedford is a ranch on Meetinghouse Road just off of Route 101, and it is a very small; so, if Mr. Robertson is thinking along the terms of a ranch home he will want to keep it very plain, simple and straightforward. You can have brick fronts on colonial ranches, but not a lot of peaks.

Mr. Robertson would like to eliminate some of the rooflines. He is trying to follow more of the historical look based on prior conversation with the Historic District Commission. He showed a photo of a light green ranch, but said where the garage bumps out, he would rather see it straight, and he would like to flatten the roof out. If he is does not construct a barn-style home an "L" shaped ranch that is plain, basic, with columns in the front is what he would be shooting for.

In Mr. Fairman's view he does not think this would be too bad. He suggests changing the stone to brick (because brick is more colonial than stone is). Mr. Robertson said that he never gave stone a thought, based on his last meeting with the Historic District Commission.

Ms. Tamulevich thanked Mr. Robertson for starting his construction project by talking with the Historic District Commission and anticipated it would be easier this time around. She recommends that he first decides whether he wants a ranch or a saltbox....Mr. Robertson indicated he doesn't yet know what direction he is going to go in, so he is presenting two options to see where he will land. He and his wife saw another home they liked – it was straight colonial across, but bigger, and with a garage, and a couple of columns at the entrance. He thinks that style home may look nice with a cupola on the top. It would be almost like what he is building now, but in an "L" shape.

Ms. Tamulevich shared two websites he may want to consult for ideas: Early New England Homes website which shows examples of historic homes; and Historic Homes in New Hampshire website which may also provide ideas. She has no problem with an “L” shape whether it is a barn or a ranch – but she feels he needs to decide what he wants especially since he plans to live there for a long time.

Mr. Robertson would like to meet with an architect to start drafting something up so that by next visit he will have an actual set of plans to work off of.

Chairwoman Walker suggested referring to photos provided by Mr. Zimmerman, the homeowner who appeared right before Mr. Robertson at this meeting because he has a colonial in an “L” shape. She thinks it would be consistent with other development within the Historic District and in town. She sees similarities in the way Mr. Robertson would like to orient his home, and with cupolas rather than 2 chimneys like the Zimmerman home has.

Mr. Robertson asked the Commission’s thoughts about a white home with black windows. There is a home in the Historic District that has that now – and he likes the look of it. Since it will be so plain, he would like a little flair to it. Chairwoman Walker doesn’t think it is uncommon to have painted windows and would assume people can paint them black. Mr. Fairman also does not see a problem, nor did anyone else.

Mr. Robertson asked about having a pool in the back. Chairwoman Walker said there are other pools in the Historic District.

Chairwoman Walker asked about siding choices. She knows that was an issue with his previous property. Mr. Robertson recently sold his home in Bedford and had to replace the atrium window. They found some rot which required him to fix the siding and everything else. He said it was a nightmare. Because of this he may want to do vinyl. He thinks the home he is building came out pretty good, but he is not sold on vinyl siding yet, but would like to have it as an option. He does think he would like to build a white home, though. Chairwoman Walker doesn’t think anyone would object to white. Mr. Fairman asked the color of the building Mr. Robertson is currently building. Mr. Robertson indicated it is also white. He had initially thought about grey, but he doesn’t think that color would look as good.

Ms. Tamulevich still thinks he needs to decide how many flights of stairs he wants. Now that Mr. Robertson knows he can go in a couple of different directions, he will talk with his wife, and they can sit with an architect and come back to the Historic District with a set of plans. He just didn’t want to spend \$3,000 and go in the wrong direction.

Chairwoman Walker appreciates him coming in and said starting the conversation before he has plans drawn up. She shared that they had a conceptual discussion with another taxpayer a couple months ago and that also worked well for them. She appreciates him coming in and giving the Historic District Commission the opportunity to look at some of his ideas.

Ms. Rombeau asked about back windows. She didn't think they would be an issue especially in the back. Mr. Robertson said he does not want to do anything crazy with the windows just something bigger. He would just like to have a bright house. Again, he needs to sit with an architect about it. Ms. Rombeau indicated a barn-style home may give him more options over a ranch-style home.

Mr. Fairman said ranches allow for skylights. Mr. Robertson had a home with skylights and indicated he never wants to have them again. He would like to keep things simple and have a relatively maintenance-free home. If he were to go with a barn-style home Chairwoman Walker suggested he may want to look into post and beam construction as an option and thinks it will lend itself to that type of construction very well. She also said she thinks the "L" shape may work on the lot very well.

Mr. Robertson said the garage in the photo of the red barn-style home he provided has a 3-bay garage – he asked about putting in a 4th bay with a 9-foot door so he could squeeze his large van in during the winter. Chairwoman Walker thinks it would be easier if the roofline were straight. She wouldn't want it to be straight across for 3-bays and then have a bump-up for the 4th bay. Mr. Fairman suggested that he check the town rules about storing a commercial vehicle. Mr. Robertson indicated it is a sprinter with seats in the back for his kids, but technically may be considered a commercial vehicle. Mr. Robertson will look into it.

Chairwoman Walker asked if Mr. Connors can think of anything with 4 garage bays (with one being larger) in the Historic District Bedford that would be similar to what Mr. Robertson is discussing. Mr. Connors could not think of anything, but that doesn't necessarily preclude it.

Chairwoman Walker opened the floor for comments and questions from the public.

Greg Zimmerman of 86 Bedford Center Road asked about colors. When he sat on the Historic District Commission colors were not under their purview, so he wondered if that had changed, and if he would need to come before the Historic District Commission for approval of colors on his property. Mr. Connors says non-traditional colors (such as hot pink) would need board approval. Mr. Zimmerman said that because they used blood as dyes in Colonial days – colors like red and pink used to be considered traditional colonial colors. He would just like to make sure

that he doesn't need to come before the Historic District Commission if he is changing window colors because colors did not used to be under Historic District Commission purview. Mr. Connors said he was correct, and he said the language only says something about non-traditional/very unusual colors. In that case, they might ask him to come before the Historic District Commission. Ms. Tamulevich indicated day-glow colors are not acceptable.

Lisa Muskat of 49 Church Rd. indicated that she was told she had to paint their house white. She thinks it is a great idea to set the house back towards the "T". She's heard some buzz that the guys who cleared the lot for the construction that is just being completed now may have cleared the wrong section and then had to clear another section; so, she would like to know what would be put in place so that the property Mr. Robertson would like to construct next is prepped for the foundation to go in and that only the trees that really need to come down are removed because she thinks it left properties to the South very exposed. Mr. Robertson said it is the first he has heard of that. The only thing he knows about is that they had to clear a few more trees for the septic. They didn't tag far enough back for that to happen. He said on his lot he would only like to take down enough trees to have a yard. He likes maples and birches and would like to keep them as much as possible but would like to get rid of the pines. He said it is inevitable to miss a few trees, but he does not think they took anything down to just "take it down".

Ms. Muskat asked if there were restrictions on taking down trees of a certain diameter and that they must be tagged to remain unless they are approved for removal. Mr. Connors indicated that if you have an existing lot you can take down trees that are less than 15" in diameter, but if taking down trees that are bigger than that then we ask you to come before the Commission. Ms. Muskat says she believe that takes away the "carte blanche" to excavate just to create a more backyard. Mr. Connors agreed, and Mr. Robertson agreed to come back into the Historic District Commission if it should happen that he needs to take down trees larger than 15" in diameter.

Mr. Robertson indicated that he is not going to clear-cut the whole back end of the property, but he doesn't want any widow-makers hanging around his house, and he does not want to have property damage in a storm. He'd like to clean it up a little bit, and he would like to leave some of the trees that are not pines throughout the yard if he can. He said he will clear out as much as he has to put his house in.

When Mr. Robertson does the plans for the house Mr. Connors asked him to show limits of tree cutting. Mr. Robertson agreed and said that he can only go back and clear trees only so far because there are wetlands back there. He believes it is the same thing in the front, and you hit wetlands coming 20 feet off of the road. He walked and tagged it the other day with the surveyor and there is a whole swath

going from the #328 house all the way to the house he is building across the road – so all of that (short of the driveway) is all getting left. He noticed there are vines growing up some of the trees and indicated he wouldn't mind getting that out of there. Chairwoman Walker said that is unfortunately, the never-ending task of most property-owners in the State these days, but she can appreciate the desire to get rid of it. Mr. Robertson said he does not want to hear the road more than anybody else does, so he would like to tuck his house back and have some property, but he is not going to clear-cut the lot to get his house in there either. He will find a happy medium.

Nicole Chauvette of 328 Wallace Rd. (the neighboring house) indicated the pine trees in the area are terrible. She said that pines line her driveway and they are terrible, so she would be interested in talking to him to see if he would like to take the pines along her driveway down too. When the property lines were set, she said it looks like someone purposely put in the pines because they line the property line. In regard to the wetlands she asked if putting his driveway right next to her driveway would create a big open way between both of their houses. Mr. Robertson said it would not, and that his driveway would be closer to her driveway than the house he is currently building, but it is not right on the corner. It will come back. He also said that he was thinking of planting arborvitaes between the pines. He thinks the diameter of the pines that line Ms. Chauvette's property line are greater than 15" in diameter. Ms. Chauvette says she has a ranch in an "L" shape with stone face and they are framing in an entryway and bringing the home back to life. The front of the house has stone, and the back of the house has floor to ceiling windows, so she asks him to keep this in mind because where he is facing the back of the house he might not want to be facing their wall of windows.

Mr. Robertson said the back of the house will not be facing her house. It will be facing the hammer of the lot. The front of his house will face Wallace Road, and the garage doors would be facing Ms. Chauvette's house. She indicated that she is the neighboring lot and would be interested to know where the driveway will layout. She said she believes the wetlands are drainage from whoever owned the home before her. It drains and there is a pipe under her driveway. Mr. Robertson indicated he would do something similar to that. Ms. Chauvette indicated that the wetlands in back are actually a natural stream, so that's probably where the drainage is coming from.

Mr. Fairman thinks if Mr. Robertson is going to push his building back he will need to be cognizant of looking into the rear of homes on both sides. He asked Mr. Robertson to keep that in mind as he locates and places his building, and if necessary, put up a hedgerow for privacy. Keep in mind if you are pushing back toward other houses – you don't want... and they don't want you looking in their

back windows. Mr. Robertson said he couldn't agree more and values his privacy too.

Ms. Tamulevich said Mr. Robertson is entitled to a driveway and a back yard. He owns the land, and even though he is in the Historic District he is still allowed to build a house and she wants him to feel comfortable doing so. Mr. Robertson said he understands. He doesn't want a big yard because he just came from having one and the mowing was atrocious; he doesn't want to impede on other people's privacy; he is not going to have windows overlooking the neighbors; he is not going to clear-cut the lot – he just wants a private, normal setting.

Chairwoman Walker looks forward to seeing him again in the coming months.

II. Other Business:

- None

III. Approval of Minutes – July 2, 2019

MOTION by Ms. Tamulevich to accept the July 2, 2019 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Vaccarello. Two abstentions: Ms. Rombeau and Mr. Fairman who were absent for that meeting. Vote taken – all in favor. Motion carried.

IV. Communications:

Mr. Connors said they finalized the fact sheet discussed last meeting and he will bring it to the next meeting. Chairwoman Walker asked if everything had been submitted for the State program we discussed last month. Mr. Connors indicated that everything had been submitted. He let them know the Historic District Commission approved the code of conduct.

V. Members Comments and Concerns:

Mr. Allen asked about the fact sheet to be sent to new residents of the district. Mr. Zimmerman's question tonight about color and our purview made Mr. Allen wonder if the fact sheet is something that should it be sent to all the residents of the district. Ms. Rombeau asked if the reason we were not sending it to everybody was related to the postage cost. Mr. Connors said it had never been suggested before, but he will look into the cost. Ms. Rombeau feels that many people in the district have said they were unaware and just didn't know about some of the rules. Chairwoman Walker asked how many houses are in the district. Mr. Connors guessed there are about 200 and that postage is about 50-cents now.

Mr. Vaccarello suggests putting the rules and codes up on the website. Chairwoman Walker suggests having documentation available at the Town Hall. Ms. Rombeau feels if

it doesn't occur to someone that it is even an issue – why then would they even look for it online, or at the Town Hall. Mr. Vaccarello said the mailer would be a reminder to residents that they are living in the Historic District and should look to the website for the rules and regulations. Chairwoman Walker said you'd would need to keep up as properties change hands and send the mailer to the subsequent homeowners. Mr. Fairman thinks people who have been living in the Historic District for a while probably know the rules (such as rules about trees), but people moving in new might not, so we would need to take some steps to make sure that real estate agents make sure to let them know they are in the Historic District and that there are special rules. He's not sure a mailing would catch the people you need to catch. The important thing is that they know they are in the Historic District and know the rules. They will need to look up the rules or come into the planning staff and ask about them. He's not sure a mailing would be particularly helpful.

Chairwoman Walker said a lot of people do know they are in the Historic District, but there are many who haven't come before the Historic District Commission and haven't made any substantial changes to the property so when they go to do that it may not be on the top of the list of things they need to address, and coming before the Historic District Commission may not be in their consciousness, so although no action may be perfect, at least making an attempt to let more people know would be worthwhile. A cost/benefit analysis should be undertaken.

VI. Adjournment:

MOTION by Ms. Rombeau to adjourn meeting at 7:50 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tamulevich . Vote taken – all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Tiffany Lewis