

**MINUTES
TOWN OF TOPSHAM
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 100 MAIN STREET
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025, 6:00 P.M.**

A meeting of the Topsham Historic District Commission was held on Wednesday, October 8, 2025 in the Donald A. Russell meeting room in the Municipal Building at 100 Main Street. Chairman Peter Davison called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL – Roll call was conducted and those in attendance included:

Peter Davison
Wayne Davis
John Graham
Andrew Munsey

Member(s) Absent: Dominic Cardella

Staff in Attendance: Skye Siladi, Director of Planning

2. MINUTES - APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2025 MEETING

Motion was made by Mr. Graham, seconded by Mr. Munsey, and it was unanimously (of those present)

VOTED

To approve the minutes of the September 10, 2025 meeting, as written in the second draft.

3. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION

TAX MAP U06, LOT 39 – APPLICANTS, KATHLEEN AND SCOTT GALLANT, D/B/A GALLANT PROPERTIES, INC., SEEK TO INSTALL A SECOND STORY REAR ADDITION WITH A CANTILEVERED DECK AND EXTERIOR ENTRY ROOF

History of the building notes that it was constructed circa 1890 – a two-story Greek Revival style structure and is a non-contributing structure (according to the 2010 Architectural Survey). Historically, the use of the building has consisted of a small commercial business on the first floor and a residential unit on the second floor. The applicants, Kathleen and Scott Gallant, purchased the property in June 2022.

In speaking to his application, Scott Gallant told the Board that the construction of the second floor after the fire in the 1970's was poorly done. Two-by-fours were used where two-by-sixes

should have been used. He said the exterior walls on the eastern side of the building, as well as the north and south sides are of balloon construction and are bowed out due to water and fire damage. These walls needed to be replaced with 2x6 exterior walls. The 2x6 roof framing was not sufficient and has been strengthened with 2x8 scabs (i.e., wood used to reinforce or extend another piece of timber). The east gable end and rotted exterior deck on the second level needed to be moved or removed.

There is a deck in place, and he would like to enclose a portion of it and extend the roof to cover the rest, as well as remove the existing stair case. The roof line will remain the same, just extended out to cover the existing second story deck. Mr. Gallant said currently there is only one internal egress from the second floor, and he is discussing this with the Code Enforcement Officer to determine how best to add a second egress with the exterior stair case being removed. The shed on the back will remain, but with an enclosed addition above it rather than an open second story deck extension.

Mr. Gallant said he completed the work on the deck as he didn't realize he needed permission from the Historic District before making the change to the back of the building. He said he explained what he was going to do to the former Planning Director and thought there was no objection.

Mr. Gallant said he plans to use the property as it has historically been utilized (i.e., a small commercial business on the first floor and a residential unit on the second floor). Gallant Real Estate will occupy the first floor, and a residential unit will remain on the second floor. He said he would like the Board's approval to continue with the construction in process to remedy the deficiencies he noted.

Chairman Davison asked if there was anyone from members of the public wishing to comment.

Pete Rosenberg came forward to speak. A portion of his comments are listed below:

- Said he lives across from the building.
- Confusing what the applicant is describing.
- Concerned that the "giant arch" is inappropriate for the district and is here to object to the applicant receiving any exceptions.
- Is at meeting to share his only experience with the applicant.
- Said his experience was the most obnoxious one he ever had.
- Parked his car in the parking lot of the house while he mowed his lawn. Parked there as he did not know the building had been sold.
- Applicant blocked his car with his truck.
- Approached Mr. Gallant to apologize for parking there and asked him to move his truck so I could remove my car.
- He stated Mr. Gallant nearly assaulted me. He tried to intimidate me. Said he didn't care if I was a neighbor. I had to call the police. Police had to call for backup. Took me almost an hour to be able to remove my car.
- A month later I witnessed the applicant treating a man the same way as he did me.

- I have no objection to the building but want it on record that Mr. Gallant is the biggest jerk I ever met. He is certainly not what you would expect from a good neighbor.
- This was the single worse experience I have ever had. There should be consequences for his for his attitude.
- He is not in compliance with the ordinance. Went ahead with the changes before receiving approval.
- Said it is his (Mr. Robinson's) understanding, and maybe not so, that the applicant wants to cut the top of the trees from his building so occupants can see the water. If so, he needs to comply with ordinance regulations.

Mr. Gallant responded that he was approached by another neighbor who brought up the idea of cutting the tree tops.

With no more comments to be heard, the public hearing was declared closed.

Motion was made by Mr. Graham, seconded by Mr. Munsey, and it was unanimously (of those present)

VOTED

That the Historic District Commission table the Certificate of Appropriateness for an exterior rear addition, cantilevered deck, and a rain guard for the structure located at 21 Main Street as outlined in the application. The Board requests the addition of existing photos from different angles from the building as they exist today, including from the view on Green Street. The Board requests that the revised application include the rain guard on the north side as proposed with overall dimension.

4. ADOURNMENT

Motion was made, seconded, and it was unanimously (of those present)

VOTED

To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Williams, Recording Secretary