

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

MAY 6, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, May 6, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Suzanne Litty, James Deerin, Patricia Ingram, Jennifer Stanley, and Julie Wells. Also in attendance was Town Administrator Cheryl Lewis.

The minutes of the meeting of April 1, 2019 were not available and will be reviewed in the June, 2019 meeting.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #19-95, Linda Taffe, 307 S. Morris St., pre-fabricated 6' x 10' lean to shed to be attached to existing shed for use as storage; wood siding will be painted to match existing shed; to be placed on professionally prepared base by contractor. Ms. Taffe was represented by her partner, Dan. Dan explained to the commission members that the lean-to shed will be attached to the existing shed on property and would have black/green shingles to match the roofing on the existing shed. The commission noted that the lean to was being sited so that it was closer to the road. Dan explained that the reason for that was that area was on higher ground and out of sight from the neighbors. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to accept the attachment of a lean to shed to the existing shed at 307 S. Morris Street, not to exceed a height of 16'. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried with all in favor.
2. Permit #19-26, Eleanor Denegre, 106 Benoni Street, paint metal roof black forest green to match dark green shutters; paint trim and fences bright white. Ms. Litty recused herself from the commission in order to represent Ms. Denegre. Ms. Litty noted that Ms. Denegre's metal roof is currently an orangey/peach color and that the trim and fencing is cream color. Mrs. Ingram made a motion that the commission members accept the application to change the metal roof color to match the applicant's dark green shutters and to paint the trim and fencing bright white. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried. Ms. Litty rejoined the meeting.
3. Permit #19-28, Robert Warner and Jean Hemphill, 107 Tred Avon Avenue, purchase pre-fabricated shed to replace existing dilapidated shed. The owners were represented by Ms. Hemphill's sister, Louisa Zendt. Mrs. Zendt explained that the owners' existing shed would be replaced a new shed, which would be a little larger, and would be placed close to the location of the existing shed, which would be removed. A picture of the new shed attached to the application showed it to have a cupola and window above a double door. Mrs. Zendt pointed out that the Warner/Hemphill shed would not have the cupola nor window as shown and that their shed would have 2 sets of doors, no shutters, and a green metal roof. It would also be 3' taller than their existing shed with a 12 pitch roof and that the total size would be 12' x 18'. Chairman Costigan pointed out that the commission would need verification that the new shed would be no more than 16' tall and that the applicants should let the town office know the

height of the building as well as the setbacks. When asked about the color, Mrs. Zendt responded that the shed would be stained the same color as the house and that its roof would match the house as well. Mr. Deerin made a motion to approve the requested construction of a new shed to replace the existing shed at 107 Tred Avon Avenue and that the new shed would be prefabricated as shown on the sheet except that it will have no shutters or light over the double door or a cupola and that it will have a metal roof painted green with stained gray siding conditioned upon confirmation of the application that the new shed will be less than 16' in overall height and meet the requirements of the town code. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried with all in favor.

4. Katie Schroeder, 314 Tilghman Street, replacing T-111 siding on marina side of building and removing windows. Mrs. Schroeder was represented by Administrator Cheryl Lewis. Administrator Lewis explained that water had been coming into the building which will require the need for the siding to be removed in order to figure out what is causing the problem. The new siding will be replaced with what currently exists on the building, which is T-111. The windows (on the second floor of the side of the building facing Brewar's Oxford Boatyard) which the applicant wants to remove are not original windows and the space where the windows are located is just used for storage. Chairman Costigan stated that he had a problem with that request in that he was wondering what the building would look like without the windows. However, he recognized that the siding was damaged and needed to have something done to it. In referencing Doug Hanks' book entitled "Oxford Treasures Then and Now", it showed a picture of the building with windows. He felt that visually speaking, without the windows the building would look unfriendly and no longer connect to what the building used to look like. Ms. Litty agreed with Chairman Costigan. Mrs. Stanley suggested that maybe a request should be made to the owner to provide a drawing of what the building would look like without the windows as she too agreed that it would look like a large wall. Administrator Lewis questioned that if faux windows were used to mimic and replace the original windows, would the commission be open to something of that nature. The group stated they would be receptive to that idea. Mr. Deerin stated that he thought the windows looked worse than a blank wall but that a mimicking faux window treatment was a great idea and was on board with getting rid of the windows and replacing them with faux windows to break it up that wall a little bit. Administrator Lewis stated that is what she wanted to suggest to the owner and that she would talk to her about it. She asked if the commission was ok with the owner starting on the siding. Chairman Costigan responded that if they want to pull off the old siding to find out what is going on there that would make sense. However, he felt that a plan was really needed but that there didn't seem to be one. Mr. Deerin suggested that the permit be deferred and that consideration of this application be pending. Administrator Lewis stated she would talk to the applicant to get back in touch with the board with a plan. All were in favor of deferring the application.
5. Permit #19-27, A. H. Passarella, 103 Jefferson St., screen-in downstairs side porch. Mr. Passarella explained to the commission that the porch in question was on the Truax south side of his property. The west elevation drawing showed a door, which would be new, with wood steps leading down from the door. Mr. Passarella noted that plans to screen in the porch had been approved back in the 1990's but that he never got around to doing it. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to accept the proposal to screen in the side porch on 103 Jefferson Street. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried with all in favor.
6. Permit #19-30, Gail VanWinkle, 200 Tred Avon Ave., new roof on existing studio addition to left of house. Administrator Lewis presented the application for the Mrs. VanWinkle explaining that the roof in question was leaking, that the owner had acquired a roofer, and that there are cedar shingles currently in use on the house but that the owner wants to replace this section of roofing

with architectural grade shingles. Chairman Costigan verified that that section of roofing on the VanWinkle house was in bad shape and though the commission would like to see her use cedar shingles, they understand that she needs to do something now. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the commission accept the proposal to put the roof on the addition of 200 Tred Avon Avenue and that the featured color will be Resawn Shake by Landmark Designer Shingles. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried by all in favor.

7. Permit # 19-12, FreiderikosAthanasopoulos, 208 Factory Street, demolish existing garage; addition of 1 ½ story frame garage with studio and bath above; demolish existing swimming pool and relocate adjacent to addition surrounded with wood deck and brick walkway, brick veneer, and brick steps with wrought iron handrail and Permit #19-31, FreiderikosAthanasopoulos, 208 Factory Street, raise existing house +24" to meet flood ordinance elevation Both Mr. Athanasopoulos and his residential designer Timothy Kearns were present to meet with the commission. When asked about the two permits, Mr. Kearns noted that at this time, he and the owner only wanted to discuss Permit #19-31 whereby the owner wanted to lift his house to comply with the floodplain elevation which had yet to be determined. Administrator Lewis spoke stating that from the floodplain point of view, she had asked them to bring her an elevation certificate to review and that from what elevation information she currently has on file, it shows that the house is not sufficiently elevated. She added that she spoken with Mr. Athanasopoulos and explained that when one makes substantial improvements to a property, one needs to insure that the house has been properly elevated. Another factor involves how to measure elevation which has changed from the time in which Mr. Athanasopoulos' house was built. She noted that she will determine what the first floor elevation will be as that is her job and that she has been trained by FEMA, who will hold her responsible. Chairman Costigan responded that the HDC will therefore need to deal with a concept instead of hard numbers and that the commission has dealt with raising houses in the past. He asked how the other commission members felt about it. Mr. Deerin asked if the work proposed to be done falls within the definition that requires the raising of the structure. Administrator Lewis responded that it did --- that anytime one improves more than 50% of the value of the house that is considered as substantial improvements. Mr. Deerin reflected that the HDC did not have much leeway in terms of the raising of a house to comply with FEMA and could not say no. Administrator Lewis agreed in that floodplain elevation overrules all other criteria. Mr. Deerin noted that he did not think the HDC should allow the applicant to raise the house as high as he wanted to. Chairman Costigan offered that the commission could approve the raising of the house 24" but if that did not meet the requirements, the commission could revisit it. Administrator Lewis offered that the commission could say 24" or more, depending on what meets the requirements. In thinking it over, Chairman Costigan asked if the +24" could be removed from the Description of Proposed Work on the building permit and to revise the request to read "raise existing house to meet floodplain ordinance." This was considered as a motion and seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried with all in favor. Chairman Costigan added that the only caveat to this would be that once the owner has a hard number, that he let Administrator Lewis know. Mr. Deerin added that technically the motion would be to defer consideration, at the applicant's request, for the additional matters on the agenda until they are brought back. The motion was seconded by Chairman Costigan and unanimously carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permits.

CONSULTATION

The following consultations were held:

1. Architect Cameron MacTavish for Thomas Mandylas, property owner of 200 West Street and the adjoining vacant lot next to it, was present to discuss Mr. Mandylas' plans for a proposed addition. Mr. MacTavish presented one set of concept plans (dated 5/6/19) showing the existing conditions on the property at 200 West Street showing the house and mechanical shed next to it. He noted that his client had also purchased the adjacent lot that he will be combining with the 200 West Street property in order to create a single parcel. The proposal is to move an existing frame structure on the lot to another location and build a new accessory structure. Plans also include bumping out the kitchen a little bit. Sketches were presented showing what the proposed changes would look like from Tred Avon Avenue and the water. An existing utility shed would go away and all the mechanicals for the house would go in the new accessory structure which would be moved further out from the house. The proposed accessory structure will be under 18'. The main house will have a new walk out deck over the existing porch instead of a porch roof, which would be accessed from the second floor. The front façade of the house would not significantly change. The owner is also investigating the possibility of putting in a geo-thermal system. Mr. MacTavish stated that for the new accessory structure, he and the owner are proposing that the new building have a Tesla solar roof that will look much like slate. Chairman Costigan noted that the commission had had a presentation on that type of roofing in the past. Mr. MacTavish added that on the porch they would want a metal roof. Chairman Costigan stated that in looking at the front elevation drawing of the new accessory structure, it appeared to have 2 bays on the front and a bay on the right that might be a garage door. Mr. MacTavish replied that this was correct – that it is a garage door that does not look like a garage door. Chairman Costigan asked the group for their comments on the proposed work. Mrs. Wells replied that she loved the concept drawings and that it was a great improvement to the lot and well balanced. Mr. Deerin noted that he would want to see the Tesla shingles on an actual area. The owner, Mr. Mandylas, responded that they could be seen on the Tesla website and that they are currently being used in California. Mr. Deerin added that he liked the concept. Ms. Litty agreed with Mr. Deerin as did the other commission members.
2. Property owner of 305 Market Street, Bob Fay, met with the commission to ask about the possibility of installing a small, Amish made shed on his property that he did not think would be noticeable from the street. Chairman Costigan stated he could not see a problem with that and that Mr. Fay just check to make sure he had enough open coverage available to do it. Mr. Fay then discussed his need to address the windows in his house noting that they were a hodgepodge of different sizes, appeared to have no history, were not weighted windows, and were mostly non-functional. Chairman Costigan stated that the commission would probably need a window inventory from Mr. Fay and suggesting that Mr. Fay determine what would be best for him – such as putting in all new windows, making repairs, or just putting storms over all the windows that are there. After going back and forth as to what Mr. Fay did or did not want to do with the windows it was agreed that Mr. Fay get back with the commission with pictures of his windows within the façade' and meet with the commission at a later date.
3. Administrator Lewis met with the commission to inform them that she had received grant approval to change out the front windows in the Oxford Museum. She asked if the commission wanted the town to facilitate moving forward with that. Chairman Costigan suggested that an application be sent in for the commission to review at next month's meeting so that they could approve the request. Administrator Lewis added that she did not want to lose the grant money

so that they would need to move as quickly as possible. The commission members all agreed that they did not have a problem with it and agreed that Chairman Costigan could just stop by the office and sign off on the permit once it is ready. Administrator Lewis next discussed the town's Customs House. She noted that the building is in poor condition and noted that she would like to get a split heating/air conditioning unit placed on the back side of the building, through grant funding, facing the yacht club so that it would be less visible from the street. She also added that she would like to replace the screen door with something similar, with a sheet of glass so that visitors could see the artifacts inside. In discussing the customs house roof, Administrator Lewis stated that currently the building has a triple layer of cedar shake on it. Mrs. Stanley thought the roofing was last done on that building in the late 1970's. Administrator Lewis stated she wanted to replace the roofing with architectural grade shingles, if the commission did not have any objections, as moisture was a real problem with that building. Mrs. Stanley offered to donate the shingles which would be like those she is using on her new addition at 221 South Street. All were agreeable to the suggestions for the customs house. Administrator Lewis' last order of business was to bring the commission members up-to-date on The Mews project. Builder Victor MacSorely found 50 to 70 percent of the wood that is being removed from the building to be in useable condition and is saving each component of the building. The outside stairs will be going away and the town will put some kind of stairs inside the building in order to access the second floor, even if it is just temporary. The exterior cover is still up in the air. The end result will be a building that is going to have 3 complete sides that will be painted and trimmed and secured on the back. Administrator Lewis added that she will keep the members posted as more progress continues. Chairman Costigan asked if any more information was out about the tide monitoring system. Administrator Lewis responded by explaining that a Japanese company, familiar with the Eastern Shore, that sells GPS equipment, is working with an entrepreneur out west and has come up with new technology that measure wave height and tide which it can record continuously. They are looking for locations in this county to try it out and asked if Oxford would like to be a trial location. The equipment needs to be on 16 to 18 ft. high on poles. Administrator Lewis stated she has a couple of location options, one of which would be the outhouse down on the Strand, and that she just wanted the commission members to be made aware of it.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk