

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 5, 2007

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairperson, Suzanne Litty, on Monday, February 5, 2007 at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were David Baker, Dorothy Fenwick, Alfred Leszczynski, and George Gaffney.

A consultation was held with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Schram, property owners of 208 S. Morris Street, and their architect, Dennis Still, to discuss changes they would like to make to their house. According to Mr. Still, the house is historic in the front facing S. Morris Street but has a contemporary look to it in the rear facing the Tred Avon River. The owners are considering the following work to be done to their home:

- replace the living room sliding doors on the west and south walls
- install windows in the living room gable
- install a window in the first floor south wall of house
- install a window in the front bedroom, 2nd floor, south wall
- raise living room chimney 3 to 4 feet, and
- replace kitchen window in west wall

The commission expressed concerns over the look of the house facing the river which, because this house faces both the street and the water, is considered as having two front yards. Mrs. Fenwick noted that though she agreed that what the owners were planning to do was fine, there was a problem because the commission has always said "that that which faces the water is equally important to that which faces the street." Mrs. Fenwick also noted that the commission members currently serving on this board "were not on this commission when permission was given to put in these various windows in the back which are not divided in any way." Though she agreed it made perfect sense to replicate what the owners already have, and though she did not "have a problem with them", Mrs. Fenwick wanted to go on record that the historic commission may be approving something that is not in agreement with their guidelines. Another possible problem was that regarding the casement windows that Mr. and Mrs. Schramm wanted to place in their kitchen window. The current guidelines state that casement windows are not permitted.

Ms. Litty asked if the casement windows could be made with dividers. Mr. Still replied there were casement windows with dividers but that none of the existing windows in the rear of the home has dividers in them. Mrs. Fenwick again referred to the guidelines stating that casement windows "are not permitted on the front facade". Mr. Still pointed out that the owners have an existing condition

they are trying to address. Mrs. Fenwick felt that the record should show that the commission is aware of the fact but may be approving something that is not in agreement with the guidelines.

Another concern of the group was the proposed group of windows to be located on the rear of the house in the existing gable. Thoughts were that the proposed windows were too contemporary in appearance. Mrs. Schramm noted that the gable is such a strong statement and that one had to follow the line of the gable otherwise the windows would look strange and that was the primary reason for the windows that she had chosen.

The members asked if Mr. and Mrs. Schramm would mind if they viewed their property prior to making any recommendations as to what the owners would like to do. Mr. and Mrs. Schramm agreed that the members could come look at their house. Mrs. Fenwick stated that though she brought up the issue "of it being modern looking in the back" she wanted to go on record as saying, "it doesn't bother me." It was then unanimously agreed to table the discussion further until next time.

The minutes of the meeting of January 8, 2007 were approved and accepted as distributed with the following correction: Page 1, #2, 6th sentence, should be changed to read "Each of the members stated they definitely did not talk to Mrs. Rasin concerning the demolition." Also, it was asked that a copy of Mrs. Rasin's letter be attached to these minutes as well.

Ms. Litty stated that Glenn Davis had contacted the town office and asked if someone from the Historic District Commission would contact him. Ms. Litty phoned Mr. Davis who asked her if the commission would send a memo to the Board of Appeals indicating that they approved of his house plans. Mrs. Fenwick suggested going back to the minutes of January 8, 2007 and referring to what the commission had said with regards to Mr. Davis' permit at that time. All members present agreed that a letter be written to the Appeal Board indicating their favor of Mr. Davis' proposed house.

A brief discussion ensued concerning a copy of a letter to Michael Rust from the Commissioners regarding the Commissioners possible appeal in connection with the demolition permit authorized by the Historic District Commission and Planning Commission. The Commissioners felt that the historic commission should have been granted the opportunity to inspect Mr. Rust's property in the context of the reports that Mr. Rust provided to them. The letter also indicated that the Commissioners will have the Town Attorney work Mr. Rust to arrange for an inspection. If the independent inspector and report confirm that there is no economically feasible plan that can be formulated to preserve the structure, the Commissioners will withdraw their appeal and a hearing will not be necessary. Mrs. Fenwick expressed concerns that Mr. Rust's demolition permit would not be going to the Board of Appeals and would be rectified without going through the appeals

Page 3
Oxford Historic District Commission Minutes
February 5, 2007

process. She also noted that the Town Attorney, David Thompson, had told the commission that this would go to an appeal. Mrs. Fenwick felt that this was not what the Commissioners were doing.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk