

## OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### MINUTES

OCTOBER 5, 2009

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, George Gaffney, on Monday, October 5, 2009 at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were David Baker, Heinrich Schmitz, and Jennifer Stanley.

The minutes of the meeting of September 14, 2009 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #09-59, Thomas Corl and Mary Cotton, 206 N. Morris Street, raise existing main house 6" on new foundation of brick; maintain existing main house entirely; remove rear additions and add two story frame bedroom/bath/garret above living room/kitchen with one story kitchen and porch; 1' width to addition on south; all work to maintain existing footprint and 1'. Mr. Kearns explained to the commission that the owners had gone before the Board of Appeals and had been granted a variance from the setbacks in order to place the one foot addition onto the south side of their house. No changes had been made to the plans from that which was shown to the historic commission last time Mr. Kearns met with the commission in consultation with regards to this application. Mr. Schmitz asked if the flat roof in the back at the rear of the house came up both sides. Mr. Kearns responded it was a hip roof. Mr. Schmitz commented that the proposed changes sat very well with Oxford and that Mr. Kearns did a good job with what restrictions he had to work with. Mr. Schmitz made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried. Mrs. Stanley questioned if the commission ever addressed gutters and roof run-offs. Mr. Schmitz responded only if there is a reference on the plans but that basically the historic commission does not address run-offs.
2. Permit #09-60, Marsha Lonergan, 112 E. Strand, convert existing screened porch into a year-round garden room with same roof and same footprint. Both Mrs. Lonergan and her builder, Matt Hurst, were present to discuss the application. Mrs. Lonergan explained that she was trying to convert her existing screen porch in the back of her house to a year round garden room and that the only change would involve changing the screening to French doors. Pella windows would also be used and the trim would stay basic and clean as it currently stands now. Mrs. Lonergan also added that she would like to put two slim skylights up on the roof. Photos were presented that were taken from the street to show that the skylights would not be visible. Mr. Hurst noted that he understood that skylights were not allowed to be visible from the street. In order to show that these proposed skylights would not create a problem, Mr. Hurst stated he built a template using the exact height and size of what the skylights would be

and placed them on top of the roof and took photos from Stewart Street showing that the skylights would not be able to be seen. Mr. Gaffney commented that the application was incomplete as there were no plans for the inspector to look over and felt that this application should have some kind of plan that could be dealt with in the event any questions were to arise. Mr. Baker added that though he did not feel uncomfortable with the permit he would like to see where the skylights were going to be on the roof. Mr. Schmitz stated he would like to see how the glass in the porch would be divided. Mr. Baker made a motion to accept the application to be effective when Mr. Gaffney sees the plans and signs off on them. The motion was seconded with all in favor. After some brief discussion, it was agreed that all the members should come in and look at the plans and each give their own approval before Mr. Gaffney officially signs off on the permit.

This concluded the review of building permit applications.

### **CONSULTATION**

A consultation was held with Carolie Patton and her builder Mike Poole. Mr. Poole explained to the commission that Ms. Patton had purchased Lot 3 instead of Lot 4 on Tilghman Street and that once her home that she is currently living in now gets sold, she would like to submit her building plans and begin building her new home. Mr. Poole indicated that there are no changes to the proposed house that Ms. Patton plans to build that the commission had already looked over in previous consultations with Ms. Patton. However, because of the shape of Lot 3, and in order to meet the setbacks, Ms. Patton just wanted to make the commission aware that she may have to set her new house at an angle on the property. Mr. Gaffney stated he would like to see the house squared up with the street. Mr. Baker offered to look into "flag/pan handle lots" to see if the house could be built facing the street and still meet the required setbacks.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Gaffney distributed letters of the Eastern Shore Heritage requesting money. Mr. Baker stated that if the members look into the amount of money Oxford has gotten out of this program they would find the answer to be zero and that the amount budgeted for Oxford for next year is also zero.

Mr. Gaffney asked if any of the members had noticed what was taking place at 308 Tilghman Street. Mr. Gaffney reported seeing a huge brick wall that had gone up on a foundation sitting about three or four feet high. In going to the town office, Mr. Gaffney stated he was informed by the Administrator, Lillian Lord, that the builder had come in and discussed putting up a brick wall to be used as screening. Mrs. Lord, in turn, gave the builder permission to go ahead and put up the wall with the thought that because it was going to be used as screening it would not need a building permit. Mr. Gaffney expressed his concerns that the commission should have looked at the plans for the wall and felt they were now faced with a true dilemma. Mr. Gaffney

stated that he was of the opinion that the builder/owner was doing all these things, now they are done, and the historic commission was going to come out looking like the bad guys. Mrs. Stanley thought the real problem was that permission was given when it should not have been and that he should "cease and desist" and go through the proper authorities. Mr. Schmitz stated he did not see how the brick wall, which would be housing a/c units, could work since it would not allow for air movement. Mr. Gaffney asked if the commission wanted the builder to attend next month's meeting to explain the wall. Mr. Baker noted that this sounded a lot like what happened at 110 N. Morris Street in which changes were made before coming before the commission. However, in this case, permission was given by the town office. Both Mr. Baker and Mrs. Stanley commented that they thought the size and look of the wall was misrepresented by the builder to the town office. Mr. Schmitz suggested taking the members out on his boat so that they would see what was going on by water. Mr. Gaffney stated he had approached the President of the Commissioners, Peter Dunbar, just to let him know what had happened and how it occurred.

#### **Old Business**

Mr. Gaffney reminded the commission that they had been talking about solar panels and satellite dishes and that he had distributed to the members information from other historic communities and how they dealt with these matters. It was agreed that a lot of the information that they have found could be copied and added to their own guidelines. It was also agreed that the commission should look into screening regulations and to add something to the guidelines about that as well.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby  
Assistant Clerk