

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

JUNE 2, 2016

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, June 2, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Suzanne Litty, Jennifer Stanley, James Deerin, and Patricia Ingram. Also in attendance was Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer Cheryl Lewis.

The minutes of the meeting of April 4, 2016 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #16-25, James and Marie Antokas, 103 Stewart Ave., 4' Oxford style picket fence and 8' x 14' Quaker style wood storage shed. Mr. and Mrs. Antokas were represented by their son who explained that the proposed new fencing would extend off of the family's existing fence. Just a small section of fencing would be going in which would be in the Oxford style. With regards to the proposed shed, it would be made of wood, painted white, and trimmed with the same color as the Antokas' front door. The roof of the shed would be cedar-like asphalt shingles. Currently there is an existing storage building on the property but the Antokas' son was unsure whether the old building would remain or not. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the application for a 4' Oxford style fence and 8' x 14' Quaker style wood storage shed as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried with all in favor.
2. Permit #16-24, Carolie Patton, Tilghman Street, construction of a new home with front and back porches. Ms. Patton was represented by Jeff Foust of Beryl homes. Mr. Foust explained that Ms. Patton was looking to build a two story, small home, with a front and rear porch. In presenting the site plan, Mr. Foust noted that the house would be sited such that the front of the house would be facing the side of the property. Jane McCarthy, a resident of Oxford and neighbor to the rear of Ms. Patton's property, spoke stating that she believed Ms. Patton's property was not a buildable lot. Administrator Lewis responded that she would look into the matter. Mr. Foust continued to explain that the owner was looking into having vinyl siding and shutters, a parget foundation, and an asphalt shingled roof. The commission expressed concern in having a long expanse of siding facing onto Tilghman Street. Ms. Litty suggested that the front of the house be turned to face Tilghman Street and to keep it in line with the other homes that are around it. Mr. Deerin expressed his dislike of vinyl siding, especially since such a huge expanse would be seen from Tilghman Street. Mr. Foust asked the commission if they had heard of "Select Siding" which he stated was very much like hardiplank. The commission members responded that they had not and asked if he would bring in a sample of it at their next meeting. When questioned about the use of shutters, Mr. Foust mentioned building 5" lineal borders around the exterior of the windows to give it a more modern look than using shutters. Mr. Costigan reminded Mr. Faoust that the house needed to fit into the historic district and that the commission did not want to see something too modern. A discussion followed as to how high the house would have to be raised to get it out of the floodplain. Mrs. McCarthy spoke

again expressing her concerns about run-off from this property. Administrator Lewis reminded Mrs. McCarthy that this was not a matter for the HDC to review and that the impacts she was worried about she would discuss with her outside of this meeting. Administrator Lewis suggested that consideration be made to have the house facing forward and to stagger the location so that if the other vacant lot in front of Ms. Patton's lot was to be built on later the houses wouldn't be blocking one another. Mr. Faoust responded that the house could be shifted. The group all agreed that they would rather see the house facing the front of Tilghman Street. It was agreed to table the application pending more information on the building siding materials, consideration given to shutters on the house, and revision to the site plan to show the house facing Tilghman Street directly and shifting the location slightly. Mrs. Stanley stated she had no problem with the design of the house. The group added that they had no problem with the request for vinyl windows but not vinyl shutters and for the owner to at least look at having operable shutters.

3. Permit #16-23, Frank Mason, Jr., III, 220 N. Morris Street, replace existing pickets and railings, facing Morris Street, and surrounding the HVAC units facing Tilghman Street. No one was present to represent the application. The request was well described and photos included with the application. Ms. Litty made a motion to approve the request of 220 N. Morris Street as written. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried with all in favor.

A request came in at the last minute from Ellen Rajacich, property owner of 206 E. Strand, with a request to change the color of her house. Mr. Costigan stated that he had gone down to look at the house and that it has been primed with white but that a portion of the back of the house already had been painted by the contractor with "friendly yellow." The owner mentioned that she was not pleased with the "friendly yellow" color and had chosen another color for the house, referred to as "convivial yellow," that she was hoping the commission would approve. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve that the color "convivial yellow" be approved for 206 E. Strand. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permits.

CONSULTATIONS

A consultation was held with Jane Selden, property manager of Old Point Comfort located at 218 N. Morris Street. Ms. Selden presented the commission a photo showing the condition of the columns on the front porch of Old Point Comfort which she described as being structurally weak. The owners of this property are looking to replace the columns with something other than wood columns. There are 10 columns on the building but only 4 are needed to be replaced. Mrs. Stanley thought that the commission should not discourage composite materials, as long as they fit into the historic area. She agreed it was better to have something that would not rot but that it also had to match what was there. Mr. Costigan added that a request of this nature would fall under maintenance but that if the columns are being replaced they would need to be replaced with columns in kind and that the commission would need to see examples of the requested material to be used.

Residential designer Timothy Kearns and architect Dennis Still, representatives for Oxford Mercantile, met with the commission to discuss Oxford Mercantile's plans to renovate their building at 102 S. Morris Street. Mr. Costigan announced that most of the commission members did a site visit to this property prior to this evening's meeting. Mr. Kearns noted that renovation work had already been started in the interior of the building. On the north side façade, a significant amount of deterioration had been found

at the first floor level and below. The structure has a brick veneer on its exterior. In order to renovate the structure, the contractor will need to take the brick veneer apart. Instead of putting back the brick work when the work has been completed, the owners would like to go back to the original wood frame. Mr. Still added that the foundation has failed on the north side and that the foundation is part of the original naval academy that was located in the building at the time of the civil war. Mr. Still also described a basement that is under the building some of which was installed prior to the civil war. Mr. Kearns talked about the brick façade facing along the east of the building. In the Doug Hanks book "Oxford Treasures Then and Now" it shows a picture of the building having an awning along the front of the building. The owners would like to go back to having a front façade more in keeping with the other commercial buildings in town by removing the two small windows and replacing them with large, flat display windows. Mr. Kearns provided the commission members a proposed plan showing the north and east elevations and how they would change. No questions were raised by the commission members. Mr. Costigan suggested that Mr. Kearns and Mr. Still to put together drawings and a submit a permit for the north and front façades for the next HDC meeting in July.

A consultation was again held with Mr. Kearns who was representing his clients Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Jacoby, residents of 300 Market Street, who were looking to construct a screened porch on the second floor of their house by closing in their upstairs deck. Because of the angle of the upstairs deck, some of the members felt that the proposed screened porch would look more like a second floor screened-in gazebo. It was agreed by the members that Mr. Kearns should rework the design and come back with a different plan.

The final consultation was with Mr. and Mrs. Donald Gibson and their architect, Philip Logan. Mr. Logan explained to the commission that the Gibsons, property owners of 209 Tilghman Street, are looking to come back into town and to either renovate or demolish their existing house. Mr. Logan noted that a contractor had looked at the house and had thought it should be demolished. Currently the house sits right on the property line. The walls of the building have caved in, the stairs are twisted, and the house in general is in bad shape. The property itself is 25' wide and the existing house is 18' wide. Mr. Logan presented the commission with a few sketches for the proposed house. The owners want to demolish their house but in building a new one, would like to preserve some of the historic qualities of their old one. Ms. Litty stated that she wanted the existing house to be saved. Mr. Costigan asked that if the house were to be kept, could it be safely raised to have a new foundation built under it. Mr. Logan responded that he did not think so and that it would probably fall apart since the interior had so much damage. Mr. Deerin commented that he thought the house could not be saved and that he was concerned about demolition by neglect in this case though he thought demolition was the only solution in this instance. Both Mrs. Ingram and Mrs. Stanley agreed with Mr. Deerin in that the house should be demolished and a new one built in its place. It was agreed that the owners should come back before the commission with a demolition permit along with a separate permit application for a new house but that they should not apply for a demolition permit without a building permit for a new house in place.

This concluded the consultation requests.

NEW BUSINESS

As part of town's façade improvement program, Administrator Lewis asked the commission to review a grant request for the owners of the property of the bookstore Mystery Loves Company. The owners are hoping to receive financial aid to improve their front steps. Mr. Deerin expressed concerns that the steps may look brand new when they are targeted. Administrator Lewis suggested the target material

could be tinted in order to make it look more in keeping with the historic nature of the building. Mr. Costigan made a motion to offer encouragement for the property owner to apply for this grant program and to do the repairs on the steps with the hope that they will use a product/tint coloration that fits in with the rest of the building. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk