

## OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### MINUTES

NOVEMBER 2, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, November 2, 2015 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, and Patricia Ingram. Also in attendance was Administrator Cheryl Lewis.

The minutes of the meeting of October 5, 2015 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #15-53, Richard Newton, 210 N. Morris St., new roof surface on upper roof of house and paint front door. Mr. Newton stated he wanted to paint his front door "brilliant blue" and presented the commission with a paint card showing the color. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the color blue as shown for Mr. Newton's house at 210 N. Morris Street. Mr. Newton then presented the commission with a sample of the architectural grade shingles he was looking into putting on the roof of his house. He noted that he already had a light color shingle on his home and that he wanted the new shingle to be light in color as well. Ms. Litty made a motion to approve the roof color as shown. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried with all in favor.
2. Permit #15-51, David Baker, 507 E. Strand, replace existing iron fence with white wood picket fence to match existing wood picket fence. Mr. Baker explained to the commission that his existing wrought iron fence had been damaged by salt water and that it was hard to keep clean. As a result, he was looking to have white picket fencing all the way down the front side of his property. Ms. Litty made a motion to approve the new replacement fence at 507 E. Strand. The motion was unanimously carried with all in favor.
3. Permit #15-52, 210 Tilghman Street, build 3' tall white picket fence with gate along front of lot. Mr. Baker pointed out that his lot had nothing on it now though it had, at one time, several different kinds of fencing such as chain link and chicken wire. The type of fencing requested was that of a French picket style, whereby the top of the picket would have notches on either side. Mr. Baker sited the property at 309 Tilghman Street as having that type of fencing. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the 3' fencing for 210 Tilghman Street to be painted white. The motion was unanimously carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permits.

### Old Business

The commission went over the final changes to the ordinance they had been working on regarding demolition by neglect. By having the ordinance in place it would give the HDC the tools need to use in

tackling individuals who refuse to take care of the asset they are responsible for but would also acknowledge the fact that some individuals may truly be faced with financial hardships.

The only correction the commission made was one item found on page 4, letter G, 3<sup>rd</sup> line, that states, in part, “the Historic District Commission must seek alternative methods.....” Mr. Costigan thought the word “must” should be changed to “may.” Administrator Lewis noted that Attorney Booth could make that change before it is given to the Commissioners for review.

Mr. Costigan made a motion to approve the ordinance dealing with demolition by neglect as its final iteration as printed on November 2, 2015, with the one caveat that in the one section G., the word “must” be changed to “may.” The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried with all in favor.

### **New Business**

Mr. Costigan mentioned he had received an email alerting him to work being done on Norton Street in which the commission had approved the existing house on the property be lifted and an addition put on the back. The house had been lifted but it has also been essentially rebuilt and anything of historic importance has now been demolished. Mr. Costigan acknowledged that this has been a problem with some other properties as well in the past and questioned whether something should be in the plans stating how the builder was going to get from what was existing to what was to be built. Ms. Litty asked about the inspector and his role. Administrator Lewis pointed out that the building inspector isn’t going to monitor what is being removed and only inspects a project when an inspection is called into the town office. She added that her concern was that she was not made aware that the builder had taken down any walls and that she would have taken immediate action had she been made aware of what was taking place. Administrator Lewis stated she would investigate the property to see what has taken place. Mrs. Stanley suggested changing the terminology in the guidelines to be more specific. Administrator Lewis again pointed out that if someone had noticed what was taking place, and had told her about it, this could have been stopped. Mr. Costigan noted that safety is always going to trump rehabilitation and thus creates a delicate balancing act.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby  
Assistant Clerk