

OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

AUGUST 2, 2016

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Planning Commission was called to order by the chairman, David Baker, on Tuesday, August 2, 2016, at 6:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Bruce Beglin, James Reed, and Stephen Mroczek.

The minutes of the meeting of May 3, 2016 were approved and accepted as distributed with the following correction – Under the heading “REQUEST FOR LOT LINE REVISION,” last sentence, the words “Mr. Mill” should read “Mr. Miller.”

A consultation was held with George and Kathleen Radcliffe, property owners of 303 S. Morris Street, who were looking to alter their existing dwelling to contain two separate dwelling units. Mrs. Radcliffe stated that she and her husband were looking to downsize their house and had a friend in need of an apartment. She explained that the layout of their house was such that the front half of the building was the original full house containing a full kitchen, living room, with two bedrooms and bathrooms upstairs. The back of the house, which was later added on, is the section in which the Radcliffes live. This new section also contains a kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom, and stairway. Mrs. Radcliffe noted that nothing would really change as there already exists a door dividing the two halves, both upstairs and downstairs. Nothing would visually change from the outside as both sections already have their own separate entrances. Both sections would also have over 750 sq. ft. of living area. Questions arose as to whether a change of this nature would create a duplex. If that were the case, the Oxford Zoning Ordinance under Section 23.05 notes that lots for duplexes shall be at least 15,000 sq. In this case, the Radcliffe property is under 10,000 sq. ft. and therefore not large enough for a duplex. A discussion took place as to other properties in town which have duplexes but which hold separate deeds of property. Mrs. Radcliffe stated that her property would remain in single ownership. Mr. Baker pointed out that the Oxford Comprehensive Plan, in discussing housing, states that the goal is to maintain single family occupied residential properties and preserve the integrity of historical structures. The commission also reviewed Section 23.01.C of the Oxford Zoning Ordinance which states, in part, “A residential structure which is in existence at the effective date of this ordinance may be altered to contain as many as three separate dwelling units so long as the exterior appearance of the structure is not, in the judgement of the Town Planning Commission, after formal review and approval by the Historic District Commission, significantly changed.....there shall be no more than one dwelling unit per floor, and each unit shall contain a minimum of 750 square feet.” This brought into question whether there could only be one dwelling unit on each separate floor as opposed, in this case, to each of the two separate sections having both an upstairs and downstairs. Mr. Beglin expressed the concern that if other houses on Morris Street decided to split their houses in the same way, how would this affect parking on Morris Street? Because of the questions being raised, Mr. Baker stated that he would like to get Administrator Lewis’ and Attorney Booth’s feeling on the matter. Mrs. Radcliffe asked what steps she and her husband should take in order to pursue their request. Mr. Reed responded that the Planning Commission would not approve the request because of the duplex issue. Mr. Mroczek added that though the Planning Commission would have to disapprove the request, the Radcliffes could take their plans to the Board of

Appeals for a decision and with the Planning Commission make a recommendation to the Board. Mr. Reed indicated he did not want to make a recommendation at this time and would rather wait to hear what the Town Attorney has to say first, though he added that he thought the request made sense. Mr. Beglin added that the utilities for each unit needed to be clear as well as to whether they would be separate or combined. This concluded the consultation.

New Business

Mr. Baker announced that there was an appeal coming up for 104 S. Morris Street to put in a small café.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk