

OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 5, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Planning Commission was called to order by the chairman, David Baker, on Tuesday, September 5, 2017, in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

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

The minutes of the meeting of August 1, 2017 were approved as written.

The following building permit was reviewed by the commission members:

Permit #17-59 Davenport West, 805 S. Morris Street, install two fences – one between neighboring property and one at the back of the garage to cover HVAC units. Mr. West explained to the commission that his house was situated in such a way that the main living areas are in the backyard and that he and his wife were just looking for some privacy from their neighbors, who live in a rental house. Mr. West added that though the current tenants were wonderful, one never knew who would move into the house should it become vacant again. With regards to the fencing to cover the HVAC units at the back of the garage, Mr. West stated he had tried to hide the units with plants but that the units were sitting too high off the ground. Mr. Baker noted that fences in town are used to delineate properties and are not used to isolate properties. Ordinance 31.12 states that 4' is the maximum height for fences and 4 ½' for fence posts. Mr. Baker added that Mr. West could seek a variance but that normally variances are granted only when unique conditions exist on parcels that are generally not shared with other lots. He suggested that Mr. West could plant shrubbery to create privacy within his yard or just continue the same height fencing he already has in his yard. Mr. Mroczek reminded the applicant that the permit would have to be disapproved because of the fence height requested but that the Planning Commission has the option of passing on a recommendation to the Board of Appeals should the applicant choose to seek a variance. The commission agreed to break the permit into two parts. In looking at the request for fencing to cover the HVAC units, the members were all in agreement that it was a good idea and that a fence would need to be reasonably tall in order to hide the elevated units. Mr. Mroczek made a motion to deny the application but to recommend to the Board of Appeals that they approve the request for fencing (shown on the site plan as "Fence #2") to hide HVAC units at the back of the West's garage. In discussing "Fence #1," as shown along the rear of the West property, Mr. Beglin expressed the opinion that he did not want to see the trend of putting taller fences in Oxford. Mr. Baker agreed with Mr. Beglin and again stated that the need for privacy could be created with the use of shrubbery. A motion was made by Mr. Beglin that the Oxford Planning Commission recommend to the Board of Appeals that they not grant approval of Mr. West's request for a 6' fence along the rear of his property, labeled as "Fence #1". The motion was seconded by Mr. Baker and unanimously carried with all in favor. Mr. Baker reminded the applicant that the Board of Appeals could override the Planning Commission's recommendation as the Planning Commission acts only as an advisory board to them.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk