

## OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### MINUTES

JULY 9, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, July 9, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were James Deerin, Suzanne Litty, Patricia Ingram, and Jennifer Stanley.

The minutes of the meeting of June 4, 2018 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

- 1) Permit #18-43, Brian and Julie Wells, 302 E. Strand, remove existing roof and replace with higher roof on garage; remove and replace siding to match house; add one window and replace existing window; replace garage door. Mr. Wells explained to the commission that his plans were to match the look of his garage to that of his house. The footprint of the building would remain the same. The roof of the garage would be raised to create a higher pitch with the siding and shingles replaced to match the siding and shingles on the house. The garage doors would be replaced and centered on the building. One window would be replaced and one new window added. The garage would be no greater than 16' in height. The building would remain as a garage with no additional features such as a bathroom. Mr. Deerin made a motion to approve the improvements to the existing garage as laid out in the submission that came with the application for 302 E. Strand. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried by all in favor.
- 2) Permit #18-44, Elizabeth Hasbrouck, 110 Norton Street, construction of picket fence along north property line. Ms. Hasbrouck explained that she was looking to place a white, 4' tall picket fence along the north side of her property. Currently there is a split rail fence on the property that would be removed. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the picket fence for 110 Norton Street along the north property line. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried by all in favor.
- 3) Permit #18-48, Church of the Holy Trinity, 502 S. Morris Street, privacy fence for a/c units. The application was represented by Mr. Gordon Fronk. Mr. Fronk apologized to the commission stating that someone had started to install the posts for this proposed project prior to applying for a permit. He stated that the intention is to replicate that which is currently surrounding the oil tank that is on the property. The proposed fencing would be painted a taupe color and will have a gate for access on the side. Mr. Fronk believed that there would be landscaping around the fence once it has been erected. Ms. Litty made a motion to approve the church's request for a screen fence around their a/c units. The motion was seconded by Mr. Deerin and unanimously carried by all in favor.

## Consultations

A consultation was held with Johnson Fortenbaugh, property owner of 305 Market Street, who is in the process of trying to sell his house. In speaking with the members, Mr. Fortenbaugh expressed his desire to see the house demolished and presented to the commission photos of the house along with the history of the building. He explained that the house had originally been moved from across town and had no entrance to the street and had not been sited well on his property. The house cannot be seen from either Banks or Market Street. He expressed his frustration at having lost a sale of this property because the house could not be demolished. Mr. Costigan asked if Mr. Fortenbaugh knew the age of the house. Mr. Fortenbaugh responded that his realtor believed that it had been built in the 1920's. Mr. Costigan noted that what worried him was that in going over the Oxford historic housing survey that had been done by local architectural historian Paul Touart, Mr. Fortenbaugh's house was listed as non-contributing but described as a single story frame house of moderate construction built in 1980. Mr. Costigan guessed that Mr. Touart probably looked down Mr. Fortenbaugh's driveway and saw his accessory building and probably thought it was the house. He felt the house was obviously over 100 years old and therefore automatically considered as contributing. Though it has had some unfortunate additions, Mr. Costigan stated that the house was typical of many of the single family watermen's homes that were common in Oxford and thus the reason for the hesitation of some of the HDC members to say tear it down. He mentioned that the members had met with the potential buyers for this property at their last meeting. Part of the problem was that the commission only had a chance to look over the plans the night they were presented and what they had been shown was a fairly large house that the couple wanted to build on the property that would have dominated the other houses around it as well as being atypical of the style of Oxford homes in general. Mr. Deerin pointed out that the HDC does not give a determination for demolition in a consultation – only their opinions. Ms. Litty added that the couple who had come before the HDC regarding Mr. Fortenbaugh's house and property were undecided as to what they wanted. Mr. Fortenbaugh asked if it would make sense for him to ask the interested party to provide more detailed plans for either incorporating the existing house in their design or demolishing it. Mr. Costigan responded that he thought the group would look more favorably on a plan that incorporated the existing structure rather than a straight demolition. He added that the commission has approved the demolition of structures in the past that are deemed unsafe and one built of materials that were so poor it would have been impossible to add a second story on to the structure. Mr. Costigan was of the opinion that Mr. Fortenbaugh's house did not seem unsafe and that working with a preservation architect might be worth looking into. Mr. Deerin pointed out that Mr. Fortenbaugh's house was so similar to the box shaped watermen's homes that were on Tred Avon Avenue. Mr. Fortenbaugh again expressed his frustration and his desire to sell his property. Mr. Deerin offered the suggestion that Mr. Fortenbaugh go back to the people who were going to buy his house and see if they would want to relook at their conceptual plans and work with an architect who does preservation. Mr. Fortenbaugh was also told that the commission typically does not allow for the demolition of a house until they see what the plans are for its replacement.

A consultation was next held with Charles Paul Goebel, architect, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Leggett, property owners of 104 S. Morris Street. Mr. Goebel presented the proposed changes for the commercial building at 104 S. Morris Street which would include handicap access on the eastern side of the building using a series of ramps. He explained that work had been done to the 3 apartments located within the building but not to its commercial space. The plans call to restore the bay windows in the front of the commercial section and to restore the design of the front of the building to make it look like it had been back in the 1930's Mr. Costigan noted that the plans were fairly close to what had been approved for the building in the past minus the ADA porch and elements that were to have been located

on The Park side of the building. The commission members were all in agreement with the overall design presented. Mr. Costigan suggested the owners bring in their permit application with their construction drawings and that if they mirror what they were presenting in consultation at this evening's meeting, they shouldn't have any problems.

The commission spoke with Jennifer Stanley who brought in a request, at the last minute, for an approval for revisions to her previously approved building permit (#18-15). The revisions were reflected on the revised elevation drawing found on page A-200, dated July 10, 2018. Mr. Deerin made a motion that the commission approved the revised sheet, A-200, dated July 10, 2018, which shows the removal of a door on the west elevation of the new addition with the replacement of 4 identical 6 over 6 windows along with changes that incorporate the comments that were made at the HDC's last meeting particularly with respect to the east elevation and the handicap ramp. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permits and consultations.

Mr. Costigan reminded the members that it was important for them all to attend the next HDC meeting scheduled for Monday, August 6 as the yearly election for Chairman will need to take place.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby  
Assistant Clerk