

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 5, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, February 5, 2018 in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

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

The minutes of the meeting of January 8, 2018 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #18-01, Joseph Mekulski, 300 E. Strand, renovate interior per plans; remove existing vinyl siding and replace with Tyvek and Hardie Plank siding and shingles; demolish interior walls and stairs; renovate kitchen and 3 bathrooms; exterior changes including new side door with door lights, replace 1 side door and 1 rear door with windows to allow interior renovation of stairs and kitchen. Mr. Mekulski explained to the commission that there were four functions of the interior of his house that affect the exterior. These are as follows: 1) there is a chimney that needs to be taken out from the roof to the ground level that will allow a new stair system to go into place. The house currently has 3 chimneys, one in the front main portion of the house, one in the rear of the house, and one in the center of the house which is the one that needs to be completely removed; 2) currently the house has a side door which the owner hopes will become the main entrance to the house. In doing so, a new door system will be put into place. There is a window next to the door which will remain. Mr. Mekulski asked for the right to make this change but that it not be a requirement as he did not know what the costs of such a project would be. He noted that the workers he had hired to put on his siding were against the change as they did not think the door would function well with Hardie Plank. The porch on the house would remain. The object is to open up the interior of the home, move the central staircase out from the front, and to relocate the center area along with opening up the sight line from the front of the house to the back. There would be no visible changes from the front elevation other than if one were on the side of the house one would see that the chimney had been removed. The second floor front windows would remain as they are but Mr. Mekulski was not sure about the shutters at this time. Mrs. Stanley suggested that Mr. Mekulski look for some old photos of his house at either the Oxford Museum or Talbot County Library to give him ideas on what the house had looked like. Mr. Deerin confirmed that the house was built in the late 1800's and was a contributing structure to the town. He asked about the proposed siding for the house. Mr. Mekulski stated that when he resided his garage he had used board and batten with shingles on the eaves. For the house he was looking to use horizontal siding with fish scales above the eave of the house. The end result would be that it would match the garage except for the use of horizontal siding; 3) the house currently has 5 doors, 2 of which Mr. Mekulski stated he would like to replace with windows. The door to the side porch is going to be blocked by the new staircase being built and that door will need to become a window. The other is located back in the kitchen area. He added that the existing enclosed porch currently had sliding doors, a single door, and two single windows, all of which would come out and be replaced with four (4) French doors of solid glass; 4) in going over the details of the proposed siding, it would look the same as what has been recently done to the garage. The hardy plank would be a light mist color with white trim. Mr. Costigan asked if the applicant had looked to see what was under the existing aluminum siding on his house. Mr. Mekulski responded that it was deteriorated ship lap siding.

Mr. Deerin asked about the shutters on the house. Mr. Mekulski stated that he did not plan on leaving them on the house as they were old plastic shutters. He added there were 28 pairs of shutters on the house and that it would be rather expensive to replace them all. He noted that all the shutters would be coming down as part of the process of residing the house and that he was looking for the right to put them back up, should he chose to do so. The commission opted to vote on each request separately. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the removal of the center chimney as requested. The motion was seconded by Mr. Deerin and unanimously carried. Mr. Deerin made a motion to approve the removal of the existing door on the west side of the house and replace it with a Steves and Son 64" x 80" Savannah 6 lite stained mahogany wood pre-hung front door with sidelights. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried with all in favor. Mr. Mekulski asked again about the shutters and if the commission would approve allowing him to put back the shutters should he decide to do so at a later date. Mr. Costigan responded that the commission probably would not approve the old shutters. Mr. Mekulski stated he would probably use shutters made of composite board. Mr. Costigan stated the commission looked kindly on those who want to put working shutters on their houses that are historically correct to which Mr. Mekulski noted that if he did put the shutters back on the house, they would function and that he would rather have none if he couldn't back the right type. Mr. Deerin made a motion to approve the removal of the siding on the existing house to be replaced with Hardy Plank, color light mist, with white hardy plank trim, and fish scale shingles on the three (3) eaves – east, west, and south. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty. Mr. Costigan did point out that the plans were confusing and asked that in the future the applicant give the commission elevations that are not mixed in with the interior plans.

2. Permit #18-02, Andy Bauer, 101 Stewart Street, jack up house; install new foundation; install new roof; install new siding; install new steps; install new windows. Both Mr. Bauer and his contractor, Eddie Moore, were present to discuss the application. Mr. Moore stated that the biggest plan was to lift the house and place it on a new foundation in order to get it out of the floodplain. The house would be approximately 3' higher from the ground when placed on its new foundation. The porch on the house would be lifted as well. The new foundation would be block and parge. The steps would be wooden to match the porch. The proposed new siding for the house was white vinyl. Photos were provided showing other houses in the area using 4" vinyl siding. Mr. Costigan noted that the HDC were not big fans and vinyl but that they had seen different kinds used recently that were acceptable. He added that the sample Mr. Moore had provided looked flimsy. Mr. Moore responded that in order to match the reveal of the existing aluminum siding there weren't many choices in vinyl. Mr. Bauer added that he did not want to fix the aluminum siding that was there and was looking to make it better. Mr. Deerin stated that the owner did not have to go with a 7" reveal like that of the aluminum siding and that he could consider a 4" or 5" Dutch lap siding. Mr. Costigan suggested tearing off the aluminum to see what is under it as even though the house has been built over time in sections, instead of cladding it back in plastic, just painting what is there might unite the house all together. Mr. Moore stated that they would want some kind of guarantee to put vinyl back on should they find that the siding under the aluminum was not acceptable to use. Mrs. Stanley suggested the owner match as close as possible what is under the aluminum and that by looking at the front section it might give him a clue as to what he would want to do. Chris Kalinski, a member of the audience, suggested that a proposal be made between the HDC and the applicant to remove all the aluminum siding and see what is under it and if it looks ok, to paint it, but, if not, to replace it with vinyl without coming back to the commission. Mr. Costigan responded that there was a priority in terms of what the HDC wanted the siding to look like starting with the street side façade. If that could be restored to the original siding there and start back, a different material could be used to do that if the remaining wood siding isn't good. Mr. Moore again stated they were not going to remove all the aluminum unless they could have assurance that they could cover it up with something in the vinyl range. Mr. Costigan responded that they should explore and see what is under there and to take photos and bring them to the town office and the commission would work with them. Neighbor to Mr. Bauer, Stuart Parnes, asked how the steps

would work if the house is lifted and as it appeared they would be right at the edge of the road. Mr. Moore responded that the house, as it is now, has standing water around it and that the front of the house has some rot and that the owner is looking to make it structurally sound and that 3' is enough to get it out of the flood zone. Mr. Costigan asked if Mr. Moore had a survey to which Mr. Moore responded that he had just gotten it and presented it to Mr. Costigan. Mr. Costigan noted that there might be a problem in that the front steps were shown as encroaching on town property. Mr. Deerin added that the steps were something the applicant would have to address with the town and once Mr. Bauer got whatever permissions were necessary, the HDC would work with him in terms of approving a staircase design, either coming out where it is now or coming out to the side of the house. However, the steps could not be approved at this night's meeting as there was no drawing for the steps at this time. Mr. Costigan agreed that the commission would need a sketch of what the steps would look like along with the railing details. Mr. Costigan asked about the proposed new roof. Mr. Bauer stated he would stick with the original color for the new shingles which was a green. Ms. Litty suggested that he go with a different color and suggested brown. Mr. Bauer stated he would be fine with that and that he had only offered to use the green shingles because that was what was already on the house. When asked about the windows in the house, Mr. Moore responded that the owner wanted to take out the old windows and replace them with vinyl windows but would keep the wood frames. The front windows in the house are currently 1 over 1 with a mix of some windows having storm frames and others that do not. The new windows would be quality vinyl thermopane replacement windows with all storm windows being permanently removed. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the raising of the house and installation of the block and parge foundation. The motion was unanimously approved with all in favor. Mr. Costigan suggested holding off on voting for the siding issue at this time until the owner has had a chance to explore and find out what he has to work with under the existing aluminum siding. He asked that once Mr. Bauer decides what he wants to do, to inform the town office and that they would contact Mr. Costigan who would decide where to go from there. He added that the HDC would work with Mr. Bauer. Mr. Deerin made a motion to approve the removal of all the existing windows in the house, including the storm windows, and to replace them all with vinyl, thermal pane, one over one windows. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried. Mr. Deerin also made a motion that the HDC approve the removal of the existing main roof of the house and porch roof and to replace them with Certaineed Landmark Designer shingles in the color Weatherwood. The motion was unanimously carried with all in favor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk