

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 4, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, February 4, 2019 in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Suzanne Litty, Jennifer Stanley, Julie Wells, and Patricia Ingram.

The minutes of the meeting of December 3, 2018 were approved and accepted as distributed. No meeting was held in January, 2019.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #19-02, Gail White/Old Point Comfort Association, 218 N. Morris Street, replace 6 shutters and hardware. Resident of Old Point Comfort, Gail White, was present to discuss the application. Ms. White explained to the members that there are six (6) sets of shutters on the main body of the building that need to be replaced and that she had found a product to replace them that was a good replication of the existing shutters. Chairman Costigan stated that in looking over the application he saw that the replacement shutters being requested were made of vinyl. Ms. White stated that when Old Point Comfort had their porch pillars replaced last year, the HDC had approved their request for vinyl pillars and that they looked quite nice. Mr. Costigan pointed out that in the case of shutters, the HDC guidelines prohibit the use of vinyl and/or aluminum shutters. He added that other homes in the historic district have used fiberglass shutters which, though more expensive than vinyl, present more attractively and are closer in appearance to a real wood shutters. Mrs. Stanley added that if the applicant could replicate a really good shutter, the commission could go with that. Chairman Costigan asked if Ms. White's contractor has explored resuscitating the existing wooden shutters on the building. Ms. White responded that he had but that a couple of the sets were beyond repair. Suggestions were given to Ms. White of houses located throughout the historic district that have composite shutters on them. Ms. White was open to the suggestions given and agreed to look at other options. It was agreed by all to table the application until the applicant comes back with a different product.
2. Permit #19-04, Mr. and Mrs. Keister Evans, 218 N. Morris Street, Unit E, request to install customized storm windows to replace existing porch screens. Mrs. Evans, along with her contractor, was present to discuss the application. Mrs. Evans explained that she and her husband have a second flood screened in porch that is plagued with rain water getting into it. Her proposal to install customized storm windows would enable the couple to keep the rain

from coming onto the porch out but could also them to open the windows for air, if desired. The railings on the porch would remain in place. Fixed glass would be placed along the bottom of the porch railings. The glass windows along the top of the railing could be opened or closed. The desire is to make the porch space useable throughout the year. Mr. Costigan asked if the existing screens were attached to the outside of the porch. Ms. Evans responded that was correct. She added that the window frames would be white to help to preserve the existing look of the porch. Mrs. Evans' contractor spoke stating that the glass window inserts would be horizontal with sliding panels. A brochure was presented showing photos of the product. The contractor added that water had been pooling in the middle of porch and that the glass panels should help to remedy the problem. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the sliding glass panels for 218 N. Morris Street, Unit E. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wells and unanimously carried with all in favor.

3. Permit #19-01, Thomas Ray, 402 S. Morris St., replace existing front door with six panel wood door same color as existing; add storm door – glass with 2 panel on bottom. Mr. Ray was present to discuss his application. He noted that his house had been renovated in the past but not the area around his front door. His stated that his reasons for wanting to replace the door area was due to a significant gaps along the door's sidelights as well as providing safety in this area. Mr. Ray noted that his application was just to replace his door but in thinking it over and exploring the structural integrity of the sidelights and transom, he felt that both needed to be replaced as well as adding a stormdoor. Mr. Ray presented the commission with two options he had for this area. Mrs. Stanley asked Mr. Ray if he had a picture of what his house looked like now as it was not included in his permit packet and reminded Mr. Ray that he should have included it in his application. Ms. Litty asked what kind of finish Mr. Ray intended to use on his new door. Mr. Ray responded that it would be painted. Ms. Litty reminded Mr. Ray that he would need to present the commission with a paint chip of the color he intended to use for his door. Mr. Ray began to talk about the new sidelights he would like to use along with his plans for a new stormdoor. Mrs. Stanley asked that the discussion be stopped as the applicant was looking for the commission to decide for him what he should be using and that the applicant should be the one making the choices and presenting them to the group. She added that she needed to see a drawing of what was being proposed. Mrs. Wells agreed with Mrs. Stanley adding that she would love to see Mr. Ray remain as historically accurate as he could by recreating what is in place now with a wood door and a wooden screen door. Ms. Litty added that the commission needed to know how the proposed work would look in the end and what the finishes were going to be. Chairman Costigan spoke stating that the commission needed something on paper that shows the existing conditions of what Mr. Ray wanted to change and exactly what it was he wanted to do. None of the paperwork attached to permit showed any of that, with the exception of one sheet of paper, nor did the building permit specify all the other changes Mr. Ray was looking to make. Mr. Ray was also reminded by other members in the commission to include photos of his house, color swatches, and materials to be used. It was agreed by all to table the permit until further information has been provided to the commission.
4. Permit #19-05, Robert Fay, 305 Market Street, add a concrete landing with brick row locks and wooden stairs and railings; replace kitchen door with wood window; use kitchen door in new

position; remove second door and replace with small wood window. Mr. Fay explained to the commission that now that his house has been lifted, he would like to add a 6'6" x 5'6" landing entrance into his home. The landing would be concrete with a brick row lock with wooden steps and railings leading up onto the landing. Also being proposed is to replace an existing kitchen door with a wooden window with the existing kitchen door to be used in a new position on the landing. A second door will be removed and replaced by a small wooden window along with 5" K style guttering used over the door. The concrete landing will be parged. Ms. Litty asked if Mr. Fay was planning to landscape around the proposed concrete landing. Mr. Fay responded that he definitely had plans to do so. Ms. Litty suggested that should Mr. Fay end up not landscaping that area, that he consider veneering over the concrete. Mrs. Stanley asked about the measurements of the replacement windows. Chairman Costigan agreed that they should have them and asked that Mr. Fay supply the town office with the dimensions of the new windows. Mr. Fay agreed to do so. Mr. Costigan made a motion that the commission approve the movement of the front door to a new location, as shown on the drawings that have been submitted, along with construction of an entry porch and stairs, and addition of a window where the old door had been that would match the window on the same façade and the addition of another window on the small box area in the front of the house to match the existing window that is already there. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of the building permits.

CONSULTATION

A consultation was held with Friederikos Athanasopoulos, property owner of 208 Factory Street, and his residential designer Timothy Kearns. Mr. Kearns explained to the commission that Mr. Athanasopoulos' property is continually wet. His plans include raising his driveway, removing his existing garage and replacing it with a single car garage. He noted that the homeowner has been working with Town Administrator Cheryl Lewis in addressing the stormwater problems on this property and that all the topography on the property will change slightly to accommodate the flow of stormwater. The HVAC and swimming pool equipment would be re-located into the proposed new garage. In order to handle the stormwater, a stormwater retention pond will be located where the existing swimming pool on the property is located now. The proposed plans include a raised patio in the front of the property which would include a raised swimming pool. Mr. Kearns explained this would create a courtyard effect which would include a 4' brick fence around the entire property. A section on the east side of the property, which houses a taller fence, would remain as is. Chairman Costigan asked about the decking and the possible need for railing to be placed around all of it. Mr. Kearns responded that a handrail is needed for the steps leading up onto the deck but not around the deck itself as it would be less than 30" tall and that decks under 30" are not required by code to have railings. Mr. Kearns explained that the courtyard idea came about in looking at the basic shapes from the adjacent houses, which are more Williamsburg in style and have brick face foundations. The thought was to continue the look of the brick with a horizontal banding of brick to tie the houses in the area closer together. Ms. Litty commented that she liked the design, that the landscaping really made it, and would approve it. Mrs. Wells stated

that as far the streetscape goes, there was nothing like this in all of Oxford nor did it reflect the historic look of Oxford at all and that all the decking looked quite contemporary. Mrs. Stanley asked about the north elevation of the property which was not reflected in the drawings presented to the commission. Mr. Kearns stated that the north elevation would not be changing which was why he did not bother including any elevation of that side of the property. Mrs. Stanley stated that she too felt the landscaping was over the top and mentioned that the zoning ordinance mentions the streetscape being there for everyone and that one cannot build forests in front of houses. She cautioned Mr. Athanasopoulos on the number of tall trees that he wanted to place on his property. Mr. Kearns responded that they could go back to the landscaper to come up with a different planting plan. Chairman Costigan stated that originally he had had reservations about the swimming pool and its proposed location but upon learning more about the property and the challenges faced with stormwater he now better understood what the homeowner was trying to do. Mrs. Stanley responded that she did not have a problem with the property plans. Mrs. Wells noted that perhaps a swimming pool shouldn't be on this property at all. Chairman Costigan pointed out that one of the HDC members was not present at this evening's meeting and that it might be helpful to get his insights as to how he would view the proposed changes to this property. Mr. Kearns stated that he would like to take the next step in preparing more detailed drawings to present to the commission in an application. Mrs. Wells again stressed that her issue was with the swimming pool being located in the front of the property and the over use of landscaping adding again that the concept plans looked nothing like anything in Oxford. She added that she believed the job of the historic commission was to keep everything looking historic in the historic district and that Mr. Athanasopoulos' plans did not capture the historic feel to Oxford nor were they authentic to Oxford. Next door neighbor James Mylander spoke stating that his concern was about the drainage, the raising of the garage, the raising of the driveway, relocation of the garage, and what the intention was for the run-off from Factory Street. Mr. Kearns responded that there were no stormwater plans as of yet, and that he and his client had been working with Administrator Lewis on that portion of the project. Mr. Mylander then began to discuss past stormwater errors that had been created on the property. Chairman Costigan interrupted Mr. Mylander explaining to him that the historic district commission had nothing to do with stormwater and that it was something that the Planning Commission would handle. In closing, Chairman Costigan addressed Mr. Kearns and Mr. Athanasopoulos stating that overall the commission had a positive view on what was presented at this night's meeting with one exception and one absence, taking into consideration that the owner may want to think about not hiding the house quite as much as the drawings show. Mrs. Stanley added that the owner obtain a copy of the ordinance regarding the streetscape from Administrator Lewis and suggested that the landscape be softened so as to hide the pool but not the house.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk