

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

MARCH 4, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, March 4, 2019, 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, Jennifer Stanley, Patricia Ingram, and Julie Wells.

The minutes of February 4, 2019 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #19-08, Patricia Rissmiller, 214 N. Morris Street, request for repairs required by insurance company including repair of brick on building that is flaking; uneven brick walkway in need of repair; repair of loose shingles on roof and window frames at rear right side in need of repair with no changes to existing look. Mrs. Rissmiller was represented by her son, Chris Rissmiller. Chairman Costigan pointed out that the work proposed was primarily maintenance work. Mr. Rissmiller concurred that was correct and that the work being proposed came about from issues raised by Mrs. Rissmiller's insurance company. The plan is to repair everything as is. Mr. Rissmiller did mention that two (2) steps needed to be built in the back of the building to replace ones that had been there in the past. The commission advised Mr. Rissmiller that he would need to take out a separate permit for that work. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the HDC accept the repair work to be done at 214 S. Morris Street. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wells and unanimously carried with all in favor.
2. Permit #19-09, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Davis, 313 N. Morris Street, tear down existing rear addition on house; build new kitchen addition within same footprint; renovate upstairs bathroom and master bathroom; replace HVAC; install new bath in existing guesthouse and add a 15' x 10' second floor dormer storage area. Mr. Davis was represented by his contractor, Torr Howell. Mr. Howell explained to the commission that no changes would be made that would affect the look of the front of the house. The proposed changes to the kitchen area will all take place in the back of the house. The plans call for the removal of a one story existing kitchen to be replaced with a new one that will be the same size. Mr. Costigan asked about the skylights that the house currently has in the back and if the new addition would have them. Mr. Howell responded that it would still have skylights as the house is fairly dark inside and that the skylights would not be visible from the street. The new, proposed windows for the kitchen would match those that the house has now. Siding for the new addition would match the existing

siding on the house. Samples of both the window and siding were provided for the commission to see. When asked about the existing siding, Mr. Howell noted that vinyl siding is on the main body of the house now. Chairman Costigan stated that the commission is not fans of vinyl siding but since the main body of the house already has that and the new kitchen can't really be seen from the street, the vinyl siding could be used. Mr. Howell mentioned that the owners had stated to him that they would like to see the house covered in hardiplank at some point. Mr. Deerin noted that the use of vinyl siding on a relatively small addition on a house that already has vinyl siding was not going to be an issue. However, he suggested that Mr. Howell might want to mention to the owners that if they come back later, and want to do something to the main house, that might trigger a further discussion on something like hardiplank or wood siding and, if they decided to go ahead and use hardiplank or wood siding on this addition, it might be worthwhile depending on what their future plans will be. Chairman Costigan added that they may want to pry up some of the vinyl on the house just to see what is under there. Chairman Costigan noted that in looking over the site plan he found a notation to replace an HVAC compressor. Mr. Howell stated that the plans call for a new system to go in and that currently there is a single outdoor unit that the owners want to replace with a new single unit. The commission then went over the plans to change the looks to the existing guesthouse in the back of the property. Mr. Howell noted that the plan is to put a new dormer on the structure and that the owners want to maintain the same look to the building. Mr. Deerin asked about a garage door on the building that looked to be closed off. Mr. Howell responded that the building has a 4'-5' storage area in the location of where the garage door lifts up into it. The rest of the building contains a walled-off area of interior space. Mr. Deerin asked if that layout was going to remain the same. Mr. Howell referred to page 3 of the attached set of plans and pointed out that the garage door was going to be replaced with two double doors and a single window. Questions were then raised as to the proposed height of the dormer to which the contractor had no answers. Chairman Costigan pointed out the importance of having this information as it could affect the setbacks of the accessory building. Mrs. Stanley added that the picture provided in the packet of the guesthouse was different from the drawing presented and that it was not in scale.....that the drawing and photo provided showed different pitches of the roof. Chairman Costigan suggested that the guesthouse drawings be revisited, that page 3 of the plans be redrawn to show what is there now and what is proposed to be there, and that the photos that have been included with the application jive with what is shown on paper. Because of all the questions involving the guesthouse, the commission agreed to just vote on the kitchen addition with the request that Mr. Howell revisit and correct the plans had for the guesthouse and come back to the commission with his corrected plans for their next meeting. Mr. Deerin added that the commission did not have a problem with what was being requested but they did need proper plans showing what the owner wanted to have done along with details on the site plan with the setbacks. Mr. Deerin made a motion that the commission approve the demolishing of the existing rear addition on the house at 313 N. Morris Street and replacing it a similar addition as shown on the plans and that they approve the replacement of the HVAC system and defer consideration to the request to approve the second floor dormer on the guesthouse until the applicant provides additional drawings with further details. The motion

was seconded by Mrs. Stanley with all in favor. Before Mr. Howell was excused, Chairman Costigan asked about the samples that the contractor had brought in for the group to view. Mr. Howell explained that the metal sample was what would be used on the new kitchen roof and the brick was a sample of what the single outdoor step leading into the kitchen would look like. It was noted that the plans did not show the single step. Mr. Howell responded that there was a single step of brick there now but that the owner would like to remove it and replace it with the new brick as shown. Prior to leaving, Mr. Howell asked about the possibility of splitting up the permit. It was suggested that he take it up that question with the town office.

3. Permit #19-10, Robert Fay, 305 Market St., place HVAC equipment on left side of house; surround equipment with a white wooden Oxford fence and shrubbery; electric meter will also reside there. Mr. Fay explained that his HVAC equipment would be in the location of his currently existing shed. Also in the same location is an electric meter. Mr. Fay explained that because he is in the floodplain his unit would have to be raised and placed on a platform that would be about 40" high. His plan was to place a custom Oxford fence around the unit to screen it and that the fence would be about 7' high. Chairman Costigan expressed his concerns on the use of a 7' tall screening fence. Suggestions were made to Mr. Fay to look into placing vegetation around his unit to hide it or taking lattice and running it from post to post on the platform, or hiding it by use of a trellis. Mr. Fay was receptive to all the ideas presented to him. A motion was made by Ms. Litty to approve the HVAC unit to be placed on the left side of the house. Mr. Fay agreed that he would come back before the commission to discuss the embellishments to the unit once it is in place. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried with all in favor.
4. Permit #19-11, Robert Fay, 305 Market Street, erect 4' white, wooden Oxford fence on western side of property; erect a black steel 4' hoop and spike fence on northern and southern side of property. Mr. Fay stated that he had met with one of his neighbors who owned a condo unit at the Oxford Arms abutting Mr. Fay's property, who was concerned about the proposed fencing being placed within a low spot between Mr. Fay's property and the Oxford Arms property. Mr. Fay noted that the two of them had come into an agreement whereby Mr. Fay would place his proposed fencing far enough into his own property so as not to disrupt the existing drainage area. When questioned about the fencing, Mr. Fay explained that currently there is a split rail fence to the left of his property that he would like to continue. Along with that, there is a vinyl fence that currently separates his property from one unit of the Oxford Arms. Starting there, he stated it would like to put up an Oxford style, 4' white fence. The Oxford fencing would go up to the corner of the boatyard next door and, at that point, the fencing style would be changed to hoop and spike black fencing along the Hinckley property down to the water. From there, Mr. Fay stated there was dense vegetation that he had trimmed so that the fencing could be placed in that area. He added that since his own property was zoned Maritime, he felt the hoop and spike fencing would work better between his property and that Hinckley boatyard property on the other side of him. He also noted that the other property next to his, at 307 Market Street, has a bit of chain link fencing that stops and becomes vegetation and that he would like to continue his hoop and spike fencing in this area as well. Mr. Deerin made a motion that with respect to the second application for 305 Market Street, that the commission approve the

construction of an Oxford style fence from the point where the white vinyl fence ends on the entry driveway down to the corner of the one-story frame building (Mr. Fay's cottage) and then, at that point, allow the construction of a hoop and spike metal fence going along the property of Hinckley, up to the water, and then, also, to the property line between Mitch Fry's property (307 Market St.) and the applicant's house where a chain link fence ends, as well as the property line to the water. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram with all in favor. Mr. Fay noted that he had heard the wooden Oxford style fencing would not be able to be painted right away after it has been erected and that he may have to wait a month or two to paint it. The commission understood the situation. Prior to leaving, Mr. Fay mentioned he had a little cottage on his property that had been an office at one time. One side was vinyl and the other 3 sides had some kind of compressed material on it that was rotting. He stated that he would like to do something with the outside of that building and asked what the commission would be comfortable with him using to cover the building. The commission suggested cedar or hardiplank, both of which would hold up well in the weather.

5. Permit #19-12, Freiderikos Athanasopoulos, 208 Factory Street, demolish existing garage; addition of 1 ½ story frame garage with studio and bath above; demolish existing swimming pool and relocate adjacent to addition surrounded with wood deck and brick walkway, brick veneer, and brick steps with wrought iron handrail. Both Mr. Athanasopoulos and his residential designer, Timothy Kearns, were present to discuss the application. Mr. Kearns reminded the commission that they had given their insights as to what they wanted the owner to reconsider doing to his property at their last meeting. In coming to this meeting tonight, Mr. Kearns stated that their mission was to get the HDC's blessing on the scheme that they were presenting in the building permit application so that the time could be invested in creating the required structural and architectural details for final construction. Mr. Deerin expressed his concerns as to whether there would be changes from the scheme that Mr. Kearns was presenting at this night's meeting and his working drawings. Mr. Kearns assured him that he and his client had been before the commission twice and, as such, the answer would be "no." He added that the next step for him would be to create the working plans for the construction of the house. Chairman Costigan suggested breaking down the permit in parts and to start with the request to demolish the existing garage. As had been discussed at the previous meeting of the HDC, the garage did not work well and had been built beyond the required setback. The new garage would be built 8' from the property line and attached to line up with the existing wall of the house. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that demolition of the existing garage be allowed at 208 Factory Street. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty. Mr. Deerin added that the garage was a non-contributing structure built in 1970. Mr. Kearns added that the house itself was built in 2005 to which Mr. Deerin responded that it too was just as non-contributing. Chairman Costigan pointed out that the proposed new attached garage would be 1 ½ stories tall. Neighbor to Mr. Athanasopoulos, James Mylander, who was in the audience, asked about the setbacks of the proposed garage. Chairman Costigan answered that since the garage was to be attached to the house, it would need the same setbacks as the principal structure. Mr. Deerin asked if a small addition would be built to attach the garage to house. Mr. Kearns responded that was correct adding that the siding and roof on the new construction

would match that which is exists on the house. He added that the new garage would house a single car, would have 2 doors, and one dormer with 5 windows which would match the windows in the main house. A window schedule will be provided when the plans are put together. Mr. Mylander spoke again and wanted to pass on to the commission information regarding the problems he had encountered with the stormwater run-off from the property. Chairman Costigan gently explained to Mr. Mylander that that was something that the historic commission was not interested in but agreed to take Mr. Mylander's information to add to the application for the Planning Commission to refer to. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the commission accept the plan for the new garage at 208 Factory Street, having a 1 ½ story frame attached to the house with studio above. Mr. Deerin added that he wanted to clarify part of that garage will be the construction of an addition to the house. Mr. Kearns confirmed that was correct, that the addition would be engaged into the house. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried. The commission next reviewed the request to demolish the existing swimming pool and to relocate it adjacent to the proposed addition, to be surrounded by a wood deck and brick walkway. Chairman Costigan questioned how one went about demolishing a pool. Mr. Kearns responded it was a bit complicated as it would be based on the stormwater plan. He explained that there will be some stormwater storage in that present location. Based on the stormwater storage needed, a determination will be made as to how much of the pool area needs to be demolished. If they find they can take the tank that will store the stormwater and place it within line of the existing pool, they won't need to pull out the entire pool. The end result should be invisible and will be essentially a cistern. Mr. Kearns added that if the footprint of Mr. Athanasopoulos' plan is approved, they can then begin to run the stormwater calculations and impervious surface coverage as well as looking at the slopes and drainage of everything in this area. From what Mr. Athanasopoulos has now and what he wants to build, no additional impervious surface coverage will be created. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the commission give approval to remove the existing pool at 208 Factory Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Deerin and unanimously carried with all in favor. Moving onto the request for decking, Mr. Deerin asked if there was any decking on the property now. Mr. Kearns responded that there was decking at the existing entry porch shown on page SP1. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the commission accept the plans for a new pool and the surrounding wood decking at 208 Factory Street. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty. Mr. Deerin, in an attempt to make things clear, asked about the square footage of the proposed decking and if the decking would require any railing on it. Mr. Kearns confirmed that the total sq. footage of the decking would be about 1,000 sq. ft. and that there would be no railing surrounding it as the deck itself would be less than 30" tall. In asking about the fencing needed to surround the pool, Mr. Kearns confirmed with Mr. Deerin that there would be an Oxford fence around the entire property except for the front of the property where there would be a brick wall. Mr. Deerin added to Mrs. Stanley's motion that the commission was referencing page A4 of the plans submitted and dated as 2/25/19. Mrs. Stanley commented that it was a lot of decking that would be going on the property. Chairman Costigan responded by stating that the house was not historic. Mrs. Wells countered that even though the house itself was not historic it was in the historic district and that there was nothing else around town that looked anything like what

Mr. Athanasopoulos wanted to build, especially with regards to the amount of decking or swimming pools in the front yard. Chairman Costigan acknowledged that even though Mrs. Wells' argument was a good one, this was a property that was located on a unique street which has swimming pools in backyards that are visible from the street, where some houses face the street and others don't, and even through lots, which have two front yards. He felt this was a unique scenario, one in which the owner was trying to deal with a stormwater problem. The motion was called by Chairman Costigan in which all were found to be in favor, and was therefore unanimously approved. The last item for review was that of the use of bricks on the property. Looking at the street side elevation, the plans called for a brick wall and entry way to be used to screen the pool, referenced on page A5. Two brick wall areas were shown. The brick walls would be 4' tall with the pillars being slightly higher. Mr. Deerin asked if there would be a large brick expanse for the driveway. Mr. Kearns acknowledged that was correct and that the owner was planning on using brick pavers and explained how the pavers would help with the flow of stormwater to the cistern/old pool area. Mr. Deerin made a motion to approve the construction of the new brick sidewalks, walls and driveway, including the gates as shown on pages A4 and A5 of the plans. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor. Before excusing the applicant, Chairman Costigan asked about a fencing running between Mr. Athanasopoulos' property and that of his neighbors and asked if that existed now. Mr. Kearns responded it did not and that it was part of the perimeter of the proposed new Oxford fencing. This again led to a question about the plans being presented at this night's meeting as being concept drawings. Mr. Kearns again explained that the plans presented were fully developed elevations and within that he could create detailed plans on a large scale. The profile would remain the same and all details would be delineated. Mr. Deerin noted that typically the commission approved working drawings and asked how the commission could make sure the final working drawings for permit did not have any changes from what was being presented that this night's meeting. Mr. Kearns suggested that the approval could be re-addressed if he and his client had any significant changes. Chairman Costigan stated that this night's review would become part of the record and that there shouldn't be any problem as long as the applicant does not deviate from that which has been approved. Mr. Deerin stated that as a record, for the town, ultimately the commission should include a sign off on the final working plan. Mr. Kearns stated that typically he would agree with that but that he just wanted the assurance that if he didn't change the plans, the HDC wouldn't change their minds with regards to the project. Chairman Costigan assured Mr. Kearns and his client that the review of the application was on record and that the commission had looked at the permit piece by piece. Mr. Mylander added to the discussion that as long as he (Mr. Kearns) abides by what he has said, he was satisfied with what had been presented.

6. Permit #19-07, Jennifer Stanley, 221 South Street, wood screen fencing replicating neighbor's pool fence to be shorter in height; wire fencing to replace picket fencing and small portion of wire fencing. Mrs. Stanley recused herself from the commission in order to present her application. She explained to the commission that she was looking to screen her view of her next door neighbor's pool. The neighbor has a fence on two sides of their pool facing South Street and along the back of their property. Mrs. Stanley stated that she was looking to take the

pattern of the neighbor's fence and make a screen fence for her side of the property, to be no higher than 4', to hide the view of the swimming pool. It would be natural in color to match other existing fencing on Mrs. Stanley's property. The fencing would just be long enough to shield Mrs. Stanley's view of the pool. The second half of Mrs. Stanley's application pertained to her request for wire fencing. She stated that when she and her husband bought Maplehurst, it had wire fencing in the front of the house and down along the side of the garage. In time, picket fencing was added to the property which Mrs. Stanley felt gave a kind of stockade fenced-in look to her property. She noted that the view down one of the sides of her property was all wooded and open for the public to see which is why she would like to see the wire fencing in that area. Mrs. Stanley added it would be the same style of wire fencing that was used on the other side of her property and similar to that found on the properties at 223 S. Morris Street and 225 S. Morris Street. The wire fencing would start at Mrs. Stanley's garage and would incorporate a little gate made of the same material. The existing white picket fencing would be removed and replaced with the wire fencing. The existing plantings in this location would work to hide the fencing so that the area would become much more natural looking. Mr. Deerin made a motion that the commission approve the drawing that shows a wood privacy fence 48" tall (shown in green ink on the site plan) and removal of an existing white picket fence north of the garage and installation of hoop wire fencing between the edge of the garage and approved wood privacy fencing. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram and unanimously carried with all in favor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk