

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

JUNE 7, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the Chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, May 3, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., via “Zoom” due to the on-going pandemic of a virus known as Covid-19.

Other members participating in the virtual meeting included Jennifer Stanley, Suzanne Litty, James Deerin, and Julie Wells. Also present was Town Manager Cheryl Lewis.

The minutes of the meeting of May 3, 2021 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

- Permit #21-60, Albert and Lisa Capitos, 110 N. Morris Street, 110 N. Morris St., roof replacement over midsection of house; siding replacement on kitchen bump-out and mid-section of house on opposite side; and installation of portico over side door. Both Mr. and Mrs. Capitos were virtually present to discuss the application. Mrs. Capitos explained that they have side door in the mid-section of their house directly opposite of the other side of their house facing onto Wilson Street, which has a portico over the door that they would like to replicate on their other side door. Chairman Costigan stated that he remembered a section of the couple’s roof that was failing and improperly installed with shingles on a flat portion of the roof and that a permit of urgency was submitted in the office to have that section of roofing replaced with a membrane that he had approved. Mrs. Capitos responded that was correct, but she and her husband had decided to hold off on that until this new request has been approved. Chairman Costigan asked about the replacement of the fish scale shingles. Mrs. Capitos explained that on the Wilson Street side of the house there are existing fish scale shingles, some of which are rotted and in need of replacement. The couple is requesting to pull off the bad ones and replace them with matching shingles. Additionally, the couple were also requesting that new fish scale shingles be placed on the opposite side of their home which would cover the entire wall in that area. Chairman Costigan noted that was a lot of fish scale in one area and noted that usually that element was used as an accent piece. Mrs. Capitos responded that because the house is so long they wanted just wanted to add some visual interest. Mr. Capitos added that it was just one long boring side right now and that they were hoping to break up by adding the fish scale siding. A suggestion was made by the commission that the same window framing on the bay window be used to wrap the windows on the side in question as that would help to break up the fish scale on is looking at and that it would look better. Mrs. Capitos responded that was a good idea and that they could do that. Mr. Deerin asked about the membrane roofing. Mrs. Capitos the reason they were replacing a section of their existing roofing with a membrane was because the roof was flat in this one area and that was what the roofing company had suggested that they use. She added that the color of the membrane would be white but that it would not be visible because the flatness of the roof. The proposed portico, to be modeled like the one found on the opposite side of the house facing onto Wilson

- Street, would have a peak roof popping into the flat roof, which was why the couple had held off having the membrane installed until it was clear that they could or could not install a new portico. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the commission approve the replacement of siding with fish scale shingles along the kitchen wall side and bump-out area of the house and the installation of a portico over the door on the same side, at 110 N. Morris Street. The motion was seconded by Mr. Deerin and unanimously carried with all in favor.
- Permit #21-59, Town of Oxford/Ennismore, LLC, 105 S. Morris Street, renovations and additions to Oxford Mews. Architect Cameron MacTavish, along with Rich Leggett (owner of Ennismore, LLC) were virtually present to discuss the application. Mr. MacTavish noted that he had submitted a model of what was being proposed that was on display in the Town Office in the hopes that the members had had a chance to view it. Plans are to build an addition on to the north side of the rear of the building which would house one apartment stacked over another along with the installation of an elevator. This will result in the creations of a courtyard as well as a reduction in the coverage on this property down to 53%. The exterior of the new addition will consist of hardiplank siding to be white with grey window sash and trim, opposite of the older, existing section of the building. Mr. Leggett spoke adding that this plan had been presented to the Commissioners as well and that they were anxious to get started. The downstairs apartment, on the north side of the addition, which would be in close proximity to the Oxford Museum, would have a series of three (3) high transom windows to give the tenant privacy. No changes to the front of the building would occur other than new roofing to replace the old, aging roofing currently on the building. Mr. Deerin asked if the window trim going on the new construction would match the window trim on the existing windows. Mr. MacTavish responded that they would attempt to match the original. Questions were raised to door entrances into the building. There would be one door in the back leading into the downstairs lobby area, one door leading directly into the first-floor apartment in the new addition, and a door(s) off of a deck in the back leading into an existing section of The Mews. Chairman Costigan asked how one would gain access to the two upstairs apartment in the existing part of the building. Mr. MacTavish responded he was not sure yet though the plan does show a door for emergency egress. However, thought has been given about accessing those apartments in either the rear of the building and/or store in the front. Mr. Deerin asked about parking. Mr. MacTavish noted that 5 parking spaces have been provided – 1 per apartment along with 1 handicap space. Mrs. Wells pointed out there is plenty parking available on the street. Mr. Deerin pointed out that when the commission approves a project of this size, they also approve the construction documents which the application was missing. Mr. MacTavish responded that he was working with a structural engineer and that it would be coming. Chairman Costigan asked if an elevation of the front of the building could be provided as well too as he thought it was a good idea to have a complete permit as well as showing that the front elevation would not be changing. Chairman Costigan asked about the location of the utilities as he noticed there was the potential for 7 separate spaces in the project. Mr. MacTavish responded that there would be a utility closet under the stairs of the building and the meters will be outside in a little notch located on the side of the building facing the museum and not easily seen by public view. Chairman Costigan asked about the drainage. Town Manager Cheryl Lewis spoke reminding the commission that the applicant would have to provide stormwater and mitigation to the town office when they bring in their plans that the office will review. Ed

Miller, a virtual attendee of the meeting, asked about the panel that use to hang in The Mews and painted by local artists in town and if there were any plans for them. Manager Lewis responded that they now belong to the Town of Oxford and that the museum has offered to house them. Mrs. Wells, current President of the Oxford Museum, added that the panels would be displayed in the museum at certain time. Mr. Miller spoke again stating that he noticed on the agenda that the applicant appearing is listed as Ennismore, LLC and asked who that was. Mr. Leggett responded that he was Ennismore, LLC and the name was chosen from where he lived in London and that he was not associated with the Ennismore, LLC real estate agency located in New York City, NY. There being no further discussion, Mr. Deerin made a motion that with respect to the application for renovation and addition to The Mews, located at 105 S. Morris Street, as shown on the application, as well as the attachment of renderings of depictions and construction details, the permit be approved as submitted. Chairman Costigan added “including the elevation of the front of The Mews.” The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously approved with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permits.

CONSULTATIONS

A virtual consultation was held with Phil Layton and Dana Fitzsimmons, property owners at 508 Valliants Lane, to discuss their plans to remodel their home. Chairman Costigan spoke stating that he remembered the gentlemen coming before the commission to discuss this project a few years back, and though he did not remember all the details, his thoughts were that the discussion had been positive. Mr. Layton confirmed that he and Mr. Fitzsimmons had met before with the commission back in 2016 but they were now ready to expand their home and looking into enclosing a patio in the back of their house and turning it into a dining room/living room on the creek side and/or placing an addition of a second floor over the main structure of the house. The proposed plan calls for an addition in the back of the house which would not be visible from either the Strand or Valliants Lane but there may also be an addition of a second which would cover a portion of the first floor. Chairman Costigan spoke stating in the packet that was sent to the commission, it was mentioned on the 3rd page that the siding and shutters on the house would be changed to natural products and that that was the kind of change the commission liked to see. In looking over what Mr. Layton and Mr. Fitzsimmons were wanting to do, Chairman Costigan felt the couple were headed on the right track. Mr. Deerin pointed out that this house is historically non-contributing, so the commission has more leeway with what they approve. Mr. Layton noted they were still working with cost of the projects and may or may not do both projects they were presenting tonight but that they wanted the commission’s feedback on both. Mr. Deerin responded that if they decide to go with one project or the other that he would have no problems with either choice or any problem with what they were proposing to do. Chairman Costigan pointed out that the house seems to have two front doors and asked if one door would make more sense as an official entryway. Mr. Layton explained that the Strand door was the more logical entryway, but the official address of the property is Valliants Lane and as a result they wanted to keep that door because of the address. Questions were raised as to whether Valliants Lane really exists. Manager Lewis spoke and verified that on the MD Dept. of Assessments and Taxation Real Property Search, it is listed as Valliant Lane and added that it does not have to be a town street on which the owner’s need to reside. Chairman Costigan stated that he had only brought it up thinking that maybe one

of the doors could be made to be more primary than the other. Mr. Layton agreed and noted that he was working to make the Stand the primary one by flanking it with either a pergola or columns and that whatever their final selection should be, they would bring that back for the HDC's consideration. Mrs. Stanley asked to see more consistency with the windows and that windows make a big difference to the appearance of the home. Other than the suggestions offered, the commission members were agreeable to what was being proposed.

A second consultation was held with Analipsi, LLC to review a proposed trellis for 200 West Street and review utility information with regards to the accessory structure. Both the property owner, Thomas Caravythà, and his landscape architect, Brian Kane. Mr. Kane explained that the property has a new swimming pool and that approval of a 4' fence has been received. The owner is looking into providing screening on his property and that of the neighbor's property at 100 West Street, by erecting a garden trellis, having an open grid, with 6' posts, that would have flowers vines growing on it. It would have little visibility and provide the garden with an edge view. The material of the trellis would be Azek and painted white. Chairman Costigan asked if the trellis would be used in lieu of the previously approved 4' fence. Mr. Kane responded that was correct. Chairman Costigan then asked about the proposed height of the trellis. Mr. Kane stated that the trellis would be 6'. Chairman Costigan pointed out that though he is not on a zoning permit his belief was that if one was looking to install a 6' trellis in lieu of 4' fence, which the zoning code allows, a 6' trellis would be too tall. Manager Lewis spoke stating that the trellis would have to be no taller than 4' in height and that to pursue a 6' trellis, one would need to seek a variance. When questioned by the owner as to why a trellis would fall under the same height restrictions as a fence, Manager Lewis responded that the trellis was being presented as a fence to be used like a fence. Mrs. Stanley added that the HDC did not allow this type screening and that the community itself likes properties to be open and not have walls, unless they are considering other types of properties, such as commercial ones. Chairman Costigan suggested consideration could be give for a 4' tall type of trellis, and though the Planning Commission would have the final say, his felt the owner and landscaper should go back to the drawing board. The second part of the consultation was a review of a cabinet in which to obscure the electrical items on the accessory structure. Mr. Caravythà explained that the southside of the building had built a recessed area within the wall so that all the electrical units would be placed there. The plan is to have double doors placed over the recess to hide the electrical equipment. Mr. Deerin asked if the door would be flush on the side of the wall and look like the trellis presented earlier. Mr. Caravythà responded that was correct and that he had been hoping it would look like the trellis but now the look of the double doors may change. Chairman Costigan suggested that Mr. Caravythà check with his electrical contractor about enclosing the area as there might be a problem with using a solid door. Mr. Deerin thought that the cabinet would give the side of the building a busy look but added that he didn't have a strong opinion on the matter. Ms. Litty stated that she thought it looked good. Chairman Costigan he thought seeing the doors would be better than having the electrical work exposed. Mrs. Stanley commented that the electricity generated on the panel would be warm and wondered if having more air available to it would be better. Mr. Caravythà responded that he agreed and that was why he had had the recess built as he did not want to look at the electric mechanicals. Chairman Costigan stated that he felt the commission members were all looking favorably to having the electrical elements hidden. The commission briefly went over the previously approved Tesla shingle roofing and where the utilities for the shingles would be located. Mr. Caravythà responded that the company had originally suggested it be located on the waterside of the property but that

he had not agreed to that and that it too would be in the recessed area. In closing, the commission was agreeable to the utility enclosure but not the trellis and asked that more thought be given on that project.

This concluded the consultation requests.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Costigan announced that the next meeting of the HDC will occur on Monday, July 12th, due to the 4th of July falling on Sunday and the office being closed for the holiday on Monday, July 5th.

Manager Lewis reported that the county is looking at writing a grant application to the MD Historic Trust as they are seeking money to selectively update historic district commission design guidelines within the county to include adaptations to protect historic structures from natural hazards and to adapt a climate change. If the county receives this grant, the Oxford HDC may have the ability to receive some professional information and be able to work with the state on this. Manager Lewis thought it was worth mentioning to the commission as notice of intent must be submitted by June 22. She noted that it would take out the effort of the town trying to get money to do some work such as have the HDC guidelines redone and put together by a professional along with acquiring services and info that the town would not normally have available. Chairman Costigan responded that he could not think of anything negative about participating with the county with the other agreeing as well.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk