

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 1, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the Chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, November 1, 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 James Deerin, Suzanne Litty, Jennifer Stanley, Patricia Ingram, and Julie Wells. Also virtually present was Town Manager Cheryl Lewis and Town Planner Maria Brophy.

The minutes of October 4, 2021 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following permits were reviewed:

- Permit #21-99, Margaret and George Morris, 200 N. Morris St., replace rotting kitchen window and replace rotted wood sections of front porch with replacements in-kind. Both Mr. and Mrs. Morris were virtually present to discuss their application. Mrs. Morris noted that their front porch was rotting out and that their two kitchen windows needed replacing. The windows would be replaced with white Marvin windows having the exact size and look as those existing. Mr. Deerin asked if the front porch material would be replaced with wood, as it currently exists, or a synthetic material. Mr. Morris responded that they would be using Azek, as they were having trouble with obtaining wood and figured the Azek would hold up better with the weather. All the wood on the front porch would be replaced and painted gray, as it exists now. Mr. Deerin made a motion that the application to replace two kitchen windows and the entire front porch with Azek, painted closely to match the existing porch floor color, be approved. The motion was seconded Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.
- Permit #21-106, William and Anne Peck, 208 Tilghman St., replace front door due to rot and inability to close properly. Mrs. Peck, who was virtually present at the meeting, explained that she had hired a contractor to try to patch and fix her existing front door, but this was found to be hopeless and so it was decided it should be replaced. The new proposed door would be mahogany with a transom, using the same configuration as that existing. She noted that the beautiful, unique molding below the transom that was put in in the 1940's would remain. Because the seal around the existing door is in such poor condition, the entire unit will need to be replaced. The new door would be painted green to match the color of the door as it is now. Mr. Deerin asked if the identical dimension of the door and transom would remain the same. Mrs. Peck responded that was correct and that everything had to be custom made. Mr. Deerin asked about the hardware. Mrs. Peck responded that she didn't know if that door hardware could be reused but that if it had to be replaced, it would be as close to what is there now, noting that the hardware was not the original hardware and that the existing door was installed in the 1940's. She added that she would not be doing anything with the railing at this time and would like to keep it as it is. Mrs. Wells spoke stating that she thought the HDC should commend Mrs. Peck for her diligence and looking into the history of the house. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the HDC approve the door replacement for 208 Tilghman Street. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.

- Permit #21-105, Kelley and Claire Selph, 105 High Street, install Gutter Helmet brand gutter covers over existing gutters on front and back of shed. Mr. Selph, who was virtually present, spoke stating he has a shed on his property which has several walnut trees nearby which deposit leaves and debris into his gutters. The plan is to install white gutter helmets to his existing white gutters. Mrs. Stanley made a motion to approve the application for gutter helmets for the building at 105 High Street. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried. Mr. Deerin questioned if gutter helmets or other systems like that should require HDC approval. Mrs. Stanley agreed. Town Manager Cheryl Lewis spoke stating that sometimes the commission wanted to see gutters and perhaps the commission should provide the office with a list of things they think are appropriate or not. Mr. Deerin responded that in this case, the applicant was just talking about a gutter protection system, not a changing the gutters. Manager Lewis responded that if that be the case, the office would no longer be submitting this type of application to the HDC.
- Permit #21-100, Bernhard Witter, 213 South St., replace 7 windows in older part of property. Neither the applicant nor a representative was virtually present. The commission decided to hold off on reviewing the application until all other applications were completed but still no one ever showed up virtually to discuss the permit. Because Mr. Witter referenced in his application that the windows he wanted to replace were in the older portion of his home, and because some of his windows have the older, "wavy" glass in them, it was agreed to table the application until Mr. Witter, or his representative, were available to properly discuss the permit.
- Permit #21-97, James Dewar, 106 N. Morris St., return front porch to original structure; addition of storage area and exercise room and walk-in closet; repairs as appropriate to front fascia and soffits. Dr. Dewar was virtually present and explained to the commission that several years ago he had built a second floor porch to the front of his home. He stated that because he does not use it and it needs repairing, he would like to remove it and change it back to the way it looked in the 1980's, with a double hung window on the second floor, in place of the second floor open porch. In addition to that, he explained that in the rear of the house he would like to build out a 167' sq. ft. enclosure to use as a downstairs storage area. The expansion would leave his house occupying 32% of the lot size. Chairman Costigan applauded Dr. Dewar for what he wanted to do to the front of the house but had questions as to the proposed addition on the back, particularly with regards to the absence of any elevation drawings and lack of any details with regards to windows, the roof, etc. All the members agreed that more information was needed and therefore it was decided to table discussion of this portion of the application until the commission's next meeting pending additional information provided by Dr. Dewar. Chairman Costigan stated that the description for the work request for the front of the house was adequate and that the request was to be undoing some things from the past along with maintenance items. Mrs. Stanley stated that it was important to see the window to make sure it would match those that are predominant in the house. Dr. Dewar noted that the window will be 2 over 2, the same as others in the house. Mr. Deerin asked about the sliding glass door on the second floor. Dr. Dewar responded it would be removed and relaced by a single double hung window. Mrs. Stanley made a motion that the commission approve returning the front porch to its original structure at 106 N. Morris Street and that the commission hold for additional information on the plan for the a back addition. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingram. Mr. Deerin asked for an addendum to the motion, that the commission is basically approving the removal of the existing second story portion of the front porch and the replacement of the existing sliding glass doorway with a single, double hung window and restoration of the first floor porch to the original as shown in the photos as provided by the applicant. Dr. Dewar noted that he was going to keep the existing first floor porch along with the gingerbread on the front of the house which goes up to the peaks of the roof. He also

noted that he would not be touching the first floor. This prompted Mr. Deerin to ask if the applicant was going to replace the porch roof. Dr. Dewar responded that the roof has a slope of about 3 or 5 degrees, but he would like to change it so that it looks like the photo from the 1980's. Mr. Deerin noted that the plan for the first floor should include a new roof, removal of the balustrade around the second floor and leaving the first floor porch the way it is now. Ms. Litty stated she wanted to see a drawing reflecting these items. Mrs. Wells agreed with Ms. Litty and asked Dr. Dewar what kind of roofing he would be using. Dr. Dewar stated it would be metal, having the same color as his bay window, dark red or dark orange red. Chairman Costigan stated he thought the commission understood what Dr. Dewar wanted out front and that a motion had been made and seconded and asked if all were in favor. Mrs. Stanley pointed out that a lot of changes had been discussed from what the commission originally thought was a simple porch plan and maybe an amended motion should be made. Mr. Deerin agreed and revised the motion as follows: with respect to the application for 106 N. Morris Street, for the return of the front porch to the original structure, I move that we approve that subject to the understanding that there will be a new roof installed over the front porch that will incorporate a standing seam metal roof the same color as the metal roof over the bay window in the front and that the remainder of the front porch will remain as is, shown in picture #2, of the 1980 renovations. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor. Chairman Costigan suggested to Dr. Dewar he get in touch with the town office for better guidance as to what the commission needed to see for the rear addition in terms of elevation. Mr. Deerin added to his motion that with respects to the second part of the application for 106 N. Morris Street, the addition on the rear of the property, the commission defer any decision on that until the applicant can provide additional information regarding the elevations and things of that nature, of which the town office can provide guidance.

- Permit #21-104, Richard Schramm, 208 S. Morris St., install two 120-gallon LP tanks and gas fired combination boiler in place of the current oil fired boiler. Mr. Schramm, who was virtually present, noted that when he bought his house in 2006, there was a boiler and fuel oil tank in place underground. The underground tank was recently cleaned and inspected, no leakage found, and was filled with cement. Mr. Schramm explained that he now wanted to replace the oil fired boiler with two propane units and install the two tanks on the outside, near his house. They would be hidden by an enclosure using the same siding as found on the house. Chairman Costigan stated that in looking at the photos provided by Mr. Schramm he was concerned that there was something close by, on the ground, in the vicinity of the proposed tanks, that looked like a dryer vent or electrical outlet. Mr. Schramm responded that that was an old, unused vent that would be removed. Two stakes, shown in a photo attached to the application, represent where the posts will be for the enclosure of the tanks. A motion was made by Chairman Costigan that the commission approve the installation of two 120 LP tanks and appropriate screening to hide the tanks from public view. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously approved with all in favor.
- Permit #21-66, David Poe and Constance Vaught, 301 N. Morris St., revision to previously approved permit for conservatory addition on second floor above sunroom; interior elevator. Residential designer, Timothy Kearns, was virtually present to discuss the revisions to the previously approved application. Mr. Kearns explained that the owners were looking to make three new changes as follows: 1) there will be vertical clear story windows, 24" tall, which would raise the roof by about 18", 2) a standing seam metal roof which would be placed on the entire addition and would match the existing one story front porch, and 3) trapezoidal windows in the center of the rear façade would be a pair as opposed to a single unit. Mr. Deerin asked if the new

addition roof would be the same height as the existing roof. Mr. Kearns responded it would be much lower. To clarify, Mr. Deerin asked if that meant the height on the back would be below the peak of the roof of the main house. Mr. Kearns responded that was correct and would be about 18" or less than the main portion of the house. Mrs. Wells asked if any of the proposed work could be seen from the front. Mr. Kearns responded that it could but only if one stood to the north and faced the house. Ms. Litty asked if the windows on the 3rd floor were up higher than they previously were shown. Mr. Kearns responded that was correct. Originally skylights had been proposed but there were concerns over leaking problems and both the builder and roofer weren't comfortable about installing them, so the plans were changed to incorporate clear story windows. Chairman Costigan made a motion that the previously approved addition to 301 N. Morris St., on the rear, be amended with changes as shown on the application dated 10/23/21 describing a conservatory addition on the second floor above an existing sunroom as shown on the plans. Mr. Deerin asked if the plans they were dealing with were the ones dated October 24. Chairman Costigan responded the application he was looking at was dated 10/23/21 but he was aware there was some juggling to get the new plans in so they may be dated a day later. Mr. Deerin responded he just wanted to be clear that those were the plans the commission was dealing with. Chairman Costigan confirmed that they were. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried by all in favor.

- Permit #21-102, Philip Layton and Dana Fitzsimmons, 508 Valliant's Lane, new porch, second story addition, and first story addition; new siding, trim, shutters, and roofing. Both Christine Dayton and Nick Cappella from Christine Dayton Architects were virtually present to discuss the application with Mr. Cappella handling the presentation. Chairman Costigan pointed out that the commission had already had consultations with regards to this property and asked Mr. Cappella to highlight any significant changes that the commission might have already seen. Mr. Cappella explained the changes beginning with the side of the house facing the Strand, where one of two front doors is located (though the other front door, facing Valliant's Lane, is considered the true front door). It is here a new porch will be added. On the side of the house, where the true front door is located, facing Valliant's Lane, an existing porch will be rebuilt. The roof over the new porch would have composition shingles. An addition will be built on the east side of the house, along with a second floor addition that will have shed dormers instead of the gable dormers, which had previously been presented and discussed. It will also contain two windows at the gable end of the second floor. The windows will be all clear. Mr. Deerin asked if the all the windows would be one over one except for small windows on the second floor which would be single light windows. Mr. Cappella responded that was correct. He added that there would be new wood shutters and new cement, horizontal Hardie plank siding. The addition would be painted light gray to match the existing portion of the home and the new second story would have the Hardie plank shingles also painted light gray. Chairman Costigan asked if the first floor siding would be regular lap siding. Mr. Cappella responded that was correct. Mr. Deerin stated that with respect to the application relating to 508 Valliant's Lane for a new porch, second story addition, and first story addition, new siding, trim, shutters, and roofing, as shown on the architectural plans and specifications dated October 18, 2021, he would move that the commission approve those renovations and changes. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stanley and unanimously carried.
- Permit # 21-92, Swallows 200, LLC, 200 Tred Avon Avenue, demolish kitchen addition and non-historic shed and doghouse; construct a new rear deck, historic front porch, extend height of parapet to match front, extend rear bay to second floor, restore historic windows, shutters, front door system, add new fence, repaint house, add new HVAC, new windows, and doors on first floor wing, and new bay. Architect Christine Dayton presented the application for the property owner.

Ms. Dayton noted that since last meeting with the HDC, she and the owner had been before the Planning Commission who approved the owner's request to restore the front porch on the street. In going over the plans, the front elevation, east side, illustrated the proposed front porch and request to put in 2 over 2 windows facing Tred Avon Avenue. The north elevation showed the proposal to extend the parapet straight on that side, with no decorative elements. The rear, west elevation illustrated keeping the parapet all the way around and introducing scuppers to drain the roof that would come down mainly on the south side. The rear, east elevation illustrated the extension of a bay window up to the second story and proposal to remove the kitchen addition that exists and introduce a single door along with a pair of French doors with side lights and full length shutters to match the other shutters on the house. Also, on the left side south elevation, new windows will be introduced on the first floor that one cannot see presently because the area is covered by the kitchen addition. Also being proposed is the removal of two existing structures that are on the property which are contemporary and not original to the property. The plan also showed the type of fence the owner was requesting to go around the property along with weathered teak decking that he would like to use on the new porch deck that would replace the existing kitchen. Proposed colors and an image of what the house would look like were also provided. Chairman Costigan asked if the rear exit and French door would have any sort of roof overhang. Ms. Dayton responded that they were not proposing to touch the roof line at this time and that the French doors would be coming out of a bedroom and the other single door will be exiting a kitchen. Chairman Costigan asked if the raising of the parapet wall was being done to accommodate the second bay window. Ms. Dayton responded that it was not and that it was more of an aesthetic that they were looking for rather than a step down because the roof line is so chopped up and they just wanted to clean up the lines as one comes around the house along with helping to receive the roof line of the second bay. Chairman Costigan asked if the second bay unit would work without increasing the parapet. Ms. Dayton responded that it was feasible. Chairman Costigan expressed his concerns over the fencing stating that currently there is an iron hoop and hook fence on the Tred Avon Ave. side which blends into the environment as opposed to a white picket fence and that no other houses on that street have a fencing which boxes in their property. He asked if any consideration had been given to parking. Ms. Dayton responded that they had not done a landscape design at this point. Chairman Costigan noted that the property consisted of a rectangular shaped lot and asked if consideration could be given to clipping the corner of West Street and Division Street to soften the look of the fence as he had concerns about large trucks going down Division Street and making that corner. Ms. Dayton responded that the request would have to be taken in consideration and that there were large rocks there now that defined that turn. Mr. Deerin asked about a photo shown with the application titled "P1" that showed a picket fence along the side of the house. He asked if that fencing had gone around the house or just the front. Ms. Dayton responded that they had contacted MD Historic Trust to get information for this project but the only images they were able to retain were those found in the Douglas Hanks book "Oxford Then and Now". Mrs. Wells stated that she too had tried to get some information and was waiting to hear back. She added that though she was a non-voting, alternate member on the OHDC, she still wanted to preserve every bit of the Oxford façade and was strongly opposed to having any of the exterior of this house altered at all and asked that it be brought back to its brick color. Ms. Dayton responded that it would damage the surface to do that and that sand blasting was not recommended as it doesn't fair well , and, as this is probably a brick and frame structure, she was sure the paint was helping with water from penetrating through the walls and protecting it. Mrs. Wells then stated it should be kept the white color that is now and to also keep it as it is with a single parapet. Mrs. Stanley

agreed and that she too also liked the original step down parapet and thought it was indicative of the type of structure that was in Oxford. She also agreed with Chairman Costigan with regards to the iron fencing and thought it was attractive. Ms. Dayton pointed out that there is now an existing aluminum fence running down along the property. Chairman Costigan stated that was an unfortunate addition that did not match the older fence that is running along Tred Avon Avenue. Ms. Dayton asked if they go with black fencing that is aluminum as an acceptable alternative. Chairman Costigan responded that he would say the black hoop and spike fencing running along the Tred Avon Avenue side was not in bad shape and just needs painting. Ms. Dayton responded that she was talking about the fence extension around the entire property. Chairman Costigan stated he was not suggesting that, just the retention of the black iron fence in the front and if the owner wanted to do a non-matching board fence, he would not have any objection to that. Ms. Dayton noted that a simple white picket is their preference but it was helpful to know other preferences the commission may have. Chairman Costigan responded that their options are to match the existing fence out front or just leave it alone and as for the rest of the property, then can put up an Oxford wooden fence around it and it would look nice, but that he did not have a problem with the white picket fencing. His only problem was that there wasn't a single property on that side that has their front yard fenced in and that everyone in that area has front yards open to the street. In polling the group, Ms. Litty stated she was OK with whichever way the owner wanted to go. Mrs. Stanley liked the step down parapet and also the openness of the wrought iron fence and felt the rest of the project looked nice. Mr. Deerin stated that he had some sympathy for the step down of the parapet, that he didn't have a problem with the bay second story, that he liked the iron fence as it was not as obtrusive, and that the rest of the plan was fine, and he liked it. Mrs. Ingram agreed with the wrought iron fence being kept and agreed with Mrs. Stanley with regards to the parapet. Chairman Costigan asked Ms. Dayton if she wanted a vote on the application on if she wanted to come back with changes. Ms. Dayton asked for a vote and for the commission to tell both she and the applicant what they wanted. Mrs. Wells asked if they were voting on a color combination as well. Ms. Dayton responded that the colors would be off white and burgundy. Town Planner Maria Brophy spoke stating that the elevation drawing she had showed an off-yellowish color for the house with red shutters but that there was also a paint sample sheet that had the red color circled stating it was "bright red." Nick Cappella stated that the bright red color was for the roof. Ms. Dayton stated that the color of the main house will match the existing and be an off-white color and that the door will be a brick red color. As discussion continued it was later stated that the house would be between a beige and off-white color. Mr. Deerin pointed out that these were major, important elements. Chairman Costigan suggested that a vote can be made on the plans subject to the applicant providing color samples. Mr. Deerin asked about the step down and if the commission would want to maintain the exact step down that is currently on the parapet. Ms. Dayton spoke stating that if she and the homeowner were not able to change that, she wasn't sure if they would want to carry it further. Mr. Deerin asked if this meant they would leave the parapet as it is, assuming the vote is for a step down. Ms. Dayton responded that was correct. With that, Chairman Costigan made a motion to approve the application to demolish a kitchen addition and non-historic shed and doghouse; construct a new rear deck, historic front porch, extend rear bay to second floor, restore historic windows, shutters, front door system, add new HVAC, new windows, and doors on first floor wing, and new bay, and eliminate the parapet request and add retaining and repairing the hoop spike fence out front. Mr. Deerin noted that they should reference the plans that were submitted in connection with the application itself dated October 18, 2021, in addition to requiring the paint colors with actual samples for approval before they are applied. Chairman Costigan amended his

motion to what he had already stated, including referencing the plans as submitted to the commission dated 10/18/21 with the provision that the applicant will provide the HDC with color samples of what they want to do. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permit applications.

CONSULTATION

A consultation was virtually held with James and Diane Ellor, property owners of a vacant lot on Factory Street. Chairman Costigan spoke stating that they group had received a front elevation drawing and he assumed the new house would be facing Factory Street. Mrs. Ellor spoke stating that was correct, and that though they did not have a final plan, the house drawing she submitted was similar to what she and her husband were wanting to build. She added that there were complications they were running into with their desire for a garage and parking area and that they were just wanting to identify any problems and concerns with the house the HDC might have before they take too many steps forward. Chairman Costigan thought there might be some stormwater problems on the lot. Manager Lewis spoke stating she would put the house facing Factory Street with the garage in the middle portion of the lot and the backyard used for the driveway. She stated that this was a long property but all the structures should be on the front side of the lot given that Banks Street had been closed the past weekend due to a recent storm surge in town which flooded that street. Mr. Deerin commented that the photo provided showed that many windows were being placed in the front of the house. Mrs. Ellor responded that they wanted to have light within the house but could be flexible with that. Chairman Costigan felt that stormwater issues were going to drive the placement of the house and once that was addressed, they could move along to their design. Mr. Ellor asked about having fencing around their property as the couple had some dogs. Chairman Costigan responded that fencing in this area was appropriate and that the house they had been discussing was different from other properties in the town.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk

