

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 7, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the Chairman, Thomas Costigan, on Monday, February 7, 2022, 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 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 January 10, 2022 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #22-05, Alfred Maskeroni and Naomi Rivas, 309 Tilghman Street, construction of a gated fence to close off backyard, renovation of existing fence, repair and replacement of damaged pickets and paint. Mr. Maskeroni, who was virtually present, explained to the members that he and Ms. Rivas had recently purchased their property and were looking to create gates and fix up the existing fence in order to keep their dog within their yard. Mrs. Wells asked Mr. Maskeroni if he was aware of the maximum height allowed for fencing. Mr. Maskeroni responded that he was and that he was keeping it all the same. Chairman Costigan stated that the committee had reviewed a permit from the past owner to do work on the fence, move the shed in the back and make some changes to the existing driveway. Mr. Maskeroni responded that he was not aware of that application, but it may be something they would want to look into the future. A motion was made by Ms. Litty to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wells and unanimously carried with all in favor.
2. Permit #22-01, Barbara Litschert, 212 South Street, new gravel driveway along side of house. Barbara Litschert, along with her son, Tom, were virtually present to discuss the application. The two explained that they were looking to put in a gravel driveway along the south side of their side yard. Chairman Costigan asked if the driveway would start at the street and end somewhere specific, like the garage or a parking area. He added that he had seen a fence that went across part of the property and questioned if or how that would tie into the plan. Ms. Litschert responded that there is a brick sidewalk right off the street. The driveway would start right at the brick and end at the fence. Mrs. Stanley asked if there were any setbacks involved with the request. Town Planner Maria Brophy responded that she and Ms. Litschert had discussed the matter and that before the town could issue a permit, they would have to have the property line on that side staked and that it would need to be 100% accurate. This may involve the property owner having to hire a surveyor to stake it out if a plat cannot be located. The town would also have to verify the coverage and a permit would not be issued until all that information has been received. Chairman Costigan noted that a house location survey was attached to the application but that it was confusing as to where the property lines were and agreed a real survey was what was called for. Ms. Brophy responded that it did not have to be

full property survey as long as the one side where the driveway is being proposed is staked with flags all the way down that property line. Mrs. Stanley noted that a full measurement of the driveway would be useful as well, as the drawing submitted showed only the width. Timothy Wilson, next door neighbor at 214 South Street, who was also virtually present, noted that he had had a survey done of his property that does show the front property corner that he shares with the Litchert property. Also virtually present was the neighbor at 218 South Street, Joan Levy, who complained about the issue of the owners being “absentee owners” who were unaware of issues that had occurred on this property over the past summer involving contractors along with trash left out at the street. Town Manager Cheryl Lewis spoke stating that with any complaint a town resident may have, even if it involves after working hours, she was available 24 hours a day but that this was not the time nor the place to be discussing what Ms. Levy was complaining about. It was agreed by all members present to table the application until more details have been received from the applicant.

3. Permit #22-03, Jennifer Stanley, 300 S. Morris Street, replace windows and Benoni Street door; windows exact size and look of existing windows. Mrs. Stanley recused herself from the meeting in order to present her application. She explained that the windows in her commercial building were failing in that the all-weathered glass in the windows was fogging up and the windowsills were rotting. Mrs. Stanley added that the failing 6 over 6 windows were installed in the 1980's when the building was renovated. There are six windows in total and all six windows will be replaced to match exactly that which is already there. The plans also call for an existing metal door, facing onto Benoni Street, to be replaced with an exact replacement painted the same color as the existing door. Mrs. Wells made a motion that the commission approve the permit to replace the 6 windows and the Benoni Street door with the same size door and color and 6 over 6 configuration of the windows. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.
4. Permit #22-02, MKW, LLC, 209 South Street, paint front door, replace concrete patio with flagstone patio, run water to dock, replace front porch. Mrs. Schroeder, who was virtually present, explained that this house had been in her family since 1994 and not much work had been done to it in that time. She noted that there has been a rot problem with the mahogany decking on the front porch and that the area holds its dampness. The plan is to replace the decking with Azek but to keep it with the same look and same color as it is now. The plans also call for the painting of the front door. A sample was provided showing an historical blue color. The storm door will remain white. In the backyard there is a concrete pad that Mrs. Schroeder stated she wanted to remove and replace with patio pavers which will be set in sand. A motion was made by Mrs. Stanley to approve the request to paint the front door, replace the concrete patio with pavers and replace the front porch with Azek. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permits.

CONSULTATIONS

A consultation was held with Timothy Kearns, residential designer, and property owner David Donovan, both virtually present, to discuss the Donovan property at 203 N. Morris Street. Mr. Kearns explained that at his previous consultation with the HDC, he had presented a more modern contemporary interpretation of an addition that he and the Donovans had planned. In contrast to that, he presented a

more craftsman/bungalow style approach with hip roof dormers that Mr. Kearns explained helped to create a center for each of the long facades facing the public way, including a second floor addition to the ranch style home. The bungalow style would allow a pitch roof with overhangs and would give the home a more architectural detail. He added that one piece that is still in flux was the size of the panes on the glass window assemblies facing west as they will be larger pane areas to get a good view of the water with the larger overhangs helping with the late afternoon sun. Chairman Costigan stated that in looking over the drawings his overall impression in looking at the property were the windows and the number of window panes that seemed to be everywhere. His other thought was that the front entry way into the house seemed as though it had a lot of glass going on there. Mr. Kearns responded that presently there are two very large windows in the front entry and that the owners were planning to add a door between those two windows. The present door does not face the street and the plan is an attempt to create an openness into the house. Because the house is 139 ft. back from the street, one can't see much of the house from the front. Chairman Costigan replied that what was being shown was different from anything one would see in Oxford but also admitted that the house itself was different from others in town. Mrs. Stanley also commented on the windows noting that there were two other cottages in town in the process of renovation and that maybe Mr. Kearns and the Donovans could copy or borrow some window ideas from them. Mr. Kearns responded that the proposed new windows could easily be changed but the existing windows could not. Mrs. Wells commented that she loved the water side design. However, she did object to the one peak off to the far side of the house. She also felt it would be better to just see a front door, without all the glass, and referenced the front door at 201 N. Morris Street, adding that she was also understanding that the owners wanted to see the front yard. Chairman Costigan asked about the change to the second floor addition. Mr. Kearns responded that that the roof shape had changed with extended overhangs and a hip roof. Chairman Costigan was of the opinion that the change made more sense. Mrs. Wells asked about the exercise/pool room addition. Mr. Kearns responded that they were holding off on that as the style would depend on whatever the major volume of the house will be. Mrs. Stanley stated that one of the difficulties she was having with the project was with the addition showing a hip roof and thought by making the garage have a hip roof it would help to tie things together. Mr. Kearns responded that the architectural implication was that one would see more of a two story structure and that they have changed so much of the house plans already that this was the only piece that they haven't had to touch. He added that he would pass along the suggestion and would ask the owners how much more they were wanting to spend to a roof that is already functional. Mr. Donovan broke into the conversation noting that he had spent enough already. Mrs. Wells asked about page A4 of the drawings which pictured HVAC units. Mr. Kearns noted that there were already units on the north side of the house and that they would need to add a new unit that would be functioning for the east side of the building. The idea is to mount it on the roof and hide it, but it had accidentally shown up on the drawing. Mrs. Stanley suggested the couple think about installing geo-thermal power. This concluded the consultation.

A second consultation was held with Mr. Kearns and virtually present property owner Michael Mueller to discuss the Mueller vacant property at 210 Tilghman Street. Mr. Kearns explained that the shape of the house had been changed significantly from the last time he and Mr. Mueller had been before the HDC and was made to look more sympathetic to the neighborhood. The house has been designed to be significantly smaller in order to allow for off-street parking with the length of the house disguised by the front of the house. The house was presented with low pitched roofs and two over two windows. Only on the waterside would one see groups of double hung windows. Mr. Mueller pointed out that this plan

was drastically different from his last version and that they had tried to incorporate the feedback of the members from their last HDC meeting. Chairman Costigan asked about a staircase leading to the front door and whether it was freestanding or attached to the house. Mr. Kearns responded it would abut the house and would basically cascade down or rise up with the angle and the width so as to appear not quite as static as a 3' wide staircase. He added that there were many limitations due to the narrowness of the lot and its location within the floodplain. The house was shown as having 3 levels, with the living quarters being on the second and third floors and the first floor housing the garage/storage areas. Mrs. Stanley commented that she liked the windows in the back but was wondering why a bay window had been chosen for the front of the house. Mr. Kearns responded it was because the bottom floor plans were much larger than the floors above. The room in which the bay window would be located was a bedroom and by having the bay window it would give the room an additional 3' of space. Mrs. Wells asked why the front door was not facing the front. Mr. Kearns responded that it was facing the street and that it was just another piece of an angle located within the front of the house. He added that with the scheme shown it allowed for a swimming pool, which has been discussed in the past, in a much more spacious way on the water side. Mrs. Wells asked if the pool would be raised. Mr. Kearns responded that it would. Chairman Costigan stated that the plans presented were an improvement and much more oriented towards the street. He asked if any engineering challenges had been encountered. Mr. Mueller responded that he had had a geotechnical survey done on the lot and no concerns were found. He added that he was also working with Lane Engineering to develop a stormwater management plan. The consultation ended with Chairman Costigan stating that the commission had a favorable view on what was presented at this night's meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk

