

## OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

### MINUTES

APRIL 4, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Planning Commission was called to order by the Chairman, Norman Bell, on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at 5:01 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Lucy Garliauskas, Bruce Beglin, Steve Mroczek, and Cameron MacTavish. Also in attendance was the Town Manager, Cheryl Lewis and Town Planner, Maria Brophy.

The minutes of the meeting of March 7, 2023, were approved and accepted as distributed.

#### REQUEST FOR LOT LINE ABANDONMENT

The commission met with Peter Clancy, property owner of 106 Myrtle Avenue and the adjacent lot beside it. Mr. Clancy explained to the members that he was looking to remove the property line between his improved property and his separate, unimproved lot and combine the two into one large parcel. Mr. Mroczek commented that the request seemed to be a straightforward one. It was noted that Mr. Clancy's vacant lot was a non-compliant one as it was under 10,000 sq. feet. All the members agreed it was a good idea to combine the two that there was no reason to deny the request. A motion was made by Mr. Mroczek to approve the abandonment of the property line as requested. The motion was seconded by Ms. Garliauskas and unanimously carried with all in favor. Mr. Clancy asked if it would be possible to install a small swimming pool on his property. Chairman Bell responded that the commission would need to see a plan and that the lot line revision would need to be signed and recorded before that could be considered.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #23-27, Lisa Quina, 100 W. Division Street, installation of a sign on building façade approximately 18" x 18". Ms. Quina explained that she was renting the downstairs of the building at 100 W. Division Street and using the space as a studio for her interior business. No parking or overload spaces would be required as she explained that most of her business takes place off-site. Her request was for one small sign as shown on the attachment to her application that would be 1 ½' x 1 ½' that would be attached to the exterior wall, next to the entrance door. No questions were asked by the commission members. Mr. Mroczek made a motion to approve the application as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Beglin with all in favor.
2. Permit #23-19, Richard Leggett, 103 S. Morris Street, two signs facing north and south bound traffic on S. Morris Street for Scottish Highland Creamery. No one was present to represent the application. Mr. Mroczek pointed out that the request was for two business signs and that the zoning ordinance only allows for one sign. Chairman Bell responded by stating that the zoning ordinance also mentions one sign per business and that The Mews building had been set up for 3 businesses and that only 1 business (The Scottish Highland Creamery) was using all 3 spaces. Chairman Bell stated that the Planning Commission could interpret this as meaning 3 signs would be allowed there, with one already in place for "The Mews", and if based on the 3 unit concept,

the applicant could put up 3 signs with the proviso that if he moved out of one of those units, one sign would have to be removed. This, in turn, brought into question "The Mews" sign itself. Mr. Mroczek questioned if "The Mews" sign was a grandfathered piece of the building. He stated it was his feeling that the building could have 4 signs, 1 for the establishment of the building and 1 per business. His belief was that "The Mews" represented the apartments upstairs. Planner Brophy responded that if this be the case, it would need to be understood that if one of the retail units were to be converted to something else, such as a store, one of the creamery signs would have to be removed. Chairman Bell agreed, stating that each business would get to have its own sign. Mr. Beglin asked if the writing on the window counted as a sign. All agreed that it did not. Ms. Garliauskas noted that one could always make revisions, if there were different circumstances, as long as the request conforms to the signage limitation, to which Mr. Mroczek pointed out, was one sign per business. Chairman Bell posed the question that as to whether each individual unit was entitled to its own sign, whether it be 3 businesses, 2 businesses, or 1 business. Mr. Beglin read aloud from the zoning ordinance that section of the sign ordinance that states that there should be no more than one sign attached to each business with street frontage. Mr. Beglin firmly stated that two signs would be against the ordinance and that the applicant is only allowed to have one sign. Chairman Bell responding by stating that was what the commission debating now, as to whether it is one sign for the entire business or one sign for each unit and that there is currently one business in all the 3 units. Mr. Beglin responded by stating because there is just the one business there that one business should be allowed only one sign, as it clearly states in the ordinance, and that the commission needed to stick to the letter of the law. He added that he thought "The Mews" sign was an historic sign that would have nothing to do with the business though he did bring into question the signage written on each window. Manager Lewis spoke stating that windows sign had never come into play before. Because of all that was being discussed about the applicant's desire to have two signs and the possibility of the permit being denied, Chairman Bell suggest that the review of the application be tabled until the applicant could be present to explain his request and possibly offer some argument for the two signs that the commission may not have thought of themselves. Mr. Mroczek made a motion to defer the application. The motion was seconded by Chairman Bell and unanimously carried with all in favor.

This completed the review of building permits.

### **Old Business**

A brief discussion took place regarding the updating of the town's comprehensive plan. Manager Lewis distributed maps of what the county currently has for Oxford's water sewer service area (which basically refers to water and sewer service outside of the town being annexed into the town for the purposes of development) along with 3 options as to how the town could handle them. The first option would involve limited expansion where basically the homes that are already built would come in when they needed to because of failed septic and would also include the parcel referred to as "The Bradley property" located between Hel's Half Acre and town. Option #2 is what the county currently has planned for Oxford which consists of the area that the county forced on the town back in the day, which the commission has not looked highly upon. Option #2 is the one that the Oxford Planning Commission sent to the county recently which calls for no expansion. She explained that these are 3 options the Planning Commission could present in a public meeting for public comment. Manager Lewis also distributed two other maps which showed priority funding areas. A land use map will also be distributed after Manager Lewis has made

some corrections to it. She asked the members to look over the materials that they have been given and email her if they have any ideas. Eventually they will come together with a final draft that they will need to send to the Commissioners and from there a public meeting will be held for public comment on what will be presented as an ordinance.

The next workshop meeting on the discussion of the comprehensive plan will be on Wednesday, April 26, beginning at 10 a.m. in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk