

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

OCTOBER 2, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the Chairperson, Jennifer Stanley, on Monday, October 2, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Suzanne Litty, James Wilcox, Justin Werner, Terry Sullivan, and Margaret Morris. Also present was Town Planner Maria Brophy.

The minutes of the meeting of September 11, 2023, were approved and accepted as distributed with the following correction: James Wilcox's name should have been included in the list of members who were in attendance at that meeting.

The following permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #23-80, Charles, Mary, Keith, and Kathryn Reilly, 102 Norton Street, replace existing chain link fence with 4' tall, regular cedar picket fencing, to be painted white. Charles and Kathryn Rielly were present to discuss the application. Mr. Reilly explained that currently there is an old wire fencing behind their house. The plan is to remove that and install a new wood picket fence, that would match the picket fencing found at Water's Edge Museum, located at 101 Mill Street, behind the Reilly's home. Mr. Reilly verified that the new fencing would be located only in the backyard of the property, running along the same line that had been created by the chain fencing that was being removed, and that it would be about 139' long. Mr. Sullivan made a motion to approve the white picket fencing to replace the chain link fencing at 102 Norton Street. Chairperson Stanley added to the motion that the fencing will be 139 feet long. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty as amended and unanimously carried with all in favor.
2. Permit #23-81, Mike Gibson, 318 Tilghman Street, build a living area in an existing space; add a mud room addition; modify some exterior features; add a bathroom and entry doors. Mr. Gibson was represented by his agent, Bill Booz. Mr. Booz explained that there was a space behind the garage area that the owner wished to turn into usable space which would include a small mudroom addition, along with changing an existing double window to a single window and replacing a double window with double doors along the back. Mr. Wilcox questioned the use of vinyl materials to be used on the project and asked how the other commission felt about that. It was explained to Mr. Wilcox that every area of the house being worked on already had vinyl on it. Mr. Sullivan added that the house was fairly new. Mr. Wilcox asked if the window being substituted at the front of the garage would look like the others already in use on the side of the house. Mr. Booz responded that that change was no longer taking place and that it would remain the same but that the window along the side of the garage was changing and that it would match the other existing windows on the house. Mr. Wilcox next asked about the size of the mudroom. He noted that while looking at the drawings, it appeared to be 3' deep on the side of the house but that Mr. Booz had mentioned at one point that it was going to be 9' x 9'. Mr. Booz responded stating that he had made a mistake and that it would be 3' x 3' so that it would line up with the house. Mr.

Booz also noted that all the new materials being used would be in keeping with the rest of the house. Chairman Stanley pointed out that the drawings were confusing, and more time needed to be spent on them. She asked about the double window that was scheduled to come out and replaced with a single double hung window with shutters. Chairman Stanley was of the opinion that the shutters on the house were out of place and did not appear to fit the windows properly and that this was something the owners needed to consider. In summarizing the plans, Mr. Booz stated that the new mudroom would come off an existing wall, one window would be reduced down from a double window to a single double hung window, a sliding door would be added to replace a double window, and that an HVAC unit will be installed which has already been approved under a separate application. Mr. Wilcox made a motion that the commission approve the building permit application, # 23-81, for 318 Tilghman Street as filed with a couple of changes: no change will be made to the window which is now on the front of the garage, the mudroom will only stand out from the side of the house 3' so that it will be in line with the rest of the exterior wall, and as far as the rear goes, and it will have a sliding glass door. The motion was seconded by Mr Sullivan and unanimously carried with all in favor.

3. Permit #23-82, Jim and Gail Walls, 106 e. Strand, replace back porch/deck using same footprint as existing; replace old, rotten, wooden deck with new deck using composite materials; replace deck back door leading to back porch; install a ceiling over front porch under the porch above first floor porch. Mr. Walls presented his application explaining that now that they had completed their front porch renovation project, they would like to install a ceiling on their front porch underneath the deck above them. The ceiling would be made from white bead board of a PVC nature. The back deck, which Mr. Walls noted was made of wood and that was in total disrepair, would be replaced with similar materials as used on the front deck and would remain within the same footprint, and would not have a ceiling. Mr. Werner asked about the PVC ceiling being used on the front porch and pointed out that there are 2 different types of that ceiling available – the first being a solid, that is board, and the other a skin, that is more like a vinyl siding. He noted that he was just making sure the owners were going with a solid board rather than a skin. Planner Brophy stated that the owner could clarify that on his permit. Mr. Walls responded that he was fairly sure they would have what was best and that the estimate attached mentioned PVC board. When asked about the decking to be used at the back of the house, Mr. Walls confirmed that it would be a PVC composite. Chairman Stanley asked about the color of the back porch/deck. Mr. Walls stated it would be harbor gray and would look similar to what the front deck has, adding that the railing would match that as found on the front porch, which is vinyl wrapped aluminum, reinforced. Mr. Werner made a motion that the commission approve the application for submitted at 106 E. Strand, for replacing the back porch and deck with the same materials as used on the front for the decking, along with a new back door, as submitted, and also the ceiling over the front porch as submitted, taking into account PVC bead board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilcox and unanimously carried with all in favor.
4. Permit #23-84, Al and Marty Sikes, 105 W. Division Street, addition to east, south, and west side of residence; one story to include new bedroom/bath; screen porch, dining area, office, and mudroom. The owners, along with their architect, Pamela Gardner, were present to discuss the application. Ms. Gardner gave a recap of last month's consultation meeting with the HDC explaining that the house was built in 1962 and is currently clad in cement board and aluminum siding with no original materials present at this time. The couple is wanting an addition off the

east side with a master bedroom and bath along with small additions on the back of the west side. Ms. Gardner noted that they had worked to make the additions subordinate to the main structure. The addition on the west side would have a telescoping design so that it steps down. She added that the area in which they are building has nothing in it and completes the void on the streetscape. Ms. Gardner also pointed out that the Sikes lot is unique in that they have a deep restriction line in the back and the open area on the east side allows the owners what they want. Chairperson Stanley asked if the floorplan had changed any since Ms. Gardener's consultation with the HDC. Ms. Gardener responded that it had not. Samples were presented of Marvin, simulated divided light, high quality windows the couple are planning to use in the new construction and also in the replacement of their existing windows. Ms. Gardener explained that the existing second floor double hung windows in the house don't meet the required egress code and that the couple is planning on replacing those with casement windows that will look like double hung windows. The siding to be used will be Hardiplank and the color will be an off white, buff color as shown in the sample provided. The trim will be PVC painted white. The foundation will be brick. The standing seam roofing on the front of the house will remain. The rest of the existing roofing and new roofing will be solar shingles, identical to those used on the house at 200 West Street. The front door, which is aluminum now, will be replaced with a solid fiberglass door with sidelights. Railings will be an Azek material, and the porch flooring will consist of an Azek tongue and groove material. The porch ceiling will be Azek beadboard. Permeable paving will be used out front for parking and around a future swimming pool. Mr. Wilcox spoke stating that he appreciated the work being done and thought the plan looked attractive. However, he stated that he would not be able to support the project because in looking at the guidelines and other historic materials that he thought the HDC was required to apply, he had a problem with the size, scale, and massiveness of the project. He expanded his thoughts further by adding that in looking at that particular block, and the 4 houses that face onto that block, none were nearly as wide as what the Sikes were wanting except for one, which does have a wing to the right side but not wings on both sides, and even the massing there was considerably less. Mr. Wilcox pointed out that the guidelines say very clearly that the scale should reflect the height and width of the structures in the vicinity and that it was his opinion that the Sikes were proposing did not meet those guidelines because their scale was very different because of the length and depth to it. He further referenced the Secretary of Interior Standards, that address, among other things, constructing a new addition that is larger than the historic building which visually overwhelms it is not a recommended approach, which Mr. Wilcox believed the owners were doing. Mr. Sullivan spoke and noted that the commission has had this discussion before with Mr. Wilcox. He addressed the architect and asked her what the sq. footage of the house was now and what it would be after the additions. Ms. Gardener responded that the owners currently have 1600 sq. ft. and upon completion of the renovation projected would have 2300 sq. ft. Mr. Sullivan pointed out that the owners were not doubling the size of their home and that this house was going to be one of the smaller houses on the street, even with the proposed additions. He noted that if the HDC did not allow houses to expand, the Town of Oxford wouldn't be the town that it is. Mr. Sullivan was of the opinion that what was being proposed did not break the HDC rules and that it would not look inappropriate. Chairperson Stanley stated that the HDC reviewed other requests such as these and that, in this case, the owners were not proposed to build two stories, that they were stepping down a lot of the roofs so that the finish project would not look like a box, and that they were expanding but

not out of proportion to the property size. Comments were asked from the audience. Oxford resident Michele MacTavish spoke stating that she couldn't imagine the couple adding on to the west side of their house and asked about an old redwood tree located in the vicinity. Ms. Gardener responded that the addition would be on the back, that it would be small, and that in creating the plans, they were careful to stay out of the tree line and would be making sure not to tear up the root system of the tree. Mr. Sullivan made a motion that the commission approve the one story addition to the east, west, and south side of the residence at 105 W. Division Street and the Tesla shingles for the roof as found at 200 West Street, along with the pavers, as specified in the application. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and approved by the following vote:

Jennifer Stanley	-	yea
Terry Sullivan	-	yea
Justin Werner	-	yea
Suzanne Litty	-	yea
James Wilcox	-	nay

This concluded the review of building permits.

A consultation was scheduled to be held with the Robert Morris Inn to discuss possible paint colors for the building. No one was present from the inn to consult with the members. Planner Brophy stated that no color was proposed, and that the new owner was curious about changing the color of the inn.

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing how the HDC should handle their own guidelines and that the of Department of Interior Standards. In closing the discussion, Planner Brophy reminded the members that they do have their own guidelines and that they can be lenient with non-contributing houses in town, but that there were still certain criteria that needed to be met.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk