

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

JULY 1, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the Chairperson, Jennifer Stanley, on Monday, July 1, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

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

The minutes of the meeting of June 3, 2024, were approved and accepted with the following corrections: Page 3, Under "Revisit of Permit #24-33", 11th line, the middle of the sentence should read, "to which Mr. Wilcox replied that maybe Mr. Salomon couldn't have it, but that the applicant already had an air conditioning unit nearby on the adjacent wall", as well as correcting the spelling of Mr. Solomon's last name where needed.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

- Permit #23-93, Michael and Denise Bloomfield, 103 Tred Avon Avenue, revisions to previously approved permit for house renovations including new deck and fencing. Ms. Bloomfield was represented by her architect, Cameron MacTavish. Mr. MacTavish noted that the approved permit plan from February had included a single side light and double tombstone Oxford door. During construction, the owner had substituted a double side light with a 6 pane glass panel door with two recessed panels underneath. Mr. MacTavish asked the commission to accept the change as it has been made. Mr. Werner expressed the need for projects to follow design plans, as submitted to the HDC, on their applications, noting that the door on the original submission was an offset tombstone door with a single sidelight which the commission approved. However, the owner moved ahead and swapped in a 3/4 glass paneled modern door with dual sidelights centered on the facade. Mr. Werner pointed out that the HDC has traditionally denied modern glass doors on contributing structures, and that the commission would not have allowed this style door on the original application. He added that he could therefore not approve an amendment. Mr. Werner also mentioned that the commission needed to hold owners to the plans that they submit and that allowing changes outside the guidelines, after the fact, would only encourage future applicants to ask for forgiveness instead of permission. Mr. MacTavish offered another possibility of maintaining the current rough opening of 2 sidelights and installing a single double tombstone door flanked by two symmetrical sidelights in order to bring more light into the hallway. Drawings depicting this change were presented. Mr. Sullivan made a motion to approve the original door at 103 Tred Avon Avenue but to make the change to add two sidelights instead of one. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously approved. Mr. MacTavish then presented the commission with a request for porch railing, noting that because the house had been lifted and a new foundation added the porch now required railing. The railing would be wood Azek and white in color to match the rest of the house, with lattice being used under the porch. Mr. Werner made a motion to approve the addition of Azek porch railing at 103 Tred Avon Avenue as shown on the

drawing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sullivan and unanimously carried with all in favor. A final request was presented by Mr. MacTavish for the addition of a mini-split system. He stated that the unit would not be visible from the street and would be located behind a fence on the south side of the house. The fence surrounding the pool on the property would also help to hide the unit as well. Mr. Sullivan made a motion to approve the HVAC system for 103 Tred Avon Avenue with the outdoor unit to be located on the back front corner of the home. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilcox and unanimously carried with all in favor.

- Revision to Permit #24-30, Swallows, LLC , 200 Tred Avon Avenue, picket fencing. Prior to beginning the review of the application, Chairperson Stanley reminded those present the applicant had received approval for his fence but would now like to amend the permit to change the fence material from wood to Azek along with making the smoothing out the tops of the pickets. She also pointed out the applicant had covered his wood fence posts with vinyl. Mr. Werner commented that the commission had previously had a detailed discussion with Mr. Caravythà with regard to his request for a wood fence which the commission ended up approving. However, he noted that the owner continues to keep substituting changes beginning with the original metal fencing that got changed to wood and now the substitution of wood with vinyl. He added that though Azek is approved by the HDC he would rather see the use of natural materials. A member of the audience spoke asking if there was a procedure in cases whereby an owner with an approved permit does something different from what was approved only to ask for forgiveness after the fact. Planner Williams responded that in the approval letter it states that one has to do the work as presented and approved by the HDC and instructed the permit holder to call the town office if they want to do something different. From there, Ms. Williams stated she can reach out to the HDC Chair to determine if the request is a minor change or if it has to go before the HDC. Chairperson Stanley added that commission has been aware there have been abuses to approved permits and that they were trying to keep an open on work being done within the historic district. Another question from the audience was asked with regards to the use of Azek and whether one would be in compliance by covering vinyl with Azek. Chairperson Stanley responded that the commission has approved the use of Azek but not vinyl. Following further discussion between the commission members and the members of the audience, a motion was eventually made by Mr. Werner that the commission approve the replacing of the approved wood with Azek pickets for 200 Tred Avon Avenue, but that the commission deny the modification of vinyl wrap (on the posts) and that they remain as painted wood. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sullivan and carried by a vote of 4 to 1 with Mr. Wilcox abstaining from the vote.
- Permit # 24-47, Steve and Susan Harris, 100 Sullivans Alley, replacement of 27 windows. Both Mr. and Mrs. Harris were present at the meeting. Mr. Harris explained that the house was listed as being built around 1974 and that all the existing windows were in poor shape with rotting wood around the frames and in need of replacement . None of the windows in the house contained wavy glass. Mr. Werner pointed out that the house was neither visible from the public way nor was it an historic home. Mr. Werner made a motion to approve the application for replacement of the existing windows at 100 Sullivans Alley with two over two grid pattern windows. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sullivan and unanimously carried with all in favor.
- Permit #24-45, James Dewar, 106 N. Morris Street, 3 ½' fence and sidewalk repair in front yard, concrete driveway from garage to Factory Street, and an 8' x 8' greenhouse in the backyard. Beginning with the sidewalk, Mr. Dewar explained his desire to raise the sidewalk in front of his

house as it currently sits much lower than the street out in front of it. Planner Williams spoke stating that property owners along Morris Street can raise the sidewalk out in front of their homes without a permit only if the brick work goes back in using the same pattern and the same bricks or as close of a substitute to the bricks that were there. Mr. Dewar stated that his intention was to use as many of the existing bricks as possible and to keep the same pattern as it exists now. He then explained that his next request was to install a black metal fence along the front of his property. The fence height would be 3 ½ ft. tall. Mr. Wilcox commented that he had an issue with the style of the proposed fencing as he was of the opinion that it looked institutional for Morris Street and that it was not in keeping with the rest of the fences along Morris Street nor was it in harmony with the streetscape. Mr. Dewar responding by noting that after the Civil War the railroad came through Oxford and many of the houses on Morris Street had iron fences. Mr. Werner responded by pointing out that iron fencing was different than aluminum, industrial fencing. Mr. Sullivan referred to the Oxford Historic District Guidelines on fencing which clearly states that “fences are traditionally wooden, picket style,” along with the acceptability of “iron, typically hoop or hoop-and-spike fences, painted black” and “composite fencing that closely mimics wood”. He mentioned that he was not aware of the commission approving aluminum fencing. A member of the audience asked what the objective of Mr. Dewar’s proposed fence was for. Mr. Dewar responded that it was to keep dogs from defecating on his front lawn. He added that his yard was small in the front and with the addition of new porch being added to the neighbor’s house next door, he felt it had resulted in closing in even more of the front of his property. Mr. Werner suggested that Mr. Dewar speak to the owner of 200 Tred Avon Avenue who was in the process of removing the iron fencing in front of his house. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Werner made a motion that the commission deny the fence as submitted, at 106 N. Morris Street but that the commission would approve putting a fence in the area shown but that he (the owner) would have to come back with other styles of fencing to present to the commission that are more along the lines of iron, wrought iron, or something of a composite nature. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor. Mr. Dewar next presented his request for a concrete driveway in front of his garage and leading onto Factory Street. He explained that there was currently an older gravel pad in front of the garage, which faces on to Factory Street, that he would like to remove and replace with a concrete pad. In addition to this, Mr. Dewar added that he wanted to extend his backyard walkway out to his shop. He noted that others in the area have concrete pads between their garage doors and the street. Mr. Sullivan made a motion that the commission approve the concrete pad in front of the garage at 106 N. Morris Street along with the brick walkway as proposed in the plan, from Factory Street to the existing sidewalk in the yard. The motion was seconded by Mr. Werner and unanimously approved with all in favor. The final item for review was Mr. Dewar’s request for an 8’ x 8’ greenhouse. Mr. Dewar stated that there would be no electricity or water hooked up to the greenhouse and that it would be located in the back of his yard next to his garage. Mr. Werner pointed out there is a section in the HDC guidelines about accessory structure and style, whereas accessory structures should be similar to other buildings on the property. Mr. Werner was of the opinion that the greenhouse Mr. Dewar had chosen wasn’t the right style for the historic district. Chairperson Stanley echoed Mr. Werner’s sentiments stating that the commission has a role of preserving the historic look of homes in the HDC and the style greenhouse Mr. Dewar had chosen would look much like a piece of plastic plopped down in his yard. She suggested Mr. Dewar come up with a

better design, something along the style of his own home. It was agreed by all to put Mr. Dewar's request for a greenhouse on hold until such time when the applicant can come back before the commission with a more appropriate style of greenhouse.

- Steven and Susan Anderson, 212 N. Morris Street, approval of exterior paint colors. Mr. Anderson addressed the commission stating that he had sent an email to the MD Historic Trust (MHT) and received a brief reply in which it was mentioned that they do not get involved with historic colors and/or mandating color on historic properties. Planner Williams spoke stating that Mr. Anderson had been speaking with the MHT tax credit division whereas she had reached out to the research and registry division. The research and registry division had done research on the Anderson's Barnaby House and responded back to Planner Williams by stating that they had nothing to add to the discussion. Chairman Stanely stated that she had come up with some paint colors from that period and had sent them up to the MHT for comment. The MHT believed them to be historic colors. From there Chairperson Stanley did more research on color used during that period and what she had determined is that some of the paint colors available at that time included the color ochre, much like the color the Anderson's wanted to paint their house. She went on to note that colors available at that time were earthy. She also added that when she removed the shingles off her own home to make some repairs, she found underneath those shingles the color yellow. She noted that though her house was somewhat younger than the house belonging to the Andersons, she believed the couple to be on the right track with their color request. Mr. Anderson confirmed that the couple's color choice was Benjamin Moore "Citrone AF-370". Mr. Sullivan made a motion that the commission approve the paint color of Citrone AF-370 for 212 N. Morris. Mr. Anderson added that they wanted to paint the front door as well. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty. The motion was carried with a vote of 4 to 1, with Mr. Wilcox abstaining from the vote.

This concluded the review of building permits.

CONSULTATION

A consultation was held with Pete Linkins who wanted to bring the commission up to date on the addition/renovation project at 200 Market Street. He noted that with the reorganization of the house, they were able to replace the chimneys that had previously been on the house prior to it being lifted and moved onto the lot in which it is currently located. The window frames and original windows have been repaired and the bricks of the old chimneys have been kept and will be used elsewhere. In stripping the front door, the original color was found to be dark green. Mr. Linkins stated that the plan is to repaint that door with that original color along with painting the shutters the same dark green. No objections to any of the information provided by Mr. Linkins was expressed by the commission members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk

