

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

DECEMBER 3, 2007

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, George Gaffney, on Monday, December 3, 2007 in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Suzanne Litty, Dorothy Fenwick, David Baker, Alfred Leszczynski, and Heinrich Schmitz.

The minutes of the meeting of November 5, 2007 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following permits were reviewed:

1. Permit #07-72, Mr. and Mrs. Sandy Orem, 101 Benoni Street, repairs to existing front porch. Mr. and Mrs. Orem were represented by their contractor, Ned Crabb. Mr. Crabb explained to the commission that the owners wished to keep their porch the way it currently is and that the only significant change would be the foundation. Currently the foundation is continuous on three sides and is creating a moisture problem under the deck. The owners would like to replace the three sided foundation with a porch having three brick piers in the front with the spaces in between covered with lattice work. The porch itself would remain with its same look. The owners would also like the steps to be replaced but the finished product would match exactly what is currently in place. The decking of the porch would be changed from tongue and groove to 1' x 4' "Epay," which is Brazilian teak. Mrs. Fenwick made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried without further discussion.
2. Permit #07-70, Susan Farmer, 301 N. Morris Street, small attached shed to existing house for storage. Mr. and Mrs. Farmer were both available to represent their permit application. The Farmers presented their plans with the revisions as requested at last month's meeting. Mr. Farmer explained that the attached shed would be set back approximately 90' from the street behind an appendage 5' high which hides a/c handlers and trash cans. From the street one would only see roofing. The shed would be on a concrete slab with trellis' going up either side. Ms. Litty made a motion to accept the application as amended. Mr. Schmitz noted that he was not happy with the drawings and that in the future the commission should set some standards for drawings, especially in this case, where the applicant has noted many things that are not actually shown on the drawings themselves. The motion was seconded by Mr. Baker and unanimously carried without further discussion.

3. Permit #07-80, Philip Logan and Barbara Paca, 101 W. Strand, demolition of existing screened-in porch and addition; replace with new open carport with screened-in porch above second floor. Mr. Logan reminded the commission that the last time they reviewed his permit request they did not like the component of a garage. As a result, Mr. Logan and Ms. Paca looked at the front of their house and decided not to go to the Board of Appeals with their request for a garage but decided they wanted to work with the commission and find a solution. At the last meeting there was a sense that if the owners treated the front of their house with a carport as opposed to a garage, that might be more acceptable to the commission. As such, the owners presented to the commission their plans for an open carport with louvers on the east side that would prevent the wind from the northeast. The front port of the carport would be open. Fixed louvers would be on the back two bays which, though fixed, could be tilted out. Mrs. Fenwick asked about the proposed screened-in porch on the second floor above the carport. Mr. Logan responded that the purpose for such would be for light and air and would create a lovely feature for a Victorian house. The front porch would not be touched. Mr. Schmitz asked how far could one see the house from the street when one walks by. Mr. Logan responded that currently there are a lot of bushes but that he and his wife would be adding a great deal of plantings. He further noted that they would be trying to keep the plants though the construction phase as a breaker but that they are not the best of plants. However, whatever plants they take out and replace would be "top of the line." Mr. Baker made a motion to accept the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Leszczynski. Mrs. Fenwick was still concerned about the mass. Mr. Logan pointed out that screened in porches were very Victorian in nature and add to the character of the neighborhood. Mrs. Fenwick added that there are other carports within the historic area. The motion was then unanimously without further discussion.

4. Permit #07-74, Richard Schramm, 208 S. Morris St., raise brick landing, restore brick walk and driveway; change roof to shed style and install mullions in door. Mr. Schramm explained to the commission that he would like to change his side door entrance. Also, the commission had previously given approval for Mr. Schramm to remove some existing deck work that Mr. Schramm would now like to replace with a raised brick landing and continue a brick walk to the back of the house. The side door Mr. Schramm would like to change to have mullions and to change the roof over that door to a shed style roof. This would result in making the new shed style roof more consistent with that which is front of the front porch. There would be no supports to hold the new roof and the same shingles as found on the main roof would be used on the side entrance roof. Mrs. Fenwick made a motion to accept the permit as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried without further discussion.

5. Permit #07-77, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Fronk, 104 Division Street, add second story to the south wing; replace two bathrooms; replace circular stair with a straight stair; reside and replace some windows. Mr. and Mrs. Fronk, along with their architect, John Gentile, were present to discuss the permit. It was explained to the commission that the concept plans as presented to the commission at their last meeting had been tightened up and the applicants would be staying within the same footprint as that which is currently existing. A change would be made to the existing roof line. Currently there is a second story above the garage and some of those windows would be changes. Changes will be in the back of the house and not visible from the street. The owners also asked to have skylights installed in their kitchen area as they have had a problem with getting sunlight into this area. Dr. Leszczynski made a motion accept the permit as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Fenwick and unanimously carried with all in favor.
6. Permit #07-69, James Turrell, 308 Tilghman St., remove screening on existing screen porch and replace with white Marvin French Sliders; build new brick fireplace constructed to match existing fireplace; replace 5 Marvin double hung windows with 5 new r Marvin double hung windows of the same size but with different mullions; removal of existing window on gable end of room to accommodate the chimney of the fireplace that is proposed for the proposed enclosed porch below; replace two Marvin double hung windows with 2 new Marvin double hung windows of the same size but with different mullions. Eric Abell, Mr. Turrell's contractor, was available to discuss the permit. Mr. Abell stated that he had revised the drawings to reflect those changes wanted by the commission at their last meeting. He added that the owner had decided not to change the french doors but to keep them the way that they currently exist. Mrs. Fenwick made a motion to approve the application. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.
7. Comber McHugh, 205 Banks Street, erect black iron ornamental fence on north side and at the back property line in keeping with black wrought iron fence at the front of the property. Though the applicant was not present, the application was straightforward. A motion was made by Mrs. Fenwick to accept the fence. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried without further discussion.

This concluded the review of building permits.

A consultation was held with Mr. and Mrs. Giovanni Salvo and their architect, Mr. Jay Corvan. Mr. Corvan explained to the commission that the Salvo's house at 512 E. Strand was an unusual one with part of a boat, referred to as "the Hod" imbedded in it. Various museums have been asked if they would like to have this relic and the Richardson Museum in Cambridge has agreed to assimilate it in their museum for the public to enjoy. The Salvos intend to work within the existing footprint of their house and take it up a second story. Because of the curious shape of their lot, variances will

have to be obtained from the front, side, and rear yard setbacks. Mr. Baker suggested that the owners will have to go before the Planning Commission. Mr. Corvan advised Mr. Baker that he and his clients were aware of that fact but wanted to make sure their preliminary plans were in order with the Historic Commission before carrying their request further. Mr. Corvan stated that the plans are for a straight forward house with a front porch similar to the ones found on Morris Street. The proposed changes would include three bays with an entrance in the middle. The concept of the building, according to Mr. Corvan, is very simple, four square, with four dormers around with the center with a small lantern (a.k.a. cupola) on the top. Mr. Baker was of the opinion that the cupola feature was very atypical of Oxford. Mr. Corvan responded that the only reason why the owners wanted to use that feature is because they wanted an interior light so this would allow light to come through down from the ceiling. The owners would also like a back porch, a screened-in porch on the first floor with an open terrace on the other side. There is an existing deck which is currently not screened that the owners would like to have screened in. The house will probably need to be lifted in order to have a new foundation laid under it.. Mr. Corvan noted that he was trying to keep the profile of the house down as much as possible. Concern was expressed from the commission regarding roof pitch, that the revised house was going to look too modern for the historic area, and that because the public way on this house is viewable from both the street and water way thus making shed dormers highly inappropriate with multiple windows. Mr. Schmitz stated that the steepness and appearance of the house as presented was an issue. Mrs. Fenwick expressed concern about mass and that this would no longer be a "dear little house". Mr. Salvo pointed out that the other houses surrounding his were much higher and that his was the only house with a relatively flat roof. Mr. Schmitz retorted that the other houses do not have the type of roof that Mr. Salvo was asking for. Mr. Corvan pointed out that most buildings in Oxford tend to move on and ramble to the back; they start with a gable and they start to transform. His concern was that with this house one was dealing with a square. A hip roof on a square gives it very little room in which to go. Mr. Corvan asked the commission if they found the bay windows acceptable. The commission members all seemed to be in agreement that the bay windows were fine. Ms. Litty stated that she liked the house but it did seem as though the pitch of the roof was bothering everyone, specifically the shed dormer. The commission suggested that the applicants have another consultation with the group before submitting their full permit application.

Prior to adjourning, Mr. Gaffney distributed to the members a letter that he had put together concerning the abominable condition of the house at 102 Tilghman Street that he wanted to send on to the Commissioners. The commission members all agreed that the letter should be sent as written.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk