

OXFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES

June 1, 2009

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Historic District Commission was called to order by the chairman, George Gaffney, on Monday, June 1, 2009 at 5:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were Heinrich Schmitz, Suzanne Litty, Dorothy Fenwick, and Jennifer Stanley.

The minutes of the meeting of May 4, 2009 were not accepted as written as Mrs. Fenwick was of the opinion that there may have been a second version of these minutes rewritten and that because this meeting had not been recorded, it was important for everyone to look closely at the minutes and verify some of the things written. It was agreed to defer the approval of the minutes of the May 4, 2009 until the historic commission's next monthly meeting.

The following building permits were reviewed by the commission:

1. Permit #09-31, Kerm Henriksen, 207 S. Morris Street, repair/replace ten 8' x 6' stockade panels facing outward; install three 8' x 6' panels of green lattice mounted on brown plywood fencing facing inward to match existing 8' x 6' panels of green lattice on brown plywood fencing. Mr. Henriksen explained to the commission that his first course of action was to replace the existing stockade fence that faces outward toward the Oxford Market as it had fallen over during the winter months. The original fence had been covered in ivy and Mr. Henriksen discovered a lot of decay and boards needing replacing as he removed the ivy from the fence. He further explained that he had set about with the idea of repairing and replacing the fence with the same kind of stockade fencing that was in place when he purchased the house. He further stated that he believed what he was doing was ordinary repair and replacement and that he was at a loss upon receiving a note from the town regarding his fence. Mr. Schmitz stated that questions arose because it appeared he was doing a complete replacement of his fence. Mr. Henriksen responded that there were two sides of the fence – one that faces outwards towards the neighboring commercial property and one that faces Mr. Henriksen's property. The only way in which to repair the fencing which faced outward was to buy replaceable units (which, according to Mr. Henriksen, was how it was originally installed) which come in 8' x 6' panels. Mr. Henriksen stated that was why he had considered this an ordinary replacement. Mr. Schmitz asked if the plywood panels, on the side facing Mr. Henriksen's property, were something that had already been there before. Mr. Henriksen responded by stating that the entire fence is ten panels long. Seven of those panels had already been plywood with lattice on top facing his side so

that he already had two different kinds of fencing in terms of appearance. Since he already had 7/10ths of the fence that was already covered with lattice on plywood board he went ahead and put up the additional plywood and lattice fencing during his repair process in order to complete the job. Mr. Henriksen stated that he did not know why the remaining plywood and lattice fencing was never completed because he had found on his property the remaining lattice to finish the job when he purchased his house. Mr. Henriksen admitted that the three panels closest to the street were new but that he thought it would look better just having the one style of fencing facing inward towards his property. Mrs. Fenwick added that when she bought the commercial property next to Mr. Henriksen back in 1994 it was recommended to her to replace that fence. Instead she stated that she simply added more ivy to hold it up. Mrs. Fenwick also stated that the fence had been there for years and years. Her thought was that the fence was originally installed back when the Oxford Market was known as "Doc's Market" and that the owner of the market at that time had not installed his fence on his own commercial property but rather on the neighboring residential property (a.k.a. Mr. Henriksen's property). Mrs. Fenwick thought that because Mr. Henriksen removed the ivy and had exposed the fence it suddenly made it look as though the fence were new and that he had suddenly installed a 6' non-conforming fence on his residential property. Mr. Schmitz asked what Mr. Henriksen's plans were as he had walked by the property and had seen the plywood fencing with no trellis. Mr. Henriksen responded that he had stopped working on the fence upon receipt of the letter sent by the town informing him that he needed a permit. He added that if he were allowed to continue, that the remainder of the lattice would be installed. Mrs. Fenwick asked Mr. Henriksen if he had extended the fence towards the street. Mr. Henriksen responded that he had not. Mrs. Stanley asked Mr. Henriksen if he had checked to see if the fence was on his neighbor's commercial property. Mr. Henriksen responded that he could not tell. Mrs. Fenwick added that when she owned the commercial property next door the fence was on the residential side. Mr. Schmitz thought the lattice should be brought all the way out to the street, some vines grown on it, and then it could be considered repair work. Mr. Schmitz then made a motion to accept the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Litty and unanimously carried with all in favor.

2. Permit # 09-32, Philip Logan and Barbara Paca, 101 W. Strand, approval for existing natural cedar pergola; posts and beams on the north side of guest cottage to be covered by a Wisteria vine. Mr. Logan apologized to the commission for not coming back before them and showing his plans for the pergola. He added that he was now before the commission with his plans and asked if the commission had any concerns about it. Mr. Gaffney responded that the issues that the commission had was that they had not approved what was built and if it was safe from an engineering standpoint. Mr. Logan went over the photos he had provided for the commission to look at with regards to the

pergola noting that it was not highly visible as it was attached to the back of the guest cottage. The only area in which it would be visible would be beyond the west property line and at the gates of the neighboring "Sandaway", provided the gates of the Sandaway were open. Mr. Logan stated that the intent was to create a natural looking pergola with cut and preserved trees. In approximately two years it should be covered in wisteria vines. He added that the pergola is fastened with screws and that it could hold 17 tons. The posts of the pergola are set in concrete going 3' down. Ropes have been positioned on the pergola only for the purpose of helping the vines to grow along. Mr. Schmitz stated that he had looked into the guidelines which mention the use of historically correct designs. His questions were how this pergola addressed the historical correct design element and how the pergola was held together. Mr. Schmitz thought the town's building inspector should look at the pergola from a structural standpoint. He also expressed concern regarding the materials used to make the pergola and stated that it reminded him of a safari. Mr. Logan responded that the pergola he had installed was an historic way to do pergolas throughout America. Mrs. Fenwick added that the Stewart house on North Morris Street had used similar materials. Ms. Litty made a motion to accept the pergola design and to make sure it is found to be structurally sound. Mr. Schmitz added that he wanted to make sure the pergola was structurally sound since it was attached to the house. Mr. Gaffney seconded the motion which was carried with one negative vote from Mr. Schmitz. Mrs. Fenwick then made a motion to ask the town to inspect the pergola to determine if it is structurally sound. Mrs. Stanley seconded the motion with all in favor.

3. Permit #09-33, Mr. and Mrs. William Korab, 516 E. Strand, enclose existing porches, add major gables on east and west and minor gable dormers on south and north; addition to west elevation. Both Mrs. Korab and her architect, Tim Kearns, were present to discuss the application. Mr. Kearns presented to the commission the final version of the redesign addition to the Korab's home after meeting with the commission in consultation at last month's meeting. Mr. Gaffney reminded Mr. Kearns that at their last meeting they had talked about materials to be used on this home and that the commission had asked about the color of the roof. Mrs. Korab stated that she wanted a red roof and questioned why the historic commission did not like that. Mr. Schmitz responded that the guidelines mention streetscape which means that the commission, in looking over this permit, has to consider the entire block in which this home is located. Mr. Kearns noted that the color red may not be easily seen though one would probably see that the roof was standing seam. Mr. Heinrich responded that he was referring to the whole overall appearance of this house. Mr. Kearns pointed out that no other house in Oxford is open to three sides and that it was hard to describe this house as an architectural piece. Mr. Schmitz responded that the Korab's house has a prominent view from the water and that it has become a three story house making its

scale rather substantial. Mr. Schmitz was of the opinion that a red roof, with all the different angles that the house has, might not blend in and would be seen as an exclamation mark. Mrs. Fenwick asked about the increase in impervious surface coverage. Mr. Kearns responded that the increase would be approximately 2.25 percent and that he and his clients had substantially down scaled this project from what they had originally requested. Mrs. Fenwick stated that her problem with this application was that she thought this house should not be in the historic district. She also noted that the house marks an entrance to a significant part of the town and that this house is changing the look of the town. Though she acknowledged that Mr. Kearns and the Korabs have tried to meet the guidelines she still was of the opinion that the house should never have been built. Mrs. Fenwick added that this was going to be a big house and that it was going to be a change. Mrs. Korab responded that it was going to be a change but that it was also going to be an improvement. Mrs. Fenwick responded that this was a choice piece of land and the commission has to make sure it will look pleasing to the eye. Mrs. Korab questioned what pleasing to the eye was determined by. Mrs. Fenwick answered the historic commission and the guidelines. She added that the commission's job is to maintain the property so that when people look at Oxford they see something that is similar to what Oxford has been personified by. Mrs. Korab responded that the commission would be proud to see her house elevated on this piece of land and that it would not stick out as the most modern house because it did not belong. Mr. Schmitz pointed out that the owners had come a long way with the results and that this new plan was a big improvement. However, there were certain elements which could reduce the house in scope. Mr. Schmitz then asked why the façade on the south side was blank without any windows. Mr. Kearns responded that it was because there was a study in that area with two blank walls and that that was the only outside wall that did not have a window centered within it. Mr. Schmitz asked if it was possible to put a window in there. Mr. Kearns stated he would talk it over with the owners. Mr. Kearns asked if he could get approval on the basic concept of his plan so that he and the owners could have something to work with. Mr. Gaffney suggested tabling the permit and coming back to it after a few items are addressed. Mrs. Fenwick thought it was not fair to bring the owners back again since there were only two questions – one involving a window and the other the color of the roof. Mrs. Korab stated that they would be willing to come back with a color sample. Mr. Kearns reworked the elevation drawing to show a window on the south side as requested by Mr. Schmitz that would be similar to the double hung window shown on the plans as existing in the front foyer. Mr. Schmitz made a motion to accept the application as seen on the drawings and with the correction of the window on the south elevation dated as 6/1/09. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Fenwick and unanimously carried. It was further agreed that the commission was waiting on the color of the roof to be submitted in order to complete the file so that the commission would have a record and know what is going on.

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This concluded the review of building permits.

A consultation was held with Thomas Cotton and Mary Cotton, and their architect, Tim Kearns with regards to the Cotton/Corl house located at 206 N. Morris Street. Mr. Cotton explained to the commission that they had originally met with the historic commission in 2005 to discuss adding on to their house. Since that time, they had reworked their plans and scaled back on what they were planning to do. The front line of the house and rear of the house would remain within the existing footprint. The new plans calls for pushing out the house a bit on the south side for about a foot in order to accommodate the expansion of the kitchen area so that any additional massing to the house would be occurring within the center of the house. This would result in a telescoping effect that would be visible from the rear of the house. It was also mentioned that Mr. Corl and Ms. Cotton had previously asked the commission about elevating their house back in 2005 and had been given approval to do so by the commission. The commission members were still agreeable with the couple raising up their home. Both Ms. Litty and Mrs. Fenwick thought that the proposed design looked good.

Prior to adjourning there was a brief discussion on tree cutting taking place throughout town. The Historic District Commission expressed an interest, would like to be kept abreast, and would like to see the plans for tree cutting and be notified when the plans arrive.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby

Assistant Clerk