

February 12, 2009

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Board of Port Wardens was called to order by the chairman, Thomas Campbell, on Thursday, February 12, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., in the meeting room of the Oxford Community Services Building.

The only other board member in attendance was Larry Murray.

The minutes of the meeting of January 8, 2009 were approved and accepted as distributed.

A consultation was held with Skip Case, one of the property owners of Oxford Landing, to discuss a proposed plan for the replacement of the Oxford Landing bulkhead and finger piers. Mr. Case explained to the board that Oxford Landing is comprised of 5 lots, four of which are owned in fee lots and the 5th lot is the common lot which each owner having a deed slip. The existing condition is that the bulkhead is badly deteriorated. The proposed plan is to do as much of an "in kind" replacement as possible. The existing bulkhead comes out 18" and seems to be typical of most bulkhead replacements. The replacement plan for the finger piers is to stay right on target within inches of the existing envelope. However, the homeowners would like to put floating piers in place of the existing finger piers. Mr. Case explained that the advantage of the floating pier is that it would be better from a safety standpoint in terms of safety and usability. Mr. Case also mentioned that the homeowners have not yet approached the adjoining neighborhood properties formally regarding this idea because they wanted to present the plan before the board first. However, Mr. Case noted that he had talked to Bob Wilson, executor of the Wilson estate of the NE side of Oxford Landing, about what the association is thinking about doing. He noted that Mr. Wilson was agreeable with the proposed changes and added that the group had originally talked about combining the replacement of the Wilson bulkhead with the replacement of the landing's bulkhead but that Don Wilson (deceased owner of the property) had opted not to go along with that plan even though his bulkhead was in similar condition's to the landing's bulkhead. On the SW corner of the property there are a couple of existing issues. One is that the SHA has a right-of-way in this area and the existing piers in that area are town owned so the association doesn't know where to go to seek approval of their plans. Also, there is a hole in the bulkhead that can be seen at low tide. It is the drainage hole from the roadway along that side and the landing's bulkhead provides the opening.

Mr. Campbell commented that he did not see a problem with the concept but that there may be some issues as far as setbacks are concerned. He asked if Mr. Case could get something in writing from the Wilson Estate stating they did not have a problem with building the bulkhead out. Otherwise, if they did have a problem, the association would have to bring their bulkhead back to where the existing bulkhead is currently located. The same thing would apply to area abutting the town's

property. Mr. Case responded that the issue for the homeowners is the cost associated with the demolition of the existing bulkhead. He also noted that it seemed to him as though others were repairing their bulkheads by putting 18" of new bulkhead in front of their existing bulkheads. Mr. Campbell responded that one could build out 18" but if one is not conforming already it does not mean you can add on an additional 18". Mr. Case retorted that was why the landing members included the harbor line, the federal channel line, and the riparian rights in their plans. Mr. Campbell pointed out that the setback in this area is supposed to be 15' and that generally, the board's approach to a situation of this nature would be replacement in kind and that if the owner's are going to work within the perimeters of the constructed pier as it currently stands, then that would be allowable. However, the proposed plan shows it to be 5' over on one side. Mr. Campbell asked Mr. Case if he could leave his proposed plans in the town office so that the board members could look into them further. He also noted that with floating docks one did not necessarily need outside mooring pilings and that in most cases they were unused. Mr. Case responded that the homeowners were going by the Bachelor Point Harbor configuration in which their docks are 60" wide and their finger piers are 62" wide and that his plan has a similar configuration.

Mr. Case also mentioned that the Oxford Landing homeowners wanted to have this work done in the 4th quarter and 1st quarter of any given year. Since there is no way to access the bulkhead without tearing out trees, the association wanted to receive permission from the town to use the town dock area on a temporary and partial use for staging equipment and materials while they are under construction so that all work can be done from the water. Mr. Campbell noted that this request would have to be made through the town office. Mr. Case then mentioned he had written a letter to the Commissioners back in 2007 informing them what Oxford Landing was planning to do and looking for their permission. Mr. Case did not know where the letter was now and asked the board when he should approach the Commissioners for that permission. Mr. Campbell responded that Mr. Case should look into getting his permits first and then put in an application for the permit. Mr. Case retorted that he did not want to submit an application and then have it disapproved because of something he hadn't disclosed or done ahead of time. Mr. Murray suggested Mr. Case talk to the Town Administrator, Lillian Lord, and get her to bring this up to the Commissioners to see if it would be viable. Mr. Case agreed to do so.

Mr. Case mentioned that there are existing water and electrical services in the bulkhead area and that any final plan would include replacements. He also noted that he realized the floating piers would require additional permits (Corps of Engineers of MD Dept. of the Environment). The point he was trying to make was that because of the floating piers, it was going to take about a year from the time the landing gets

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the permit from the town to then get the other permits for all the work to go ahead. Mr. Murray reminded Mr. Case he would have to get the permits from the Corps and MDE before a permit could be obtained from the town. Mr. Campbell suggested getting all three permits at the same time and added that with the MDE and Army Corps they do not acknowledge setbacks so it would be up to Mr. Case to take something to them that he thought those permitted offices would allow to be built.

In closing, Mr. Campbell stated the board would get back to Mr. Case with regards to the setbacks in that area.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk