

OXFORD PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

AUGUST 3, 2010

The regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Planning Commission was called to order by the chairman, Donald Silliman, on Tuesday, August 3, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., in the meeting room, of the Oxford Community Services Building.

Other commission members in attendance were David Baker, Carol Abruzzese, James Reed, and Anthony Passarella. Also in attendance were Town Attorneys David Thompson and Brynja Booth.

The minutes of the workshop meeting of July 6, 2010 and the regular monthly minutes of July 6, 2010 were approved and accepted as distributed.

The following building permits were approved in the town office:

- #10-30 R-1 Mr. and Mrs. Mark Harrison, 707 S. Morris St., replace existing fence and add new 64' long section. Section 32.12.
- #10-31 R-1 Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Munsch, 710 S. Morris St., new second floor addition; new porches; new garage roof; new potting shed, renovated first floor, and new 4' fence. Sections 21.01.1, 21.03.1a, 21.03.2a,b, 21.05, 32.12, and 33.06.4.
- #10-32 R-1 Paul Celluzzi, 106 E. Division St., replace deck roof; install new handrails; install new windows and door in master bedroom; framing for new windows only. Section 21.01.1
- #10-34 R-2 Nancy Dalager, 204 E. Strand, replace existing wooden picket fence with new vinyl picket fencing; replace 3 storm doors; front door and side panels and one old casement window. Section 32.12. To Historic District Commission.
- #10-37 R-2 Peter Rouse, 208 South St., reframe back roof section; repair walls in back section; install new piers; install new window in front because of rot damage; move side window 2' over; install new roof shingles all to existing accessory building. Section 23.03. To Historic District Commission.
- #10-41 R-1 Walter Patton, 104 Sinclair St., storage shed. Section 21.03.1a and 21.03.2a,b.
- #10-46 R-2 Thomas Corl and Mary Cotton, 206 N. Morris St., reinstall fence; repair shed and replace roof; install salvage windows and Azek skirt and replace existing doors with sliding doors. Section 32.12. To Historic District Commission.
- #10-47 R-2 Mr. and Mrs. Walter Rasin, 206 Tilghman Street, replace fence with 4' aluminum fencing. Section 32.12. To HDC.

The follow building permits were reviewed by the Planning Commission:

Permit #10-55 C-2 Innspiration, LLC, 314 N. Morris Street, request to install a removable sidewalk sign; sign will be hung from post during operational hours of tavern and removed daily at closing; sign will hang from 6' post with 2' yardarm. Sign will be approximately 2' square. Mark Salter, executive chef and Vice-President was present to discuss the application. Mr. Baker pointed out to the commission that the Oxford Zoning Ordinance allows for only one freestanding sign per building lot. This property already houses a freestanding sign for the Robert Morris Inn. Mr. Baker noted that he had nothing against the sign and mentioned that the requested tavern sign could be attached to the building, if desired, otherwise the applicants would have to seek approval through the Oxford Board of Appeals. Mr. Silliman pointed out that in the past the planning commission has had discussion about encouraging businesses to open up and that the commission wants to make it easy for the Robert Morris Inn to open and thrive. Mrs. Abruzzese added that if the commission could find a way to approve this they would and that the commission should encourage businesses. Mr. Passarella added that the commission could make a motion to the Board of Appeals that they have no objections with the request and that they would approve it. Mr. Baker responded that he would be good with that.

Permit #10-56 C-2 Innspiration, LLC, 314 N. Morris Street, request to place a temporary (during business hours) sandwich board sign in front of tavern entrance; sign will be 24" x 36" and placed out at opening and removed after closing each day. Mr. Salter explained that this sign was to be considered as a backup plan only if the first sign request did not work out. Mr. Passarella stated that the way in which the zoning ordinance is written concerning a sign of this nature was confusing in that one is not allowed portable signs. Mr. Silliman pointed out that the Oxford Museum has a sandwich board sign which they use. Attorney Thompson spoke stating that the applicant could have a sidewalk sign. However, the ordinance was clear about no more than one free standing sign per building lot. That permit would need to be sent to the Board of Appeals. Attorney Thompson suggested to the commission that rather than sending a memo to the Board of Appeals stating that they had no objection to the free standing sign, they should say that they recommend that it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and stated town policy. Attorney Thompson also suggested to the commission that they look at amending the sign ordinance to permit signage that identifies the occupants of a commercial establishment.

Mr. Reed made a motion to approve the removable sidewalk sign. The motion was seconded by Mr. Passarella. Mr. Baker asked why the zoning ordinance mentioned no portable signs, such as a sidewalk sign. Attorney Thompson responded he did not know what was meant by that since real estate signs are portable, adding that any sign that one can remove is portable. He thought it was a poor choice of language and thought it was referring to different signage such as the announcement sign in front of the fire house. He noted the town has permitted various sandwich signs around town. Mr. Silliman added that the commission could approve the sidewalk sign as long as it wouldn't be obstructing the sidewalk and going out into the street. There being no more discussion the motion was unanimously carried without any further discussion. Mr. Baker than made a motion with regards to permit application #10-55 that due

to conflicts with the zoning ordinance, the commission would have to deny the application for a second post sign on the property. However, they would strongly recommend to the Board of Appeals that they grant a variance for the sign. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Abruzzesse and unanimously carried with all in favor.

This concluded the review of building permits.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Silliman stated for the record the following:

“On July 1, 2010, the Town delivered to the County a copy of its Comprehensive Plan. As required by state law, that Plan includes a municipal growth element. Essentially, it requires that any geographic area proposed for growth---that is, the inclusion into the Town’s boundaries---be identified. Accordingly, our plan identifies the Town’s growth area. That growth area was determined and identified by an earlier Oxford Planning Commission, together with the Talbot County Commission and the Talbot County Planning Officer. The Oxford Growth Area mapped in the Comprehensive Plan now under consideration is identical to the Oxford Growth Area mapped in the current Talbot County Comprehensive Plan. The Talbot County Comprehensive Plan and the proposed Oxford Comprehensive Plan are 100% consistent. In addition to identifying a municipal growth area in coordination with the County plan, the County is permitted 30 days to make comments about the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. That 30 days has now expired and we have not received any comments. We are also required to meet with a County representative. To that end, Mr. Sandy Coyman and the Talbot County Planning Commission were invited to this meeting to satisfy the meeting requirement. Mr. Coyman, the Talbot County Planning Officer is here, and I would like to give him the opportunity to make comments.”

Mr. Coyman presented himself to the commission along with Mr. Thomas Hughes, Talbot County Planning Commissioner. Mr. Hughes addressed the commission by stating that he had read Oxford’s plan and the town’s municipal growth element and that he was happy that everything was in sync with the County plan and that he was pleased. Mr. Coyman added that the staff had taken Oxford’s Plan to the Talbot Co. Council and that they had glowing statements about it. He added that tomorrow (August 4, 2010) the Talbot County Planning Commission was going to have the first opportunity to discuss the plan and that they did not find any major issues with it and that the municipal growth element was fine.

The commission discussed setting up a public hearing to be held at their next regularly scheduled meeting on September 7th. Mr. Silliman stated he would talk to the town office about getting the necessary paperwork filed and notices out.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Willoughby
Assistant Clerk